



# **REPARATIONS NOW TOOLKIT**

**M4BL**



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**"THE MANDATE FOR OUR PEOPLE IS TO AVENGE THE SUFFERING OF OUR ANCESTORS, TO EARN THE RESPECT OF FUTURE GENERATIONS, AND TO BE TRANSFORMED IN THE SERVICE OF THE WORK. LET'S GET FREE, Y'ALL."**

**- MARY HOOKS**



## **ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

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## TOOLKIT INTRODUCTION

Reparations for people of African descent living in the United States have been in the news and a hot topic of conversation on social media. Presidential candidates have taken positions on the issue, and on Juneteenth of 2019 (June 19, 2019), the Congressional House Judiciary Committee held a hearing on legislation - H.R.40 - that would establish a Commission to study the question of reparations for Black people in the United States.

But reparations for Black people are not a new topic. The first demands for reparations were made by enslaved people before the Civil War. Since emancipation, there have been long-standing movements for reparations in the United States, the Caribbean, Africa, and throughout the Diaspora, including the National Coalition of Blacks for Reparations in America (N'COBRA), founded in 1987, and the National African American Reparations Commission (NAARC), established in April 2015.



Comprehensive individual and collective reparations for the full range of past and ongoing harms to Black people living in the United States are a central pillar of the Movement for Black Lives policy platform, the Vision for Black Lives: Policy Demands for Black Power, Justice and Freedom, and a key demand of our Electoral Justice Project.

The Movement for Black Lives honors the long legacy of struggles for reparations for Black people in the United States and throughout the African Diaspora. We wholeheartedly endorse and support the ongoing work of NAARC and N'COBRA and their demand of reparations for the long history of colonialism, genocide, land theft, enslavement, anti-Black racial terror, racial capitalism, structural discrimination, and exclusion that have been foundational to the establishment and economic growth of the United States, and their ongoing impacts.





**THIS TOOLKIT** explores the long history of struggles for reparations for Black people, lays out key facts, concepts, and international human rights law underlying reparations demands, and provides case studies of struggles for reparations at the institutional, local, state, and international levels. Our goal in creating this toolkit is to provide a foundational definition of what reparations are, to advance our argument that reparations for Black people in the United States are essential, to inform public discussion about reparations, and to support organizers seeking reparations at the local, national, and international level in order to advance our collective struggles for Black liberation.





## HOW TO USE THIS TOOLKIT?

This toolkit is meant to support individuals, organizations, and communities to better understand what reparations are and how Black people in the United States can get them. It consists of a combination of narrative, images, interactive group exercises, and other resources. We recognize that everyone learns differently, so our hope is that you take what is most useful for you. The toolkit can be used by individuals interested in learning more about reparations, in organizing or educational settings, including trainings and classroom lessons, or as part of community meetings.

Each section of the toolkit consists of a number of different components, including:

- ☒ **KEYWORDS/CONCEPTS:** This part of each section defines some key terms that will be used throughout the section. We started each section with definitions because we wanted to make sure you know what we mean when we use different terms. We know that you may not completely agree with all the definitions and invite you to engage your organization or community in creating your own definitions or talking through what you would add to different definitions.
- ☒ **NARRATIVE:** Each section includes a narrative, which uses interviews, academic research, studies, and news as sources to explore and explain different topics. This piece is meant to ground you in different components of reparations, including why we are owed reparations, what exactly we mean by reparations, the history of reparations, and some examples of our people organizing, fighting, and winning reparations.
- ☒ **ACTIVITY:** Following the narrative, each section has a group activity that will help you better understand and make relevant the information provided in the narrative. Most of the group activities require at least 5 people. There are additional group activities at the end of the toolkit. All the activities can be used in a training, classroom, or organizing setting.
- ☒ **DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:** Some of the sections include a set of discussion questions that can help guide conversations. These can be used in a training, classroom, or informal setting. There is also space for you to write your own notes.

We hope you enjoy the toolkit and use it support your fight for reparations!!





**"VIRTUALLY EVERY INSTITUTION WITH  
SOME DEGREE OF HISTORY IN AMERICA,  
BE IT PUBLIC, BE IT PRIVATE, HAS A  
HISTORY OF EXTRACTING WEALTH AND  
RESOURCES OUT OF THE  
AFRICAN-AMERICAN COMMUNITY...  
BEHIND ALL OF THAT OPPRESSION WAS  
ACTUALLY THEFT."**

**- TA-NEHISI COATES**





## **WHY REPARATIONS**

**In this section, we outline some of the harms experienced by people of African descent in the United States and explain why reparations are necessary. The section explores the multiple ways that the United States government and United States corporations have benefited from the exploitation of Black people in the United States from slavery through the "war on drugs."**

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**KEYWORDS/CONCEPTS****TRANSATLANTIC SLAVE  
TRADE:**

The kidnapping, transportation, and sale of African people in the Americas, which operated from the 1500s to 1808.

**MIDDLE PASSAGE:**

The portion of the transatlantic slave trade in which enslaved Africans were transported under horrific conditions from Africa to the Americas. The journey would take anywhere from three weeks to three months.

**DOMESTIC SLAVE TRADE:**

Once the transatlantic slave trade was abolished, the transportation and sale of enslaved people of African descent within the United States increased, resulting in the relocation of millions of enslaved people to the Deep South.

**CHATTEL SLAVERY:**

An economic, social, and political system under which people are deemed to be property, or "chattel," for life, to be used, bought, and sold at the owner's will as a matter of law, and their status as such is passed to their children on at birth.

**JIM CROW:**

A derogatory term to refer to a Black man. The Jim Crow period (1877 to the mid-1960s) refers to the period during which segregation and other laws explicitly regulating the behavior of Black people and people of color were in operation, and enforced through policing, criminalization, and racial terror.

**GREAT MIGRATION:**

The migration of over 6 million Black people from Southern states to urban areas of the North, Midwest, and West, which occurred between 1916 and 1970 in response to state and state-sponsored terror and discrimination.

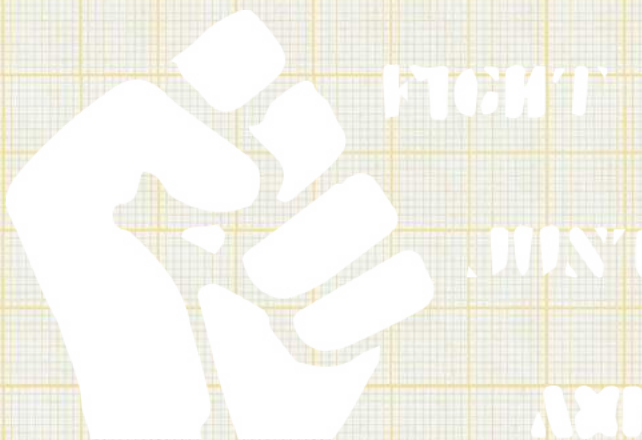


**REDLINING:**

The systematic denial of credit, insurance, or loans to particular communities on a discriminatory basis is called redlining. The term "redlining" was coined by sociologist James McKnight in the 1960s based on how lenders would literally draw a red line on a map around the neighborhoods they would not invest in based on demographics alone. Black urban neighborhoods were most likely to be redlined. Investigations found that lenders would make loans to lower-income whites but not to middle- or upper-income African Americans. Examples of redlining can be found in a variety of financial services, including mortgages, student loans, credit cards, and insurance.

**WAR ON DRUGS:**

The "war on drugs" is a concerted, militarized campaign led by the U.S. government to enforce prohibitions on importation, manufacture, use, sale, and distribution of substances deemed to be illegal, advancing a punitive rather than a public health approach to drug use. It is characterized by racial profiling, racially discriminatory, targeted, and aggressive policing and prosecutorial practices, long mandatory prison sentences on conviction of drug-related offenses, and a host of collateral consequences, which have wrought devastation in the lives of millions of people in the United States and beyond. It has served as one of the driving forces of skyrocketing rates of mass incarceration in the United States.





## BELOW IS A LIST OF JUST SOME OF THE HARMS COMMITTED AGAINST BLACK PEOPLE IN THE UNITED STATES FOR WHICH REPARATIONS ARE OWED:

**10.7 MILLION** African people were kidnapped, enslaved, and transported from West Africa to the Americas to be sold into slavery.

**2 MILLION** more died at sea of starvation, murder, torture, disease, and suicide under the horrific conditions of the Middle Passage.

**MILLIONS** of enslaved Africans in the United States spent their lives in bondage in cotton and tobacco fields, as house servants, and providing unpaid skilled labor. They were subject to execution, torture, and extreme physical abuse, systemic and state-sanctioned rape and sexual violence, and were denied basic human rights, including the right to establish and maintain family relationships, as a matter of law.

**ONCE THE TRANSATLANTIC SLAVE TRADE WAS ABOLISHED IN 1808**, slave owners relied on systemic rape, forced childbearing, and the enslavement of free people of African descent to maintain and increase the population of enslaved people.

**1 MILLION** enslaved Black people were forcibly transferred to the deep South between 1810 and 1860.

**MORE THAN HALF OF ALL ENSLAVED PEOPLE WERE SEPARATED** from a parent or child through sale, and **A THIRD OF MARRIAGES WERE DESTROYED BY FORCED MIGRATION** during this period.

**NEARLY ALL AMERICAN INDUSTRIES DEPENDED ON THE LABOR OF ENSLAVED PEOPLE.** Additionally, profits from slavery fueled the Industrial Revolution, helped to build Wall Street, and funded some of the United States' most prestigious schools, including Harvard, Columbia, Princeton, and Yale.





## **FINANCIAL INSTITUTIONS ALSO DIRECTLY BENEFITED FROM THE SLAVE TRADE.**

Banks like JP Morgan Chase and creditors accepted enslaved people as “collateral” for loans, and were authorized to “repossess” them if the loan defaulted. Insurance companies like Aetna and New York Life Insurance also profited from policies sold to insure enslaved people as property.

## **BY 1830, ALMOST 1 MILLION BLACK PEOPLE**

labored without compensation in the cotton industry, generating more than half of U.S. global exports.

## **BY 1860, IN THE 15 SOUTHERN STATES** nearly **ONE** **IN FOUR FAMILIES ENSLAVED PEOPLE OF AFRICAN DESCENT.**

## **BY DECEMBER 1865,** just over 150 years or a mere 5 generations ago, there were **4 MILLION ENSLAVED BLACK PEOPLE LIVING IN THE UNITED STATES.**

## **AFTER THE PASSAGE OF THE THIRTEENTH AMENDMENT,**

bringing about the legal end of slavery except “as a punishment for a crime,” in some states formerly enslaved Black people continued to be forced, under threat of death or violence, to work for free. In many states, Black people, subject to laws that applied only to them, were arrested, convicted, and forced to perform unpaid labor through criminalization.

## **THE LEGAL END OF SLAVERY WAS FOLLOWED BY 100 YEARS OF RACIAL TERROR, DISENFRANCHISEMENT, ABUSE, AND EXCLUSION**

of Black people by white people seeking to re-establish the social and economic order that existed under slavery.

## **BETWEEN 1877 TO 1950, MORE THAN 4,300 BLACK PEOPLE WERE LYNCHED** in

the United States. Millions more lost millions of dollars worth of land, homes, businesses, and communities in the South to theft by government, financial institutions, and racial terror.





**SIX MILLION PEOPLE** fled the South for the North, Midwest, and West during the Great Migration, where they experienced state and state-sanctioned housing discrimination, predatory lending, continuing theft of property and wages, and state and state-sanctioned racial terror.

**BECAUSE CHATTEL SLAVERY IN THE UNITED STATES WAS PREMISED ON A PERMANENT HEREDITARY STATUS TIED TO BLACKNESS** it required the creation and widespread dissemination of **MYTHS OF BLACK RACIAL INFERIORITY TO JUSTIFY ENSLAVEMENT AND ITS INHERENT VIOLENCE AND DENIAL OF HUMAN RIGHTS.** Religious, medical, and social institutions were complicit in perpetuating myths of Black inferiority. These myths, and their real life impacts on all Black people living in the United States, persist to this day, long after slavery was formally abolished.

**OVER 1.5 MILLION ARRESTS** were made for drug-related offenses in 2017. **BLACK PEOPLE ARE NEARLY 4 TIMES MORE LIKELY TO BE ARRESTED FOR MARIJUANA USE,** even though they use drugs at rates equal to white people.

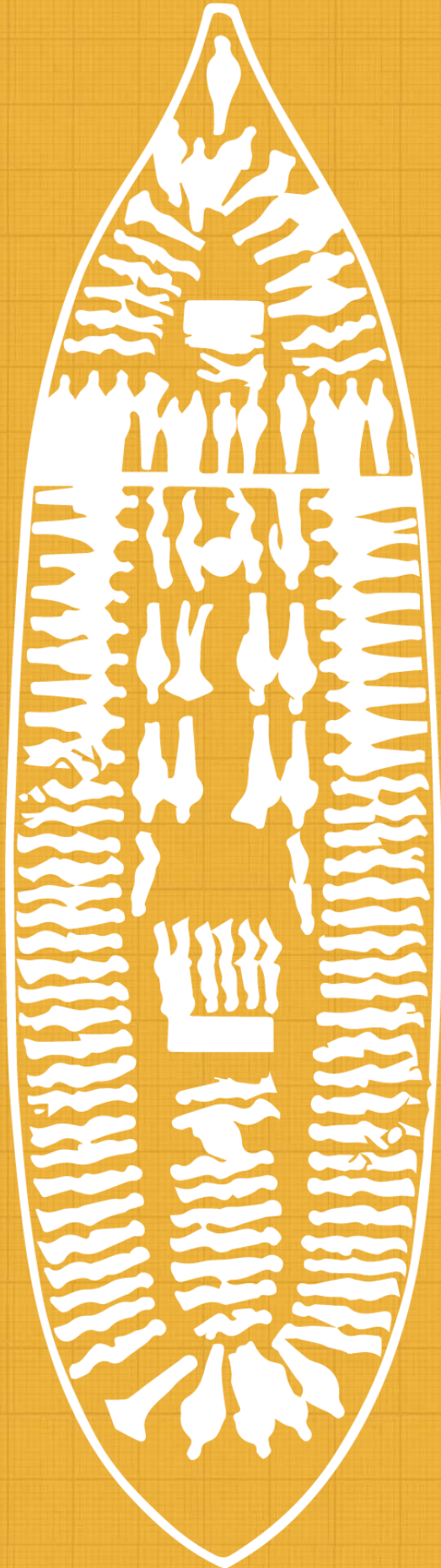
**NEARLY ONE MILLION BLACK PEOPLE** are incarcerated; 850,000 of them in men's prisons. That number is larger than the number of Black men that were enslaved in 1850. Black women represent the fastest growing prison and jail population. **INCARCERATION HAS BEEN SHOWN TO RESULT IN HAVING YOUR VOTING RIGHTS TAKEN AWAY, HOUSING INSECURITY, UNEMPLOYMENT, INCREASED RATES OF POVERTY AND FAMILY SEPARATION AS WELL AS LONG-LASTING EMOTIONAL AND PSYCHOLOGICAL IMPACTS.**





AS A DIRECT RESULT OF REDLINING and other forms of systemic discrimination, WHITE FAMILIES ON AVERAGE POSSESS SIX TIMES THE WEALTH OF BLACK FAMILIES, a disparity which has worsened over time. Additionally, WHILE 73% OF WHITE HOUSEHOLDS OWN THEIR HOME, ONLY 45% OF BLACK HOUSEHOLDS OWN THEIR HOMES.

DUE TO CENTURIES OF EDUCATIONAL INEQUITY and lack of access to education opportunities, as of 2011, 34% OF WHITE PEOPLE HAD COMPLETED FOUR-YEAR COLLEGE DEGREES COMPARED TO JUST 20% OF BLACK PEOPLE. Additionally, Black college graduates saw a lower return on their degrees: FOR EVERY \$1 IN WEALTH THAT ACCRUES TO BLACK HOUSEHOLDS ASSOCIATED WITH A COLLEGE DEGREE, WHITE HOUSEHOLDS ACCRUE \$11.49.





## WHY REPARATIONS? TALKING POINTS

THE LEGACY OF SLAVERY, ANTI-BLACK RACISM, JIM CROW, AND STRUCTURAL DISCRIMINATION AND EXCLUSION FROM EMPLOYMENT, HOUSING, INSTITUTIONS, AND COMMUNITIES CONTINUES TO THIS DAY. BLACK PEOPLE IN THE UNITED STATES CONTINUE TO EXPERIENCE THE HIGHEST RATES OF POVERTY, UNEMPLOYMENT, HEALTH DISPARITIES, AND INCARCERATION, AND THE LOWEST WAGES AND RATES OF WEALTH ACCUMULATION.



THIS IS A RESULT OF CENTURIES OF ANTI-BLACK POLICIES AND PRACTICES, AS WELL AS A REFUSAL BY THE UNITED STATES TO ADDRESS THESE HARMS THROUGH REPARATIONS. ALTHOUGH THE 14TH AMENDMENT GRANTED PEOPLE OF AFRICAN DESCENT THE RIGHT TO NATURALIZE AS UNITED STATES CITIZENS, IMMIGRATION QUOTAS ADOPTED IN THE 1920S EFFECTIVELY BARRED IMMIGRATION FROM AFRICAN COUNTRIES UNTIL 1965, AND THE UNITED STATES HAS CONSISTENTLY REFUSED AND DISCRIMINATED AGAINST BLACK MIGRANTS FROM AFRICAN NATIONS, AS WELL AS FROM HAITI AND OTHER CARIBBEAN COUNTRIES.





THESE PRACTICES AND POLICIES, INCLUDING JIM CROW SEGREGATION, REDLINING, AND OTHER FORMS OF STRUCTURAL DISCRIMINATION AND EXCLUSION, AND RACIALIZED CRIMINALIZATION, HAVE IMPACTED ALL BLACK PEOPLE IN THE UNITED STATES, NOT JUST THOSE WHO CAN PROVE THAT THEIR ANCESTORS WERE SLAVES.

REPARATIONS ARE OWED, IN A FORM AND MANNER TO BE DETERMINED BY BLACK PEOPLE IN THE UNITED STATES.





THEY REQUIRE A SYSTEMATIC ACCOUNTING, ACKNOWLEDGEMENT, AND REPAIR OF PAST AND ONGOING HARMS, MONETARY COMPENSATION TO INDIVIDUALS AND INSTITUTIONS LED BY AND ACCOUNTABLE TO BLACK COMMUNITIES, AND AN END TO PRESENT DAY POLICIES AND PRACTICES THAT PERPETUATE HARMS ROOTED IN A HISTORY OF ANTI-BLACK RACISM, ALONG WITH A GUARANTEE THAT THEY WILL NOT BE REPEATED.



REPARATIONS MUST TAKE AS MANY FORMS AS NECESSARY TO EQUITABLY ADDRESS THE MANY FORMS OF INJURY CAUSED BY CHATTEL SLAVERY AND ITS CONTINUING VESTIGES.



# ACTIVITY: THE CASE FOR REPARATIONS - A VISUAL STORY QUILT

## DIRECTIONS:

Quilts are part of many cultures. Made by hand—often collaboratively—using familiar materials such as scraps of clothing, quilts are both personal and communal objects. Quilts can be works of art as well as stories through visual images. This activity will result in a collective quilt co-created by participants. Each participant will use paper to create a quilt patch that makes the case for reparations. At the end, you will tape or staple all of the patches together to make a beautiful collective quilt. Here is the catch: it has to be a wordless quilt. Make your case using only pictures and other images.



## OBJECTIVES:

This group activity provides an opportunity to exercise your creativity while having everyone offer their case for reparations.



## PARTICIPANTS:

9-Unlimited



## FORMAT:

Each participant will get a sheet of construction paper, markers, and any images you want to bring. Participants will be given 10-20 minutes to create an image or series of images that makes the case for reparations.



## TIME REQUIRED:

15-45 minutes



## MATERIALS:

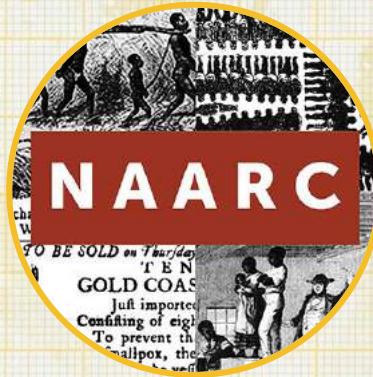
Construction Paper, Markers, Images (photos, pictures), Tape



## SET-UP AND TECHNOLOGY:

Wall space to display final quilt





**"THE DEVASTATING DAMAGES OF ENSLAVEMENT AND SYSTEMS OF APARTHEID AND DE FACTO SEGREGATION SPANNED GENERATIONS TO NEGATIVELY AFFECT THE COLLECTIVE WELL BEING OF AFRICANS IN AMERICA TO THIS VERY MOMENT... THE FULFILLMENT OF A "MORE PERFECT UNION" IS NOT POSSIBLE WITHOUT AN UNEQUIVOCAL ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF/ AND UNQUALIFIED APOLOGY FOR THE "ORIGINAL SINS" COMMITTED BY THE EUROPEAN COLONIALISTS IN BRUTALLY, DISPOSSESSING THE NATIVE PEOPLE OF THEIR LANDS AND THE HORRIFIC ENSLAVEMENT OF AFRICANS TO BE THE ECONOMIC LIFEblood OF THE "AMERICAN NATION;" A NATION CONCEIVED TO BE A "WHITE MAN'S LAND." AND THE GRANTING OF REPARATIONS AS RESTITUTION TO REPAIR AND HEAL THE DAMAGES DONE TO NATIVE PEOPLE AND AFRICANS."**

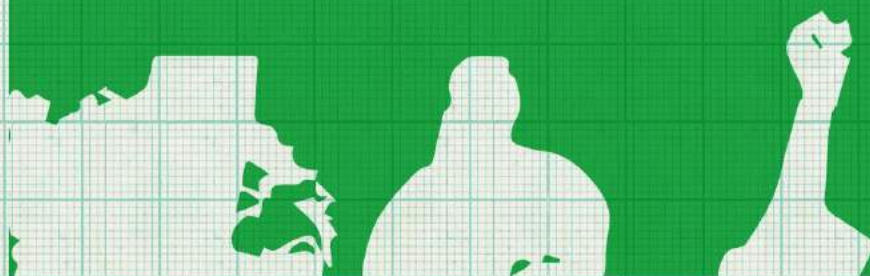
**- NATIONAL AFRICAN AMERICAN REPARATIONS COMMISSION,  
PRELIMINARY REPARATIONS PROGRAM**





## DEFINING REPARATIONS

In this section, we define what reparations are and what they are not. The section also explores how to apply the definition of reparations to specific harms experienced by people of African descent in the United States. It also explores the Movement for Black Lives' vision and demands around reparations.



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**KEYWORDS/CONCEPTS****BADGES AND INCIDENTS OF SLAVERY:**

Ongoing perceptions, discrimination, violence, or policies and actions by state or private groups that target or taint any racial group or population that has previously been held in slavery or servitude.

**CESSATION:**

A complete, full, and final end to continuing violations.

**DIVEST/INVEST:**

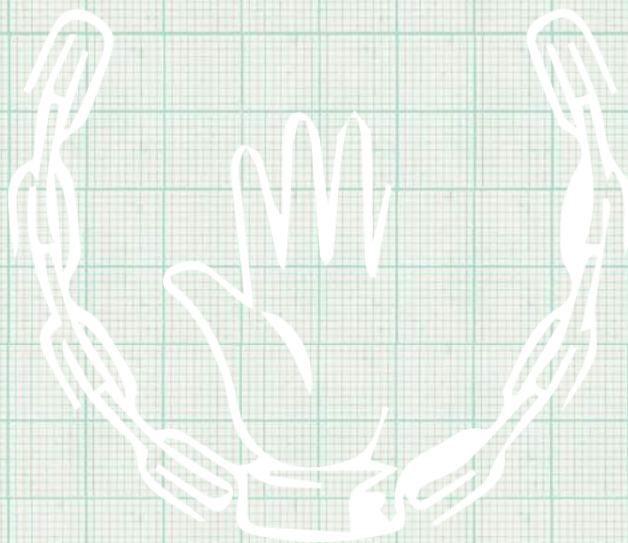
A framework that demands divestment (in the form of resources, legitimacy, and power) from exploitative forces (including prisons, fossil fuels, police, surveillance, and corporations) and investment into infrastructure and services that support our people (including education, transportation, and the health and safety of our communities).

**GUARANTEES OF NON-REPETITION:**

Assurances that violations will not be repeated in the future, including reviewing and reforming laws contributing to or allowing violations.

**INTERGENERATIONAL TRAUMA:**

The transmission of historical oppression and its negative consequences across generations. Evidence of the health and emotional impacts of intergenerational trauma has been shown in Black and Indigenous peoples in the United States and Canada.





**KEYWORDS/CONCEPTS****PRISON INDUSTRIAL  
COMPLEX ABOLITION:**

Critical Resistance defines abolition of the Prison Industrial Complex (PIC) as a political vision with the goal of eliminating imprisonment, policing, and surveillance, and creating lasting alternatives to punishment and imprisonment. This definition recognizes that the PIC both feeds on and maintains oppression and inequalities through punishment, violence, and control. Because the PIC is not an isolated system, abolition is a broad strategy. An abolitionist vision means that we must build models today that can represent how we want to live in the future.

**RESTITUTION:**

Measures intended to restore the survivor to the original situation before the violations occurred, including, as appropriate: restoration of liberty, enjoyment of human rights, identity, family life, and citizenship, return to one's place of residence (repatriation), restoration of employment, and return of property.







## DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

- ☒ What does cessation and non-repetition look like to you?
- ☒ What does restitution look like to you?
- ☒ What does compensation look like to you?
- ☒ What does satisfaction look like to you?
- ☒ What does rehabilitation look like to you?

## NOTES FOR DISCUSSION:



## **WHAT ARE REPARATIONS?**

Reparations are the act or process of making amends for a wrong.

### **ACCORDING TO THE UNITED NATIONS:**

Adequate, effective and prompt reparation is intended to promote justice by redressing gross violations of international human rights law or serious violations of international humanitarian law. Reparation should be proportional to the gravity of the violations and the harm suffered. In accordance with its domestic laws and international legal obligations, a State shall provide reparation to victims for acts or omissions which can be attributed to the State and constitute gross violations of international human rights law or serious violations of international humanitarian law. In cases where a person, a legal person, or other entity is found liable for reparation to a victim, such party should provide reparation to the victim or compensate the State if the State has already provided reparation to the victim.



### **THE NATIONAL COALITION OF BLACKS FOR REPARATIONS IN AMERICA (N'COBRA) DEFINES REPARATIONS AS:**

A process of repairing, healing and restoring a people injured because of their group identity and in violation of their fundamental human rights by governments, corporations, institutions and families. Those groups that have been injured have the right to obtain from the government, corporation, institution or family responsible for the injuries that which they need to repair and heal themselves. In addition to being a demand for justice, it is a principle of international human rights law.



## THE UNITED NATIONS OUTLINES FIVE CONDITIONS THAT MUST BE MET FOR FULL REPARATIONS:

### 1. CESSATION, ASSURANCES AND GUARANTEES OF NON-REPETITION:

Under international law, a state responsible for wrongfully injuring a people "is under an obligation to a) "cease the act if it is continuing, and, b) offer appropriate assurances and guarantees of non-repetition..."

### 2. RESTITUTION AND REPATRIATION:

Restitution means to "re-establish the situation which existed before the wrongful act was committed." Changes traced to the wrongful act are reversed through restoration of freedom, recognition of humanity, identity, culture, repatriation, livelihood, citizenship, legal standing, and wealth to the extent they can be, and if they cannot, restitution is completed by compensation.

### 3. COMPENSATION:

The injuring state, institution or individual is obligated to compensate for the damage, if damage is not made good by restitution. Compensation is required for "any financially accessible damage suffered..." to the extent "appropriate and proportional to the gravity of the violation and circumstances."

### 4. SATISFACTION:

Satisfaction is part of full reparations under international law for moral damage, such as "emotional injury, mental suffering, and injury to reputation." In some instances where cessation, restitution, and compensation do not bring full repair, satisfaction is also needed. Apology falls under the reparative category of satisfaction.

### 5. REHABILITATION:

Rehabilitation shall be provided to include legal, medical, psychological, and other care and services.

# REPARATIONS NOW





## WHAT REPARATIONS ARE NOT

There has been a lot of confusion about what reparations are and what they are not. Some presidential candidates have claimed that universal programs like baby bonds are reparations. They are not. Other people have claimed that individual GoFundMe campaigns for their own benefit are reparations. They are not.

As explored above, reparations include five key components: Cessation/Assurance of Non-Repetition, Restitution and Repatriation, Compensation, Satisfaction, and Rehabilitation. Reparations are a concept rooted in international law that involves specific forms of repair to specific individuals, groups of people, or nations for specific harms they have experienced in violation of their human rights. Therefore, reparations cannot be achieved simply through “acknowledgment or an apology” or “investment in underprivileged communities.”



## REPARATIONS ARE NOT:

- ☒ Just saying sorry or feeling bad while avoiding accountability for individual or collective contributions to the violation, or while benefiting from the harm, whether through inheritance or ongoing privileges.
- ☒ Paying an individual Black person's bills.
- ☒ Donating any amount of money to a Black institution. Unless accompanied by acts of repair, restitution, and efforts to leverage power, influence, and resources to ensure cessation and non-repetition, simply writing a check is not reparations.

703  
ONWARD TO VICTORY!



W. E. DUBOIS



HEADQUARTERS OF THE



CORETTA SCOTT KING

## REPARATIONS ARE ALSO NOT THE SAME AS "DIVEST/INVEST"

The Vision for Black Lives includes a series of demands calling for divestment from institutions that harm Black people and investment in institutions and programs that will improve our overall physical, social, economic, and spiritual well-being. This is not the same as reparations, which require specific forms of repair to specific groups of people for specific harms they have experienced. Both reparations and divest/invest strategies are essential to our collective liberation and well-being, but are distinct approaches to achieving our goals.



**EXAMPLE**

*Organizers are mounting a campaign to close a local jail. Here's how their demands would differ depending on the framework for the campaign.*

REPARATIONS	DIVEST/INVEST	KEY DIFFERENCES
<p><b>IDENTIFYING THE HARM:</b></p> <p>People incarcerated in the local jail experience a number of harms, including physical, sexual, and spiritual violence, loss of liberty, employment, housing, family relationships, adverse health impacts, and more.</p>	<p><b>IDENTIFYING THE HARM:</b></p> <p>People incarcerated in the local jail experience a number of harms, including physical, sexual, and spiritual violence, loss of liberty, employment, housing, family relationships, adverse health impacts, and more.</p> <p>The city or county is currently spending money on incarcerating and harming people instead of spending on meeting their needs and transforming harms and conflicts and the conditions that produce them.</p>	<p>The harms identified may be similar, regardless of which approach organizers take.</p>
<p><b>CESSATION &amp; NON-REPETITION:</b></p> <p>To satisfy this prong of reparations, the jail must be closed and the city or county must pass a measure preventing it from being re-opened or operated in a different form or location because we have a right to cessation and non-repetition of harms caused by the jail.</p>	<p><b>DIVEST:</b></p> <p>Close the jail because the money used to run the jail should be used to meet community needs instead of criminalizing people.</p>	<p>While the demand might be similar here, the reason behind it is different. Often reparations focuses on the harm experienced by specific groups of people and how to ensure non-repetition of those harms, while divest/invest focuses on financial choices and community investments.</p>



# REPARATIONS

# DIVEST/INVEST KEY DIFFERENCES

## COMPENSATION:

Compensate all people who have been harmed by the jail for:

- ☒ Time spent in the jail, including lost income/wages during time incarcerated. Any physical, sexual, emotional, or spiritual harm experienced in the jail. Any money they spent as a result of being in the jail, including phone charges, commissary purchases, fees, fines, etc.
- ☒ Time separated from partners, children, and loved ones.
- ☒ Environmental harm created by jail construction, operation, or decommissioning.

## INVEST:

Use the money the government would have spent on the jail to fund community-based services available to everyone.

Under a divest/invest framework, it is possible that investment in services that result from divestment from the jail will disproportionately benefit people who would otherwise have been held in the jail, but they will not be exclusively available to people who were previously held in the jail.

Under a reparations framework, compensation would be made to people who are able to trace a specific harm to the jail, but not to all members of a community. Moreover, the amount of compensation for individuals harmed by the jail is not tied to any specific amount of money (like how much money the government spends on the jail annually), it is based on what is needed to fully repair the harms.

## RESTITUTION & REPATRIATION:

Restore people who were held in the jail to the position they would be in if they had not been held in the jail, including restoration of lost:

- ☒ Housing, including returning them to the communities they were taken from, under conditions that enable them to reconnect with their communities and families in a meaningful way
- ☒ Employment
- ☒ Child custody
- ☒ Voting rights
- ☒ Citizenship or immigration status
- ☒ Property

## INVEST:

Some of the money may be invested in programs that attempt to restore those who were incarcerated but it is not a requirement. It is likely that investments will be made in communities and not specifically targeted to those harmed by the jail.

A requirement of reparations is that those harmed are restored back to the condition they would have been in if the harm had not happened. In a divest/invest framework, it is possible that some of the funds previously used to operate the jail that are reinvested into meeting community needs would help restore people harmed by the jail to the position they would have been in had they not been jailed, but it is not specifically promised or guaranteed.



## REPARATIONS

## DIVEST/INVEST

## KEY DIFFERENCES

### SATISFACTION:

Under a reparations framework a number of things might happen that meet the need for satisfaction. They include:

- ☒ Issue an official apology to everyone who has personally been harmed by the jail or had a family member or loved one held in the jail.
- ☒ Hold a Truth and Reconciliation Commission to expose and heal the harms caused by the jail.
- ☒ Build a memorial to those harmed by the jail and hold an annual Free the Jail event to educate the public about the historical harms caused by the jail to ensure that they will never be repeated.

### DIVEST/INVEST:

There is no guarantee of an apology, memorial, or healing process under Divest/Invest.

Reparations, unlike Divest/Invest, requires an acknowledgement of wrongdoing and an honoring and recognition of the harm caused.

### REHABILITATION:

To satisfy this prong of reparations, the state would provide healing services to those directly impacted by incarceration. This could include therapy, healthcare, acupuncture, or other healing services that help those impacted rehabilitate and recover.

### INVEST:

While some of the investments may go into healing services, they are not necessarily specifically catered to those impacted.

Rehabilitation for those harmed is a requirement for reparations. It is not a requirement for Divest/Invest.



## HOW DO I KNOW IT'S REPARATIONS AND NOT SOMETHING ELSE?

### IT IS REPARATIONS IF IT INCLUDES:

- ☒ An official acknowledgment and apology for harm, public education, or memorial about the harm; and
- ☒ Compensation to a specific, defined group of individuals harmed by a violation, including descendants, as well as family and community members of individuals directly targeted for harm who were adversely affected; and
- ☒ Action to restore individuals harmed to the position they were in before the initial harm occurred; and
- ☒ Action to stop the systems, institutions, and practices causing the harm; and
- ☒ Changes to laws, institutions, and systems aimed at ensuring that harm will not happen again.





# ACTIVITY: 6-WORD POEMS/STORIES ABOUT REPARATIONS

## DIRECTIONS:

Have you ever heard of something called the “Six-Word Memoir” or “Six-Word Story?” If not, don’t worry. It’s a fun way to simply and concisely express yourself. The writer Ernest Hemingway was once challenged to write a story in six words. He came up with: “For sale: baby shoes, never worn.” Your challenge is to write a 6-word poem or story defining what reparations are, how you feel about reparations, or why reparations are warranted for Black people. You can choose to focus on any of these questions. Make sure that your poems or stories are informed by what you’ve read in this toolkit about the definition of reparations.



## OBJECTIVES:

This group activity provides an opportunity to exercise your creativity while coming up with your own ideas about how to define reparations and/or to express how you feel about the idea.



## PARTICIPANTS:

4-Unlimited



## TIME REQUIRED:

15-30 minutes



## MATERIALS:

Paper, pens



## SET-UP AND TECHNOLOGY:

No technology is required.



## FORMAT:

Each participant will have 5-15 minutes to write their 6-word poem. The only rules are that it has to be no more than six words and answer one of the following questions:

- ☒ What are reparations?
- ☒ How do you feel about reparations?
- ☒ Why are reparations warranted for Black people?

Once everyone writes their poem, volunteers will share it with the group.



HERE ARE SOME EXAMPLES OF  
SIX-WORD MEMOIRS SUBMITTED  
TO SMITH MAGAZINE WHEN THEY  
CHALLENGED THEIR READERS:

CURSED WITH CANCER. BLESSED  
WITH FRIENDS.

[submitted by a grandmother with cancer]

I STILL MAKE COFFEE FOR TWO.

[submitted by an elderly widower, Zak Nelson]

SHE SAID SHE WAS NEGATIVE.

DAMN. [by Ryan McRae]

JOINED ARMY. CAME OUT. GOT  
BOOTED.

[by Johan Baumeister]

MOM DIED, DAD SCREWED US OVER.

[by Lesley Kysely]

FOURTEEN YEARS OLD, STORY STILL  
UNTOLD.

[by David Gidwani]

I LIKE GIRLS. GIRLS LIKE BOYS.

[Andrea Dela Cruz]

HERE'S A FEW ABOUT  
REPARATIONS TO GET YOU  
STARTED:

SLAVERY DESTROYED LIVES.  
REPARATIONS ARE DUE.

WHITE SUPREMACY  
PERPETUATES INEQUALITY.  
REPARATIONS NOW!

AMERICANS STOLE AFRICAN  
LIVES/LABOR. REPARATIONS!

LEGACIES LOST; LIVES  
STOLEN; REPARATIONS NOW.

RESTORE WHAT WAS STOLEN  
THROUGH RESTITUTION.

REPARATIONS MEANS  
RIGHTING WRONGS OF  
RACISM.



## MOVEMENT FOR BLACK LIVES

### REPARATIONS DEMANDS

#### OUR VISION

The Vision for Black Lives sets forth a bold vision of reparations for African descended people in the United States and beyond. While we prioritize the demand for reparations for slavery, we do not limit our demand for reparations to slavery. We believe demanding reparations only for slavery erases the reality that the United States has continued to exploit and harm Black people through convict leasing, sharecropping, Jim Crow, redlining, and other policies of structural discrimination and exclusion, and mass criminalization and incarceration through policies such as the "war on drugs."

We believe that people have a right to sovereignty over our bodies, our labor, and our communities. We demand abolition and reparations in connection with all ways and places where this sovereignty is breached; we demand repair in all places where there is disrepair. We believe that reparations is owed across the African Diaspora for all harms associated with colonization and genocide on the continent of Africa, the transatlantic slave trade, and the institution of chattel slavery.

Slavery, violent oppression, extraction, displacement, and exploitation of Black communities are not a thing of the past. Our sovereignty, bodily integrity, health, wealth, freedom, rights, and safety have been, and continue to be, violated through the ongoing operation of systems of white supremacy, racial capitalism, ableism, and heteropatriarchy, all of which are rooted in, and were reinforced, by slavery. We seek to illuminate the ways in which systems and institutions that flow from slavery, including the prison, military, and medical industrial complexes, continue to assert ownership over Black bodies.





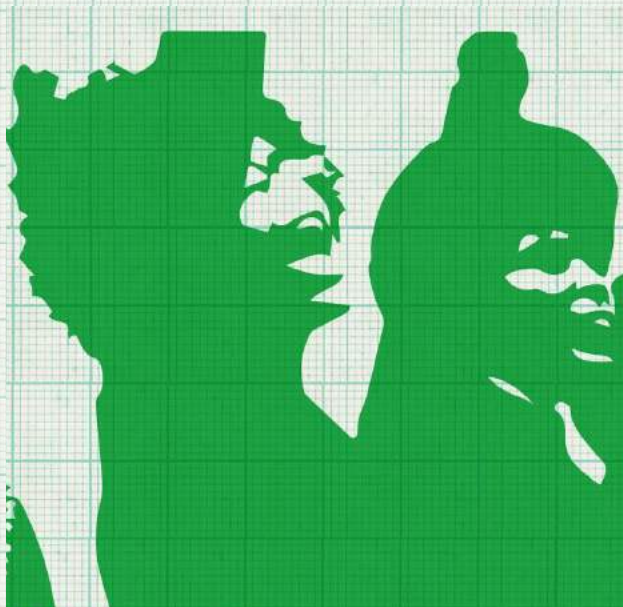
## MOVEMENT FOR BLACK LIVES

### REPARATIONS DEMANDS

We particularly lift up the specific forms of past and current oppression and exploitation of economic and reproductive labor of Black women, queer, trans, gender nonconforming, and disabled people under slavery and the systems that grew from it.

We demand reparations now for all of these past and continuing harms, and immediate agency over our bodies, our culture, our community wealth, and our dignity. We believe it is impossible to achieve equality or to end racial injustice without acknowledging and materially addressing past, and continuing, harms. Without accounting for and repairing the accumulated impact of past harms, we are destined to perpetuate them.

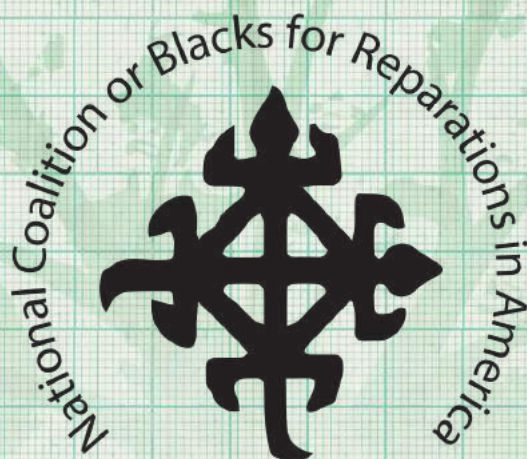
As abolitionists, we believe what is required is a transformation of all systems, institutions, and structures which continue to oppress Black people, a systemic shift in social and economic systems and relations of power, and significant investment in Black community infrastructure.



We believe all who have benefited from the legacy and continued oppression of Black people, including nations, states, and cities, individuals and families, corporations and institutions must do their part in making true reparations. Failure to make reparations renders governments, corporations, institutions, and individuals complicit in slavery and its ongoing effects.

We call for solidarity for all reparations demands made by African descended people around the world. We also support calls for reparations for colonization and genocide of Indigenous peoples and theft of the land the United States is built upon, and honor Indigenous sovereignty and land claims.





**"AS ATTENTION IS CALLED TO THE UGLY REALITY OF PRESENT-DAY SEXUAL HARASSMENT, THERE MUST ALSO BE ATTENTION TO THE HISTORICAL SEXUAL VIOLATIONS OF BLACK WOMEN DURING THE ENSLAVEMENT ERA AND BEYOND. FOR WELL OVER 350 YEARS BLACK WOMEN WERE VICIOUSLY RAPED, SAVAGELY BEATEN AND TORTURED... WOMEN WHO RESISTED WERE TERRORIZED, CONTINUOUSLY DEFILED AND DISRESPECTED, AND LYNCHINGS WERE COMMONPLACE... JUST AS WE DO NOT CONDONE OR TAKE LIGHTLY PRESENT-DAY DISCLOSURES AND ACCUSATIONS OF SEXUAL HARASSMENT, THE UNFETTERED CRIMES AGAINST WOMEN OF AFRICAN DESCENT**

**DURING THE ENSLAVEMENT ERA AND BEYOND THAT TO DATE STILL AWAIT REMEDY MUST NEVER BE FORGOTTEN."**

**- N'COBRA H.R.40 PRIMER, SISTAH'S STATEMENT.**



## OUR DEMANDS

At the core of M4BL's demands for reparations is a call for full reparations to all descendants of enslaved Africans in the United States for the devastating and genocidal harms of colonialism, the transatlantic slave trade, and the institution of chattel slavery in the United States. Reparations must include full compensation for stolen lives, labor, children, health, well-being, sexual, gender, and reproductive autonomy, culture, language, and spirituality, and for torture, rape, and other forms of physical and sexual violence flowing from the institution of chattel slavery. Reparations must also address the impacts of intergenerational trauma.



These harms were not only perpetrated and sanctioned by the U.S. government, but also by responsible corporations, educational, religious, philanthropic and other institutions and families that have profited off of the labor, bodies, and lives of Black people.

We also demand reparations for policies and practices enacted in the aftermath of chattel slavery which continued the exploitation, murder, theft, rape, and displacement of Black people.

Reparations are owed to the descendants of enslaved Africans, in a manner and form to be determined by them. Reparations must take as many forms as necessary to equitably address the many forms of injury caused by the transatlantic slave trade and chattel slavery.



While reparations to descendants of enslaved Africans in the United States is a primary and core demand of the Movement for Black Lives, the Vision for Black Lives doesn't stop there.

We, like N'COBRA and many other formations that have come before us, call for reparations to all African descended people in the United States for harms flowing from the "badges and incidents" of slavery—the ways in which the practice of chattel slavery in the United States marked all Black people, regardless of whether they are direct descendants of Africans enslaved in the United States, for dehumanization, violence, structural exclusion, and discrimination. This includes: racial terror, state-sanctioned segregation, and theft and destruction of Black people's land, property, businesses, and homes in the Jim Crow era and beyond, housing discrimination and "redlining," and the ongoing effects of racial segregation, discrimination, and structural exclusion which represent ongoing impacts and harms of slavery that have not yet ceased or been remedied.

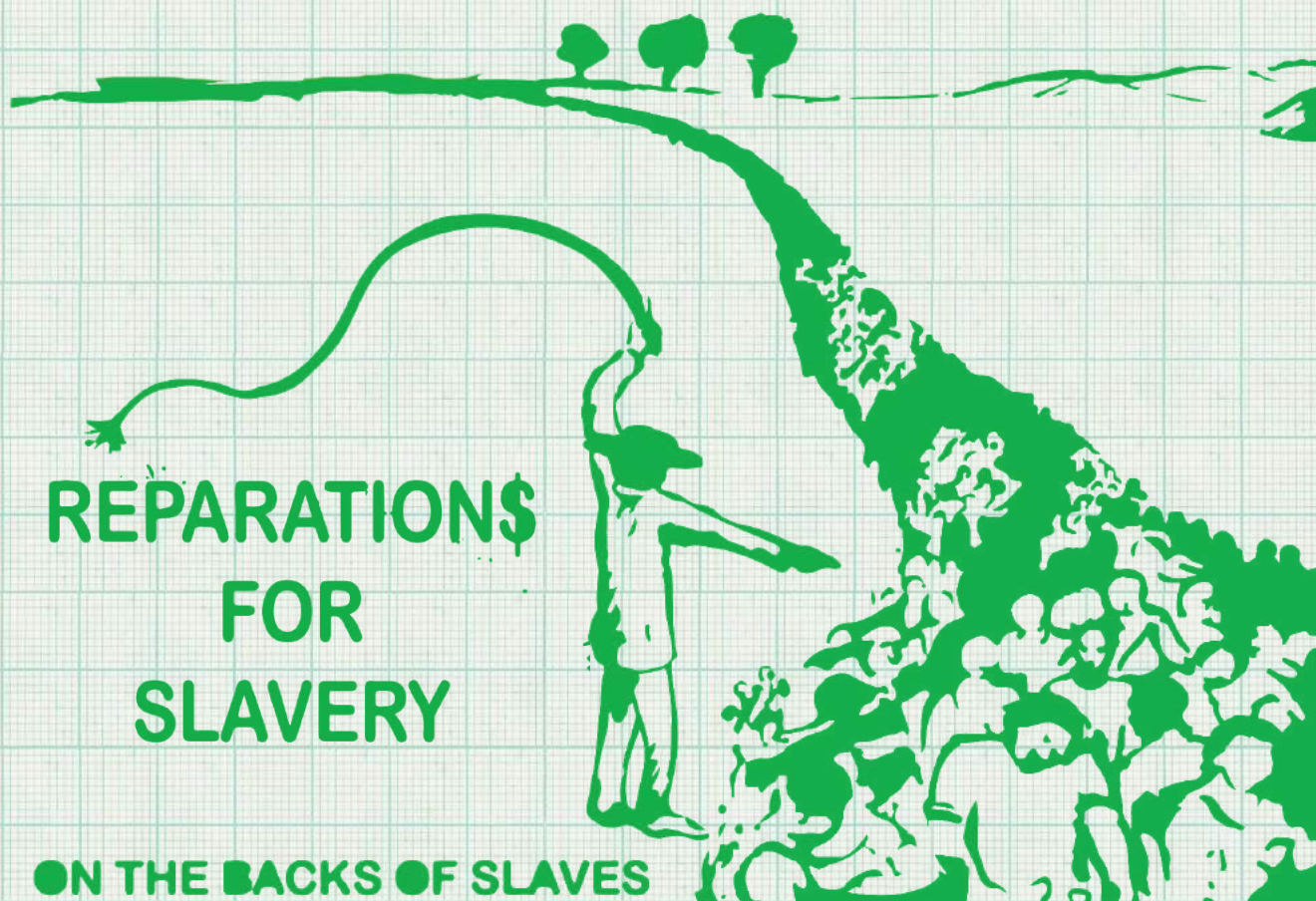


We also call for reparations for all Black people in the United States who have been subject to post-slavery policies and practices representing a continuation of harms inflicted in the context of chattel slavery, including family separation, state-sponsored sterilization and medical experimentation, mass criminalization and incarceration which followed slavery, and for the violence, institutionalization, discrimination and structural exclusion specifically targeting disabled Black people, and contributing to high rates of disability among Black people.



## WE BELIEVE THAT

- ☒ Specific reparations are owed to descendants of enslaved Africans; AND
- ☒ Reparations are owed to ALL Black people in the United States for the ongoing harms flowing from the afterlives of slavery in the United States, including the many African descendants of enslaved people in the United States who, as a result of chattel slavery and its aftermath, are unable to trace their ancestry to establish a specific claim as descendants of enslaved people, and are nevertheless entitled to reparations for the harms flowing from slavery; AND
- ☒ Anti-Black immigration policies and practices, and the harms flowing from them, are both rooted in slavery and part of the ongoing afterlives of slavery, and that Black migrants are entitled to reparations for the harms associated with them.





While other groups have been harmed by some of the same state policies targeting Black people, we recognize that many of these policies are intended to specifically target and have specific impacts on Black people, and are often rooted in chattel slavery. For example, the practice of shackling pregnant people in prison while giving birth is rooted in the expectation that the incarcerated population would primarily be made up of formerly enslaved people of African descent, and that the people experiencing this treatment would be Black women, who have given birth in literal and figurative shackles for centuries in the United States. Because Black women continue to be incarcerated at twice the rate of white women, this practice continues to be disproportionately experienced by Black women. And, because of Black people's unique history, this practice has specific emotional and spiritual impacts on Black incarcerated women and their babies. We, therefore, call for reparations for these harms to Black people and communities based on these specific histories and impacts, while recognizing, and often supporting, the right of other groups to demand reparations for the specific harms these policies have had on them.



The Movement for Black Lives supports the demands of other groups for reparations for harms they have experienced, including the demands made by African descendants in the Caribbean through CARICOM and the demands of African nations against European colonizers.

There are a range of positions within the M4BL ecosystem about land claims as part of demands for reparations. However, the totality of the Movement for Black Lives Policy Table is committed to Black and Indigenous sovereignty and self-determination, and we look forward to engaging in consistent and continued conversations internally and with First Nations.



**A FEW OF THE DEMANDS FOR REPARATIONS INCLUDED IN THE  
THE VISION FOR BLACK LIVES ARE:**

**1.**

Legislation at the federal and state level that requires the United States to acknowledge the lasting impacts of slavery and establish and execute a plan to address those impacts. This includes the immediate passage of H.R.40, the "Commission to Study Reparation Proposals for African-Americans Act," or subsequent versions which call for reparations remedies.

**2.**

Reparations for the systemic denial of access to high-quality educational opportunities in the form of full and free access for all Black people (including undocumented and currently and formerly incarcerated people) to lifetime education including: free access and open admissions to public community colleges and universities, technical education (technology, trade, and agricultural), educational support programs, retroactive forgiveness of student loans, and support for lifetime learning programs.

**3.**

Reparations for the wealth extracted from our communities through environmental racism, slavery, food apartheid, housing discrimination, and racialized capitalism in the form of corporate and government reparations focused on healing ongoing physical and mental trauma, and ensuring our access and control of food sources, housing, and land.



**A FEW OF THE DEMANDS FOR REPARATIONS INCLUDED IN THE  
THE VISION FOR BLACK LIVES ARE:**

**4.**

Reparations for the cultural and educational exploitation, erasure, and extraction of our communities in the form of mandated public school curriculums that critically examine the political, economic, and social impacts of colonialism and slavery, and funding to support, build, preserve, and restore cultural assets and sacred sites to ensure the recognition and honoring of our collective struggles and triumphs.

**5.**

Reparations for the devastating impacts of the “war on drugs” and criminalization, including a reinvestment of the resulting savings and revenue into restorative services, mental health services, job programs, and other programs supporting those impacted by mass criminalization.

Reparations must also address ongoing harms to Black people in the United States, including but not limited to police and state violence, mass criminalization, incarceration, institutionalization, deportation, and exclusion, segregation, and structural employment and housing discrimination, food and service apartheid, denial of health care, and high rates of disability and stress-related conditions, high rates of maternal and infant mortality, and lower than average life expectancy, forced sterilization, and denial of reproductive care and gender, sexual, and reproductive autonomy in Black communities.



# ACTIVITY: FOUR CORNERS EXERCISE

## DESCRIPTION:

Create four different posters with the following four opinions: "Strongly Agree," "Agree," "Disagree," and "Strongly Disagree." Post these on chart paper in four different areas of the room. The facilitator will read the below statements and ask participants to move to the area of the room that reflects their opinion about the statement. The facilitator will engage each of the areas of the room to hear why people moved to that specific area. Facilitators can use the answer key below to help land the conversation.



### OBJECTIVES:

This activity will allow participants to talk through what they have learned about reparations together.



### TIME REQUIRED:

25-40 minutes



### PARTICIPANTS:

8-Unlimited



### MATERIALS:

Poster paper, markers, tape



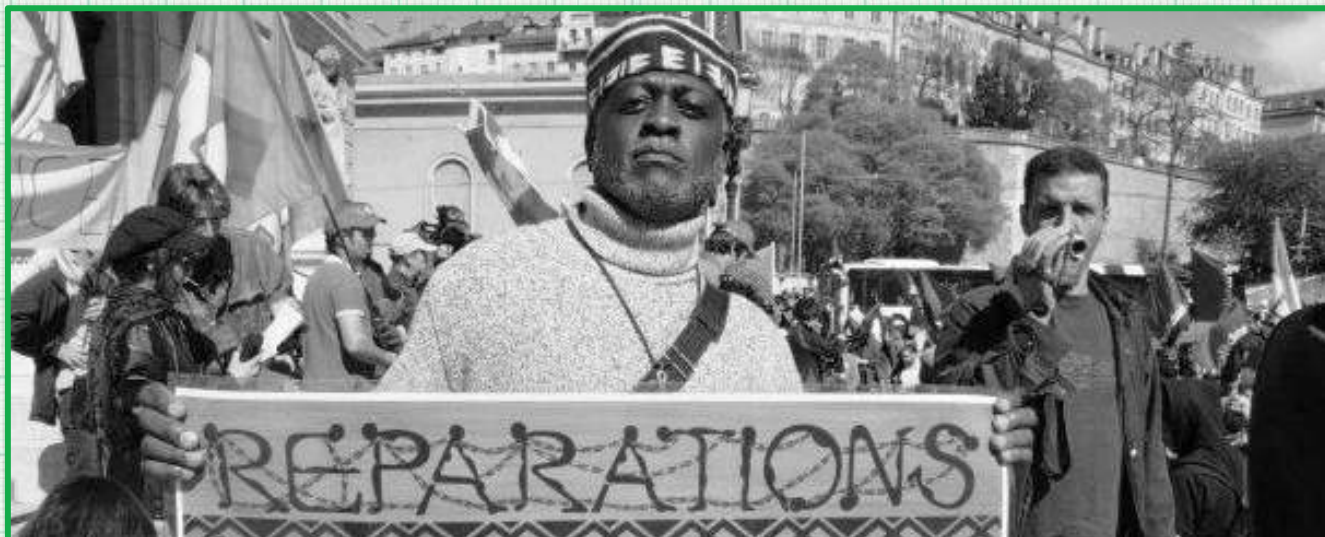
### FORMAT:

Small/Large group discussion



### SET-UP AND TECHNOLOGY:

None required





**READ THE FOLLOWING AND DECIDE ON WHETHER YOU:**

**"STRONGLY AGREE"**

**"AGREE"**

**"DISAGREE"**

**"STRONGLY DISAGREE"**

☐☐☐☐

**1. REPARATIONS IS MAKING PEOPLE WHO HAD NOTHING TO DO WITH SLAVERY PAY FOR SOMETHING THAT HAPPENED CENTURIES AGO.**

The entire economy and prosperity of the United States, along with the wealth accumulated and passed down by many corporations, institutions, and families in this country, is built on the theft of this land and the genocide of its peoples, and on the backs and blood of Black people, with our stolen labor, bodies, reproductive autonomy and freedom. The entire country, as well as specific institutions, corporations, and families, continue to benefit today from the profits of these genocidal harms against people of African descent, as well as the privileges conferred on white people through the white supremacy enabled by slavery and its afterlives. It is absolutely consistent with principles of reparations that the state that committed the harm, as well as those who continue to benefit from it, be required to pay reparations.

**"STRONGLY AGREE"**

**"AGREE"**

**"DISAGREE"**

**"STRONGLY DISAGREE"**

☐☐☐☐

**2. REPARATIONS CAN BE ACHIEVED THROUGH "INVESTMENT IN DISADVANTAGED COMMUNITIES" OR "FREE EDUCATION AND HEALTH CARE FOR ALL."**

Universal programs are not the same as reparations. Reparations are owed to specific people and communities that have been harmed, and cannot be accomplished through generic social programs or investments in communities.

**"STRONGLY AGREE"**

**"AGREE"**

**"DISAGREE"**

**"STRONGLY DISAGREE"**

☐☐☐☐



**3. REPARATIONS SHOULD ONLY BE GIVEN FOR SLAVERY.**

The systematic exploitation, violence, theft, and harm to Black people did not end with slavery. The afterlife of slavery, recognized by international law as the “badges and incidents of slavery” includes centuries of policies and practices perpetuated by the United States government, individuals, and corporations that must also be accounted for and should not be ignored. This includes convict leasing, sharecropping, Jim Crow, redlining, and the “war on drugs.”

**"STRONGLY AGREE"**☐**"AGREE"**☐**"DISAGREE"**☐**"STRONGLY DISAGREE"**☐**4. AN APOLOGY FROM THE UNITED STATES TO BLACK PEOPLE WOULD SATISFY OUR DEMAND OF REPARATIONS.**

Reparations requires more than just an apology. Reparations require:

An official acknowledgment and apology for harm, and public education or memorial about the harm; and

Compensation to a specific, defined group of individuals harmed by a violation, including descendants as well as family and community members of individuals directly targeted for harm who were adversely affected; and

Action to restore individuals harmed to the position they were in before the initial harm occurred; and

Action to stop the systems, institutions, and practices causing the harm; and

Changes to laws, institutions, and systems aimed at ensuring that harm will not happen again.

**"STRONGLY AGREE"**☐**"AGREE"**☐**"DISAGREE"**☐**"STRONGLY DISAGREE"**☐





**"OUR PURPOSE IN LIFE IS TO LEAVE  
A LEGACY FOR OUR CHILDREN AND  
OUR CHILDREN'S CHILDREN. FOR  
THIS REASON, WE MUST CORRECT  
HISTORY THAT AT PRESENT DENIES  
OUR HUMANITY AND SELF-RESPECT."**

**- QUEEN MOTHER MOORE**





## REPARATIONS HISTORY

This section offers a brief overview of the history of how reparations have been used to remedy long-term structural harms targeting specific groups of people.

M4BL





## KEYWORDS/CONCEPTS

### EUGENICS:

“Junk science” that claims the human race can be improved, and “social ills” can be eliminated, through scientific “breeding.” Popularized by the Nazis, it is rooted in the same theories of scientific racism that were used to justify genocidal colonization of the African continent, the transatlantic slave trade, and chattel slavery. Eugenic sterilization programs were explicitly ableist, targeting both individuals and racial and ethnic groups described as “epileptic, ‘feeble-minded,’ or mentally diseased.” They were also used to punish gender and sexual nonconformity, targeting women and girls deemed “promiscuous” for sterilization—including when they became pregnant as a result of rape and incest. Sterilization was also often a condition of release from incarceration in state institutions, and people incarcerated in women’s prisons continue to report sterilization without informed consent.

### REPATRIATION:

Returning a person to a place they were removed from or forced to flee due to a violation of human rights.

### TRANSFORMATIVE:

Social change that fundamentally shifts structures of power, as opposed to change that does little or nothing to create long-term systemic solutions. Transformative change requires thoroughly tending to the root causes of the problems, whereas non-transformative (often labeled reformist change) does not.





## DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

- ☒ Before this toolkit, did you know that there was a long international history of paying reparations?
- ☒ Which examples included in this section surprise you? Why?
- ☒ Why do you think Black people in the United States have not received reparations for chattel slavery and its continuing harms?

## NOTES FOR DISCUSSION:



## HISTORY OF REPARATIONS

Reparations are key to any transformation of the current economic, political, social, and legal system. The underlying premise is simple: it is impossible to achieve equity and to end racial injustice without acknowledging and materially addressing past and continuing harms. Without remedying the accumulated impact of past harms, we are destined to perpetuate them. There is a long established history of reparations both in the United States and across the globe.



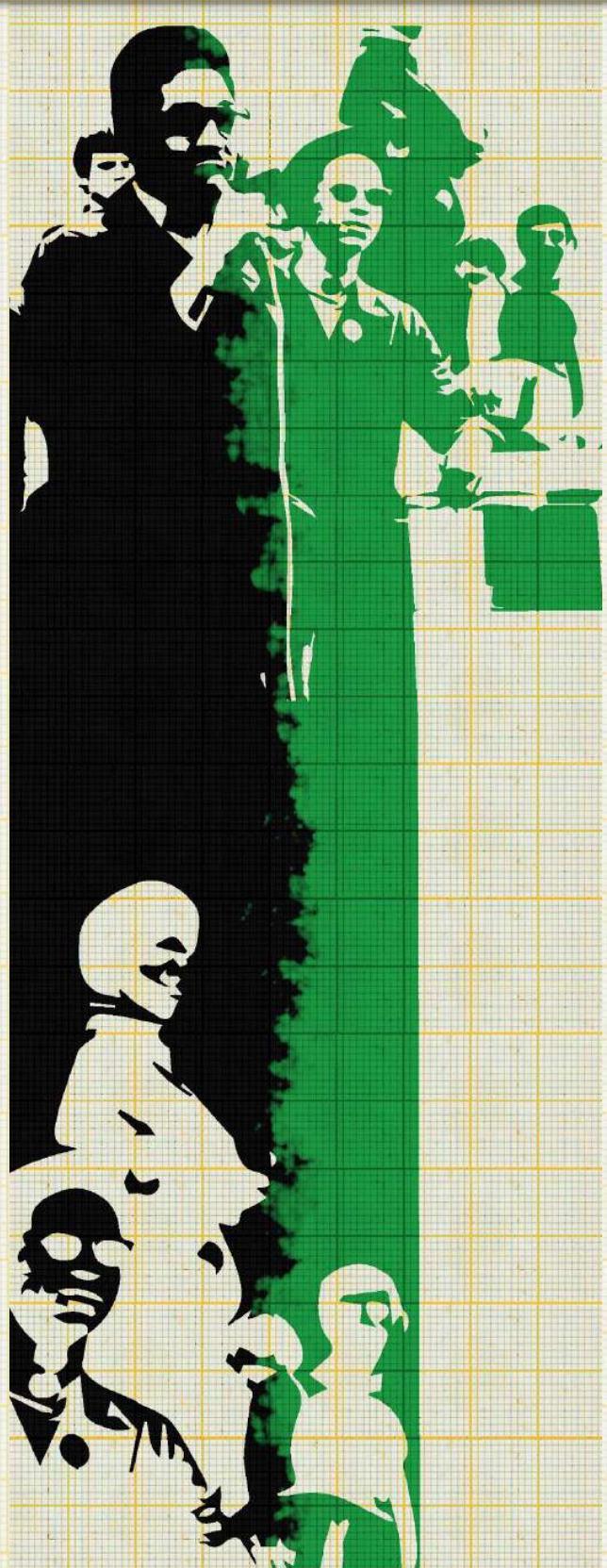
## HISTORY OF REPARATIONS IN THE INTERNATIONAL CONTEXT

Reparations is a well-established concept under international law. Making reparations has been structured in two broad ways. First, reparations can be paid to individuals and/or groups harmed by state actors or state policies (such as Holocaust survivors). Secondly, reparations can be paid to countries that have suffered financial and human loss in times of war or rebellion. Examples of country-to-country reparations go back millennia, to when Rome demanded and received payment from Carthage after the two Punic Wars. Since then, reparations were paid by Germany, Italy, and Japan after both World Wars, and Iraq is still paying reparations to Kuwait. Disturbingly, the Haitian Republic was also forced to pay reparations to France after they fought for freedom and independence from colonial rule and slavery.



## HERE ARE SOME OTHER EXAMPLES OF INDIVIDUAL AND GROUP REPARATIONS:

- ☑ Germany paid nearly \$89 billion in reparations for the Holocaust between 1952 and 2012. This included \$7 billion paid to the state of Israel. According to Israeli historian Tom Segev, the Bank of Israel attributed 15% of the country's growth over a twelve year period to these reparations, as well as about 45,000 jobs. Most of the reparations paid by Germany went to individual survivors through both one-time payments and ongoing monthly pensions. However, the Israeli government estimates that the financial cost of the Holocaust was between \$240 billion and \$320 billion, meaning that even these reparations efforts have not come close to covering the financial costs of the Holocaust.
- ☑ The South African post-apartheid Truth and Reconciliation Commission also recommended reparations and other policies and programs that would benefit the survivors of the apartheid regime, including over \$350 billion in monetary payments to individual survivors. However, in 2003, South African President Thabo Mbeki announced that only \$85 billion would be authorized to make one-time payments of \$3,900 to approximately 16,000 people (a fraction of the total number of people impacted by apartheid).







- ✓ In 2005, following a series of hearings before the Royal Commission on Aboriginal peoples, the Canadian government agreed to pay reparations to Indigenous people forced to attend government- and church-run residential schools between 1879 and 1996, creating a \$1.9 billion compensation package. In 2008, the federal government issued a formal apology for the practice. A \$600 million Truth and Reconciliation Commission to document the stories of survivors was launched in 2008, and relaunched in 2012. To date, it has collected and released over 900,000 pages of documentation related to the Indian Residential School experience. From 1998 to 2014, the federal government also funded the Aboriginal Healing Foundation to support community-based healing initiatives, and allocated \$20 million to community and commemorative projects.
- ✓ In 2017, the Canadian government agreed to pay \$750 million to survivors of the so-called “Sixties Scoop,” when Indigenous children were forcibly removed from their families between the 1960s and 1980s and placed in foster care or adopted by non-Indigenous families. The compensation package is designed to settle many of the lawsuits launched by survivors, who say the forced removal deprived them of their heritage, and led to mental disorders, substance abuse, and suicide.



## HISTORY OF REPARATIONS DEMANDS IN THE UNITED STATES

Black scholars, organizers, and communities made claims for reparations from the United States government both before the Civil War and following Reconstruction. One example of a successful individual petition was made by Belinda Sutton, seeking reparations for wages for her forty years of enslavement. In 1783, she was awarded a monthly pension from Isaac Royal, one of the major financial contributors to Harvard University. Another powerful example is that of Callie House, a formerly enslaved woman who was one of the founders the National Ex-Slave Mutual Relief and Bounty and Pension Association. House traveled throughout the South preaching the gospel of reparations, and during her 1897-1899 lecture tour, increased the organization's membership by over 30,000 people. In 1900, the Ex-Slave Mutual Relief and Bounty and Pension Association had a nationwide membership of nearly 300,000 people.

In the immediate aftermath of the Civil War, there was a widely accepted and well-reasoned assumption that delivering justice and equality to formerly enslaved people must consist of more than freedom alone. Congressman Thaddeus Stevens called for the transfer of 400 million acres from former slaveholders to former slaves. In addition, Senator Charles Sumner "called for land grants to those recently enslaved because legal equality did not eradicate the disparities in assets and power."

Nearly a hundred years later, in 1963, Queen Mother Audley Moore, the mother of the modern-day reparations movement, launched a campaign for reparations, claiming \$36 million in back pay for descendants of enslaved people as well as job quotas and job training. She published an extensive analysis of reparations: *Why Reparations? Reparations is the Battle Cry for the Economic and Social Freedom of More than 25 Million Descendants of American Slaves*, and mentored many generations of leaders throughout the 60s and 70s, including members of the Black Panther Party and the Republic of New Afrika.





Throughout the 1960s and 1970s, Black organizers ramped up their demands for reparations. Martin Luther King, Jr. also advocated for reparations, comparing it to compensation for stolen wages. In 1969, James Forman, a leader in the Student Non-Violent Coordinating Committee (SNCC), released the "Black Manifesto" on behalf of the National Black Economic Development Conference, calling for half a billion dollars in reparations from white churches and synagogues. The manifesto outlined a plan to create a National Black Labor Strike and Defense Fund, a National Welfare Rights Organization, a southern land bank, and four publishing and printing industries as "an alternative to the white dominated printing fields." Ultimately, Forman raised closer to half a million dollars, including a contribution from New York City's Riverside Church. At the 1972 National Black Political Convention meeting in Indiana, delegates demanded that the President create a Black-majority commission to collectively determine a procedure for reparations calculations and "exploring the ways in which the Black community prefers to have this payment implemented."



In 1987, a number of organizations came together to form the National Coalition of Blacks for Reparations in America (N'COBRA). A few years later, the NAACP officially endorsed reparations. Since 1989, Representative John Conyers, Jr. regularly introduced House Resolution 40 (H.R.40) in the federal House of Representatives, which would create a commission to examine financial and other impacts of slavery and continued discrimination and make recommendations to Congress on appropriate remedies.



Lawyers and organizers have taken the case for reparations to domestic courts and international tribunals, pursuing both governmental and corporate reparations. For instance, in 1951, the Civil Rights Congress filed a petition with the United Nations titled "We Charge Genocide: The Crime of Government Against the Negro People," detailing harms of lynching, legal discrimination, disenfranchisement, police violence, segregation, and systemic inequalities in health and other indicators connected to Jim Crow segregation, and demanding the newly formed United Nations to take action on behalf of Black people in the United States.



In 2016, after meeting with community groups and advocates from across the country, the United Nations Working Group of Experts on People of African Descent endorsed the call for reparations for people of African descent in the United States.

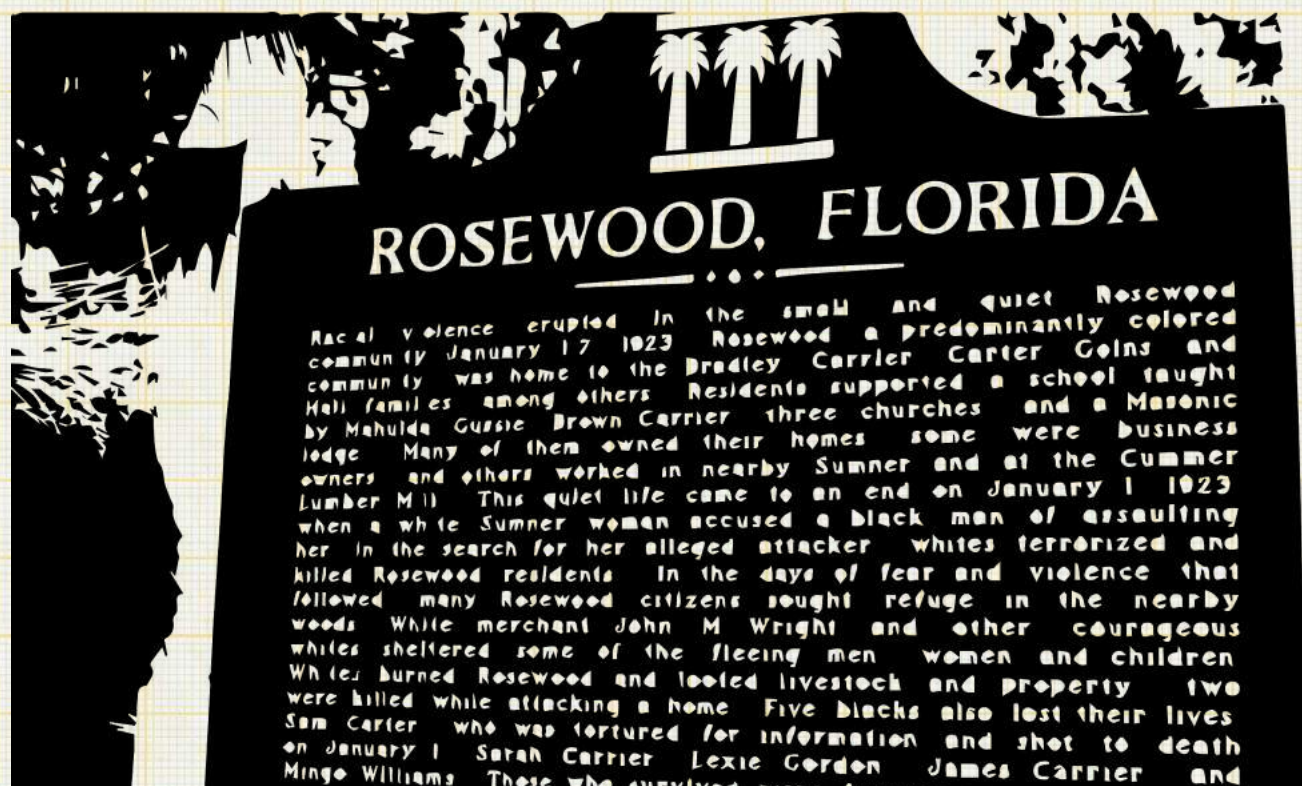
*"The colonial history, the legacy of enslavement, racial subordination and segregation, racial terrorism, and racial inequality in the [United States] remains a serious challenge as there has been no real commitment to reparations and to truth and reconciliation for people of African descent. Despite substantial changes since the end of the enforcement of Jim Crow and the fight for civil rights, ideology ensuring the domination of one group over another, continues to negatively impact the civil, political, economic, social and cultural rights of African Americans today. The dangerous ideology of white supremacy inhibits social cohesion amongst the [U.S.] population."*



Despite all of these calls for reparations, and extensive documented and ongoing harms against Black communities traceable to slavery and its aftermath, the federal government has refused to even issue an official apology for the state-sanctioned wrongs that mar this country's history and continue to impede the progress of Black communities.

Nevertheless, a few communities have successfully organized around the demand for reparations at the state and local levels. Some examples include:

- ☑ In 1974, a group of survivors and families impacted by the 40-year-long Tuskegee experiments, during which nearly 400 Black men with syphilis were left untreated so that scientists could study the progression of the disease, reached an out of court settlement of \$10 million that included both monetary payments and lifelong medical treatment for survivors and their families.
- ☑ In 1994, the state of Florida agreed to pay \$3.4 million in reparations to survivors of a 1923 white vigilante attack, in which the state was complicit, which completely destroyed the town of Rosewood, displaced all of its residents, and resulted in the death of 8 people and the rape, beating, and torture of dozens of others. The reparations package included approximately \$2.4 million to compensate living survivors and money for scholarships for descendants of survivors.





## NON-BLACK GROUPS IN THE UNITED STATES

Other groups, including survivors and families of Japanese Americans interned during War World II, have received nominal reparations from the federal government. Throughout War World II, the United States interned 120,000 Japanese Americans in camps, on the pretext that they posed a threat to national security. Aside from the incalculable emotional costs of being torn from their homes and incarcerated, the internment resulted in the loss of about \$3.1 billion of property and a \$6.4 billion loss of income. Between the end of War World II and 1992, the United States authorized about \$1.6 billion in payments to approximately 80,000 survivors. In addition to the individual payments, both President Ronald Reagan and President George H.W. Bush issued apologies to survivors of internment, and a 1988 Congressional bill included funding for investment in Japanese Cultural Centers, and the placement of landmarks on all internment sites reminding visitors that "this nation failed in its most sacred duty to protect its citizens against prejudice, greed, and political expediency."





# ACTIVITY: JEOPARDY

## DESCRIPTION:

We are going to play Jeopardy!



## OBJECTIVES:

To highlight some of the key information about reparations.



## TIME REQUIRED:

20-30 minutes



## PARTICIPANTS:

3-12 people (3 teams made up of between 1-4 people)



## MATERIALS:

Depends on which format you choose, but in all formats you will need the questions and answers.



## SET-UP AND TECHNOLOGY:

Depends on format.



## FORMAT:

This activity can happen in teams or with individuals playing against individuals. You can play the game by reading out the answers to the questions and having participants answer the questions orally. If you want to be high tech, you can also use a website or create a powerpoint. Or, if you are feeling artistic, you can set it up using pieces of paper with the answers to the questions and post them on the wall. However you decide to set up, let participants know you will be playing Jeopardy. Someone must be the host—they will be in charge of asking the questions (or in this case providing the answer) and keeping score. We have provided some sample questions, but you can write your own questions based on the information you have learned from the toolkit. Once everyone is done, give participants a chance to discuss any information that was new and/or surprising.



# JEOPARDY ANSWERS AND QUESTIONS

**ANSWER: 10.7 million**

**QUESTION:** What is the number of African people kidnapped, enslaved, and transported from West Africa to the Americas to be sold into slavery?

**ANSWER:** Born in Louisiana in 1898, she was one of the co-founders of the National Coalition of Blacks for Reparations in America

**QUESTION:** Who is Queen Mother Audley Moore?

**ANSWER:** Author of the case for reparations published in the Atlantic Magazine in 2014.

**QUESTION:** Who is Ta-Nehisi Coates?

**ANSWER:** She co-founded the National Ex-Slave Mutual Relief, Bounty and Pension Association in 1896.

**QUESTION:** Who is Callie House?

**ANSWER:** A bill that would establish a commission to examine the institution of slavery in the U.S. and its early colonies, and recommend appropriate remedies.

**QUESTION:** What is H.R.40?

**ANSWER:** A leader in the Student Non-Violent Coordinating Committee (SNCC) who released the "Black Manifesto" calling for half a billion dollars in reparations from white churches and synagogues.

**QUESTION:** Who is James Forman?

**ANSWER:** The petition filed in 1951 with the newly formed United Nations by the Civil Rights Congress that detailed the harms of lynching, legal discrimination, disenfranchisement, police violence, segregation, and systemic inequalities in health and other indicators connected to Jim Crow segregation.

**QUESTION:** What is "We Charge Genocide: The Crime of Government Against the Negro People?"

**ANSWER:** Cessation/Assurance of Non-Repetition, Restitution, Compensation, Satisfaction and Rehabilitation

**QUESTION:** What are the 5 components of the United Nations definition of reparations?

**ANSWER:** Georgetown University, Chicago Torture Cases, Tuskegee, forced sterilization in North Carolina.

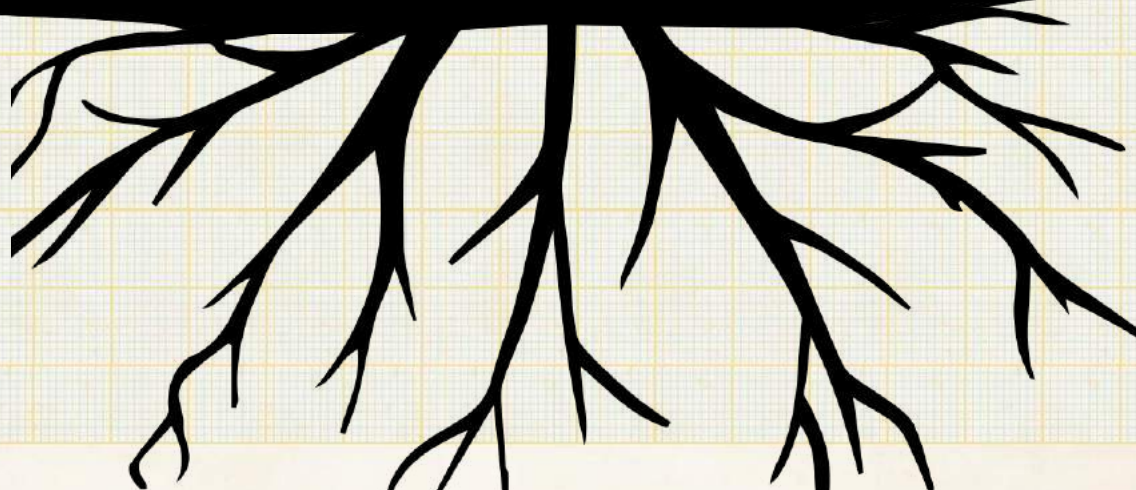
**QUESTION:** What are some examples of reparations given to Black people in the US?





**The colonial history, the legacy of enslavement, racial subordination and segregation, racial terrorism, and racial inequality in the [United States] remains a serious challenge as there has been no real commitment to reparations and to truth and reconciliation for people of African descent. Despite substantial changes since the end of the enforcement of Jim Crow and the fight for civil rights, ideology ensuring the domination of one group over another continues to negatively impact the civil, political, economic, social and cultural rights of African Americans today. The dangerous ideology of white supremacy inhibits social cohesion amongst the [U.S.] population.**

Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights, United Nations' Working Group of Experts on People of African Descent







## CASE STUDIES

## M4BL

This section describes four campaigns to secure reparations for specific harms to Black people or disproportionately experienced by Black people in the United States. Each campaign sought a variety of remedies and each used different combinations of strategies. Each faced critical challenges and can teach us important lessons about how to envision, develop, implement, and evaluate reparations campaigns around our issues and in our communities.



## HOW TO USE – CASE STUDIES

Each case study starts with an opening page that gives you the highlights about that case study. Below, you will find the key features that will support you in building knowledge on each case study.

### TYPE OF REPARATIONS:

- ☒ Following the opening summary there is a description of what happened and some of the key lessons learned.

### MECHANISMS:

- ☒ The mechanism by which it was won—from legislation to litigation.

### TARGET:

- ☒ The targets who organizers and advocates had to push to get reparations.

### BENEFICIARIES:

- ☒ The beneficiaries, or the people who benefited directly from reparations.

### OUTCOMES:

- ☒ The concrete outcomes, or things that organizers and advocates won and some discussion questions to help you think about the case study.







## DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

- ☒ These can help guide conversations and can be used in a training, classroom, or informal setting.

## NOTES FOR DISCUSSION:

A place to write your own notes about what you're learning as you're reading through the case studies.



## KEYWORDS/CONCEPTS



### STATUTE OF LIMITATIONS:

A statute prescribing a deadline for the bringing of certain kinds of legal action. Statutes of limitations restrict people's ability to sue people for violations or to indict them for crimes they may have committed if too much time has passed.

### ABLEIST/ABLEISM:

As defined by the Harriet Tubman Collective: a system that places value on people's bodies and minds based on societally-constructed ideas of normalcy, intelligence, and excellence. These ideas are deeply rooted in anti-Blackness, eugenics, and capitalism. This form of systemic oppression leads to people and society writ large determining who is valuable or worthy based on people's appearance and/or their ability to satisfactorily produce, excel, and "behave." Importantly, you do not have to be disabled to experience ableism.





**CASE STUDY ONE:  
REPARATIONS FOR  
POLICE TORTURE —  
CHICAGO**





## TYPE OF REPARATIONS:

- ☒ Apology
- ☒ Financial compensation
- ☒ Services and Support for Survivors
- ☒ Public Education
- ☒ Memorial

## MECHANISM:

- ☒ Legislative

## TARGET:

- ☒ Mayor of Chicago
- ☒ Chicago City Council

## BENEFICIARIES:

Black people tortured by Chicago Police Commander Jon Burge and detectives under his command at Areas 2 and 3 of the Chicago Police Department between 1971 and 1992.

## OUTCOMES:

- ☒ **Official apology from the City of Chicago** to living survivors.
- ☒ **Creation of a Public Memorial** (currently unfunded).
- ☒ **Public Education:** Chicago Public School curriculum to include a section co-developed with organizers and torture survivors entitled "Reparations Won: A Case Study in Police Torture, Racism, and the Movement for Justice."
- ☒ **Compensation:** \$5.5 million Reparations Fund for Burge Torture Victims divided equally (approximately \$100,000 per survivor) among 57 living survivors with credible claims of torture by Jon Burge and detectives under his command between 1971 and 1992.
- ☒ **Free enrollment in City Colleges** for torture survivors, immediate family, and grandchildren.
- ☒ **Priority access to city employment** for torture survivors.
- ☒ **Creation of a counseling and organizing center** for survivors and all people affected by police violence in Chicago.



## DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:



- ☒ What lessons from the Chicago reparations struggle might be applied to a fight for reparations in your community?
- ☒ What strategies seem most and least promising in a reparations fight?
- ☒ What does it mean to wage a multiracial struggle for reparations in which white allies play a leadership role? What are potential challenges? How might they be addressed?

## NOTES FOR DISCUSSION:

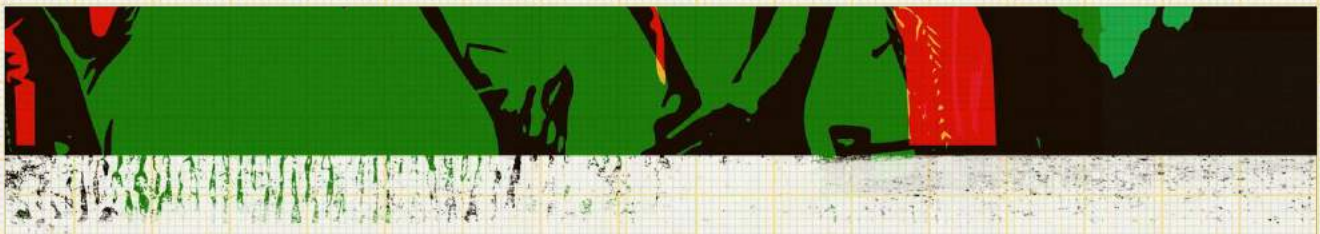




## WHAT HAPPENED?

Between 1971 and 1992, Chicago Police Commander Jon Burge and detectives under his command tortured over 120 Black men and women during interrogations. Detectives used electric shock, suffocation, beatings, Russian Roulette, rape, and denial of food, water, and bathrooms to obtain confessions, which were then used to secure criminal convictions and severe sentences, up to and including the death penalty. Torture survivors, their mothers, other family and community members, along with reporters, organizers, and lawyers, led a 30-year struggle. As a result, they won Burge's termination from the Chicago Police Department, an official acknowledgment of a systemic practice of torture, and the exoneration of 21 Burge torture survivors who were subsequently released from death row and prison. Some survivors were able to file successful civil lawsuits for wrongful conviction and obtain financial compensation. However, many survivors could not successfully file lawsuits because the statute of limitations had passed. Additionally, almost 30 remained behind bars based on convictions secured through confessions obtained by torture. Beyond Burge's termination with a full pension, no police officers or county officials responsible for the torture and subsequent cover-up, or for pursuing and upholding prosecutions based on confessions obtained by torture, were held accountable— in fact, one went on to become the Mayor of Chicago, and many others became prosecutors and judges.





In 2005, Standish Kwame Willis, founder of Black People Against Police Torture (BPAPT), called for reparations for survivors of police torture in Chicago before the Inter-American Commission for Human Rights that same year. In 2006, Joey Mogul, a white attorney from the People's Law Office, who has represented and organized on behalf of dozens of torture survivors, secured a finding from the UN Committee Against Torture calling on the United States government to investigate the cases and bring the perpetrators to justice.

Following widespread media coverage and public pressure, former Chicago Police Commander Jon Burge was prosecuted and convicted for perjury and obstruction of justice for lying about the torture he and other detectives committed (he could no longer be prosecuted for his acts of torture due to the expired statute of limitations).

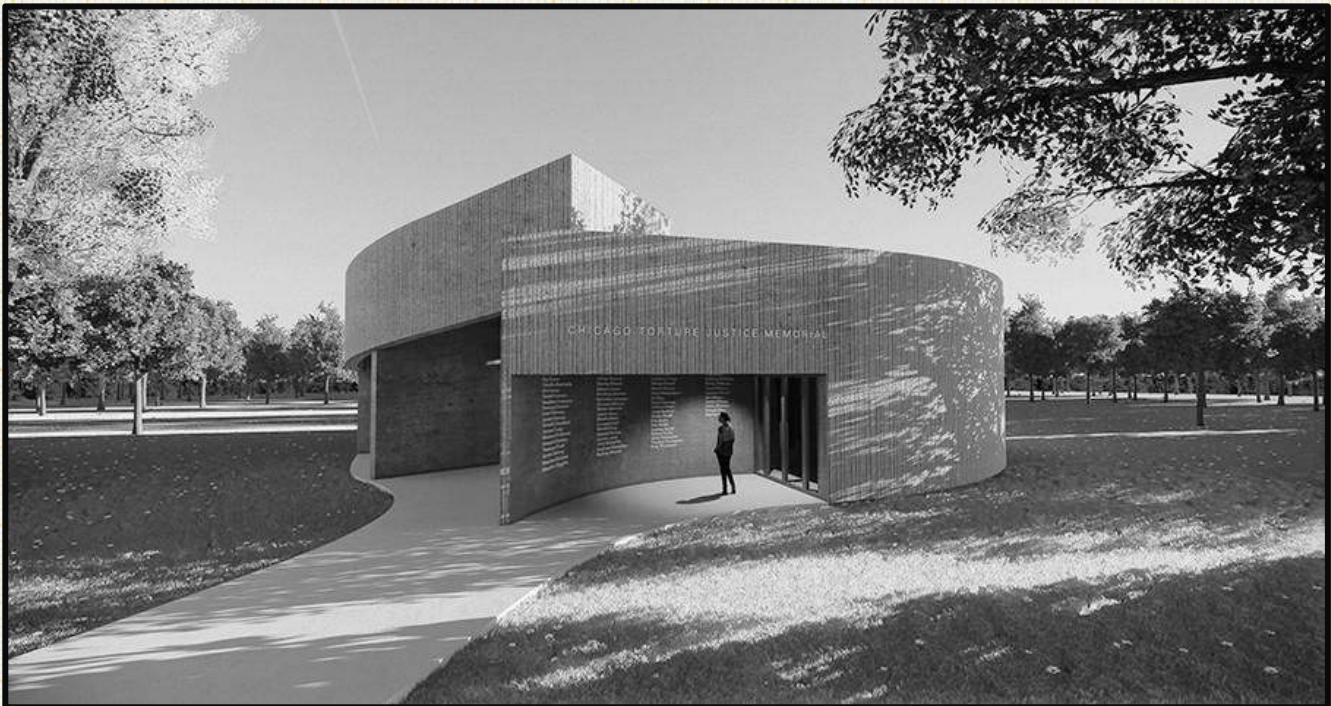


In 2013, Mogul founded the Chicago Torture Justice Memorials (CTJM) with survivors, artists, organizers, and lawyers to explore what justice for survivors of police torture could look like, and how to publically memorialize the Burge torture cases. CTJM issued a call for proposals and mounted dozens of exhibits and events exploring visions for individual and collective justice and healing for survivors and Black communities on the South Side of Chicago. In September 2013, Mogul drafted and submitted a municipal reparations ordinance as a proposed memorial to the survivors and the struggle for justice.



In the Spring of 2014, a delegation of Black youth from We Charge Genocide, an organization named after the 1951 Civil Rights Congress We Charge Genocide petition, returned from a second successful effort to call for justice in the Burge torture cases before the UN Committee Against Torture.

In 2014, within the context of heightened outrage around police violence, Chicago community organizations came together under the leadership of CTJM, Mariame Kaba and Project Nia, We Charge Genocide, and Amnesty International USA to secure passage of the reparations ordinance. Through weekly protests and actions, including train takeovers, sing-ins, light actions, banner drops, public rallies, art exhibits, and demonstrations at Chicago's City Hall over a six month period leading up to a mayoral and city council election, organizers eventually secured passage of the reparations legislation and creation of a \$5 million compensation fund.



In addition to individual monetary compensation, the reparations legislation included provisions for restitution and repair, including a full official public apology to the survivors by the City of Chicago, construction of a memorial to the survivors and their struggle for justice, inclusion of a section on the torture cases in the Chicago Public Schools 8th and 10th grade curricula, free tuition at the City Colleges for torture survivors, their immediate family members, and grandchildren, priority for city jobs, and creation of a counseling and organizing center on the South Side of Chicago.





## CHALLENGES AND LESSONS

### LEARNED:

The Chicago reparations package represents a significant victory in a local struggle for reparations. That said, beyond the creation of a counseling and organizing center that is open to anyone affected by police violence in Chicago, it only provides reparations and redress for a limited group of people who experienced particularly egregious forms of police torture and brutality at the hands of a specific group of officers during a particular time frame. Chicago's reparations package did not produce any policy change, and there are no guarantees of non-repetition. While the specific forms of torture deployed by Burge may no longer be used, Chicago police officers continue to kill, torture, rape, and use Tasers, violating the rights of Chicago residents with impunity.

Additionally, there is currently no guaranteed city funding for the Chicago Torture Justice Center beyond 2019, and while the City has identified land upon which the memorial can be built, it has not yet appropriated any funds to do so.

One of the most significant lessons learned in the Chicago campaign for reparations is how hard implementation can be. It is important to think ahead, beyond passage of legislation, and to build a team (including and beyond organizers) who possess the necessary knowledge, skills, experiences, and most importantly, energy and commitment, to help ensure robust and principled implementation of a comprehensive reparations legislation package.







**CARICOM**  
REPARATIONS COMMISSION

## CASE STUDY TWO: CARICOM







## TYPE OF REPARATIONS:

- ☒ Apology
- ☒ Repatriation
- ☒ Rehabilitation
- ☒ Education

## MECHANISMS:

- ☒ Legislative
- ☒ Administrative

## TARGET:

- ☒ European nations who hold or held colonies in the Caribbean, Central and South America.

## BENEFICIARIES:

Indigenous and African descendant communities in the Caribbean who have experienced genocide, slavery, slave trading, and racial apartheid.

## OUTCOMES:

- ☒ While none of the European countries targeted have met all of the reparations demands, CARICOM's campaign has kept the issue of reparations for colonialism, slavery, and genocide alive in the international community and has kept the issue within conversations at the United Nations.





## DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:



- ☒ What kinds of pressure do you think the international community could put on the European countries targeted by CARICOM to push them toward meeting any of the reparations demands?
- ☒ What should be key elements of an African knowledge program?
- ☒ In addition to potentially getting reparations, what other benefits could come from the CARICOM countries working together to develop this set of joint reparations demands?

## NOTES FOR DISCUSSION:



## WHAT HAPPENED?

In 2013, the Caribbean Community, or CARICOM, a group of 20 countries in the Caribbean, Central and South America working together for cooperation and economic integration, began discussions about Reparations for Native Genocide and Slavery, and to lay out a case for reparatory justice for the region's Indigenous and African descendant communities who experienced forms of genocide, slavery, slave trading, and racial apartheid.

In 2014, CARICOM developed a 10-point plan for reparatory justice demanding:

- ☒ A full formal apology, as opposed to "statements of regrets" that some European nations have Issued.
- ☒ Repatriation, asserting the legal right of the descendants of more than 10 million Africans stolen from their homes and forcefully transported to the Caribbean as enslaved chattel and property to return to their homelands.
- ☒ An Indigenous Peoples Development Program for survivors.
- ☒ Cultural institutions through which the stories of victims and their descendants can be told.
- ☒ Attention to the "public health crisis" in the Caribbean: the Caribbean has the "highest incidence of chronic diseases which stem from the nutritional experience, emotional brutality, and overall stress profiles associated with slavery, genocide, and apartheid."
- ☒ Eradicating illiteracy, as Black and Indigenous communities of the Caribbean were left in a state of illiteracy, particularly by the British.
- ☒ An African knowledge program to teach people of African descent about their roots.
- ☒ Psychological rehabilitation for healing and repair of African descendant populations.
- ☒ Technology transfer for greater access to the world's science and technology culture.
- ☒ Debt cancellation to address the "fiscal entrapment" that faces Caribbean governments that emerged from slavery and colonialism.

**OPPORTUNITIES:** If successful, this case could be a model for future reparations campaigns aimed at seeking reparations from other colonial powers.





## CASE STUDY THREE: GEORGETOWN UNIVERSITY





## TYPE OF REPARATIONS:

- ☒ Services
- ☒ Policy change
- ☒ Investment in institutions
- ☒ Education

## MECHANISMS:

- ☒ Administrative

## TARGET:

- ☒ Georgetown University

## BENEFICIARIES:

Descendants of enslaved Africans held by Georgetown University who were sold by the university to prevent financial hardship.

## OUTCOMES:

- ☒ **Restitution:** Preferential admissions to Georgetown University for descendents of people sold by the university.
- ☒ **Memorial:** Campus building names changed: one to the name of one of the slaves that had been sold; one to a free woman of African descent.
- ☒ **Education:** Create a booklet called, "What We Know: Georgetown University and Slavery," which was distributed across campus and used in an on-campus teach-in.
- ☒ **GU272 descendant groups formed.** One group sought legal representation, others are interested in pushing the university to do more, others are interested in establishing a foundation.





## DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:



- ☒ What do you think about the fact that the student body agreed to raise student fees to pay into Georgetown's reparations fund? Should those resources come from student fees? Why or why not?
- ☒ What do you think about Georgetown offering "preferential admissions" to descendants of the slaves it sold? Should those descendants receive any other supports?

## NOTES FOR DISCUSSION:



## WHAT HAPPENED?

In 2014, pressure from the student body pushed Georgetown University to publicly acknowledge that the university had held slaves and sold 272 people in order to save the university financially in 1838. In 2015, Georgetown established a working group that came up with the following recommendations:

- ☒ Establish a working group of faculty, staff, students, and alumni.
- ☒ Create a booklet called, "What We Know: Georgetown University and Slavery," which was distributed across campus and used in an on-campus teach-in.
- ☒ Establish a memorial for the 272 people sold by the university.
- ☒ Rename campus buildings currently named for the presidents involved in the sale.
- ☒ Establish a Department of African American Studies.
- ☒ Create the Institute for Racial Justice and a Center for the Study of Slavery and Its Legacies (still not established in 2018).
- ☒ Give admissions preference to descendants of people sold. This applies to about 7,700 people (similar to legacy students, and with no financial assistance offered to attend).

## CHALLENGES AND LESSONS LEARNED:

- ☒ Challenging to identify the descendants.
- ☒ Not all descendants have felt the reparations offered are sufficient.
- ☒ Some of the descendants wanted to play a larger role in determining the shape reparations would take, but they were not invited to participate in the working group; others want Georgetown to establish a foundation to support efforts of descendants and groups working to alleviate impacts of slavery; other descendants want support for family reunification; others think educational support for descendants needs to start during early childhood education so that people have a chance at even being competitive to take advantage of preferential admissions status.

**OPPORTUNITIES:** This model could be used as a starting place for other campaigns to demand reparations from private institutions.



**STOP FORCED STERILIZATION**  
**ALTO A ESTERILIZACION FORZADA**

**CASE STUDY FOUR: FORCED  
STERILIZATION —  
NORTH CAROLINA**

**PUBLIC HEARINGS ON STERILIZATION —**  
**FEB 12TH ▲ 10▲ STATE BUILDING 350 McALLISTER SF**

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## TYPE OF REPARATIONS:

- ☒ Apology
- ☒ Policy change
- ☒ Financial compensation
- ☒ Memorial

## MECHANISMS:

- ☒ Legislation
- ☒ Executive Order
- ☒ Budget appropriation

## TARGET:

- ☒ State legislature
- ☒ Governor

## BENEFICIARIES:

Living survivors who can establish by documentary evidence that they were involuntarily sterilized pursuant to an order of the North Carolina State Eugenics Board.

## OUTCOMES:

- ☒ **Apology** to living survivors.
- ☒ **Memorial plaque** and creation of traveling exhibit (unfunded).
- ☒ **Policy change:** Eugenics Board closed (1974); law allowing forced sterilization repealed (2003).
- ☒ **Public Education:** Public school curriculum is supposed to include history of eugenics, but has not been widely implemented.
- ☒ **Compensation:** \$10 million fund divided equally (approximately \$45,000 per survivor) among living survivors with provable claims against the State Eugenics Board. Compensation received by survivors does not count toward calculations of eligibility for state benefits or state tax liability.







## DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:



- ☒ How could survivors have been more involved in the struggle for reparations for sterilization in North Carolina? How might that have changed the process and outcomes?
- ☒ How could this struggle for reparations have made stronger connections between forced sterilization and anti-Black ableism (historic and structural violence against Black people who are—or are framed as—disabled)?
- ☒ What challenges do we see in seeking reparations for harms experienced predominantly, but not exclusively, by Black people?
- ☒ How can we specifically highlight the ways many harms committed are directly connected to slavery and anti-Blackness even though they may impact non-Black people or may have started after the passage of the 13th Amendment? *For instance, shackling incarcerated pregnant people while giving birth is driven by the fact that the majority of women historically and currently incarcerated are Black women—and, therefore, the treatment of incarcerated people giving birth is rooted in the assumption that the people experiencing this treatment will be Black women.*
- ☒ How can we address documentation challenges in our demands for reparations, particularly where the documentation of harm is in the hands of the state or records are likely to have been destroyed?





**NOTES FOR DISCUSSION:**



**WHAT HAPPENED?** Between 1929 and 1974, the North Carolina State Eugenics Board ordered the sterilization of 7,600 people against their will. Hundreds more were sterilized under orders issued by county governments based on petitions by local doctors and social workers. Eighty-five percent of people overall, and 98% of people sterilized in the 1960s, were Black. More than 75% of forced sterilizations in North Carolina occurred at the height of the Jim Crow era.

North Carolina's sterilization program was first challenged through two lawsuits filed against the state in 1973 and 1974 by Black women sterilized under threats of institutionalization or termination of welfare benefits. The lawsuits did not produce compensation from the government, but raised awareness of the issue, leading to **policy change**: the Eugenics Board was closed in 1974, and the state law that allowed forced sterilization was eventually repealed in 2003.

Thirty years after the lawsuits were filed, the Winston-Salem Journal newspaper published a 5-part series on the eugenics program in 2002, prompting North Carolina state representative Larry Womble to call the practice a "holocaust" and demand an apology, acknowledgment, and compensation. The Governor of North Carolina issued an **apology** later that year, and established a Eugenics Study Committee charged "with exploring the history of the [eugenics] program, ensuring it was never repeated, and making recommendations on how to assist program survivors." After the Committee released its recommendations, a **memorial** was created in the form of a traveling Eugenics Exhibit and a Eugenics Board Historical Marker. Additionally, the history of eugenics was to be added to North Carolina public school curriculum as part of **public education** efforts.





Representative Womble introduced a bill in 2003 calling for compensation for people subject to forced sterilization, and every year thereafter until 2013. In 2010, the Governor set aside \$250,000 to establish the House Select Committee on Compensation for Victims of the Eugenic Sterilization Program to develop a proposal for compensation, including health care, counseling, and educational assistance. Once established after some delay, the Committee heard testimony from survivors and family members, but did not include any survivors in the decision-making process. The Committee recommended \$50,000 in compensation per person to living survivors of forced sterilization, and that the funds not be counted as income for the purpose of calculating state taxes or benefits. It also recommended that mental health services be provided for survivors, and revival of the traveling exhibit. After a long legislative debate, the Governor signed a budget including a \$10 million **compensation** fund for living survivors.





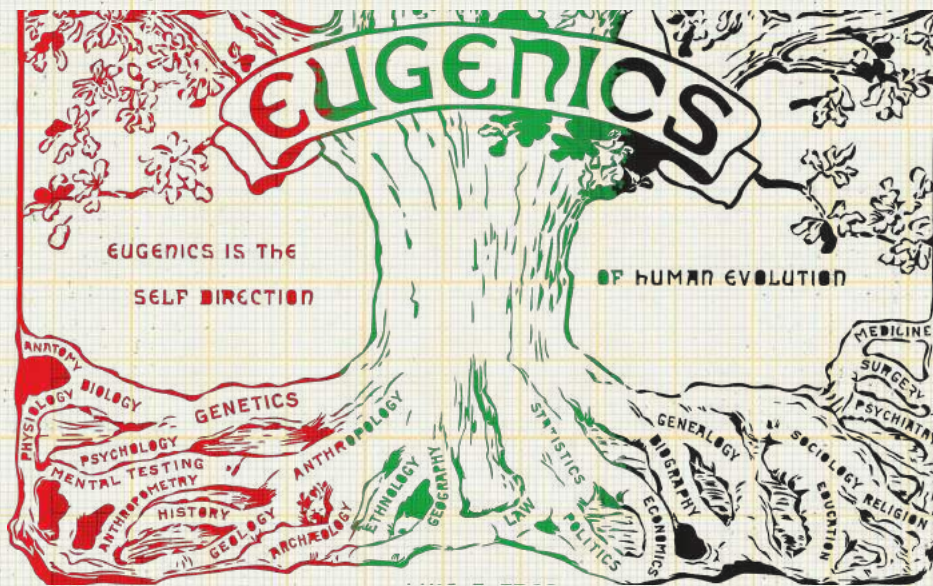
**CHALLENGES AND LESSONS LEARNED:** The fight for comprehensive reparations for people who were sterilized against their will in North Carolina faced several challenges, including:

- ☒ A state budget crisis.
- ☒ Concerns that the state would face unlimited liability if there was no cap on the compensation fund.
- ☒ A sense that taxpayers were being asked to pay for past wrongs committed by others.
- ☒ Many people who were forcibly sterilized were no longer alive when compensation was offered in 2013 to living survivors of a practice that took place between 1929 and 1974. No compensation was available to the descendants of people harmed by the practice.
- ☒ Many survivors were unable to provide documentary proof that they qualified for compensation because many records had been lost or destroyed.
- ☒ Many survivors or their guardians signed consent forms under threat of being denied welfare entitlements or being institutionalized (although the reparations law created a presumption that minors and adults deemed "incompetent" under the law were involuntarily sterilized).
- ☒ Reparations were **not** provided for people sterilized under orders by county officials that were not officially sanctioned by the State Eugenics Board.
- ☒ Survivors were given a relatively short time period to file a claim, and no official efforts were made to conduct outreach to survivors.
- ☒ Individual survivors received a relatively small amount of compensation.



Due to these challenges and more, the number of people who received compensation (220-250) was small compared to the number of people who were harmed (more than 7,600). Payments are exempt from state tax and income eligibility requirements for state and federal programs, but are still counted as income for the purpose of federal taxes.

The State of North Carolina is one of two of the 33 states that operated forced sterilization programs to provide financial compensation to survivors. The State of Virginia issued an apology and recently approved legislation providing for a \$400,000 compensation fund to pay the 11 survivors remaining out of over 7,600 people subjected to forced sterilization approximately \$25,000 each.



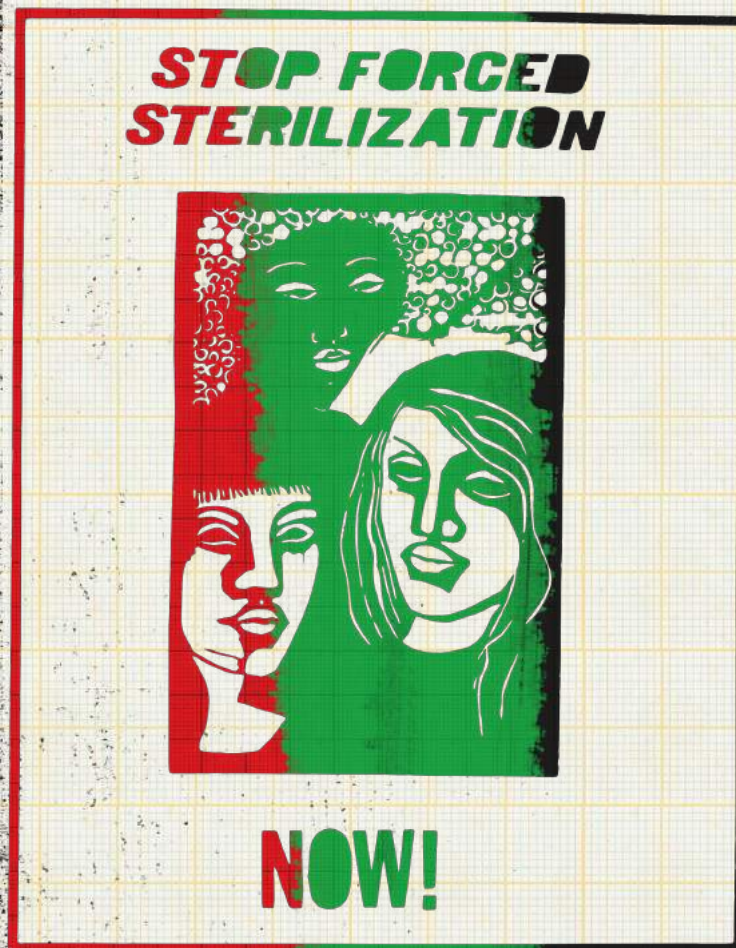
California is currently considering passage of AB 1764, which would provide compensation to people sterilized under California's state-sponsored sterilization program between 1909 and 1979, as well as to survivors of involuntary sterilizations in women's state prisons after 1979. The California legislation would be the first to offer compensation to survivors of involuntary sterilizations at a women's penal facility.

These represent some of the few instances in which Black women received or would receive reparations for reproductive harms which could be characterized as a "badges and incidents" of slavery because they are connected to abuses experienced by enslaved African descended women, and represented an exercise of total control over Black women's reproductive autonomy and bodily integrity. This was also one of the only instances where reparations were paid for forced sterilization, which is a common manifestation of ableism and harm to Black disabled people.



However, the struggle for reparations for forced sterilizations presents some complicated questions for those pursuing reparations as part of struggles for Black liberation. First, reparations for state forced sterilization programs are not exclusively owed or given to Black people, but to all individuals who are able to prove they were sterilized against their will, including white people. In fact, legislators actively promoted the fact that white people would be receiving benefits under the legislation in order to avoid perceptions that only Black people would receive compensation.

Secondly, the movement to obtain reparations for forced sterilization in North Carolina was not driven or led by the survivors, but rather by legislators, governors, and other system players without a direct stake in the outcome—and competing interests with survivors.



Third, the reparations ultimately obtained were limited to monetary compensation to living survivors who were able to prove entitlement through documentary evidence, and did not reach the hundreds of people who were illegally sterilized pursuant to county orders. Survivors only had three years to make a claim. The total amount of compensation was also capped at \$10 million, regardless of how many people came forward, creating a disincentive for survivors to seek out others, as that would reduce everyone's compensation. Although survivors received an apology and a permanent memorial of the program was created, the healing and educational services for survivors and their families originally recommended by the Task Force never became a reality and changes to the public school curriculum were never fully implemented.



## ACTIVITY: REPARATIONS CASE STUDIES

### DESCRIPTION:

In this exercise, participants will be given a scenario and will be asked to respond to the scenario by developing a set of reparations demands and a plan for seeking to have those demands met. Each group will be given the same short, pre-written scenario, relevant to the specific group of participants, laying out the harm being done to Black people in the scenario, the generational impacts of the harm, and contemporary expressions of the harm (note: you can use the case studies from this toolkit as scenarios).



### OBJECTIVES:

To support participants to understand the foundational elements of reparations claims.

To encourage participants to articulate and think collectively about the range of means through which reparations may be won.



### TIME REQUIRED:

45-90 minutes



### MATERIALS:

Pre-written scenarios (enough copies for each group)

Easel pads, markers, and tape



### PARTICIPANTS:

8-Unlimited



### SET-UP AND

### TECHNOLOGY:

Not needed



### FORMAT:

Small Groups. Break participants into groups of 2-4 depending on the number of participants. Ask each group to gather and do the following:

- ☒ Identify someone to write down the group's demands and plan, and someone to report back to the large group.
- ☒ Read the scenario together.





- ☒ Develop reparations demands to address the harm outlined in the scenario, keeping the five conditions of reparations in mind:

- ☒ Cessation and guarantees of non-repetition
- ☒ Restitution
- ☒ Compensation
- ☒ Satisfaction
- ☒ Rehabilitation

Describe what mechanisms or tools the group recommends to compel the demands to be met (i.e. legislation, executive orders or resolutions, budget allocations, direct action, media campaigns, etc.).

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Give each group at least 30 minutes to develop demands and make plans, and at least 10 minutes to share their demands and plans with the larger group. *Note:* facilitators should be careful to calculate time for report backs from all small groups into the overall time allotted for this exercise.





## **TIMELINE**

**This is an incomplete list of reparations demands and payments made in the United States by the federal government, states, cities, religious institutions, and colleges and universities.<sup>1</sup>**



**1783:** Belinda Sutton, kidnapped as a child in what is now Ghana and sold into slavery, successfully petitioned the Massachusetts state legislator for reparations from the man who claimed to own her, who was one of the major financial contributors to Harvard. Belinda inspired a movement by Harvard Law students in 2017.

**1865:** Union Army General Sherman issued Special Field Order #15, which gave 40,000 former slaves 40 acres each of captured land from South Carolina, Georgia, and Florida. The order was later overturned by President Andrew Johnson, who ordered the land returned to Confederate landholders.

**1866:** The Southern Homestead Act was signed into law, through which, "ex-slaves were given 6 months to purchase land at reasonable rates without competition from white southerners and northern investors. But, owing to their destitution, few ex-slaves were able to take advantage of the program. The largest number that did were located in Florida, numbering little more than 3,000... The program failed."

**1870:** Sojourner Truth circulated a petition requesting Congress to provide land to the "freed colored people in and about Washington" to allow them "to support themselves." Yet, Truth's efforts were not successful. Former slaves in the United States got no land or financial support after the end of slavery.

**1878:** Henrietta Wood won restitution for slavery. According to Caleb McDaniel, "[t]hough born enslaved in Kentucky in 1818 or 1820, Wood had been living as a free woman in Cincinnati in 1853 when she was kidnapped and re-enslaved by a white Kentuckian named Zebulon Ward; she ended up living in slavery until after the Civil War. But in 1869, Wood returned to Cincinnati and filed a lawsuit against Ward for \$20,000 in damages and lost wages. A federal court handed her a verdict for \$2,500, an amount worth \$60,000 today. It is the largest known sum ever awarded by a U.S. court in restitution for slavery."



**1894:** The National Ex-Slave Mutual Relief and Bounty and Pension Association was formed by a formerly enslaved woman, Callie House, and challenged the United States to pay pensions to former slaves. By 1898, it had enrolled 300,000 African Americans to demand pensions from the federal government. The Association called for \$15 per month, and \$500 in bounty for all formerly enslaved people over seventy, with staggered and decreasing benefits for younger former slaves who could still work.

**1890-1903:** Six ex-slave pension bills went before Congress; none were passed.

**1914:** Marcus Mosiah Garvey and Amy Ashwood Garvey formed the Universal Negro Improvement Association and began a movement for repatriation to Africa.

**1915:** When organizing efforts were consistently being stymied by federal attacks, Callie House "instigated and paid for a reparations lawsuit" that called for the federal government to pay \$68,073,388.99 to African Americans out of the Treasury that had been collected from cotton taxes between 1862 and 1868.

**1957-1959:** Queen Mother Audley Moore presented a petition to the United Nations demanding land and billions of dollars in compensation, as well as repatriation to Africa. She later published *Why Reparations? Reparations Is the Battle Cry for the Economic and Social Freedom of More than 25 Million Descendants of American Slaves*.

**1962:** Queen Mother Audley Moore formed the Reparations Committee of the United States Slaves, Inc., with Dara Abubakari. In 1962, they delivered a communiqué to the United Nations demanding that the United States government be forced to pay reparations.



**1969:** The "Black Manifesto" was launched in Detroit. Penned by James Forman, former Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee (SNCC) organizer, and released at the National Black Economic Development Conference, the manifesto demanded \$500 million in reparations from predominantly white religious institutions for their role in perpetuating slavery. About \$215,000 was raised from the Episcopal and Methodist churches through rancorous deliberations that ultimately tore the coalition apart.

**1988:** President Ronald Reagan signed the Civil Liberties Act, which provided \$1.2 billion (\$20,000 a person) and an apology to each of the approximately 60,000 living Japanese Americans who had been interned during World War II. Additionally, \$12,000 and an apology were given to 450 Unangans (Aleuts) for internment during WWII, and a \$6.4 million trust fund was created for their communities.

**1994:** The State of Florida approved \$2.1 million for the living survivors of a 1923 racial massacre that resulted in multiple deaths and the decimation of the Black community in the town of Rosewood.

**1995\*:** The Southern Baptists apologized to African American church members for the denomination's endorsement of slavery.

**1997\*:** President Bill Clinton apologized to the survivors of the United States government-sponsored syphilis tests in Tuskegee, Alabama.

**2001:** The Oklahoma legislature passed, and Governor Keating signed, a bill to pay reparations for the destruction of the Greenwood, Oklahoma community by white supremacists in 1921 in the form of low-income student scholarships in Tulsa; an economic development authority for Greenwood; a memorial; and medals to the 118 known living survivors of the destruction of Greenwood.



**2002\*:** Governor Mark Warner of Virginia issued a formal apology for the state's decision to forcibly sterilize more than 8,000 of its residents.

**2002:** Edward Fagan filed a class-action lawsuit in the name of Deadria Farmer-Paellmann and other people in similar situations. Fagan's lawsuit requested a formal apology and financial reparations from three United States companies that profited from slavery. Among these corporations was Aetna Insurance Company, which held an insurance policy in the name of Abel Hines, Farmer-Paellman's enslaved great-grandfather. Although the case was dismissed in 2004, the United States Court of Appeals for the Seventh Circuit later allowed the plaintiffs to engage in consumer protection claims exposing the companies named in the lawsuit for misleading their customers about their role in slavery.

**2005\*:** The United States Senate approved, by voice vote, S.R.39, which called for the lawmakers to apologize to lynching victims, survivors, and their descendants, several of whom were watching from the gallery. No financial reparations were given.

**2005:** Virginia, five decades after ignoring Prince Edward County and other locales that shut down their public schools in support of segregation, made a rare effort to confront its racist past, in effect apologizing and offering reparations in the form of scholarships. With a \$1 million donation from billionaire media investor John Kluge and a matching amount from the state, Virginia provided up to \$5,500 to any state resident who was denied a proper education when public schools shut down. More than 80 students have been approved for the scholarships and several thousand were potentially eligible.

**2008:** The United States House of Representatives issued an apology to Black Americans for the institution of slavery, and the subsequent Jim Crow laws that discriminated against them.



**2014:** The State of North Carolina set aside \$10 million for reparations payments to living survivors of the state's eugenics program, which forcibly sterilized approximately 7,600 people.

**2015:** The City of Chicago signed into law an ordinance granting \$5.5 million in cash payments, free college education, priority for city employment, and a range of social services, including the creation of a healing and organizing center on the South Side of Chicago, to 57 living survivors of police torture. Explicitly defined as reparations, the ordinance includes a formal apology from Mayor Rahm Emanuel and a mandate to teach the broader public about the tortures through a memorial and public school curriculum.

**2016:** The State of Virginia, one of more than 30 other states that practiced forced sterilizations, followed North Carolina's lead to award \$25,000 to each survivor.

**2016:** Georgetown University acknowledged that the school profited from the sale of slaves and "reconciled" by naming two buildings after African Americans and offering preferred admission to any descendants of slaves who labored at the university.

**2017\*:** Congressman John Conyers, D-Michigan, introduced a newly revised bill H.R.40, Commission to Study and Develop Reparation Proposals for African Americans Act, which was initially proposed to the House of Representatives in 1989 and every year since. The bill was introduced "[to] address the fundamental injustice, cruelty, brutality, and inhumanity of slavery in the United States and the 13 American colonies between 1619 and 1865 and to establish a commission to study and consider a national apology and proposal for reparations for the institution of slavery, its subsequent *de jure* and *de facto* racial and economic discrimination against African Americans, and the impact of these forces on living African Americans, to make recommendations to the Congress on appropriate remedies, and for other purposes."

\* the asterisk denotes apologies from government institutions and other organizations



## REPARATIONS PAID BY OTHER COUNTRIES

**1952:** Germany: \$822 million to Holocaust survivors: German Jewish Settlement

**1988:** Canada: \$230 million: Japanese Canadians

**1990:** Austria: \$25 million: Holocaust Survivors

**2008:** Canada: Reparations to survivors of Indian Residential Schools

**2014:** France: More than 700 claims have been filed under an agreement between the United States and France in which French officials have agreed to pay out \$60 million for the deportations of World War II prisoners to Nazi death camps carried out by SNCF, France's railway system. In exchange, the United States government agreed to ask courts to dismiss any lawsuits against SNCF or the French government.

**2015:** Japan: \$8.3 million to provide elder care to Korean "Comfort Women" survivors and a renewed apology.

**2016:** France: The State Department paid or approved 90 claims for a total of \$11 million in reparations by France to former WWII prisoners who were carried to Nazi Death Camps in French trains—the first French reparations paid to Holocaust survivors in the United States.

**2017:** Canada: Reparations for abduction of Indigenous children into the child welfare system.

<sup>1</sup> This timeline specifically borrows heavily from the booklet *Black Reparations Now! 40 Acres, \$50 Dollars, and a Mule, + Interest* by Dorothy Benton-Lewis, "Black and Blue Chicago Finds a New Way to Heal" by Yana Kunichoff and Sarah Macaraeg, YES Magazine, Spring 2017; and *Long Overdue: The Politics of Racial Reparations: From 40 Acres to Atonement and Beyond* by Charles P. Henry, 2007, NYU Press.



## ACTIVITY: REPARATIONS TIMELINE

### DESCRIPTION:

Create a timeline using the collective knowledge in the group. Use the timeline above to supplement the timeline you created and discuss major milestones in the ongoing fight for reparations. Once you complete the timeline, discuss the questions below.



### OBJECTIVES:

To build knowledge in the room about major milestones in the fight for reparations, and to add to that knowledge.



### PARTICIPANTS:

5-Unlimited



### FORMAT:

Individual reflection followed by large group discussion. Draw a timeline up on a whiteboard or butcher paper that begins in 1492 and ends in the present. Invite participants to write up key moments in history that they believe are critical to racial justice in the United States.

If participants are stuck and need some inspiration, pass out the timeline from the previous pages and discuss some of the historical moments included to help them spark their own thoughts.

Next, ask participants to write down on post-it notes some examples of reparations they are aware of. Use the above abbreviated list to fill in the timeline and engage participants in a discussion of the following questions:

- ☒ Why did we begin by focusing on historical moments relevant to racial justice in the United States before discussing the history of reparations?
- ☒ Where do you see your ancestors, your family, and/or yourself represented or involved in this timeline?
- ☒ How much of the history of reparations did we know? How much did we not know?
- ☒ What does this timeline tell you about our fight for reparations?
- ☒ Are there any lessons you want to apply to our current fight for reparations? If so, what?



### TIME REQUIRED:

20-40 minutes



### MATERIALS:

Butcher Paper or whiteboard, post-it notes, pens



### SET-UP AND TECHNOLOGY:

Not needed







# ACTIVITY: APOLOGY AND REPAIR

## DESCRIPTION:

This activity is an opportunity for participants to examine the apology issued from the House of Representatives in 2008 and discuss how they could use the points in the letter to advocate for reparations.



## OBJECTIVES:

To articulate a case for reparations and reflect on the adequacy of the 2008 House of Representatives apology.



## PARTICIPANTS:

3-Unlimited



## FORMAT:

In small groups, read the below apology and discuss the questions below.





## DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:



- ☒ What are your thoughts about this apology for slavery and Jim Crow that was passed as a resolution in the House of Representatives in 2008? What do you appreciate about the apology? What is missing or lacking?
- ☒ This apology does not mention a need for reparations for Black people. Write a response letter using the points offered in the apology to make a case for reparations.
- ☒ How do you think Harriet Tubman, Callie House, or Sojourner Truth would feel if they could have read this apology? What do think their responses would be to this apology?

## NOTES FOR DISCUSSION:



In 2008, the U.S. House of Representatives issued an apology to Black Americans for the institution of slavery, and the subsequent Jim Crow laws that discriminated against them. The following is the text of the Resolution written and introduced by Congressman Steve Cohen (D-TN):

### **U.S. Apology for Slavery, Jim Crow**

**July 29, 2008**

Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and Mr. Chairman. It is with pride that I introduce this resolution with 120 co-sponsors from both sides of the aisle. It is with pride that I serve as a member of this institution, in this building that was built with slave labor, and for which the new Visitors Gallery will be known as Emancipation Hall. It was a gentleman from this side of the aisle, the party of Lincoln, Representative Zach Wamp from my state, and this side of the aisle, Representative Jesse Jackson Jr., who eloquently spoke to a subcommittee of which I'm a member, urging the remembrance and recognition of the work of the slaves who helped construct this magnificent capitol building and have the entryway named Emancipation Hall.

This country had an institution of slavery for 246 years and followed it with Jim Crow laws that denied people equal opportunity under the law. There was segregation in the south and other places in this country, at least through the year 1965 when civil rights laws were passed. There were separate water fountains for people, marked white and colored, there were restaurants, there were separate hotels, there were job opportunities that were not available to African-Americans. There were theaters that were segregated.

It's hard to imagine, in 2008, that such a society existed and was sanctioned by law, that the laws of the nation provided for segregation and enforced slave fugitive slave laws. In fact, the history of slavery goes not just through the Emancipation Proclamation and the 13th, 14th, and 15th amendments to our constitution, but as so eloquently written, just yesterday, in "The Baltimore Sun" in an editorial by Mr. Leonard Pitts Jr., that slavery existed up until about World War II, but it was a form of slavery where people were bought and sold for debts, it was slavery by another name. In a book called *Slavery By Another Name* by Douglass Blackman, a correspondent for the Wall Street Journal, when he talked about a convict leasing system in the south where in poor black men were routinely snatched up and tried on false petty or nonexistent charges by compliant courts, assessed some fine they could not afford, and then put into the servitude of an individual who bought them. This system continued up until World War II.

The fact is, slavery and Jim Crow are stains upon what is the greatest nation on the face of the earth and the greatest government ever conceived by man. But when we conceived



this government and said all men were created equal we didn't in fact make all men equal, nor did we make women equal. We have worked to form a more perfect union, and part of forming a more perfect union is laws, and part of it is such as resolutions like we have before us today where we face up to our mistakes and we apologize, as anyone should apologize for things that were done in the past that were wrong. And we begin a dialogue that will hopefully lead us to a better understanding of where we are in America today and why certain conditions exist.

In 1997, President Clinton talked to the nation about the problem this country had with race. And he wanted a national dialogue. He considered an apology for slavery. I happened to run into President Clinton at that time, at the Amtrak station here in Washington and discussed with him having an apology for Jim Crow as well as slavery. I encompassed that in a letter dated July 2, 1997 that as a state Senator in Tennessee I wrote to President Clinton. In that letter, I urged him to have a slavery apology and a Jim Crow apology and to mark it on the 30th Anniversary of the Assassination of Dr. Martin Luther King, and that event tragically took place in April of 1968 in my city and that the appropriate time for President Clinton to have that apology would be on that 30th anniversary.

In going through my papers as I was elected to congress, I found this letter and I thought about it and I said to myself, you're a member of congress, you don't need to wait on a response

from the President of the United States, which my friend, the president's office, failed to make a response. I can take action myself. So I introduced the resolution in February of 2007 with 120 sponsors joining me as time went on. It is important on this day that we admit our error, that we apologize. I've been in this body and voted with the rest of the body on unanimous voice vote to encourage, this past year, the Japanese Government to apologize for its use of Chinese women as "comfort women" during the war. And not a voice was raised questioning that resolution which passed unanimously on us calling on a foreign country to apologize for its use of "comfort women." Twenty years ago this congress passed a bill apologizing for the internment of Japanese citizens during World War II. In fact, subsequent to the consideration of this resolution, the distinguished lady from California, Ms. Matsui, has a resolution recognizing and celebrating the 20th anniversary of the passage of that bill.





This Congress did the right thing in apologizing for the imprisonment of Japanese-Americans during World War II and in encouraging the Japanese Government to apologize for the use of "comfort women." But the fact that this government has not apologized to its own citizens, African-Americans, for the institution of slavery and for the Jim Crow laws that followed and accepted that fact and encouraged changes in our dialogue and understanding in the actions of this country to rectify that is certainly a mistake. And today we rectify that mistake. This is a symbolic resolution but hopefully it will begin a dialogue where people will open their hearts and their minds to the problems that face this country, from racism that exists in this country on both sides and which must end if we're to go forward as the country that we were created to be and which we are destined to be. So it is with great honor that I speak on this resolution and urge the members of this body to pass this historic resolution, recognize our errors, but also recognize the greatness of this country, because only a great country can recognize and admit its mistakes and then travel forth to create indeed a more perfect union that works to bring people of all races, religions and creeds together in unity as Americans part of the United States of America. Mr. Speaker, I thank you for the time and I urge my colleagues to vote unanimously to pass this resolution today. Thank you.

<http://bit.ly/Congress-Apologizes-for-Slavery>





# ACTIVITY: REPARATIONS FROM THE MASTERS HOUSE

## DESCRIPTION:

This exercise allows participants to apply a Black queer feminist abolitionist lens to reparations. The exercise is borrowed from our comrades in Wildfire Project.



### OBJECTIVES:

Practice applying an abolitionist and Black queer radical feminist reparations lens.



### TIME REQUIRED:

30-45 minutes



### PARTICIPANTS:

15-20 people



### MATERIALS:

Flip chart paper and markers



### FORMAT:

Small groups.



### SET-UP AND

### TECHNOLOGY:

No technology required

The facilitator should reveal four flip charts:

- 1) white supremacy/race;
- 2) capitalism/class;
- 3) hetero-patriarchy/gender and sexuality;
- 4) picture of a house.

Give the following instructions to the participants:

- ☒ Let's engage a Black queer feminist reparations lens. For each flip chart, come up with one thing that needs to be **abolished**; one way money from an institution, the state, or a lineage/family could contribute to "**repair**;" or a vision of a new house.
- ☒ Break into **3 groups**: one per flip chart (or six if too many people). Each group has 10 minutes to brainstorm more examples.
- ☒ Groups have 1-2 minutes each to share back.

We will call the source of all harm "The Masters House."



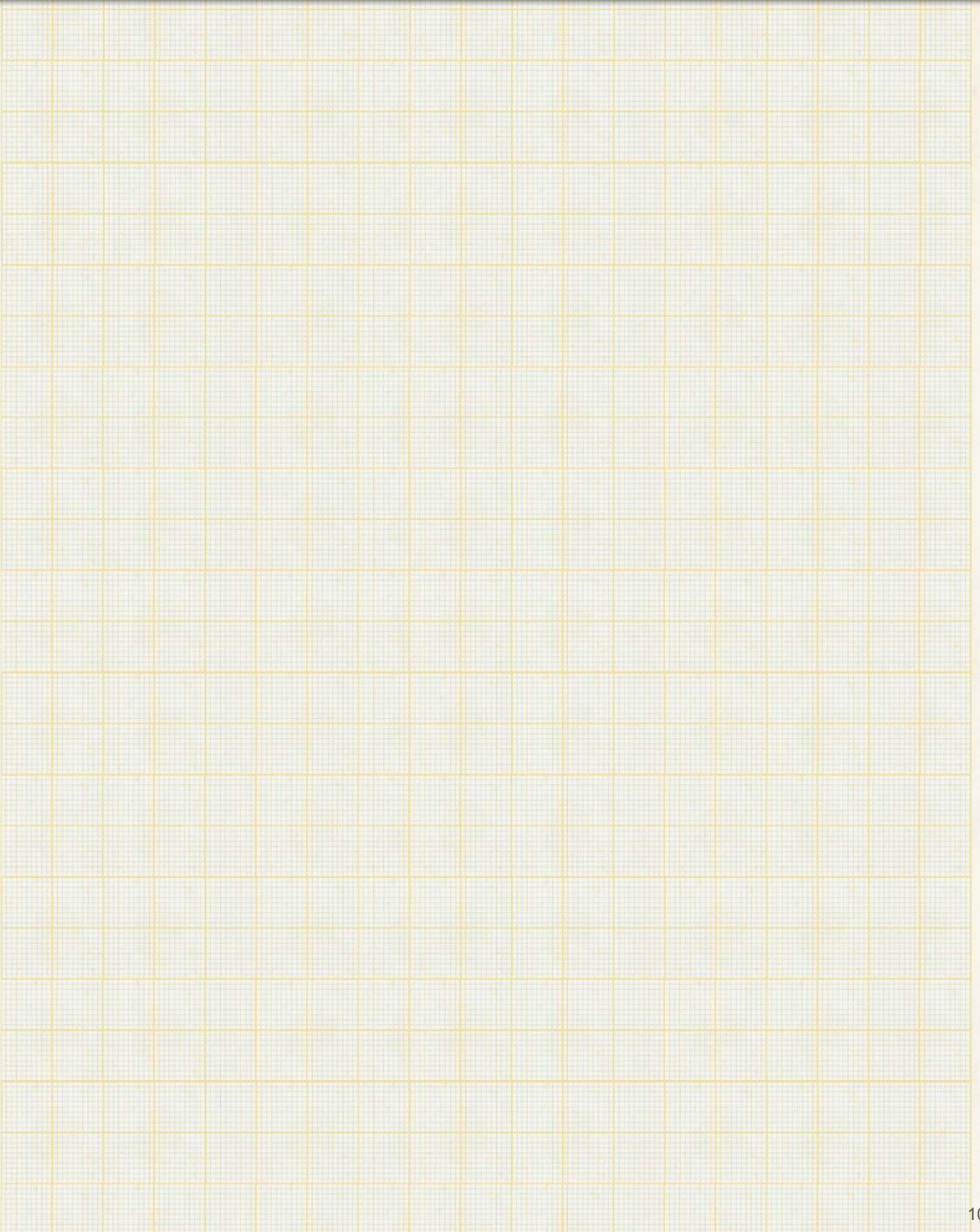
Building the master's house first required displacing people in both Africa and the land now known as the United States, through genocide, kidnapping, and enslaving people.

Then, in order to build the house on the stolen land, the intersecting oppressions of **white supremacy**, **heteropatriarchy**, and **racial capitalism** were required. Throughout history and still today this oppression continues to keep the master's house in place.

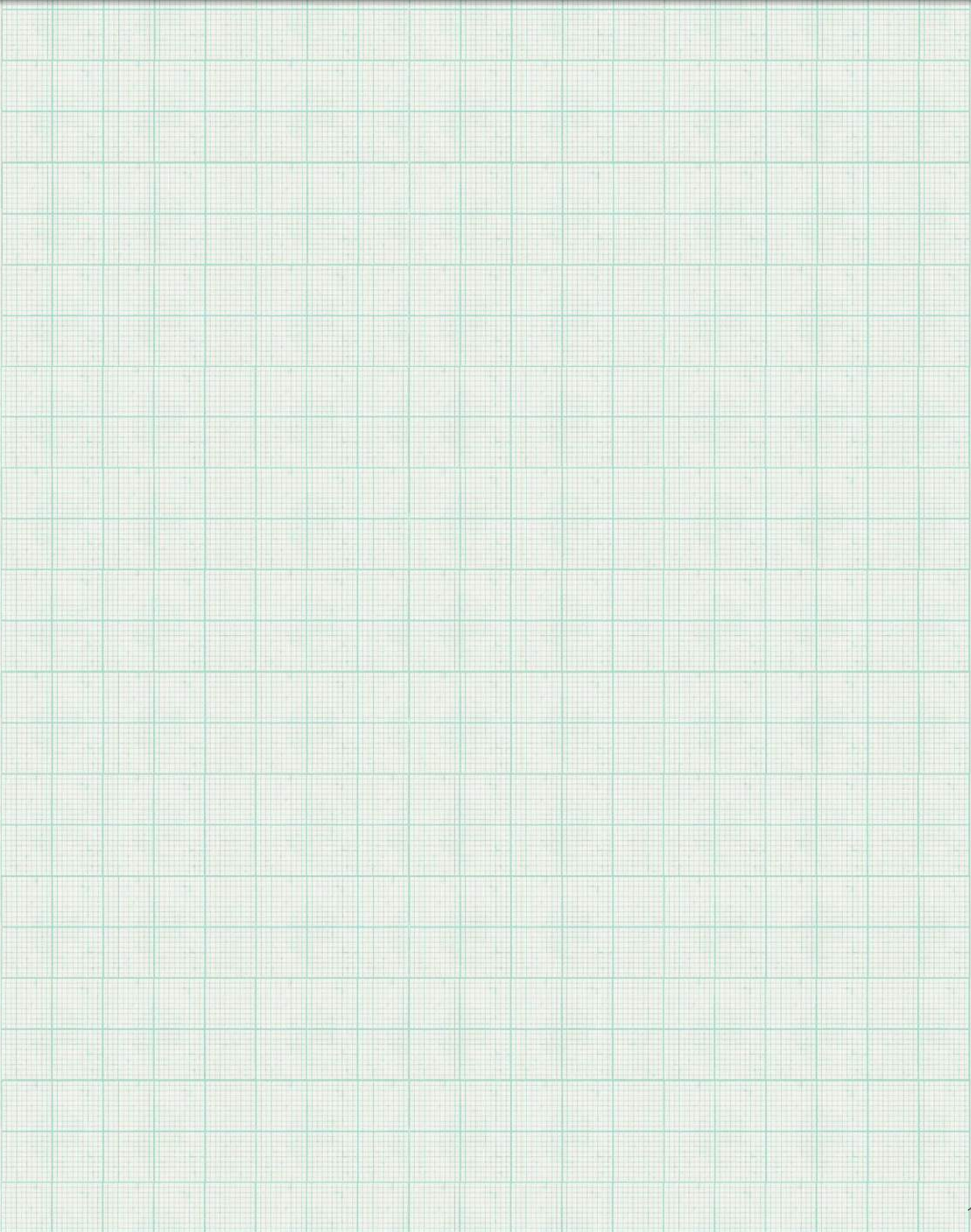
If reparations must dismantle the master's house, what are all the areas that must be addressed, repaired, abolished?



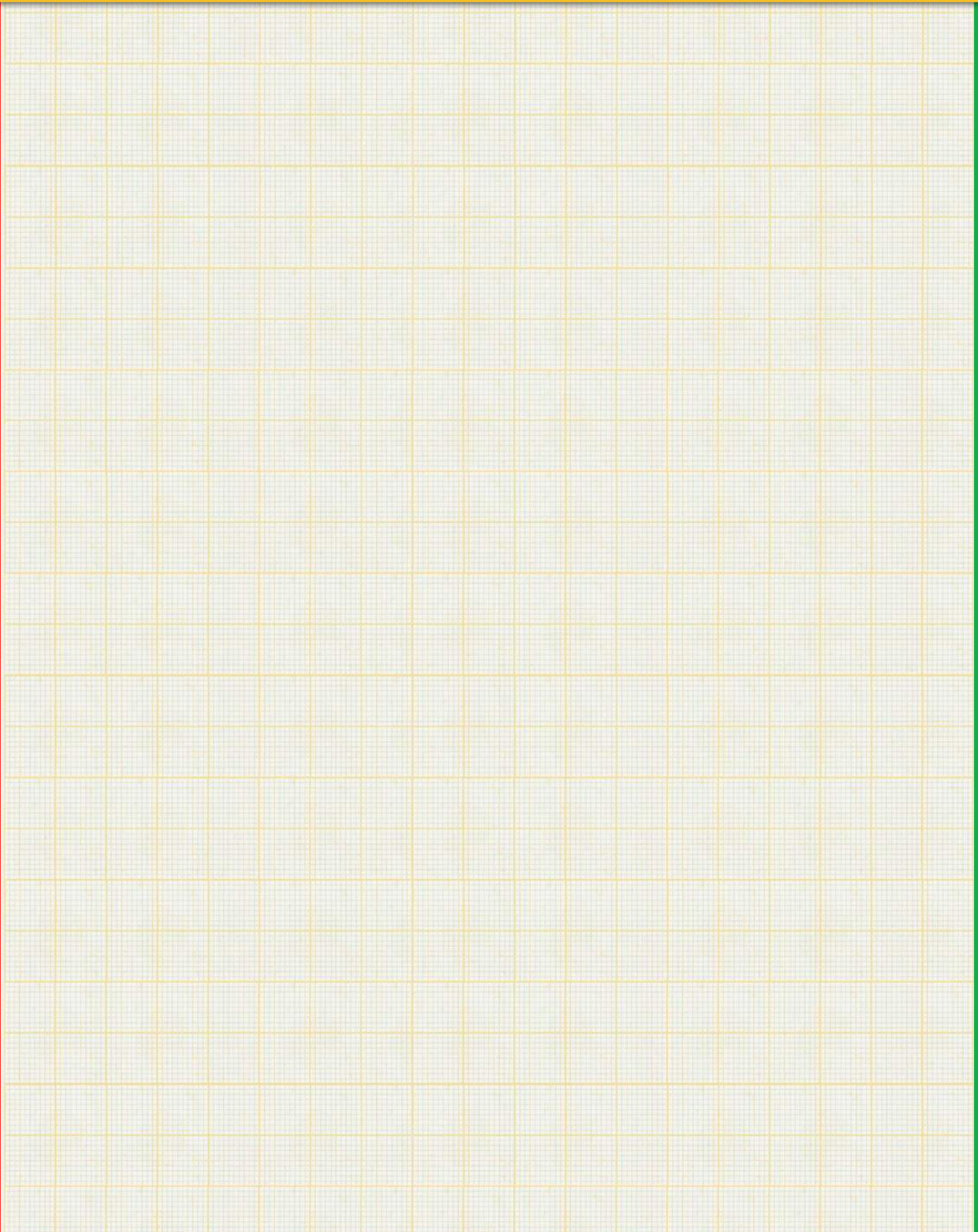














# > GLOSSARY

- **ABLEIST/ABLEISM:** As defined by the Harriet Tubman Collective: a system that places value on people's bodies and minds based on societally-constructed ideas of normalcy, intelligence, and excellence. These ideas are deeply rooted in anti-Blackness, eugenics, and capitalism. This form of systemic oppression leads to people and society writ large determining who is valuable or worthy based on people's appearance and/or their ability to satisfactorily produce, excel, and "behave." Importantly, you do not have to be disabled to experience ableism.

- **BADGES AND INCIDENTS OF SLAVERY:** Ongoing perceptions, discrimination, violence, or state or private policy or action that target or taint any racial group or population that has previously been held in slavery or servitude.

- **CESSATION:** A complete, full, and final end to continuing violations.



- **CHATTEL SLAVERY:** An economic, social, and political system under which people are deemed to be property, or "chattel," for life: to be used, bought, and sold at the owner's will as a matter of law, and their status as such passed to their children at birth.
- **DIVEST/INVEST:** A framework that demands divestment (in the form of resources, legitimacy, and power) from exploitative forces (including prisons, fossil fuels, police, surveillance, and corporations) and investment into infrastructure and services that support our people (including education, transportation, and the health and safety of our communities).



- **DOMESTIC SLAVE**

**TRADE:** Once the transatlantic slave trade was abolished, the transportation and sale of enslaved people of African descent within the United States increased, resulting in the relocation of millions of enslaved people to the Deep South.

- **EUGENICS:** “Junk science” that claims the human race can be improved, and “social ills” can be eliminated, through scientific “breeding.” Popularized by the Nazis, it is rooted in the same theories of scientific racism that were used to justify genocidal colonization of the African continent, the transatlantic slave trade, and chattel slavery. Eugenic sterilization programs were explicitly ableist, targeting both individuals and racial and ethnic groups described as “epileptic, ‘feeble-minded,’ or mentally diseased.” They were also used to punish gender and sexual nonconformity, targeting women and girls deemed “promiscuous” for sterilization—including when they became pregnant as a result of rape and incest. Sterilization was also often a condition of release from incarceration in state institutions, and people incarcerated in women’s prisons continue to report sterilization without informed consent.

- **GREAT MIGRATION:**

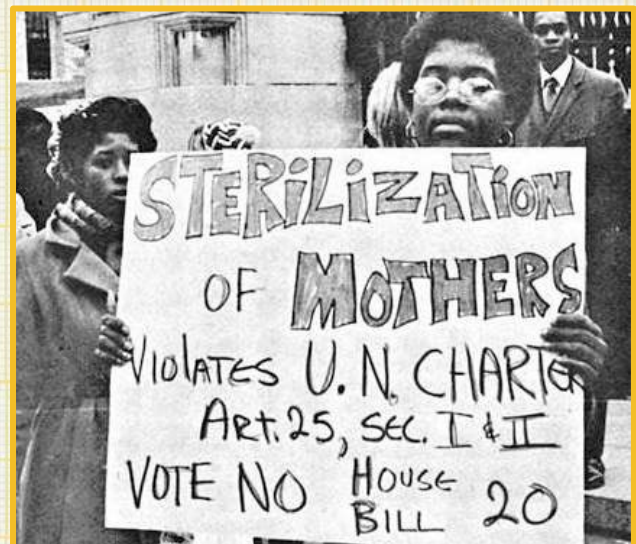
The migration of over 6 million Black people from Southern states to urban areas of the North, Midwest, and West, which occurred between 1916 and 1970 in response to state and state-sponsored terror and discrimination.

- **GUARANTEES OF NON-REPETITION:**

Assurances that violations will not be repeated in the future, including reviewing and reforming laws contributing to or allowing violations.

- **INTERGENERATIONAL**

**TRAUMA:** The transmission of historical oppression and its negative consequences across generations. Evidence of the health and emotional impacts of intergenerational trauma has been shown in Black and Indigenous peoples in the United States and Canada.





- **JIM CROW:** A derogatory term to refer to a Black man. The Jim Crow period (1877 to the mid-1960s) refers to the period during which segregation and other laws explicitly regulating the behavior of Black people and people of color were in operation, and enforced through policing, criminalization, and racial terror.
- **MIDDLE PASSAGE:** The portion of the transatlantic slave trade in which enslaved Africans were transported under horrific conditions from Africa to the Americas. The journey would take anywhere from three weeks to three months.
- **PRISON INDUSTRIAL COMPLEX ABOLITION:** Critical Resistance defines abolition of the Prison Industrial Complex (PIC) as a political vision with the goal of eliminating imprisonment, policing, and surveillance, and creating lasting alternatives to punishment and imprisonment. This definition recognizes that the PIC both feeds on and maintains oppression and inequalities through punishment, violence, and control. Because the PIC is not an isolated system, abolition is a broad strategy. An abolitionist vision means that we must build models today that can represent how we want to live in the future.
- **REDLINING:** The systematic denial of credit, insurance, or loans to particular communities on a discriminatory basis. The term was coined by sociologist James McKnight in the 1960s based on how lenders literally drew a red line on maps around the neighborhoods they would not invest in based on demographics. Black urban neighborhoods were most likely to be redlined. Investigations found that lenders would make loans to lower-income whites but not to middle- or upper-income African Americans. Examples of redlining can be found in a variety of financial services, including mortgages, student loans, credit cards, and insurance.
- **REPATRIATION:** Returning a person to a place they were removed from or forced to flee due to a violation of human rights.





- **RESTITUTION:** Measures intended to restore the survivor to the original situation before the violations occurred, including, as appropriate: restoration of liberty, enjoyment of human rights, identity, family life and citizenship, return to one's place of residence (repatriation), restoration of employment and return of property.

- **STATUTE OF LIMITATIONS:** A statute prescribing how much time people have to bring certain types of legal actions. Statutes of limitations restrict people's ability to sue people for violations or to indict them for crimes they may have committed if too much time has passed.

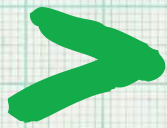
- **TRANSATLANTIC SLAVE TRADE:** The kidnapping, transportation and sale of African people in the Americas, which operated from the 1500s to 1808.



- **TRANSFORMATIVE:** Social change that fundamentally shifts structures of power, as opposed to change that does little or nothing to create long-term systemic solutions. Transformative change requires thoroughly tending to the root causes of the problems, whereas non-transformative (often labeled reformist change) does not.

- **WAR ON DRUGS:** A concerted, militarized campaign led by the United States government to enforce prohibitions on importation, manufacture, use, sale, and distribution of substances deemed to be illegal, advancing a punitive rather than a public health approach to drug use. It is characterized by racial profiling, racially discriminatory, targeted, and aggressive policing and prosecutorial practices, long mandatory prison sentences on conviction of drug-related offenses, and a host of collateral consequences which have wrought devastation in the lives of millions of people in the United States and beyond. It has served as one of the driving forces of skyrocketing rates of mass incarceration in the United States.





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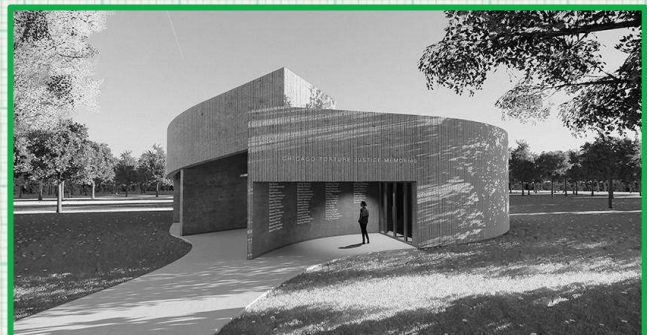
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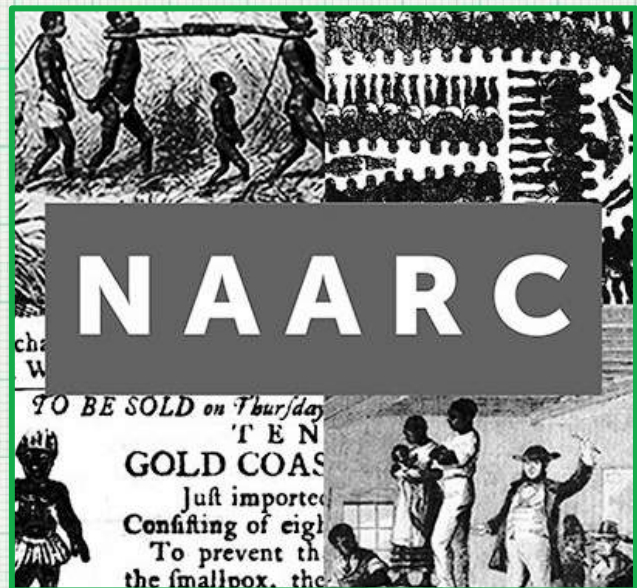
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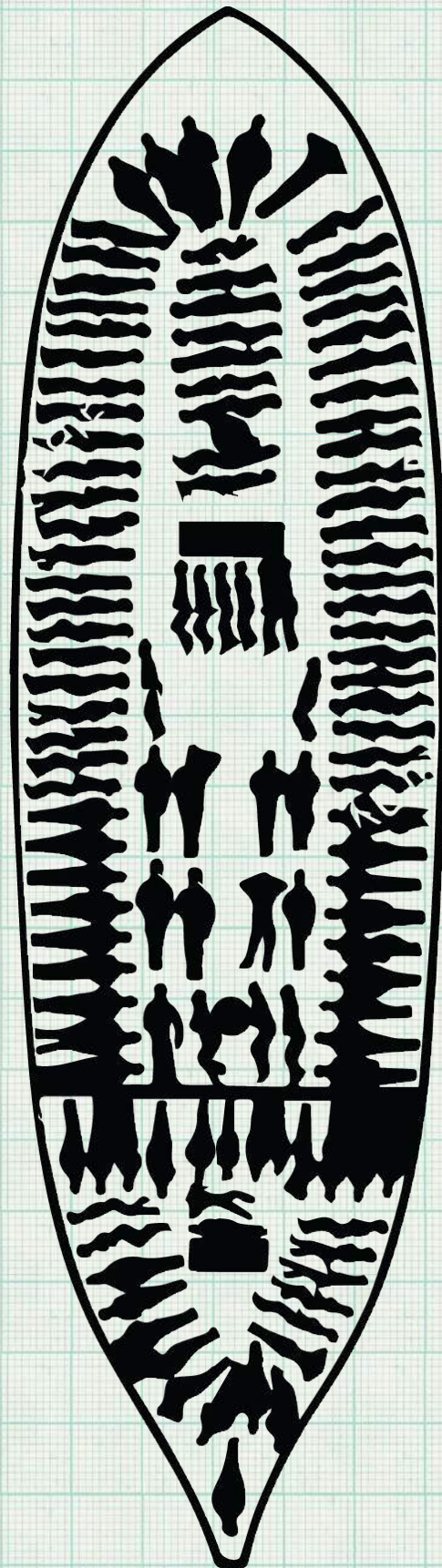
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