

How to Host a *The New Black* House Party Screening and Fundraiser



The New Black will be broadcast on PBS's long running documentary program *Independent Lens* on June 15, 2014, at 10:30 p.m. Additionally, for 21 days following the broadcast, it will be streaming online for free. Whenever you decide to watch, there's a great opportunity to get together with friends and family – in living rooms, dorm rooms, bars and other safe and beloved spaces – to view the film and, afterwards, to discuss issues of importance to you. Every conversation matters, but these gatherings offer the unique opportunity to create even greater impact by using the night as a chance to fundraise for *The New Black's* ongoing grassroots community outreach – as well as other organizations dedicated to achieving civil rights for all. For more ideas on how to produce a great event, use the checklist below.

1) PICK A VENUE

Maybe you'd like to invite loved ones to enjoy the broadcast from your own den, or perhaps there's a nearby bar where you and friends meet for the occasional drink. Pick a space where you and your guests will feel comfortable. If you choose a public space, be sure to consult with staff ahead of time to make sure they can accommodate your party. If you plan to watch on the night of the actual broadcast, make certain the venue will allow you to tune into your local PBS station on Sunday, June 15, 2014, at 10:30 p.m., and to stay tuned in for the full hour of the film's broadcast.

2) DOWNLOAD *THE NEW BLACK* COMMUNITY CINEMA DISCUSSION GUIDE AND OTHER RESOURCES

Click [here](#) to download *The New Black* Community Cinema discussion guide, which includes a director's statement, historical information, a glossary of terms, and questions to help facilitate the conversation when the film ends. You might also download character updates, ([here](#)) to find out what the film's subjects are up to now, or the film press guide ([here](#)) to learn what critics have said about *The New Black*.

3) INVITE YOUR GUESTS TO THE PARTY – AND TO CONTRIBUTE TO THE CAUSE!

Create a list of friends, family, associates, colleagues and others from your social network with whom you'd like to share the film and discuss. It's okay to "overbook" your party at this stage – you should plan for a 20%-30% drop off in attendees on the actual night of your event. Contact your guests via email and web-based services like Evite and Punchbowl, and consider creating a Facebook event page. And don't be afraid to pick up the phone! Specify in your invitations that

your event is a fundraiser. Send event reminders to invitees in the days just before your house party.

4) MAKE YOUR SPECIAL EVENT...SPECIAL!

Consider ways to make things festive for your guests. Enjoy cooking? Turn your Broadcast House Party into a potluck. Prefer trivia? Have guests come armed with factoids about African-American LGBT figures throughout history. Holding the party at a local bar? Talk with staff ahead of time about creating a special cocktail just for the event. You get the picture. There's a huge array of activities that will not only enrich your party, but also ensure it's tailor made to suit you and your guests.

5) KICKING OFF YOUR HOUSE PARTY

Greet your guests as they arrive, and ask them to put their names and emails on a sign-up sheet. You may want to give a brief (2-3 minutes) introduction to the movie, which can include the reasons you wanted to share the film and why the issues illuminated in the documentary matter to you. Following the conclusion of your remarks, lower the lights, sit back, and watch the film with your guests.

6) COLLECTING FUNDS

Right after the film ends – before discussion begins – invite guests to make their donations to *The New Black* outreach campaign. Be sure to use this time to emphasize the kind of work the campaign is doing as well as the impact it is making. Let attendees know why their support is needed, and the difference their tax-deductible contributions can make. (For more information about *The New Black* outreach campaign, check out the last two pages of this guide.) Emphasize that donations must be made by check made payable to *Hartley Film Foundation* and write “New Black” on the memo line. (For other ways to donate, see item 10 on this list.)

7) DISCUSS MORE WAYS YOUR GUESTS CAN TAKE ACTION

Let your guests know that there are myriad opportunities to affect change, from taking part in the night's fundraiser on behalf of *The New Black's* outreach, to volunteering with a local LGBT rights organization. Tell them to visit www.newblackfilm.com/take-action for more ideas about ways to help gain civil rights for all. Advise guests who want to stay abreast of what's happening with *The New Black* to like the film on [Facebook](#), follow us on [Twitter](#), and sign up for our newsletter by visiting www.newblackfilm.com/contact.

8) TAKE LOTS OF PICTURES – AND THEN SHARE THEM WITH US!

We'd love to see how your broadcast party went! Take plenty of pictures, then send them to us at events@newblackfilm.com, along with basic information including geographic location; the names of the folks in the photo; and anything else you'd like to mention about the success of

your party. (Don't forget to get permission from those depicted to share their pictures.) We'll post our favorites in the coming months on *The New Black* website.

9) FOLLOW UP WITH YOUR GUESTS IN THE DAYS FOLLOWING THE PARTY

Be sure to send a note thanking your guests for attending and reminding them to like *The New Black* on [Facebook](#), follow us on [Twitter](#), and sign up for our newsletter by visiting www.newblackfilm.com/contact. Encourage them to find out where the film will be next and to look into holding their own screening of the film by visiting www.newblackfilm.com/screenings.

10) SENDING YOUR DONATIONS

Please mail collected donations to:

Sarah Masters
Hartley Film Foundation
49 Richmondville Avenue, Suite 204
Westport, CT 06880

For other ways to donate, visit *The New Black* site [here](#) and follow the directions displayed.

WHAT IS THE NEW BLACK OUTREACH CAMPAIGN?

The New Black's outreach and public education campaign is a grassroots effort that takes *The New Black* to cities around the country to begin conversations that lead to deeper understanding, greater inclusion, bridge-building between communities and, ultimately, policy and institutional change. Our partners in this national effort include Human Rights Campaign (the country's largest gay rights organization), the ACLU, the National Black Justice Coalition (the largest black LGBT rights organization in the U.S.), the Gay-Straight Alliance Network, and many others. *The New Black* outreach campaign is focused primarily on reaching LGBT, faith and African-American communities, although the impact of this work will have impact far beyond any particular groups. We have already witnessed the ways the film helps create incremental progressive change within individual churches, colleges, organizations and communities. These kinds of changes indicate that, with continued work, our efforts and actions can contribute to a sea change in civil rights and inclusion for all.

Over the next year, the campaign will bring the film to hundreds of spaces and audiences around the U.S. through a series of screenings at Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs), in churches, and in key states that are ripe for policy reform. In each case, we will ensure that LGBT rights are addressed in a way that is respectful and doesn't alienate audiences, while allowing for sensitive and powerful dialogue. The discussions that result from these screenings have the potential to foster collaboration between black, faith and LGBT groups; create greater awareness and acceptance of LGBT issues in black communities; and to pave the way for a more racially inclusive LGBT rights movement. Here are just a few highlights from our ongoing work:

- In October 2013, Illinois Unites for Marriage – a coalition of more than 60 organizations – used *The New Black* as a key element in a public education campaign around gay marriage as a civil right. The state's pending marriage equality bill passed in November last year, making Illinois the 16th state to legalize gay marriage.
- In March 2014, the American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU) of Pennsylvania began using *The New Black* as part of its "[Why Marriage Matters Pennsylvania](#)" public education campaign to engage the African-American community, religious institutions and civic organizations statewide in the fight for same-sex marriage. A federal judge ruled Pennsylvania's ban on marriage equality unconstitutional on May 20, 2014.
- In partnership with Human Rights Campaign, we recently launched the Empowering Equality on HBCU Campuses campaign. The effort makes funding available for HBCU students, faculty and staff interested in developing pilot projects that support diversity and inclusion for LGBT people on their campuses. [To learn more about the campaign, click here.](#)
- [The New Black Freedom Summer Tour](#), organized in collaboration with Spectrum Queer Media, commemorates the 50th Anniversary of Freedom Summer, when more than 700

student volunteers from around the country joined organizers and African-Americans living in Mississippi to support freedom schools and voter registration activities. These screenings will invite audiences to consider the power of the African-American vote then and now, particularly in light of the current legislative fight for gay marriage and the recent dismantling of the 1965 Voting Rights Act. The tour, which began in April 2014, will take the film to more than a dozen cities around the country before arriving at its final destination – the official commemoration of Freedom Summer in Jackson, Mississippi – on June 28, 2014.

Among the most compelling evidence we've seen in support of our outreach comes from the audiences themselves. During a recent discussion following a screening of *The New Black*, the prominent pastor of a local African-American church publicly apologized for "the black church's role" in opposing LGBT rights, as well as its "non-acceptance of the gay community." Moments like this cut to the heart of what our work is all about: they are proof that the film can play a role not only in facilitating dialogue, understanding, acceptance, and – above all – connection, but also even in taking steps to heal old wounds. Those moments are transformative and have implications that resonate through lives and across communities.

Thank you for sharing the *The New Black* with your own community, and helping us continue this incredibly important work. Your support goes a long way.