

Lynching Photography:

Today, we will view some photographs taken from the book *Without Sanctuary: Lynching Photography in America* (Ed. James Allen, Hilton Als, et. Al., 2000).

In the “Forward” to this book of lynching photographs, Congressman John Lewis writes:

Without Sanctuary brings to life one of the darkest and sickest periods in American history. As a young child growing up very poor in rural Alabama, I heard stories about lynchings and about the nightriders coming through, intimidating and harassing black people. At the time it all seemed nightmarish, unreal—even unbelievable. The photographs in this book make real the hideous crimes that were committed against humanity. (7)

Use the following questions as a starting point for examining the photos:

- What do you see first? Then, how do your eyes move around the image?
- What is in the background? What is in the foreground (the front)?
- Of the people featured, what observations can you make of them:
 - Of their ages?
 - Gender?
 - Clothes?
 - Facial expressions?
 - Posture?
- Consider the setting: Where is the photograph taken? What can you say about the location, the time of day, etc.?
- Why do you think the photograph was taken?

In light of what you see, how do the lynching photos affect your reading of Chapters 15 & 16 of *To Kill a Mockingbird*?

How do these images affect your viewing of the scene outside of the jail that is featured in the film version of *TKM*?