

 POLITICAL AND CIVIL RIGHTS

RACIAL JUSTICE TODAY:
The Movement for Black Lives, 2012-2020



OVERVIEW

Students will become familiar with the sustained and organized activism of the Movement for Black Lives, and how the recent 2020 uprisings brought #BlackLivesMatter back to the center of national conversation. By viewing and interpreting sources, students will analyze the key issues of ending racial injustice, increasing community control, and providing equal access to health care, food, safety, and education in Black and Brown communities.

COMMON CORE STATE STANDARDS

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RI.3.1 Ask and answer questions to demonstrate understanding of a text, referring explicitly to the text as the basis for the answers.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RH.6-8.7 Integrate visual information (e.g., in charts, graphs, photographs, videos, or maps) with other information in print and digital texts.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RH.11-12.5 Analyze in detail how a complex primary source is structured, including how key sentences, paragraphs, and larger portions of the text contribute to the whole.



POLITICAL AND CIVIL RIGHTS

RACIAL JUSTICE TODAY: The Movement for Black Lives, 2012-2020

STUDENT GOALS

- Students will examine the “Vision for Black Lives” policy platform, to understand the interconnected hardships Black and Brown people have faced and continue to face in the United States, and the central ideas raised by over 170 Black-led organizations in the movement.
- Students will examine photographs of protests from 2020 to analyze the interconnections between the global pandemic and the 2020 uprisings against racial violence and inequalities, and how New Yorkers have responded through protests and mourning.
- Students will define what safety means to them and use this discussion as a springboard to examine the issues that Black and Brown communities have faced and what is at the root of the terms “Divest/Invest” and “#DefundPolice.”
- By examining the sources and connecting activism to their own lives, students will learn about the importance of “Mutual Aid” during the pandemic. Students will also understand the various forms that mutual aid is practiced within activist movements and in everyday life.
- Students will learn the definitions “Transgender” and “Cisgender” as they analyze the importance of “Intersectionality” in activism and the centering of women and LGBTQ people of color in the Movement for Black Lives.
- Students will participate in a self-reflection activity inspired by the political uses of healing, self-care, and self-preservation by examining an activist healing manual side by side with a quote from Black woman activist and poet Audre Lorde.



POLITICAL AND CIVIL RIGHTS

RACIAL JUSTICE TODAY: The Movement for Black Lives, 2012-2020

KEY TERMS/VOCABULARY

- Activism
- Direct Action
- Racial and Economic Justice
- Racism
- Anti-racism
- Marginalized Communities
- Divest
- Invest
- Safety
- #DefundPolice
- Mutual Aid
- Intersectionality
- Transgender
- Cisgender
- Self-Care
- Self-Preservation
- COVID-19 Pandemic
- 2020 Uprisings

ORGANIZATIONS

- Black Alliance for Just Immigration (BAJI)
- Black Youth Project 100 (BYP100)
- The Black Lives Matter Network (BLM)
- The Marsha P. Johnson Institute
- The Okra Project



POLITICAL AND CIVIL RIGHTS

RACIAL JUSTICE TODAY: The Movement for Black Lives, 2012-2020

INTRODUCING THE TOPIC:

The 2020 uprisings have brought #BlackLivesMatter back to the center of national conversation. Organized by queer Black women Alicia Garza, Patrisse Cullors, and Opal Tometi, the hashtag first appeared on Twitter in 2013 as a rallying cry to “recognize the humanity of all Black life.” It has since anchored activism against anti-Black racism in the criminal justice system and beyond. New York activists have been integral to what is known as the Movement for Black Lives (M4BL), a sustained and organized force for change across the country.

In 2020, continued police and vigilante killings of Black people, including George Floyd, Breonna Taylor, Ahmaud Arbery, Tony McDade, and others, and the COVID-19 pandemic—with its disproportionate impact on marginalized communities in New York and elsewhere—ignited an unprecedented wave of Black-led activism propelled by calls to “defund the police” and reimagine a more just, caring, and equitable society.

Recent Historical Context:

The issues raised by M4BL were not new in 2013: The protests of 2020 built on generations of anti-racist organizing led by Black New Yorkers. Racial tensions in New York surged in the early 2010s after a series of local and national events in response to the increasingly visible violent and discriminatory police treatment against Black communities. In 2011, Black and Latinx New Yorkers comprised approximately half of New York City’s population, but made-up 84 percent of the 685,000 stops made by the New York Police Department and 89 percent of inmates at the Rikers Island jail complex.

In 2014, a crescendo of protests over government use of force occurred across the city. Eric Garner died on Staten Island in July after being choked by New York Police Department (NYPD) officers while allegedly selling loose cigarettes. In November Akai Gurley was shot by new NYPD officer Peter Liang in a public housing stairwell in Brooklyn. Activists cited the chokehold used on Garner as illegal and the use of a gun on Gurley as unprompted. Protesters stopped traffic on the West Side Highway and staged “die-ins” in front of the Barclays Center in Brooklyn. On December 13, 60,000 New Yorkers took to the streets of Manhattan for the Millions March.

Movement activists continue to build on this legacy by highlighting problems they see as interconnected: systemic racism, gender discrimination, health hazards, anti-immigrant sentiment, and economic inequality.



POLITICAL AND CIVIL RIGHTS

RACIAL JUSTICE TODAY: The Movement for Black Lives, 2012-2020

KEY EVENTS:

- 2012** Trayvon Martin is killed in Florida by George Zimmerman
- 2013** The hashtag #BlackLivesMatter emerges in response to Zimmerman’s acquittal; New York State Supreme Court declares “stop-and-frisk” policing by NYPD unconstitutional
- 2014** July: Eric Garner killed in New York; August: Michael Brown killed in Ferguson, Missouri; November: Akai Gurley killed in New York and Tamir Rice killed in Cleveland; December: Millions March in Manhattan
- 2015** Kalief Browder commits suicide after spending three years at the Rikers Island jail without a trial, prompting protests and a promise by Mayor Bill de Blasio to close Rikers
- 2016** Fifty groups release “A Vision for Black Lives” the same month Philando Castile and Alton Sterling’s deaths make headlines nationwide; BYPD100 sit-in at NYPD’s union, the Police Benevolent Association
- 2017-2018**
Amidst nationwide protests, New York M4BL activists protest the Trump administration’s ban on travelers from seven Muslim-majority countries; help lead the Women’s March; and successfully protest to remove the Fifth Avenue statue of J. Marion Sims, a 19th-century physician who experimented on the bodies of enslaved Black women.
- 2019** Layleen Cubilette-Polanco Xtravaganza died in solitary confinement on Rikers Island after staff failed to provide her with medical care. New York City Council votes to close Rikers, but provokes controversy by approving rezoning for building four new smaller jails
- 2020** Black New Yorkers suffer higher infection and fatality rates from COVID-19; George Floyd killed in Minneapolis; Unprecedented ongoing protests throughout New York City; M4BL convenes first Black National Convention in almost 50 years



POLITICAL AND CIVIL RIGHTS

RACIAL JUSTICE TODAY: The Movement for Black Lives, 2012-2020

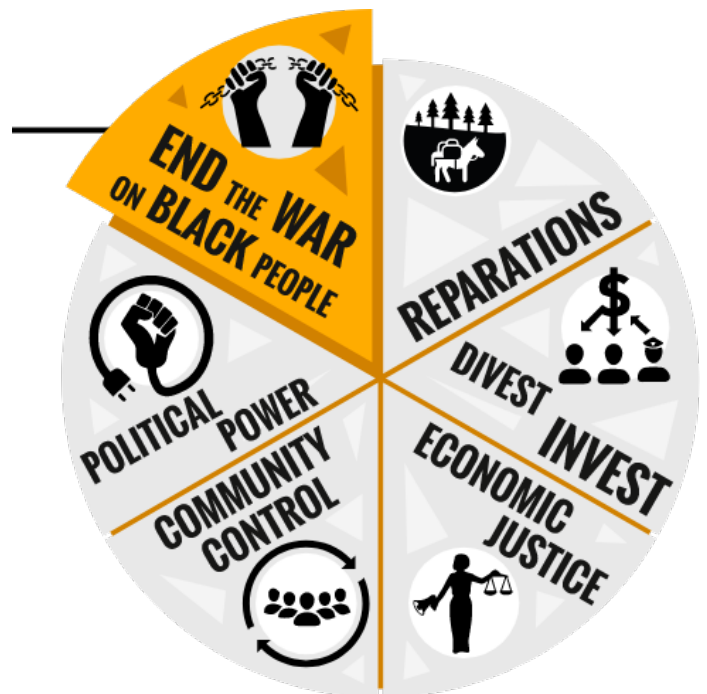
INTRODUCING RESOURCE 1

Vision for Black Lives: 2020 Policy Platform

On August 28, 2020, M4BL held a virtual Black National Convention (BNC) in response to police and vigilante violence against Black people and to activate Black voters in the 2020 election.

The BNC emphasized M4BL's 2016 "A Vision for Black Lives" platform. The first plank, "End the War on Black People", was expanded and released on Juneteenth in 2020 to kick off a national weekend of mass actions. "A Vision for Black Lives" addressed police and state sanctioned violence; reparations, economic investment and justice; community control of schools and other institutions; and political power. These central tenets to the movement remain as relevant today.

The convention commemorated the 1972 Black National Convention in Gary, Indiana, which sought to build a Black-led political and policy agenda, and the policy platform echoes previous platforms, such as the 10-point program created by the Black Panther Party in 1966.



THE PREAMBLE

END THE WAR ON BLACK COMMUNITIES

END THE WAR ON BLACK YOUTH

END THE WAR ON BLACK WOMEN

END THE WAR ON BLACK TRANS, QUEER, GENDER NONCONFORMING AND INTERSEX PEOPLE

END THE WAR ON BLACK HEALTH AND BLACK DISABLED PEOPLE

END THE WAR ON BLACK MIGRANTS

END TO ALL JAILS, PRISONS, AND IMMIGRATION DETENTION

END THE DEATH PENALTY

END THE WAR ON DRUGS

END THE SURVEILLANCE ON BLACK COMMUNITIES

END TO PRETRIAL DETENTION AND MONEY BAIL

THE DEMILITARIZATION OF LAW ENFORCEMENT

END THE USE OF PAST CRIMINAL HISTORY

Vision for Black Lives - 2020 Policy Platform. Copyright @ M4BL 2020. All rights reserved. <https://m4bl.org/policy-platforms/>



POLITICAL AND CIVIL RIGHTS

RACIAL JUSTICE TODAY: The Movement for Black Lives, 2012-2020

Document-Based Questions For Resource 1

- What words stand out to you when you read the demands in the policy platform?
- Why does the platform use the language of “war” to describe the experience of Black people in the United States?
- Who are the groups represented in the demand to “End the War on Black People?” What message is the platform trying to send by placing the language describing this “war” first?
- The policy platform emphasizes “divest/invest,” “community control,” and “political power.” What do these phrases mean to you?



POLITICAL AND CIVIL RIGHTS

RACIAL JUSTICE TODAY: The Movement for Black Lives, 2012-2020

INTRODUCING RESOURCES 2 & 3: PROTESTS THROUGH THE PANDEMIC

The crises of 2020 challenged New Yorkers like never before. In early March, the first cases of COVID-19 appeared in New York City, and within weeks, all non-essential businesses were required to close down, beginning a citywide lockdown. As the city became the epicenter of the global pandemic by April, New York's healthcare workers and other essential workers were on the frontlines, meeting the constant demands of the pandemic and dealing with the losses of hundreds of people a day. The pandemic also highlighted and exacerbated racial disparities and inequalities. The uprisings of 2020 were the continuations of activist work that was galvanized by the pandemic and the killings of George Floyd, Breonna Taylor, Ahmaud Arbery, Tony McDade, and other Black lives because of police and vigilante violence. In 2020, larger numbers of New Yorkers joined the Movement for Black Lives and other interconnected activist movements in order to demand racial justice and illustrate communal support, creating a multi-racial mass movement that was arguably New York's and the nation's largest social movement in history.

Below are photographs from different protests and actions in June 2020. Following the killing of George Floyd in Minneapolis on May 25th, protests against police violence and systemic racism broke out across the country and around the world. Protestors took to the streets of New York City amidst the COVID-19 pandemic. New Yorkers expressed frustration with unjust policing of Black and Brown communities by kneeling in solidarity and silent mourning of the disproportionate number of people of color who lost their lives to the police or to health inequities exacerbated by the pandemic.

The following images are from ***New York Responds: The First Six Months***, a crowd-sourced, community-juried exhibition at the Museum of the City of New York (2020-2021) that received 20,000+ submissions.



POLITICAL AND CIVIL RIGHTS

RACIAL JUSTICE TODAY: The Movement for Black Lives, 2012-2020

Resource 2:



Unafraid & Afraid, Million People March, Brooklyn, NYC, Kenneth Nelson, June 19, 2020, Courtesy of the photographer.

Artist Statement:

The photographer explains, *“For this image, I had decided to stand still and let all the marchers going down Flatbush Avenue pass me and photograph them as they pass[ed] by. Ominously, the sign can be taken as a prophetic warning...”*

The number of New Yorkers that have shown support for social justice reform has been tremendous...The movement continues. There’s more documentation and history to be made in the coming months and years.”



POLITICAL AND CIVIL RIGHTS

RACIAL JUSTICE TODAY: The Movement for Black Lives, 2012-2020

Resource 3:



Moment of Silence, Kristin Slaby, June 7, 2020, Courtesy of the photographer.

Artist Statement:

The photographer writes, “New York’s healthcare workers, overtaxed because of the demands of the COVID pandemic, took time out to be part of the protests against American injustice toward Black lives. The healthcare workers marched in solidarity from Union Square in Manhattan to the Barclay’s Center in Brooklyn. They made periodic stops along the way ‘taking the knee’ to show unified respect for those that had lost their lives as a result of these injustices.

“A moment of silence for lost lives by those who save lives.”



POLITICAL AND CIVIL RIGHTS

RACIAL JUSTICE TODAY: The Movement for Black Lives, 2012-2020

DOCUMENT-BASED QUESTIONS FOR RESOURCES 2 & 3

- In both images, protestors are marching in the streets. Why would protestors choose to march in public spaces?
- What is the message that the protester in Resource 2 is communicating based on the sign they are holding?
- What do you think is the significance of healthcare workers participating in the protest against injustices towards Black lives in Resource 3?
- In the artist statement for Resource 3, why do you think photographer Kristin Slaby wrote: *“A moment of silence for lost lives by those who save lives”*?
- In the artist statement for Resource 2, photographer Kenneth Nelson wrote: *“There’s more documentation and history to be made in the coming months and years.”* Why do you think movement organizers must keep the momentum going and encourage participants to keep up their individual efforts to enact social change?

**POLITICAL AND CIVIL RIGHTS****RACIAL JUSTICE TODAY:** The Movement for Black Lives, 2012-2020

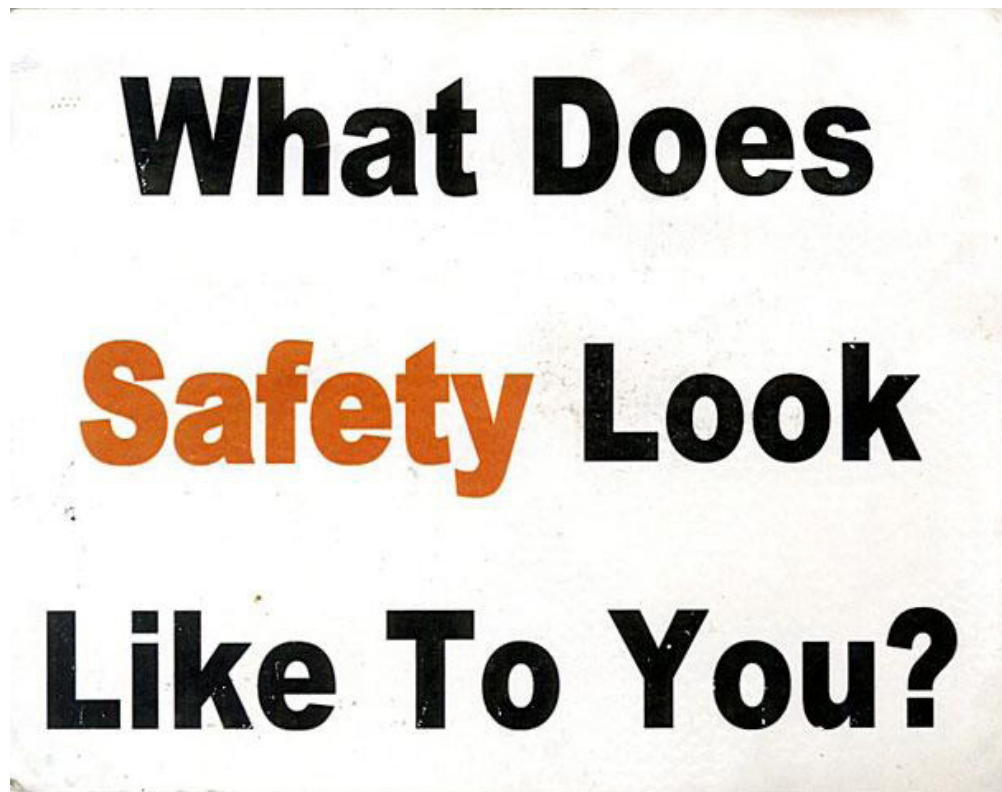
INTRODUCING RESOURCES 4 & 5 - ACTIVISM FOR SAFETY

For years, the Movement for Black Lives has addressed the lack of safety that Black Americans feel in the face of police violence, systemic racism, and discrimination. Autumn Robinson, in collaboration with the New York chapter of Black Youth Project 100 (BYP100), created the campaign “Our Streets Our Bodies Our Voices” in order to further the conversation of reimagining safety in Black and Brown communities across the city that have a heavy police presence and history of disproportionate policing and incarceration.

Movement organizers have encouraged community members to engage in important conversations around safety and the demand to defund the police long before the pandemic. The idea to redistribute resources away from the police and into marginalized communities to support healthcare, food and job security, and education, gained traction during the 2020 uprisings. The pandemic made clear the extent to which communities of color have been neglected for years due to the long history of systemic racism. Many of New York’s essential workers, such as teachers, joined the 2020 uprisings to protest for change and greater investment in marginalized communities.



POLITICAL AND CIVIL RIGHTS

RACIAL JUSTICE TODAY: The Movement for Black Lives, 2012-2020**Resource 4:**

"OUR STREETS OUR BODIES OUR VOICES" POSTCARD AND STICKER, Black Youth Project 100, 2015, Private Collection.

Groups such as the BYP100 have emphasized "the right to be safe." The New York chapter of BYP100's campaign, "Our Streets Our Bodies Our Voices," aimed to create a dialogue about policing and safety in communities across the city, and to include voices, such as those of transgender New Yorkers, that are often left out of such conversations.



POLITICAL AND CIVIL RIGHTS

RACIAL JUSTICE TODAY: The Movement for Black Lives, 2012-2020**Resource 5:**

[A teacher at a Black Lives Matter march], Danielle Goldstein , June 13, 2020 , Courtesy of the photographer.

Artist Statement:

The photographer writes, "This young woman is a school teacher who was protesting at Columbus Circle, fighting for change for her students—the next generation. Her eyes are so soulful, and her commitment to her students is so apparent. The lockdown during COVID, the awareness of racial inequality and systemic racism, and the stress of the election all coalesced to bring the city together in ways that I believe were unprecedented."



POLITICAL AND CIVIL RIGHTS

RACIAL JUSTICE TODAY: The Movement for Black Lives, 2012-2020

DOCUMENT-BASED QUESTIONS FOR RESOURCES 4 & 5

Encourage students to think of safety as an idea or place that makes them feel cared for and comfortable. What makes one feel free from harm, dangers, or worries? Using the questions below, ask students to define what makes them feel safe, and where they would want to see greater investment in communities (education, shelter, food security, afterschool programs, healthcare resources, etc...)

- When you think of the word “safety,” what comes to mind? What does the word safety look like to you?
- In Resource 4, why might organizers want to engage people who are normally left out of conversations about safety and policing? What does this say about the movement’s organizing priorities?
- In Resource 5, what does the teacher mean by the phrase “#DefundPolice” ? How does this idea connect to education?
- Where would you want to see investment in communities in New York City?



POLITICAL AND CIVIL RIGHTS

RACIAL JUSTICE TODAY: The Movement for Black Lives, 2012-2020

INTRODUCING RESOURCES 6 & 7 - A CITY OF MUTUAL AID

Mutual aid has been present in past activist movements in the spirit of taking care and protecting people who have been ignored and discriminated against by civil and social services. With conversations surrounding the phrase #DefundPolice and the concept of Divest/Invest during the uprisings of 2020, the city was also facing the July 1, 2020 deadline to determine municipal budgets. In June 2020, protestors set up camps in City Hall Park for nearly a month to demand that at least one billion dollars be cut from the New York City Police Department and reinvested in communities of color disproportionately affected by the pandemic.

Around the same time, New Yorkers across the five boroughs were involved in mutual aid efforts such as providing food and delivering groceries to meet the immediate needs of their communities, while also addressing the need for greater investment and accountability by municipal services. These actions also created pathways for New Yorkers to imagine a world where communities take care of each other, rather than institutions in their current form.



POLITICAL AND CIVIL RIGHTS

RACIAL JUSTICE TODAY: The Movement for Black Lives, 2012-2020**Resource 6:**

Occupy City Hall - Budget Day, NYC, June 30, 2020, © Graham MacIndoe.

Activists spent nearly a month camping out at the public space next to New York's City Hall in June and July 2020. In addition to mobilizing for significant cuts to the NYPD's budget, protesters engaged in communal living: operating a library and wellness space; creating art and music; and serving food to activists and others in need. Police removed protesters on July 22, 2020. Occupy City Hall's length and dismantling also evoked Occupy Wall Street, another occupation in Lower Manhattan, in 2011.



POLITICAL AND CIVIL RIGHTS

RACIAL JUSTICE TODAY: The Movement for Black Lives, 2012-2020

Resource 7:



*[The Barrio Fridge shared donated food with the community],
Nicole Freezer Rubens, August 22, 2020, Courtesy of the photographer.*

Artist Statement:

Community refrigerators offering free food began appearing on New York's streets in February 2020. They proliferated as activists, many of them working with the organization A New World in Our Hearts, sought ways to address the food insecurity that affects one in four New Yorkers and was being deeply exacerbated by the pandemic. As of December 2020, there were over 60 community fridges reported in the five boroughs.

In the words of the photographer, *"This is one of several community refrigerators that have been started across the city to help combat food insecurity, reduce food waste, and bring communities together. Individuals and food suppliers donate for those in need to take the nutritious fare."*



POLITICAL AND CIVIL RIGHTS

RACIAL JUSTICE TODAY: The Movement for Black Lives, 2012-2020

DOCUMENT-BASED QUESTIONS FOR RESOURCES 6 & 7

- Resource 6 is a photograph of an action that was called Occupy City Hall, which lasted for nearly a month. Why might activists call this an occupation? What message are they sending the government?
- In Resource 7, what messages do you see on the community fridge?
- What does mutual aid mean to you in your own words?
- Based on Resources 6 & 7, what are some forms of mutual aid that New Yorkers participated in?
- How might examples of mutual aid lead us to imagine other solutions to societal problems? What type of changes would you like to see in New York City?



POLITICAL AND CIVIL RIGHTS

RACIAL JUSTICE TODAY: The Movement for Black Lives, 2012-2020

INTRODUCING RESOURCES 8 & 9 - INTERSECTIONALITY AT THE CORE OF ACTIVISM

LGBTQ people of color have been leaders within the Movement for Black Lives, using intersectional approaches to advocate for understanding how a person's social and political identities can connect and leave an individual vulnerable to multiple, overlapping systems of discrimination or disadvantages such as racism, sexism, classism, homophobia, transphobia, etc. The M4BL has continued to address the dangers and discrimination that ALL Black lives have faced, but especially transgender people.

A transgender person is a person whose gender identity is different from the gender identity they were assigned at birth by their doctors and/or family members. A cisgender person is a person who continues to identify with the gender identity they were assigned at birth by their doctors and/or family members. Gender is the way a person sees or thinks of themselves, which could mean as a girl, a boy, both, or something else.



POLITICAL AND CIVIL RIGHTS

RACIAL JUSTICE TODAY: The Movement for Black Lives, 2012-2020

Resource 8:



Black Trans Lives Matter, Brooklyn Museum, June 2020, June 14, 2020 , © Cindy Trinh.

Thousands of protesters, many wearing white, gathered at the Brooklyn Museum on June 14, 2020 to take part in a rally and silent march for Black Trans Lives. “Brooklyn Liberation: An Action for Black Trans Lives” was organized by the Okra Project, the Martha P. Johnson Institute, and other Black Trans centered groups. The action responded to the deaths of Layleen Cubilette-Polanco Xtravaganza, a Black-Latinx transgender woman who died in solitary confinement while on Rikers Island on June 7, 2019; Tony McDade, a Black transgender man killed by a police officer in Tallahassee, Florida on May 27, 2020; and several other victims of police violence and transphobia. The large size of the rally, which culminated in Brooklyn’s Fort Greene Park, reflects the growing recognition of M4BL’s call to fight for the safety and betterment of all Black life.

Trans people of color have been targeted by transphobic and racist violence. The deaths of Tony McDade and Layleen Cubilette-Polanco Xtravaganza and others sparked the silent protest from June 2020 outside of the Brooklyn Museum, a known social gathering place in Brooklyn because of the open spaces and close proximity to other cultural institutions and recreational spots. This was a silent protest where activists were encouraged to wear white to invoke The Silent Parade of 1917, a silent march in Manhattan that protested against anti-Black violence, when the men wore black and women and children wore white.



POLITICAL AND CIVIL RIGHTS

RACIAL JUSTICE TODAY: The Movement for Black Lives, 2012-2020**Resource 9:**

Justice for Breonna Taylor, 2020, Digital Reproduction © Cindy Trinh

On March 13, 2020, Breonna Taylor, a 26-year-old Black woman, was fatally shot in Louisville, Kentucky, when three plain-clothed police officers attempted to execute a “no knock” search warrant. The deaths of cis Black men have been the most covered in the news. It took months for Taylor’s murder to become a national story, but in the aftermath of George Floyd’s death, activists have called for justice for Taylor.

In New York, activists wrote postcards urging the arrest of the men responsible for her death, carried signs with Taylor’s face and name at marches, and in some cases, traveled to Louisville to push for the arrest of the men responsible for her death.



POLITICAL AND CIVIL RIGHTS

RACIAL JUSTICE TODAY: The Movement for Black Lives, 2012-2020

DOCUMENT-BASED QUESTIONS FOR RESOURCES 8 & 9

- What do you notice in resources 8 and 9?
- What are some strategies and tactics activists are using to spread their messages and ideas?
- Why do you think activists organize specifically for Black Trans Lives in Resource 8?
- What do you think is the significance of all the protestors wearing the same color? Why the color white?
- Why did it take months after Breonna Taylor's death for there to be a national call for justice?
- What issues about media attention were activists trying to address in Resources 8 and 9?



POLITICAL AND CIVIL RIGHTS

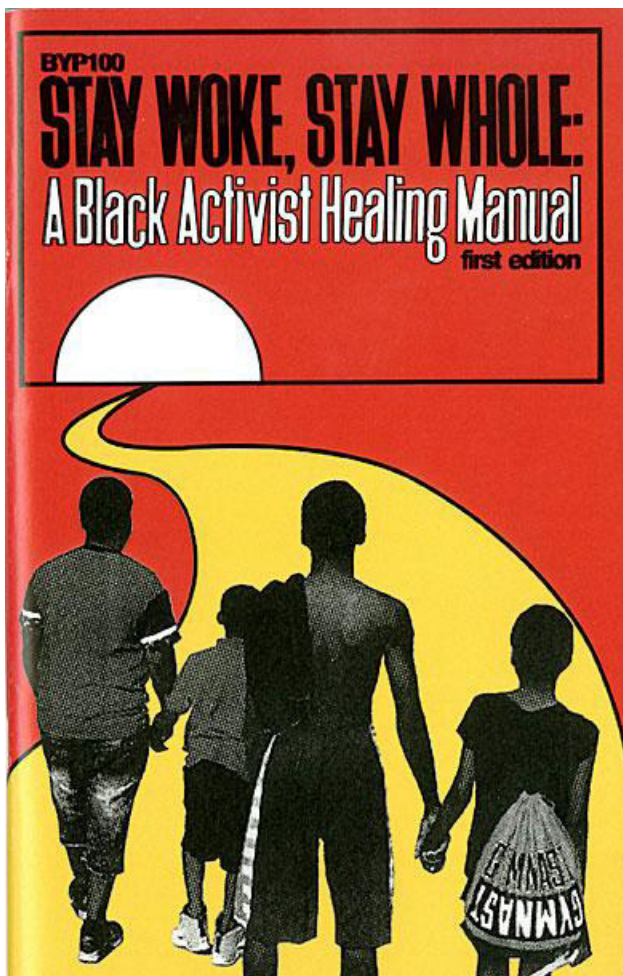
RACIAL JUSTICE TODAY: The Movement for Black Lives, 2012-2020

INTRODUCING RESOURCE 10 - ACTIVISM FOR HEALING AND SELF-CARE

Space for care and healing have become central components of the Movement for Black Lives. Self and collective care initiatives intend not only to create safe spaces and new restorative modes of activism, but also to address the physical, emotional, spiritual, and mental stress of racism, the disproportionately poor health outcomes of Black and other people of color, and to create nonpunitive ways to deal with conflict and harm.

All forms of activism can give anyone positive emotions of starting a change in the world, but also increase exhaustion. This manual stresses the importance of individuals needing to heal and take care of themselves in order to feel whole enough to take care of others.

Resource 10:



“Caring for myself is not an act of self-indulgence, it is self-preservation, and that is an act of political warfare.”

– Audre Lorde, 1988

*“Stay Woke, Stay Whole: A Black Activist Healing Manual,”
Fresco Steez, Black Youth Project 100, 2017, Private Collection.*



POLITICAL AND CIVIL RIGHTS

RACIAL JUSTICE TODAY: The Movement for Black Lives, 2012-2020

DOCUMENT-BASED QUESTIONS FOR RESOURCE 10

Consider the Activist Healing Manual and the quote from Audre Lorde. Have the group describe the cover of the healing manual and then have someone read the quote aloud.

- What does it mean to heal?
- What do you notice about the cover of the healing manual?
- How does Audre Lorde describe “caring for herself” in the quote? Why do you think she describes it in the terms of “self-preservation?”



POLITICAL AND CIVIL RIGHTS

RACIAL JUSTICE TODAY: The Movement for Black Lives, 2012-2020

ACTIVITY

For Educators:

The Self-Care activity is a free-thinking activity for students to engage with and connect their lives and actions to the main goals of the healing manual. The idea of caring for yourself in order to care for the ones around you is part of the M4BL's work to combat racism and injustice. These ideas can be applied to individuals of all backgrounds to stand for justice.

For each prompt on the next page, the educator should model the prompt by explaining what it means and answering it in their own words. Allow time for students to reflect on the prompt and share their own answers. Be sure to encourage student participation and note that whether actions are big or small, they are still choices that students make to contribute to a changing world.



POLITICAL AND CIVIL RIGHTS

RACIAL JUSTICE TODAY: The Movement for Black Lives, 2012-2020

FIRST PROMPT: “CARE FOR MY COMMUNITY LOOKS LIKE...”

- Educator: *“For me, care for my community looks like...” (Share your own thoughts and examples, i.e., buying groceries for elderly neighbors, shoveling sidewalks, picking up trash from streets, participating in community gardens...)*
- “Community” can be students’ friends and family, their classmates, their whole school, their home, their apartment building, neighborhood, etc.
- Ask students to share their own examples of “Care for my community looks like...”

The second section is called “Stay Woke,” meaning how can we continue learning about social issues and activist movements across the world.

SECOND PROMPT: “I WILL CONTINUE MY LEARNING BY...”

- Educator: *“I will personally continue my learning by...” (Share your own thoughts and examples, i.e., reading more about an activist or organization we learned about, getting involved in community events, talking about these issues more with other people...)*
- Prompt students to think what are they excited to learn more about.
- Ask students to share their own examples of “I will continue my learning by...”

The third section is called “Stay Whole,” meaning what can we do for ourselves as individuals to feel happy, loved, and at peace in order to keep surviving, thriving, and willing to care for our communities.

THIRD PROMPT: “I WILL CARE FOR MYSELF BY...”

- Educator: *“I care for myself by...” (Share your own thoughts and examples, i.e., doing art, listening to my favorite music, gardening, exercise, dancing, cooking healthy and delicious meals, talking with friends and family...)*
- “Care for myself” can be doing whatever makes you feel safe, happy, and healthy. Prompt students to think of how they like to care for themselves, What does care for yourself look like?
- Ask students to share their own examples of “I will care for myself by...”



POLITICAL AND CIVIL RIGHTS

RACIAL JUSTICE TODAY: The Movement for Black Lives, 2012-2020**FOURTH PROMPT: “I AM COMMITTED TO...”**

- Educator: *“Personally, I am committed to...” (Share your own thoughts and examples i.e., standing up for racial and social justice and for gender equality whenever I see something unjust happening, being there for friends and family, learning more about what I can do as an individual and teaching others the same....)*
- “I am committed to...” can mean to make a promise to yourself that you will continue to keep. What is something you are committed to?
- Ask students to share their own examples of “I am committed to...”



POLITICAL AND CIVIL RIGHTS

RACIAL JUSTICE TODAY: The Movement for Black Lives, 2012-2020

LINKS, ARTICLES, AND RESOURCES:

Information on the Movement for Black Lives, including links to a detailed version of the platform:
<https://m4bl.org/policy-platforms/>

Information on the Black Youth Project 100:
<http://byp100.org/>

Information on the Black Alliance for Just Immigration:
<http://baji.org/>

<https://crossculturalsolidarity.com/the-uprisings-of-2020/>
(Compilation of articles written during and after the 2020 uprisings)

<https://defundpolice.org/>

<https://nplusonemag.com/online-only/online-only/magic-actions/>

<https://rampantmag.com/2020/06/15/more-rebellion-more-results-a-list-of-victories/>

<https://www.theatlantic.com/photo/2020/06/images-worldwide-protest-movement/612811/>

BOOKS

Carruthers, Charlene. *Unapologetic: A Black, Queer, and Feminist Mandate for Radical Movements*. Boston: Beacon Press, 2018.

Garza, Alicia. *The Purpose of Power: How We Come Together When We Fall Apart*. New York: One World, 2020.

Khan-Cullers, Patrisse, Asha Bandele; foreword by Angela Davis. *When They Call You a Terrorist: A Black Lives Matter Memoir*. New York: St. Martin's Press, 2018.

Chasman, Deborah and Cohen, Joshua. eds. *The Politics of Care*. New York: Boston Review with Verso Books. 2020.

Ransby, Barbara. *Making All Black Lives Matter: Reimagining Freedom in the Twenty-First Century*. Vol. 6. Oakland, CA: Univ. of California Press, 2018.

Lebron, Christopher J. *The Making of Black Lives Matter: A Brief History of an Idea*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2017..

Lorde, Audre. *A Burst of Light: Essays*. Ithaca, NY: Firebrand Books, 1988.

Lowery, Wesley. *They Can't Kill Us All: Ferguson, Baltimore, and a New Era in America's Racial Justice Movement*. New York: Little, Brown, and Company, 2016..

Taylor, Keeanga-Yamahtta. *From #BlackLivesMatter to Black Liberation*. Chicago: Haymarket Books, 2016.