

*“We Want Freedom. We Want Power to Determine the Destiny of Our Black Community.”*

—Huey Newton

## Black Panther Party Then Black Lives Matter Today

FROM THE BLACK PANTHER PARTY'S ANGELA DAVIS PEOPLE'S FREE FOOD PROGRAM  
**10,000 FREE BAGS OF GROCERIES** (WITH CHICKENS IN EVERY BAG)  
WILL BE GIVEN AWAY FREE MARCH 29, 30 AND 31, 1972  
AT THE BLACK COMMUNITY SURVIVAL CONFERENCE

MARCH 29, 1972 Oakland Auditorium 10th St. OAKLAND, CALIF. (Doors Open at 5:00 P.M.)  
MARCH 30, 1972 Greenman Field 66th Ave. (Near East 14th) OAKLAND, CALIF. (12:00 P.M.)  
MARCH 31, 1972 San Pablo Park 2800 Park St. (at Oregon) BERKELEY, CALIF. (12:00 P.M.)  
FREE ADMISSION ALL THREE DAYS

**ANGELA DAVIS**  
WILL BE AT THE  
BLACK COMMUNITY  
SURVIVAL CONFERENCE

**BOBBY SEALE**  
CHAIRMAN, BLACK PANTHER PARTY

**ERICKA HUGGINS**  
BLACK PANTHER PARTY

**JOHNNIE TILLMAN**  
NATIONAL CHAIRMAN,  
WELFARE RIGHTS ORGANIZATION

**RON DELLUMS**  
CALIFORNIA CONGRESSMAN  
FROM THE 7TH  
CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

**ERICKA HUGGINS**  
BLACK PANTHER PARTY

**REGISTRATION FORM**  
BLACK COMMUNITY SURVIVAL CONFERENCE  
MARCH 29,30,31,1972

ORGANIZATION REQUESTS - INDIVIDUAL PARTICIPANT  
REGISTRATION FOR \$1.00 SHOULD BE MAILED IN  
ADVANCE WITH THIS FORM. NAME PHONE  
ADDRESS  
CITY/STATE ZIP  
IF ORGANIZATION OR U.S. OR FOREIGN MAIL TALK  
FOR REGISTRATION PLEASE MAIL TO: NUMBER OF REGISTERS  
EACH REGISTAR IS RESPONSIBLE FOR THEIR OWN REGISTRATION

RETURN REGISTRATION FORM TO: P.P.P. - C.C.S.A.  
BLACK COMMUNITY SURVIVAL CONFERENCE  
P.O. BOX 9999, BERKELEY, CALIF. 94709

FOR MORE INFORMATION, AT CONFERENCE CONTACT THE BLACK PANTHER PARTY, CENTRAL HEADQUARTERS 106A FINESTREET OAKLAND, CALIFORNIA 94612 (916) 835-2000

In this lesson, students will explore the history of the 1960s and '70s Black Panther Party, and how its legacy connects with today's racial justice movements, such as Black Lives Matter.

### Step 1: Hook: Symbols in Action, “The Raised Fist” (5 minutes)



Ask your students, “What does this graphic represent to you?” Some see the “raised fist” as an individual’s assertive action; others see the fist as a more general symbol of collective action, because the closed hand, with fingers held together, will always be more powerful in bringing change than a single digit alone.

## Step 2: Profile of the Black Panther Party (20 minutes)

Founded in 1966 in Oakland, Calif., the Black Panther Party for Self-Defense was one of the era's most influential and controversial movements. Its members confronted politicians, challenged the police, and acted, they said, in self-defense to protect citizens from brutality. Some leaders connected the Black Power movement in the United States to the Black nationalism and liberation movement in Africa and the Caribbean.

Some members of the Black Panther Party strongly asserted that militancy was the only path to "liberation." Other local chapters, many led by women, focused their attention on "community survival" programs and social reform. These Black Panthers organized free breakfast programs for thousands of children each day, as well as a free food program for local families and the elderly. They sponsored schools, legal aid offices, clothing distribution, local transportation and health clinics in several cities.

Video (seven minutes): [Lessons to Be Learned from the Black Panther Party Experience Fifty Years Later](#)

Poetry and Video (seven minutes): [Burnt Grits: A Video Poem for the Black Panthers](#)

The Black Panther Party's flame eventually burned out. Because of its "revolutionary" national profile, the organization was frequently undermined and targeted by the media, the FBI, and state and local law enforcement. Its leadership was scattered—some fled the country, some moved into academia, others were imprisoned, and others met violent ends. But many of the mainstream members of the Black Panther Party continued to live and work in their communities for many years, still pursuing programs for social and racial justice on a local scale.



Now, more than 50 years later, the Black Lives Matter movement has taken center stage. Unlike the Black Panthers of the past, with their charismatic leaders like Eldridge and Kathleen Cleaver, the Black Lives Matter movement is more diffuse, and less dependent on a traditional pyramid-shaped leadership. It doesn't have a typical power structure—and says it doesn't want one, as it pushes advocacy on multiple fronts.

Learn more about this strategy from [“Why the Black Lives Matter Movement Doesn't Want a Singular Leader.”](#)

Video (15 minutes): [Black Lives Matter Explained: The History of a Movement](#)

### Step 3: Questions for Discussion (15 minutes)



Here are three points from the Black Panther Party platform in 1966:

- We want decent housing, fit for shelter of human beings.
- We want an immediate end to police brutality.
- We want land, bread, housing, education, clothing, justice and peace.

Considering those points, are your students able to find parallels from the past and connect them to today's Black Lives Matter movement?

How did the Black Panther Party confront systemic racism with the tools they had available to them? How does that compare or contrast with today's Black Lives Matter movement?

To what extent were the goals of the Black Panther Party achieved?

Looking at both the past and the present, do people get more done working collectively or individually? Why?

### Step 4: What Can Students Do?



Use this step to expand on the idea of community action and the fight for civil rights.

The goal is to learn more about the motivations behind activists and their drive for social justice and fairness in your community. Students might connect with other local Black Lives Matter activists. They may be at your school, nearby university, on the city council, or in the community.

Divide the class into teams. Each team is assigned to conduct an interview with someone in the community who is an advocate for social justice and racial equality.

Students will use their interviews as information to create presentations about the community that could include drama, poetry, podcasts, poster displays, comic strips or music.

Here are two options for your students to join in with students from around the country working on similar projects:

[RFK Human Rights Video Contest](#)

[RFK Music Composition Contest](#)

## Additional Resources and Materials



- [Black Lives Matter: From Hashtag to Movement](#) (Anti-Defamation League lesson plan)
- *Smithsonian Magazine*: [The Rank and File Women of the Black Panther Party and Their Powerful Influence](#)
- [Music:](#) <https://www.grammy.com/grammys/news/pride-music-soundtrack-black-panther-party>
- Video (four minutes): 2020 BET Awards “[Fight the Power 2020](#)”
- Video (four minutes): [Who Were the Black Panthers? It’s Complicated](#)
- [Say It Loud: The Black Power Revolution in Music](#)

- Australian Broadcasting Corporation: [Black and Proud: The Music of the Black Panther Party](#)