

## EAGLE INDEPENDENT

# Chelmsford resident creates video series on civil rights

**Margaret Smith** Wicked Local

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CHELMSFORD -- From slavery to modern times, a video series explores the history and continuing struggle of civil rights and racial justice.

Resident Jesse Heines produced “Civil Rights: A History.” Heines also narrates and serves as presenter of the series.

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The series’ four segments follow the outline by attorney and civil rights activist Bryan Stevenson -- slavery, lynching, segregation, and mass-incarceration.



The series is linked to the page of the [Diversity, Racial Equity and Inclusion Committee](#), and is also available on YouTube and at Chelmsford Telemedia.



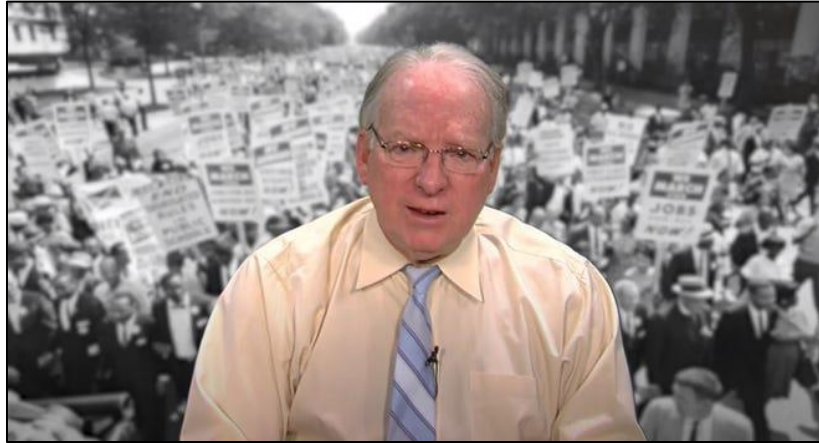
A photograph by Elliott Erwitt depicts segregated drinking fountains. The photo is featured in "Civil Rights: A History," created by Jesse Heines of Chelmsford, with Bob Pariseau and Chelmsford Telemedia. *Courtesy Photo.*

[Congregation Shalom](#), a synagogue in town to which Heines belongs, plans a virtual presentation and discussion of the series on Jan. 18, for Martin Luther King Day.



Heines, a retired computer science professor who worked at the University of Massachusetts at Lowell, serves on Congregation Shalom's adult education and social justice committees.

"Civil rights is a major tenet of Reform Judaism," Heines said.



A panel discussion on Chelmsford Telemedia is set for March 9.

## An idea grows

The idea for the series came after Bob Pariseau, a Chelmsford Telemedia producer, heard a presentation Heines gave on behalf of Learning in Retirement Association early in 2020. The presentation took place just before the coronavirus crisis.

"It snowballed from there," said Heines.



## Past and present

After his retirement, Heines began working with the New Hampshire Department of Corrections, developing job-training programs for inmates.

Melissa Pennell, a UMass Lowell colleague, asked Heines to give a presentation to her class.

The series follows a timeline -- from the trans-Atlantic slave trade, to the killing of George Floyd -- which sparked worldwide outrage, and calls to end racial injustice.

“The theme of the program is historical, but I tried to relate it to the present day,” said Heines. “What happens in the present day doesn’t just happen in a vacuum.”

The series alludes to Stevenson’s quote, “Slavery didn’t end in 1865, it just evolved.”



## Persistence of racism

Heines said, “White supremacy is in the news all the time now -- people who just believe Black people aren’t as good as white people, for whatever reason.”

Through Pete Pedulla, executive director of Chelmsford Telemedia, Heines learned of the Diversity, Racial Equity and Inclusion Committee.

Speaking with the committee’s chairman, Philip Hicks, Heines said, “We had a wonderful conversation...and he asked me to talk to the committee.”

Heines hopes the series will raise awareness of the ongoing civil rights struggle, and foster a dialogue about the past -- as well as the future.

To learn more, visit [jesseheines.com](http://jesseheines.com).

### **Forum on tap**

A presentation and discussion of Jesse Heines' series: "Civil Rights: A History"

WHEN Tuesday, March 9, 12:30 p.m.

WHERE Virtual presentation by Chelmsford Telemedia

DISCUSSION PANEL Professor C. Shawn McGuffey, associate professor of sociology and director of African and American Diaspora Studies, Boston College; Brenna Wynn Greer, associate professor of history, Wellesley College; and Ralph Edward Jordan, assistant teaching professor, Manning School of Business, UMass Lowell.

MORE INFO [jesseheines.com](http://jesseheines.com).