

## [CFP: Teaching Black Lives Matter, upcoming issue of Radical Teacher](#)

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<http://radicalteacher.library.pitt.edu/ojs/index.php/radicalteacher/announcement/view/8>

In many ways, the origin of the Black Lives Matter movement is rooted in the unfinished revolutions of the 1960s and the more recent work of groups like the Organization for Black Struggle (OBS) and the Malcolm X Grassroots Organization. Founded by three Black queer women as a call-to-action in the Fall of 2013, #BlackLivesMatter emerged as a response to anti-Black racism and state-sanctioned violence. Since then it has grown as a decentralized horizontal movement and has become a nationwide activist network, a political organization, and a global rallying cry. Supporters have issued multiple statements clarifying the intersectional nature of the movement and its critique of heteronormativity and the politics of respectability. Activities undertaken under the banner of #BlackLivesMatter have included street level disruptions, high school walk-outs, boycotts, meetings with politicians, national conferences, campus protests, and chapter building on the local level. While not free of criticism from both the left and right on its strategies and tactics, the movement has proved adept at adapting to different political contexts while imagining and defining a more just future.

Educators inspired by the #Blacklivesmatter movement have created resources such as the San Francisco Public Schools libguide, the Frank Leon Roberts BLM Syllabus, #CharlestonSyllabus and #FergusonSyllabus. College students have also used Black Lives Matter as a vehicle of protest against discrimination on campuses and shed a national spotlight on issues of prison divestment, historic monuments, and the role institutions of higher education played in slavery and colonization. #BlackLivesMatter is in schools, brought there by students and teachers interested in linking contemporary debates to questions of the past and the future of this country. However, recent efforts to suffuse curricula in K-12 schools and universities through a lens of social justice often rely on a tolerance-based narrative that advocates for basic literacy and appreciation of “multiculturalism.” While this can be useful, there are many pitfalls in watering down the realities of historic and present forms of institutional racism and systemic oppression. The tenets of social justice cannot be realized within institutions of education, when larger organizational and structural issues are ignored. The #BlackLivesMatter movement presents opportunities for educators to not only discuss issues of race, power and privilege, but also enact alternative ways of organizing, resisting, and acknowledging the historic struggle for equity across the nation and world.

*Radical Teacher* invites essays that examine the #BLM movement and the issues it has raised in the classroom, in schools, and other spaces. We also encourage brief reflections on teaching with a particular educational resource, text, or on an individual class session related to #BLM, including spoken word, poetry, artwork, protest anthems and music. This is not limited to teaching specifically about #BLM, but also how #BLM can inform teaching about other ideas and concepts.

Some of the questions one might consider include:

- How can teachers teach about, with and through the lens of the BLM movement, rather than simply incorporating this into a special topics class, or current events discussion?
- How are teachers linking the present crisis to a long historical arc of racial injustice and resistance in the U.S. and beyond?
- How can student voices and experiences be centered in discussions of BLM?
- Given the demographics of the public education system in the U.S., how can teaching BLM generate an examination of power and privilege within the foundations of the American educational system itself?
- What role can educators play in opening a critical space for discussion and dialogue on issues of identity, racism and systemic oppression in the US? Can we imagine schools as sites for activism and resistance?
- How can educators and schools make a deep and sustained commitment to highlighting movements like BLM and the socio-political issues it raises?
- What can BLM teach teachers about the role of activism, direct action, and resistance in schools?
- What opportunities does BLM offer to radically re-imagine and rethink social justice education and activism?

Manuscripts due June 1, 2016. Questions may be directed to the issue editors:

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