

## Session 8: Anti-Black Racism

# Black History in North America



### *Pre-Workshop:*

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✚ Watch [The Racial Wealth Gap](#), video, (16:12 min.)

✚ Read or watch **2 or more items** from the “Reading & Viewing Material” list below. Your thoughts on these will be welcome during the debriefing discussion.

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**Intro:** The goal of this session is to explore the connections between Black history on our continent and the present Black Lives Matter movement.

### *Videos:*

- [Martin Luther King Jr. 'I have a dream' speech](#) (1:11 min.)
- [Amend: The Fight for America, trailer](#) (2:39 min.)

### *Small Discussion Groups:*

**Step 1:** (Overview, Black Lives Matter) **Black Lives Matter** is an activist movement that began following the acquittal of George Zimmerman for the shooting death of Trayvon Martin, an unarmed African-American teenager killed in Florida in July 2013. Local and national protests were later sparked by the deaths of other unarmed African-Americans, bringing the movement to increasing public attention. Following the killing of George Floyd in Minneapolis in 2020, an estimated 15 million to 26 million people participated in the Black Lives Matter protests in the United States, making it one of the largest movements in the country's history. Black Lives Matter became a global rallying cry as protests quickly spread around the globe<sup>1</sup>.

**Step 2:** In groups of 4 to 6 people, discuss the video of Black history on this continent and its present-day consequences. Discussion questions:

- How aware were you of Black history on this continent? What are your present feelings and thoughts?
- How do you think we can create individual and social change towards correcting the injustices that have resulted in social inequality?
- What attitude or attitudes prevailed in the place you grew up? How has this changed over the years?
- What are the Black stereotypes in popular culture, both positive and negative?

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<sup>1</sup> [Vox article, BLM has become a Global Rallying Cry, 2020](#)

*Whenever a person breaks a stick in the forest, let him consider what it would feel like if it were himself who was thus broken."*

- [Yoruba Proverb African Traditional \(Nigeria\)](#)

*That which is despicable to you, do not do to your fellow, this is the whole Torah and the rest is commentary...*

– Judaism, [Rabbi Hillel](#)

*None of you [truly] believes until he loves for his brother what he loves for himself.*

– Islam, [Hadith #13](#)

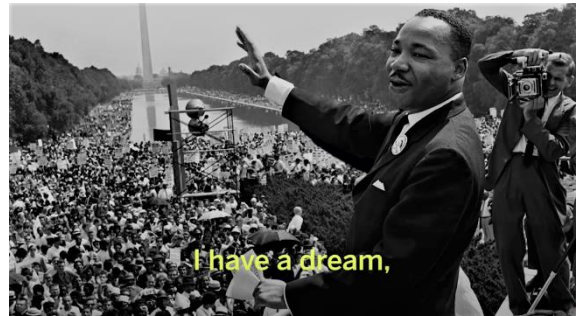
## *Debriefing:*

Quotes and discussion questions to promote reflection and action.

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- What did we learn? What needs to change?
  - How can we contribute to systemic change here and elsewhere?
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## *Suggested Reading*

### *& Viewing Material:*



- [Seeing White John Biewen](#) TED talk, (18:32 min.) John Biewen addresses the question: "How did racism start?"
- [Reconstruction in America](#) Video (6:19 min.) The critical period of 1865-1876
- [Amend: The Fight for America Trailer](#), (2:39 min.) Will Smith, 6-part docu-series, 2021, Netflix & YouTube. The story of America's 14th Amendment.
  - [Amend: Episode 1](#) YouTube (55:18 min.) Citizenship & Equality
  - [Amend: Episode 2](#) YouTube (56:09 min.) Following the Civil War
  - [Amend: Episode 3](#) YouTube (57:17 min.) The Jim Crow era
- ["The Birth of a Nation"](#) c. 1915 American film, (3:13 hrs), YouTube

**Note:** You may wish to read this [Washington Post article](#) before deciding whether to watch this film. As it notes, *The Birth of a Nation* is "one of the most reprehensibly racist films in Hollywood history" and "Its racist imagery has reverberated for a century". Although it was controversial from the beginning, it was a widely viewed and profoundly influential film.