

400 Year Commemoration

Toolkit

“Education is indoctrination if you are white, subjugation if you are black.” - James Baldwin.

From the time that most of us were small, we have learned one story about the history of slavery in this country. Most history books treat it as a blip in an otherwise pristine American timeline, but the reality is that slavery is the very foundation upon which our nation was built and continues to thrive.

How much do we really know about it? How much do we know about the history of Africans prior to colonization and enslavement? How much do we know about the inciting incidents that prompted colonization in the first place? How much do we know about the Africans who were enslaved who fought back, centering liberation and the promise of a better future? Do we understand the implications of slavery not just in the South, but in the North, and how the institution continues through our policies and practices at a local, state, and national level?

The following toolkit is designed to increase the knowledge and awareness of City staff, community residents, and all other interested readers. It will do what our history books did not do, providing us with the real truth about who we are, who we have been, and where we are going. Each section provides you with a couple of articles and videos for you to increase in your knowledge, followed by reflection activities and additional resources for deeper development.

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Contextualizing the moment

As we honor the 400 year commemoration of resistance and liberation of people of African ascent, it is critical to name why this moment is important. Why should we honor 1619, considering that slavery was practiced in the Americas prior to British involvement? And why is it important to relive old memories that are harmful and traumatic? The collection of resources listed below will help us answer these questions and better contextualize the roots of slavery in the United States.

[400 Years of Inequality](#) (Web page)

This is an interactive website highlighting efforts around the country to hold and commemorate 400 years of resistance and liberation of people of African ascent.

Understanding 1619 was not the beginning

- [Afrikan presence in early America](#) (YouTube video)
- [The fallacy of 1619: Rethinking the history of Africans in early America](#) (Article)
"In 1619, '20 and odd Negroes' arrived off the coast of Virginia, where they were 'bought for victualle' by labor-hungry English colonists. The story of these captive Africans has set the stage for countless scholars interested in telling the story of slavery in English North America. Unfortunately, 1619 is not the best place to begin a meaningful inquiry into the history of African peoples in America. Certainly, there is a story to be told that begins in 1619, but it is neither well-suited to help us understand slavery as an institution nor to help us better grasp the complicated place of African peoples in the early modern Atlantic world."

Reflection questions

How do you relate to the history of enslavement, resistance, and liberation of people of African ascent? What does this history mean for you and your people? And what does a future without harm and continual oppression look like?

Additional resources

- [Central Africans, Atlantic Creoles, and the Foundation of the Americas, 1585-1660](#) by Linda M. Heywood and John K. Thornton (Book)
- [Africa and Africans in the Making of the Atlantic World, 1400-1800 \(Studies in Comparative World History\)](#) by John Thornton (Book)

History of people of African ascent

Understanding the history of people of African ascent prior to the enslavement is critical in the process of remembering, recovering, and reimagining around the 400 Years. In school, many of us are taught that African peoples did not have a history, or ways of thinking, understanding,

and engaging the world. But this is not true. As Carter G. Woodson states in his work, *Miseducation of the Negro* (quote from his book here). In order to contextualize and understand enslavement, we must have a greater understanding of who African people were prior to it. Such also speaks to how we have been able to resist and center our liberation in spite of our oppression. These resources listed below are designed to help us do just that.

- [Black History Month, part one: We must study ancient Africa by Ivory Phillips \(Article\)](#)
“It is well known that ancient Egyptians performed surgical procedures, practiced dentistry, and successfully embalmed the dead so that corpses were preserved for centuries. The same is true of engineering and the development of geometry. It is well documented the Egypt was one of the first and most advanced early civilizations. While this is acknowledged, there is and continues to be a widespread attempt to pretend that the ancient Egyptians were not Africans. If we lose this knowledge or fail to recognize these contributions of ancient Africa, we fall into the deception of the white supremacists. Ignoring the advanced nature of ancient African society helped spread the idea that these Africans were blessed or helped because they were introduced to an advanced civilization.”
- [Henry Louis Gates explores 'Africa's Great Civilizations' by Kimberly C. Roberts \(Article\)](#)
This article featured in *Variety Magazine* profiles Henry Louis Gates and his PBS docuseries 'Africa's Great Civilizations.' He starts his narrative 200,000, highlighting the genesis of humankind being located in Africa and ends the series in 1896, at the battle of Adwa when the Ethiopians defeated the invading Italians.

Reflection questions

Who were your people before the institution of slavery in the Americas? If you know this history, in what ways do you feel connected to it? If you don't know it, how will you seek to understand it?

Additional resources

- [Cheikh Anta Diop: Precolonial Black Africa](#), Translated from the French by Harold J. Salemson
- *Stolen Legacy: The Egyptian Origins of Western Philosophy* by George G.M. James (Book)
- [Africa: Mother of Western Civilization](#) by Dr. Yosef A.A. ben-Jochannan (Book)

Chattel slavery

Many of us who are educated in America grow up learning about slavery in a way that appeases the imagination of those in power. We learn a few names of people who were enslaved and

resisted, learn more about white abolitionists who fought against the institution, and watch way too many movies depicting Black pain and suffering. The resources curated below are designed to help us collectively think about slavery from the perspective of people of African ascent.

- [African Holocaust: Maafa](#) by Alik Shahadah (Article)
The word "Maafa" (also known as the African Holocaust) is derived from a Swahili word meaning disaster, terrible occurrence or great tragedy. The term today collectively refers to the Pan-African discourse of the 500 hundred years of suffering of people of African heritage through Slavery, imperialism, colonialism, apartheid, rape, xenophobia, oppression, invasions, and exploitation. This article discusses the Maafa, recognizing it has the greatest continuing tragedy the world has ever seen, and connects the ongoing legacy to capitalism.
- [Slavery Made America: The case for reparations](#) by Ta-Nehisi Coates (Article)
This article by Ta-Nehisi Coates outlines the author's work in understanding how central the institution of slavery was in the making of America. He explains how it was a violent institution that went to great lengths to protect its interests and expand its reach. Combing through Civil War narratives and the Autobiography of Fredrick Douglass, among other resources, Coates states that "slavery is not a sanitized form of forced labor, but first and foremost, a system of violence, an assault on black bodies, black families, and black institutions."
- [Slavery and America's Legacy of Family Separation](#) by Vanessa M. Holden (Article)
This article in Black Perspectives discusses how the practice of family separation has long been big business in the United States. It explains that rather than the separation of children from their parents at the border, that the institution of slavery regularly sold off children and exploited them for labor. This human rights violation not only continues at the border but is protected and upheld in the justice system that disproportionately terminates the rights of parents of color.
- [Black Market Reads: Episode 23 - Author Erica Armstrong Dunbar on Never Caught](#) (Podcast)
One of the myths about slavery is that Africans did not resist and had little agency. Never Caught: The Washington's Relentless Pursuit of Their Runaway Slave Ona Judge by Erica Dunbar disputes that myth. In a 2017 episode of Black Market Reads, host Lissa Jones spoke with Dunbar about Judge's legacy illustrating that rather than being sold further south, Judge with help from the abolitionist or free-black community, escaped and was never caught.

Reflection questions

Not all white people were involved in the institution of slave trade as owners or overseers. However, because of structural racism, all white people benefited and continue to benefit from its existence - even those who are economically disenfranchised. How have your people related to the institution of slavery?

For further reading

- [Slave Trade and Slavery](#) by John Henrik Clarke and Vincent Harding (Book)
- [Never Caught](#) by Erica Armstrong Dunbar (Book)
- [Barracoon: The Story of the Last "Black Cargo"](#) by Zora Neale Hurston

Invention of race

Race is a social construct that was invented to justify the ongoing enslavement and justification of oppression of people of African ascent. It is not biological, contrary to scientific arguments made in the 19th and 20th centuries. In fact, we have more in common biologically than we have differences. Still, this idea of superiority based on race continues to drive our nation's – and our city's - policymaking. Attempts at 'race neutral' policies and practices only deny these realities and intensify disparities.

- [The Social Construction of Race](#) by Brian Jones (Article)
This article traces the practices and policies that eventually led to the invention of race in America.
- [Constructing Whiteness](#) (Article)
This article demonstrates that the construction of race did not only affect people of African ascent, but people of European ascent as well. It shows how as different groups immigrated to the United States, that they were able to assimilate and became white over time, leaving behind language, culture, and their own way of being.
- [As People of Color, We're Not All in the Same Boat](#) by Rinku Sen (Article)
This article by talks about the very differences in treatment that people from different racial categories experience. She accredits this phenomenon to the construction of a racial hierarchy which " is not a binary in which all whites occupy the lead boat and all people of color occupy the one left behind. Instead, it's a ladder, with groups occupying different rungs of political, economic and cultural power."
- [Heteropatriarchy and the Three Pillars of White Supremacy](#) by Andrea Smith
This article takes Sen's work one step further and explains how different racial groups are positioned and sometimes pitted against each other in order to protect the interests of capitalism and white supremacy.

Reflection questions

How has your identity been constructed around the social construct of racism? What promise do you see In moving from race to culture, a frame of reference used by the Cultural Wellness Center, as a more grounded way of understanding self identity? How might it change how you relate to yourself and deepen your ability to relate to other cultural groups?

Additional resources

- [Race: the History of an Idea in America](#) by Thomas F Gossett (Book)
- [The Myth of Race/The Reality of Racism](#) by Mahmoud El-Kati (Article)

How slavery continued

- [Why celebrating Juneteenth is more important now than ever](#) by P.R. Lockhart (Article)
Many people believe that after the Emancipation Proclamation was enacted, that African Americans who were enslaved were automatically free. History, however, tells us that African Americans enslaved in Galveston, TX were not freed until more than two years later. This article shows how the annual festival of Juneteenth is rooted in forcing America to come to terms with this injustice and why celebrating Juneteenth is now more important than ever.
- [Slavery, the Constitution, and a Lasting Legacy](#) from James Madison Montpelier (Article)
The constitution is often uplifted as a document that promotes inclusion and justice. And yet, there is no mention of the institution of slavery in it. This article argues that this omission protected slavery and gave rise to profitable racism, which also set the tone for how slavery would persist into the future.
- [Slavery by Another Name](#) (Film)
Slavery by Another Name is a 90-minute documentary that challenges one of Americans' most cherished assumptions: the belief that slavery in this country ended with the Emancipation Proclamation. The film tells how even as chattel slavery came to an end in the South in 1865, thousands of African Americans were pulled back into forced labor with shocking force and brutality.
- [Lynching in America: Targeting Black Veterans](#) from the Equal Justice Initiative (Report)
Lynching in America: Targeting Black Veterans builds upon the comprehensive seminal report on the era of racial terror lynchings and violence that the Equal Justice Initiative published last year. Documenting over 4000 lynchings of African Americans throughout the South between 1877 and 1950, the 2015 report, [Lynching in America: Confronting the Legacy of Racial Terror](#), explored the ways in which racial terrorism profoundly shaped the nation's demographics and reinforced a myth of racial inferiority and a legacy of racial inequality that is readily apparent in our criminal justice system today.
- [13th](#) from Netflix (Documentary)
In this Netflix documentary, directed by Ava DuVernay, scholars, activists and politicians analyze the criminalization of African Americans and the U.S. prison boom.

Reflection questions

Some people believe that slavery ended after the Emancipation Proclamation in 1863, when in reality, the institution continued to exist in many forms. How do you relate to the continuation of slavery? How have you and your people either been oppressed or

have benefited from the ways in which this institution continues to thrive? What would it take to put an end to it once and for all?

Additional resources

[History of Racial Injustice Calendar Highlights](#) (Resource)

This resource from Equal Justice Initiative includes profiles of 72 different policies and practices that have undermined fair treatment, equal justice, and opportunity for African Americans, American Indians, and other communities of color.

Intentional loss of wealth

- [Reconstruction: America after the Civil War](#) (Documentary Series)
This PBS documentary by Dr. Henry Louis Gates explores the transformative years following the Civil War, called the Reconstruction Era. The twelve years that composed the post-war Reconstruction era (1865-77) witnessed a seismic shift in the meaning and makeup of our democracy, with millions of former enslaved African Americans and free black people seeking out their rightful place as equal citizens under the law. Episode 3 of the series shows that as African Americans built wealth and power, there was severe white backlash that put an end to the gains that were made. This set the stage for the rise of Jim Crow and the undermining of Reconstruction's legal and political legacy. Watch the trailer >
- [The People's Grocery Lynching, Memphis, Tennessee](#) by Damon Mitchell (Article)
Lynching was a strategy used by white supremacists to control and intimidate African Americans. While many Black men who were lynched were accused of raping white women, the truth is that the majority of victims were lynched for being economic competitors to whites. Such was the case of People's Grocery owner Thomas Moss, and two of his workers, Calvin McDowell and Will Stewart, when a white grocer named William Barrett found his business shrinking because of the People's Grocery Store's success.
- [Black Wall Street and the Destruction of an Institution](#) by Josie Picekns (Article)
Black Wall Street was in Greenwood, Oklahoma, a suburb of Tulsa, was the type of community that African Americans are still, today, attempting to reclaim and rebuild. Black Wall Street was modern, majestic, sophisticated and unapologetically Black. Tragically, it was also the site of one of the bloodiest and most horrendous race riots (and acts of terrorism) that the United States has ever experienced.
- [Top infrastructure official explains how America used highways to destroy Black neighborhoods](#) by Alan Pyke (Article)
This articles talks about how America's build out of its highway system tore apart underresourced communities all across the country. An article by ThinkProgress notes former transportation secretary Anthony Foxx saying that in the first 20 years of the federal interstate system alone, highway construction displaced 475,000 families and over a million Americans. Many of the highways were routed through thriving, self

autonomous Black communities as was the case with I-94 in St. Paul in the Rondo Community and 35W in South Minneapolis around 38th Street.

- [Black Americans unfairly targeted by banks before housing crisis, says ACLU](#) (Article and report)

A 2013 report from the American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU) states what we have long known to be true: that Black Americans were disproportionately issued loans on unfavorable terms during the sub-prime loan bonanza that prefigured the housing crisis. As a result, the resulting economic downturn adversely affected them to a much greater degree than white homeowners, said the ACLU's Rachel Goodman, who said the report's findings suggest banks knowingly preyed on black mortgage-seekers when it came to issuing sub-prime mortgages. The report not only examines the likely effect of the financial crisis on the racial wealth gap for the next generation. What it uncovers is a tale of two recoveries: among families that owned homes, white households have started to rebound from the worst effects of the Great Recession while black households are still struggling to make up lost ground.

Reflection questions

The evidence suggests that in spite of the great lengths that African Americans have gone to create economic well-being for their families and communities, that these efforts have been intentionally targeted with violence and disrupted. Who has benefited historically from the dismantling of this wealth and who continues to benefit? How have you benefited? The City?

Racism in Minnesota

There is a pervasive myth that Minnesota did not engage in the slave trade and is one of the most progressive states in the country. The following set of resources not only refute this myth, but give readers an opportunity to ask themselves 'When will Minnesota face its racism? And what will Minnesotans do about it when they do?'

- [Slavery's Reach](#)
From the 1840s through the end of the Civil War, leading Minnesotans invited slaveholders and their wealth into the free territory and free state of Minnesota, enriching the area's communities and residents. Dozens of southern slaveholders and people raised in slaveholding families purchased land and backed Minnesota businesses. Slaveholders' wealth was invested in some of the state's most significant institutions and provided a financial foundation for several towns and counties. And the money generated by Minnesota investments flowed both ways, supporting some of the South's largest plantations. Through careful research in obscure records, censuses, newspapers, and archival collections, Christopher Lehman has brought to light this hidden history of northern complicity in building slaveholder wealth.
- [Read Lehman's article "Slaveholder Investment in Territorial Minnesota"](#)

- [Enslaved African Americans and the fight for freedom](#)
This article profiles several enslaved African Americans who lived in Minnesota, which was in direct violation of the Missouri Compromise which outlawed slavery in the state. One of the African Americans who was enslaved was Dred Scott, who filed a case with the Supreme Court to gain freedom for him and his wife. However, the courts ruled that Blacks “had no rights which the white man was bound to respect; and that the negro might justly and lawfully be reduced to slavery for his benefit.” This sentiment continues to affect the treatment of African Americans in Minnesota and across our country at large.
- [Read 'Dred Scott decision still resonates today'](#)
- [Listen to '150 years later, Dred Scott still remembered'](#)
- [North Star: Minnesota’s Black pioneers](#)
This PBS documentary tells the story of 12 Black men and women who came to Minnesota under different circumstances. It shows how Black people, from the moment they came to Minnesota, fought for civil rights and liberation in a state that touted being racially progressive as it intentionally denied Black people opportunities to thrive.
- [When will the North face its racism?](#)
This article by Isabel Wilkerson, author of Warmth of Other Sons, dispels the myth of the progressive North. Wilkerson points out that many of the incidents of officer involved shootings of African Americans have been concentrated in the North, rather than the South. This suggests that for all that the North purports to be of being more racially just, that it is just as inhospitable to African Americans as the South. A 2018 article from USA Today affirms this – of the 15 worst cities for African Americans to live, the majority of them are concentrated in the Midwest.
- [USA Today's Article](#)
- [Jim Crow of the North](#)
Why does Minnesota suffer through some of the worst racial disparities in the nation? One answer is the spread of racist, restrictive real estate covenants in the early 20th century. This PBS Documentary, Jim Crow of the North, charts the progression of racist policies and practices from the advent of restrictive covenants after the turn of the last century to their final elimination in the late 1960s.

Reflection Questions

How do you relate to this history of slavery and racism in Minnesota? What does admitting the truth about the disparities in this state mean for you? What does it mean for our local governments and institutions that continue to profit off of these long standing disparities?

Additional Resources

[Alliance for Regional Equity's Race and Regionalism series](#)

Black resistance

From the moment that Africans were first enslaved, they have forcefully resisted that oppression. This collection of resources illustrate how over the last 500 years, people of African ascent have exercised agency to bring about their individual and collective liberation.

- [African resistance to enslavement: The nature and evidentiary record](#)
This publication by Ella Forbes from the Journal of Black Studies demonstrates how much Africans – both on the continent and in the diaspora, fought against enslavement. It discusses how enslavers were so frightened of African resistance that they instituted a series of measures intended to ensure that Africans would neither resist nor dream of resisting the humiliation of the Great Enslavement. Yet in spite of the best efforts of the White enslavers to guarantee a perpetual servility, Africans revolted, rebelled, and resisted in diverse ways.
- [The Black Radical Tradition of Resistance](#)
This essay by the National Center for Institution Diversity describes the Black radical tradition of resistance. It defines this tradition as a collection of cultural, intellectual, action-oriented labor aimed at disrupting social, political, economic, and cultural norms originating in anticolonial and antislavery efforts. This tradition is not only resistance against structures rooted in slavery, imperialism, and capitalism, but maintenance of an ontology (cultural traditions, beliefs, values). From ship revolts to maroon communities, from abolition to civil rights, from Black Power to Black Lives Matter, the major goal has to be strategic action to maintain the dignity and humanity of Black people.
- [The Pan-Africanist Congresses, 1900 - 1945](#)
Pan-Africanist ideals began to emerge in the late nineteenth century. Pan-Africanist philosophy held that slavery and colonialism depended on harmful categorizations of race, culture, and values of African people. As a broader political concept, Pan-Africanism's roots lie in the collective experiences of African descendants in the Americas. Africa assumed greater significance for some blacks in America for two primary reasons. First, the increasing futility of their campaign for racial equality in the United States led some African Americans to demand voluntary repatriation to Africa. Next, for the first time the term Africans, which had often been used by racists as a derogatory description, became a source of pride for early black nationalists. Hence, through the conscious elevation of their African identity, black activists in America and the rest of the world began to reclaim the rights previously denied them by Western societies. This article on Blackpast.org delves into this rich history.
- [The Black Power Mixtape](#)
The Black Power Mixtape 1967–1975 is a 2011 documentary film, directed by Göran Olsson, that examines the evolution of the Black Power movement in American society from 1967 to 1975 as viewed through Swedish journalists and filmmaker.
- [Black Student Movements](#)
Today, ethnic studies is an accepted part of academia. Many if not most college students have taken a course or two. But 50 years ago, studying the history and culture of any people who were not white and Western was considered radical. Then came the longest student strike in U.S. history, at San Francisco State College, which changed everything. The

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groundwork was laid for the strike a couple of years before, when black students organized to press for a black studies department and the admission of more black students. Yet, San Francisco is not the only city that saw sustained protest of Black students rallying for their rights: the University of Wisconsin-Madison, the University of Minnesota-Twin Cities, and the University of Michigan are only a handful of colleges among many that share this same history.

- [Read more about the protest in San Francisco](#)
- [Learn more about the University of Wisconsin-Madison's Black Student Strike](#)
- [Learn more about the University of Minnesota's Morrill Hall Takeover](#)

Reflection Questions

In spite of the ongoing barriers, people of African ascent – both on the continent and in the diaspora, have actively resisted their oppression. And yet, very few stories of this resistance have been told outside of the Civil Rights Era of the 1960s that solely concentrates on the activism of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Why do you think this era is the sole explanation of this resistance? What does knowledge about this deeper, complex history of Black resistance mean for how we contextualize current resistance movements including Black Lives Matter?

Additional Resources

[Freedom is a constant struggle: Ferguson, Palestine, and the foundations of a movement by Angela Y. Davis](#)

Intersectionality Part 1: Gender & Sexuality

Oyeronke Oyewumi, author of *The Invention of Women*, writes that the history of both the colonizer and the colonized is often written from the male perspective (1997). Such is true of the history of people of African Ascent as the stories that have been told about our experiences leave out women as well as queer/gender non-conforming identified individuals. This collection of resources demonstrate how involved Black women and Black queer/gender-nonconforming individuals have been in advancing Black liberation.

- [The Combahee River Collective Statement](#)
Years before Kimberlé Crenshaw articulated her definition of intersectionality, a group of Black feminist lesbians began to articulate a vision for their politics that addressed the compounding intersections of identity. These women were actively committed to struggling against racial, sexual, heterosexual, and class oppression. The following is a statement written by these women that articulates (1) the genesis of contemporary Black feminism; (2) what we believe, i.e., the specific province of our politics; (3) the problems in organizing Black feminists, including a brief herstory of our collective; and (4) Black feminist issues and practice.

- [Lorraine Hansberry's Gay Politics](#)

This article from the Root.com writes: "Black gays and lesbians have been erased from our community's history with surprising thoroughness. March on Washington planner Bayard Rustin labored away on behalf of the greater good for decades while having his own humanity shunted by fellow movement leaders. Duke Ellington's genius writing partner Billy Strayhorn's contributions have been profoundly obscured. And many of the artists who peopled the Harlem Renaissance have had their queer lives entirely straight-washed. It's a terribly consequential trend because it has left too many black people, straight and gay alike, to believe that sexual shame and silence is a long-standing norm in our community. The opposite is true, and Hansberry is a wonderful example."

- [Learn more about Bayard Rustin](#)

- [Audre Lorde: Learning from the 60s](#)

This essay from Audre Lorde, a Black Lesbian Feminist, reflects on the lessons that she has learned from the 60s Civil Rights Era. For her, the 60s upheld a single vision of Black resistance and liberation that oppressed Blacks who either chose not to or were not able to adhere to that vision. Lorde writes, "As Black people, if there is one thing we can learn from the 60s, it is how infinitely complex any move for liberation must be. For we must move against not only those forces which dehumanize us from the outside, but also against those oppressive values which we have been forced to take into ourselves. Through examining the combination of our triumphs and errors, we can examine the dangers of an incomplete vision. Not to condemn that vision but to alter it, construct templates for possible futures, and focus our rage for change upon our enemies rather than upon each other."

- [Transgender Women of Color at Stonewall](#)

History remembers New York's iconic Stonewall Inn as the birthplace of the modern LGBT rights movement. On June 28, 1969, its bar patrons clashed with the police who had arrived to arrest and brutalize same-sex couples and trans individuals whose gender presentation was still deemed illegal. Patrons fought back, starting a riot that turned into a multiple-day uprising. This rebellion is now commemorated by Pride celebrations across the world. And while The New York Times describes a recent film version of the event to include the "invention of a generic white knight" making it "tantamount to stealing history from the people who made it," the truth is that transgender women of color were leading the fight. Marsha P. Johnson was one of those transgender women who lived and died at the intersection of race as a person of African descent, gender, sexual orientation. Johnson also experienced homelessness, was a sex worker, and struggled with mental illness.

- [Ms. Major Griffin-Gracy](#) was another Black transgender activist present during the Stonewall riots. In the decades since Stonewall, she has worn the hats of organizer, activist, prison abolitionist, sex worker and transgender elder, providing a crucial voice for those members of the LGBTQ community most disproportionately affected by violence and systems of power and oppression.

- [The Queer Roots of Black Lives Matter](#)

Black Lives Matter is an ideological and political intervention in a world where Black lives are systematically and intentionally targeted for demise. It is an affirmation of Black folks' humanity, our contributions to this society, and our resilience in the face of deadly

oppression. This article by David B. Green on Medium.com describes the queer roots of this movement stating that its founders - Patrisse Khan-Cullers, Opal Tometi, and Alicia Garza - "rooted their fight for freedom and liberation in an intersectional-justice praxis that disrupts the traditional framework of black activism — a framework that historically prioritized addressing racial injustice over and against gender injustice and sexual freedom; a framework, without question, that silenced and shunned 'homosexuality' and openly gay activists across much of the twentieth century."

- [Read Black Lives Matter's Herstory \(does not work\)](#)

Reflection Questions

For what reasons has the needs and identities of Black women and queer/gender-nonconforming individuals not always been recognized within society itself, as well as within the Black community? What would an intersectional approach to Black resistance and liberation look like? What would this approach cost you as an individual?

Additional Resources

- [When and where I enter](#) by Paula Giddings
- [Black Feminist Politics: from Kennedy to Trump](#) by Duchess Harris
- [BLACK ATLANTIC, QUEER ATLANTIC: Queer Imaginings of the Middle Passage- sharepoint](#)
- [The Queen Caribbean Speaks](#)