III- Reactions, solutions

Use these words to fill in the blanks: breathe; demonstrations; hashtag; kneeling; movement; police; racism; racial

Black Lives Matter (**BLM**) is a decentralized political and social _____ that aims to highlight _____, discrimination and _____ inequality experienced by Black people in the United States. Its primary concerns are _____ brutality and racially motivated violence against Black people.

The movement began in response to the killings of Trayvon Martin, Michael Brown, Eric Garner, and Rekia Boyd, among others.

In 2013, activists and friends Alicia Garza, Patrisse Cullors, and Ayọ Tometi originated the _____ #BlackLivesMatter on social media following the acquittal of George Zimmerman in the fatal shooting of African-American teen Trayvon Martin. The movement became nationally recognized for street _____ following the 2014 deaths of two more African Americans, Michael Brown—resulting in protests and unrest in Ferguson, Missouri—and Eric Garner in New York City.

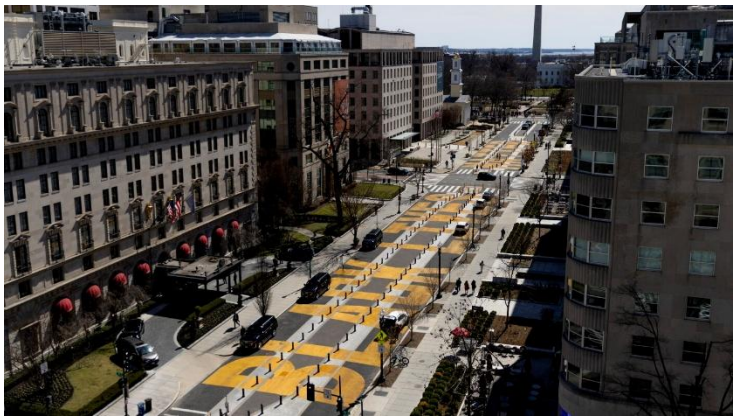


At the end of May 2020, spurred on by a rash of racially charged events, more than 450 major protests were held in cities and towns across the United States and three continents. The breaking point was due primarily to the murder of George Floyd by Minneapolis police officer Derek Chauvin, eventually charged with second-degree murder after a video circulated showing Chauvin _____ on Floyd's neck for nearly nine minutes while Floyd pleaded for his life, repeating: "I can't _____."

Document 3

Black Lives Matter Plaza Is Gone. Its Erasure Feels Symbolic.

By Clyde McGrady and Tim Arango, *The New York Times*, March 16, 2025



This week, government workers near the White House, on two blocks lined with luxury hotels and union headquarters, used a

jackhammer and a pickax to tear up a mural that read “Black Lives Matter,” painted on the road during the long hot summer of 2020.

The symbolism was potent.

The erasure of the bold yellow letters of Black Lives Matter Plaza, installed on 16th Street after the murder of George Floyd by a Minneapolis police officer, was a concession from Washington’s mayor, Muriel Bowser, who faced threats from congressional Republicans to cut off federal funds to the capital city if the words were not removed. But to Black Americans grappling with a fierce resurgence of forces that they believe are beating back the causes of social justice and civil rights, it felt like much more.

That plaza was “spiritual,” said Selwyn Jones, an uncle of Mr. Floyd. “But them taking the time to destroy it, that’s making a statement, man. That’s making a statement, like we don’t care.”

Even those who did not put much faith in the mural to begin with were taken aback.

“Bowser caving[1] immediately to the faintest hint of pressure on the name of the plaza is somehow even more cynical than the move to name it Black Lives Matter Plaza in the first place,” said Olúfẹ́mi O. Táíwò, a Black associate professor of philosophy at Georgetown.

A movement that once crested[2] with a former Republican senator, Mitt Romney, marching in the streets has now waned. After a brief window of conversation about the ways racism had impeded the progress of Black citizens, the country in November chose to return President Trump to the White House, after he called the words “Black Lives Matter” a “symbol of hate” and Black-centered history “toxic propaganda” at the end of his first term. “We saw the largest protest movement in our nation’s history, a unique and powerful moment where it seemed anything was possible, and you had the numbers to do anything,” lamented Samuel Sinyangwe, executive director of the nonprofit Mapping Police Violence, without exaggeration.

The millions of dollars that flowed to groups with “Black Lives Matter” in their titles have slowed to a trickle, forcing some to retrench, others to close shop. The Black Lives Matter Foundation Inc., for instance, raised a staggering $79.6 million in fiscal year 2021. The next year, that figure was down to almost $8.5 million. By 2023, it was about $4.7 million, with expenses of $10.8 million, according to records tracked by the nonprofit journalism organization ProPublica.

As it recedes, Mr. Trump has sought to bury it. In two short months, his administration has moved to end diversity, equity and inclusion as goals of the federal government and pressured private industry to do the same. It shut down the National Law Enforcement Accountability Database, which tracked the misconduct records of federal law enforcement officers.

[1] Giving up, accepting
[2] Reached its highest point

Words with even a hint of racial, ethnic or gender sensitivities are being struck from federal websites and documents. Just this week, the Environmental Protection Agency moved to eliminate offices responsible for addressing the disproportionately high levels of pollution facing poor communities, often with predominantly minority residents.

The billionaire White House adviser Elon Musk has even said pardoning George Floyd's killer was "something to think about."

Beyond Washington, journalists and academics who vaulted to[3] stardom a half decade ago on their reinterpretations of history, their views on racism and their valorizing of the African American experience find themselves sometimes marginalized, and often under attack.

"I feel we are going backwards," Mr. Jones said.

Given the swift change of circumstances, some in the Black Lives Matter movement say they must answer an existential question: How do they pursue racial justice amid so fierce a backlash?

1. Vocabulary

a) Match the words with their synonyms – in their context:

b) Union (l.4)	i. A clue, an indication
c) To tear up (l.5)	ii. Destroy
d) To grapple with (l.12)	iii. Erase
e) To make a statement (l.15)	*iv.* Hinder, *gêner, entraver*
f) A hint (l.18)	v. Professors
g) To wane (l.22)	vi. To be removed
h) To impede (l.23)	*vii.* *Syndicat*
i) To bury (l.36)	viii. To declare something
j) To be struck (l.40)	ix. To decline
k) Academics (l.46)	x. To struggle with

2. General understanding

a) What type of article is this (a news analysis article, a news report or an opinion piece). Justify

b) What is the immediate news event that prompted the publication of the article (explain what, why, who)?

c) What actions has the Trump administration taken and which areas do they affect? How do you think this will affect African Americans?

3. Detailed understanding

a) How does the writer place the removal of the mural within a broader political and social trend?

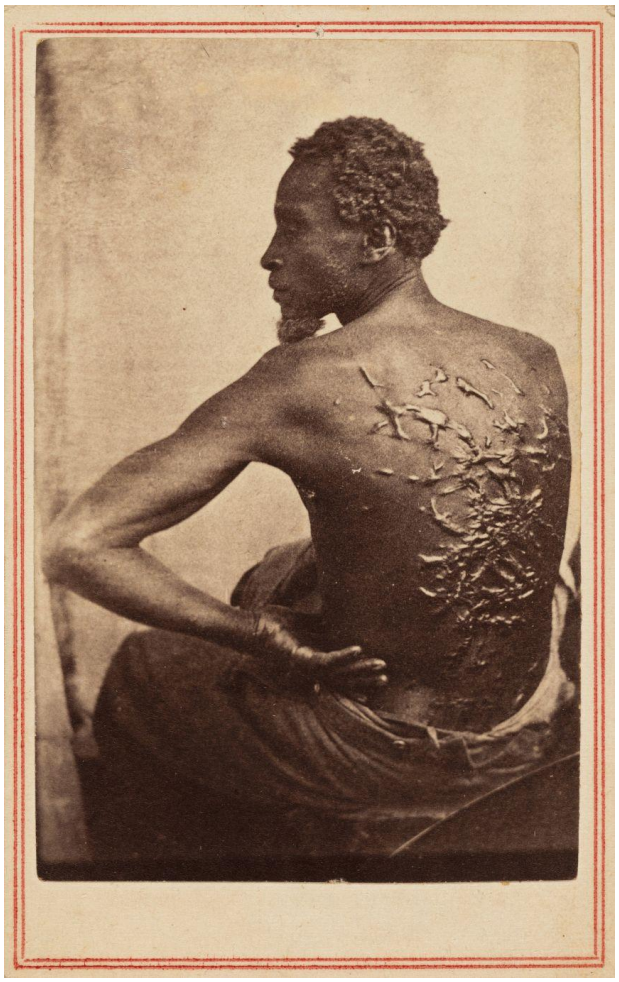
[3] Quickly achieved

<u>Document 4:</u> Trump Orders National Park to Remove Famed Photograph of Formerly Enslaved Man

By Alex Greenberger, ARTnews, Sept 15 2025

Taken in 1863, the photograph shows a man who may have been named Peter who escaped a plantation in Louisiana and was subsequently examined by doctors who discovered the web of scars on his back that resulted from repeated brutal whipping. The image was reprinted widely at the time as proof of the horrors of enslavement that some Americans could not personally witness firsthand. Informally, the picture is known as *The Scourged Back*.

It remains a key image of its era. Artist Arthur Jafa, for example, has included versions of it in recent installations. The National Portrait Gallery, the National Museum of African American History and Culture, the National Gallery of Art, and many other museum own prints of it.



According to the *Washington Post*, Trump's order called for the removal of information and signage at the Harpers Ferry National Historic Park in West Virginia. The President's House Site in Philadelphia may also be impacted, staffers told the *Post*.

In March, in an executive order that targeted Smithsonian-run museums, Trump singled out Independence National Historical Park, in Philadelphia, whose displays, he claimed, put forward the notion that "America is purportedly racist."

A Parks Service spokesperson confirmed to the *Post* that exhibits under the organization's aegis[4] were under review, saying, "interpretive materials that disproportionately emphasize negative aspects of U.S. history or historical figures, without acknowledging broader context or national progress, can unintentionally distort understanding rather than enrich it."

It is not the first time Trump's administration has gone after displays related to enslavement. In August, Trump claimed that the Smithsonian's museums emphasize "how bad Slavery was," a further sign that they were "OUT OF CONTROL."

1. What is an "(executive) order"?
2. Explain Trump's decision.
3. Going further: React to Trump's decision.

[4] protection