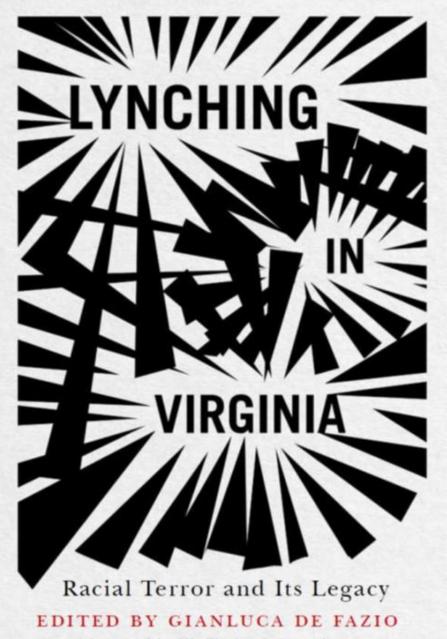
# Lynching in Virginia: Racial Terror and its Legacy (UVA Press)

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Afterword by W. Fitzhugh Brundage

## Lynching in the US and Virginia

 About 4,700 persons were lynched in the US between the early 1880s and WWII, mostly African American men

■ In Virginia, at least 115 people were lynched between 1866 and 1932, across 57 Counties

 Lynching was an instrument of statesanctioned terrorism

### **Four Sections**

Newspapers and Lynching

Lynching in SW Virginia

State Response to Lynching

Collective Memory and Memorialization

### What Can We Do About It?

- Remember and Educate
- Lynching is, for the first time, explicitly included in the 2023 Virginia SOL for History and Social Science → VUS.10 and USII.5
- In February 2019, VA General Assembly passed a joint resolution to express regret about lynching (the first of its kind)
  - The résolution àlso committed the Commonwealth to record each documented lynching, work with local communities to raise awareness and build historical markers





Thomas Washington, an African American man-was lynched on 23 March 1896 for allegedly attempting to assault the young daughter of a prominent white citizen. A boy found Washington's body hanging from a tree about 1/8 mile southwest of here. A coroners jury did not identify the killers. The body, buried near the tree, was later given a proper burial by relatives. This was the only documented lynching in Essex County. The case attracted publicity across the state, but no one was ever brought to justice. More than 4,000 lynchings took place in the U.S. between 1877 and 1950; more than 100 people, primarity African American men, were lynched in Virginia.

#### XB LEONARD WOODS LYNCHED

Benjamin Thomas

Leonard Woods, a black coal miner from Jenkins, KY, was lynched near here on the night of 29-30 Nov. 1927. Officers had arrested Woods for allegedly killing Herschel Deaton, a white man from Coeburn, VA, and had taken him to the Whitesburg, KY, jail. On the day of Deaton's funeral, a white mob numbering in the hundreds broke into the jail and brought Woods close to this spot, where they hanged, shot, and burned him. No one was ever arrested. In the aftermath, at the urging of Norfolk editor Louis Jaffé, Nortons Bruce Crawford, and other journalists, VA Cov. Harry F. Byrd worked with the General Assembly early in 1928 to pass the nation's first law defining lynching as a state crime.



terrorized African Americans and helped to maintain white supremacy.

ISAAC BRANDON LYNCHED, 6 APRIL 1892

A mob of about 75 masked men dragged issac

Brandon from a cell in the old Charles City County jall and hanged him from a tree on this hillside

on the night of 6 April 1892. Brandon, a 45-yearold black man, had been held in jail on a charge of assaulting a white woman. He was married and

the father of eight children. No charges were filed In connection with Brandon's murder. More than 4.000 lynchings took place in the United States between 1877 and 1950. In Virginia, approximately 100 people, the vast majority of them black men, were killed in documented lynchings. Lynch moba

## Historical Markers related to Lynching

- New project compiling a database of all the historical markers related to lynching in the United States
  - As of August 2024, 186 markers identified, the oldest one erected in 1981; most markers erected after 2016
- Alabama has the highest number of markers with 16, then Virginia with 15
- Map of <u>Historical Markers</u>