Dear Host,

On behalf of the team at Repair the World, a national nonprofit that mobilizes Jews to volunteer, we want to THANK YOU for joining us in honoring the legacy of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., by hosting a Turn the Tables Shabbat Dinner as part of Points of Light’s MLK Day Sunday Suppers Series.

We’re inspired that your passion moved you to use your time, energy, and dollars to create the space for people to have meaningful conversations. During the weekend of January 16, 2015, you’ll join thousands of people across the country dining together and engaging in important dialogue about the issues impacting their communities.

As you know, the focus of this year’s Turn the Tables campaign is racial inequality. The resources in this toolkit will help you facilitate important conversations with your guests.

We hope that you and your guests leave your dinner with a new awareness about the world around you, having had the opportunity to speak up about racial inequality, and feel inspired to take action in their community by volunteering their time on Monday, January 19, 2015 and over the coming year. While many of the realities are grim, the opportunity for action is full of promise.

One of our favorite quotes by Dr. King reminds the world that “injustice anywhere is a threat to justice everywhere.” It’s dinners like these with people like you that will inspire action and turn the tables on racial injustice, in ways big and small. And it’s because of leaders like you that the world can change: table by table and city by city.

Thanks again for all you do – and all you did to make this dinner possible!

Repair the World
weRepair.org

Share your experience with us!
Tag and post your photos, stories, or videos with @RepairtheWorld, #TurntheTables #MLKDay2015
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Thank you again for hosting a Turn the Tables Shabbat Dinner to celebrate and honor the work of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. This program has several ingredients: a tasty meal, some meaty conversation about important issues, and an opportunity to get involved.

GETTING STARTED

Read through the toolkit

Review the TALKING ABOUT RACE & CLASS tip sheet about how you can facilitate a respectful discourse about a touchy subject with which we come in contact everyday.

WHET YOUR APPETITE

Appetizer: Opening Activity

We believe in setting intentions. With our LAST WORDS/FIRST WORDS activity, we ask you to start off the dinner reflecting on past tragedies and setting actions for the future.

Choose your discussion entrée

Decide which conversation guide you’d like to chew on.

- Discussion Entrée Option 1: A Lesson on Privilege
- Discussion Entrée Option 2: Chris Rock Interview
- Discussion Entrée Option 3: Jewish Perspectives on Civil Rights
- Discussion Entrée Option 4: Lauryn Hill’s Black Rage
- Discussion Entrée Option 5: Choose Your Own!

Use the Closing Activity to wrap-up your discussions.

SIMMER, DO NOT BOIL.

Productive Discomfort is encouraged.

Feeling uncomfortable can generate learning and growth. Keep your At a Glance: Tips for facilitating a respectful discussion on hand during the meal so you can have a filling conversation that makes everyone feel just a bit uncomfortable—and at ease.

SERVE!

Take action.

Located in Baltimore, Detroit, New York, Philadelphia or Pittsburgh? Sign up to join or learn more about Repair the World MLK Day volunteer opportunities by visiting www.turn-the-tables.org/take-action. Outside those cities? Check out national volunteer opportunities through the All for Good volunteer database or find a #BlackLivesMatter event on their respective Facebook page. Don’t forget to tell us how it went! Email us at jillian@weRepair.org. Or hit us up on Facebook, Twitter or Instagram @RepairtheWorld, #TurntheTables!

IF YOU NEED SUPPORT

While we can’t help you prepare the dinner, we hope to help you prepare for the discussion. If you have questions about how to create the program, contact jillian@weRepair.org.
The first step to eliminating racism and inequality is to talk about it open and honestly, which you’re about to do – so, BRAVO! Talking about racial inequality is challenging for everyone. There is a reason why this section about how to hold the conversation is much longer than the actual discussion questions! Know that being uncomfortable isn’t always a bad thing, as long as everyone’s voices are heard, listened to, and respected.

Your goal as the host should be to create a safe space where individuals can express their opinions honestly, and where the feelings of the group are valued and protected.

**The ultimate measure of a man is not where he stands in moments of comfort and convenience, but where he stands in times of challenge and controversy.** – Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.

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**A FEW TIPS ON FACILITATING HONEST AND RESPECTFUL DISCOURSE AT YOUR EVENT:**

**APPOINT A FACILITATOR.** Before your meal, decide among your guests who should lead the discussion. As the host, the best leader is likely you, but if you’re not comfortable in that role, ask a friend. A discussion leader guides the discussion – s/he doesn’t dominate it. If things get out of hand, or if voices are being blocked out, the facilitator intervenes.

**ACKNOWLEDGE THAT THIS MIGHT BE UNCOMFORTABLE FOR YOUR GUESTS TO TALK ABOUT.** It’s sort of the elephant in the room, but in many cases, it helps to say out loud what others are feeling: “I know we don’t usually talk about race at the dinner table, and it might make you or others feel uncomfortable, and that’s ok.”

**SET GROUP GROUND RULES.** Collectively, decide on a set of rules for your discussion. These could be formal, such as “whoever holds the spoon speaks,” or “if you agree, wave jazz hands.” These rules could also be more informal, including “whatever is said in this room, stays in this room.”

**DO NOT TOKENIZE PEOPLE.** Individuals can only speak to their own experiences, and it puts unfair pressure on your guests to ask them to represent their cultural identity. Do not look to others to speak on behalf of their race, gender, or ethnicity. For example, there is a great deal of diversity within the Jewish experience, and not one single individual can speak to its totality.

**ENSURE THAT EVERYONE WHO WANTS TO, GETS A CHANCE TO SPEAK.** Very frequently, individuals who are most comfortable expressing their opinions can dominate conversations like these. Being verbal about one’s opinions isn’t necessarily an indicator of how strong those opinions are. Make sure the facilitator respectfully asks for the opinions of others if a few voices begin to dominate the conversation.

**BE RESPECTFUL OF INTROVERTS – AND OF SILENCE.** Make sure the facilitator is noticing who is not speaking. Encourage those individuals to contribute, but do not force them. Similarly, if the conversation reaches a point of silence, do not push people to speak. Be respectful of reflection.

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**Continued on next page...**
A FEW “NEXT STEPS” IN THE EVENT THAT THE DISCUSSION BECOMES HEATED OR UNCOMFORTABLE:

AVOID “RIGHT” AND “WRONG.” While some opinions are commonly accepted as “right,” it is unproductive to cast someone’s statements or beliefs as “wrong.”

IF YOU’RE OFFENDED, SHARE – DON’T BLAME. Ignorance is not animosity. Use the “I felt...when you...” format to discuss how their statement was perceived by you personally. For example, you could say, “I felt offended when you said that your grandfather worked himself into the middle class, and therefore anyone could achieve the American dream if they tried hard enough. I felt that you might not have thought about the impact of institutional racism on the outcomes of immigrant, minority families.”

TRY NOT TO USE CHARGED LANGUAGE SUCH AS “BIGOT” OR “RACIST.” If someone says something offensive, assume that they simply do not realize that they have said something hurtful. Calling them a racist is one surefire way to make the situation a lot worse. Use the opportunity to educate.

PROVIDE CONTEXT. Even though it’s difficult, try to explain why you believe what you believe. Provide examples, facts, and stories to illuminate your opinions, and encourage others to do the same.

Racism is man’s gristest threat to man – the maximum of hatred for a minimum of reason. – Abraham J. Heschel

DESPITE THE PROGRESS THAT HAS BEEN MADE, THERE ARE MANY MISPREDICTIONS ABOUT RACE AND RACISM. HERE’S A LIST OF SOME OF THE MOST COMMON, AND HOW TO HANDLE:

“RACE IS A FACT OF LIFE.” Race is actually a social construct. No genetic, personality, or intellectual differences exist between people of different races. Discuss that race was developed as a category to classify people.

“I’M NOT RACIST!” Despite major progress, everyone still remains at least “a little bit racist” (to quote Avenue Q!). While most people harbor very little ill-will towards people of other races, they may continue to make assumptions about others based on race. That includes you...and your guests. In order to combat racism and tackle misperceptions, we first have to acknowledge that we are all somewhere on a spectrum of perpetuating racial prejudice. Once you take the guilt out of the word, you can have an open conversation about the issue. Acknowledge that racism is a spectrum, embedded in our society; it’s not just a dirty word.

“WE LIVE IN A POST-RACIAL SOCIETY.” Racism is still virulent in our society, and all over the world. While our generation tends to be more open minded about race and inequality, racism is still a defining part of the American experience. Have everyone go around the table and give an example of discrimination they have faced for their religion, race, or ability. Very quickly an accurate portrait of the work yet to be done will emerge.

“[INSERT ISSUE] CAN BE ELIMINATED IF PEOPLE JUST ‘TRIED HARDER.’” Institutional odds are stacked against poor and minority children from birth. Even with exceptional intelligence, a student’s odds of escaping the cycle of poverty are extremely slim without comprehensive support services. Remind your guests that what comes to many as a privilege of birth is systematically denied to millions across the country.
TIPS FOR FACILITATING A RESPECTFUL DISCUSSION

Acknowledge that this conversation might be uncomfortable for you and your guests.
Set group ground rules.
Everyone speaks from their own perspective.
Ensure that everyone who wants to speak, gets to speak.
Be respectful of introverts – and of silence.
Avoid the terms “right” and “wrong.”
Use “I” statements to avoid blame.
Try not to use charged language such as “bigot” or “racist.”
Acknowledge that racism is a spectrum, embedded in our society; it’s not just a dirty word.
Provide context.
APPETIZER: OPENING ACTIVITY

Last Words / First Words

ITEMS NEEDED:

- Last Words cards
- Pen and “I am here to ___” printouts, 1 for each guest (optional)

We believe in setting intentions. With our LAST WORDS/FIRST WORDS activity, we ask you to begin your dinner by reflecting on past tragedies and setting intentions for the discussion.

Over the summer, Iranian American journalist and filmmaker Shirin Barghi created a powerful statement by illustrating last words from people whose lives were cut short due to police and vigilante violence.

Take a moment to pass out the Last Words cards to guests.

Going around the table, ask each guest read their card aloud starting first by sharing the victim’s story and then reading their last words.

Share with guests that by reflecting on the lives and deaths of each of these victims we hope to transform last words of tragedy into first words of intention. Going around the table again, ask each guest to read the last words again and then state their first words of intention for this conversation in a statement: “I am here to ___.”

For example, guests could share “I am here to learn more about racism and injustice.” Or “I am here to confront privilege” or “I am here to observe lives that were lost.”

If it’s ok with your diners, hand out the “I AM HERE TO” printouts and have guests mark their actions in ink.
A LESSON ON PRIVILEGE
(via Buzzfeed and Quartz.com)

ITEMS NEEDED:
• Scrap paper
• Recycling bin

INSTRUCTIONS: The facilitator should read through this entire discussion entrée before using it with guests

This November, Buzzfeed’s Nathan Pyle shared a powerful lesson about privilege with a recycling bin and some scrap paper that went viral, with over 4.8 million views. Below is what he shared. The facilitator should read the text out loud and have guests simulate the exercise by handing out scrap paper and placing the bin at the front of the room.

1. I once saw a high school teacher lead a simple, powerful exercise to teach his class about privilege and social mobility. He started by giving each student a scrap piece of paper and asked them to crumple it up.

2. Then he moved the recycling bin to the front of the room.

3. He said, “The game is simple — you all represent the country’s population. And everyone in the country has a chance to become wealthy and move into the upper class.”

Continued on next page...
5. The students in the back of the room immediately piped up, “This is unfair!” They could see the rows of students in front of them had a much better chance.

6. Everyone took their shots, and — as expected — most of the students in the front made it (but not all) and only a few students in the back of the room made it.

7. He concluded by saying, “The closer you were to the recycling bin, the better your odds. This is what privilege looks like. Did you notice how the only ones who complained about fairness were in the back of the room?”

8. “By contrast, people in the front of the room were less likely to be aware of the privilege they were born into. All they can see is 10 feet between them and their goal.”

“Your job — as students who are receiving an education — is to be aware of your privilege. And use this particular privilege called “education” to do your best to achieve great things, all the while advocating for those in the rows behind you.”
A LESSON ON PRIVILEGE continued...

Jeff Yang felt the lesson Nathan Pyle shared was a bit too simple. He shares his real-world – and not so simple – take on Pyle’s post and the concept of privilege below.

How to Really Understand White Privilege (via Jeff Yang, Quartz.com)

INSTRUCTIONS: Read this version out loud and share images with guests. Then use the Guiding Questions to prompt discussion.

Continued on next page...
The way it goes is, at the beginning of the teacher’s class, every student received a sheet of paper.

The teacher then put a waste basket at the front of the room.

They were told to crumple it up into a ball.

"We’re going to play a game," he said. "All of you take your balls of paper and try to throw them into the waste basket. Whomever gets it into the basket wins."

Except that the kids were seated in rows. And of course, the kids in the front row were closer to the waste basket than the ones in the middle and back rows.

And where you were seated was basically random.

Simple, right?

You see, if you wanted to really be accurate, you’d make it so that when the kids in the back row made a sudden move, people in uniform would come in and start asking them questions.

And based on their answers, sometimes they’d get beaten. Or shot.

WELL... NOT QUITE.

Continued on next page...
DISCUSSION ENTRÉE OPTION 1

Every so often, a back-row student would be taken out of the classroom. They'd spend the rest of the period in the broom closet. Because you didn't want them making trouble for the front-row kids.

The front and middle-row kids would be able to go to throwing lessons, assuming they wanted to. The back row kids would have to stay out in the hall. Because if they weren't already doing well at throwing, it's obvious that they didn't have the "aptitude" or "discipline" for throwing. If the kids in the front and middle rows ran out of paper balls, they'd just take balls from the back-row kids. Because gentrification.

At some point, the back-row kids would get sick of the whole game and just start throwing the balls at each other. The front-row kids would use that as evidence that the back row was where they belonged. Hmm... maybe "privilege" isn't so simple after all?

Honestly, some people were just meant to be back-row. Just sayin'.

HAPPY THANKSGIVING.
DISCUSSION ENTRÉE OPTION 1

GUIDING QUESTIONS

• What do you think about these two exercises?
• Which pieces of each exercise resonate with you and which pieces do not?
• What’s too simple about the first exercise? Does the second get at privilege better? Is it still too simple?
• What additional factors would you add to the exercise so that it better represents privilege? (e.g., Do the seats have spikes because...)
• What do you think about using games and simulations to teach youth about privilege? What are the benefits and dangers of doing so?
DISCUSSION ENTRÉE OPTION 2

INSTRUCTIONS: Have a guest read the following article out loud and then use the guiding questions to prompt discussion.

CHRIS ROCK: IT’S NOT BLACK PEOPLE WHO HAVE PROGRESSED. IT’S WHITE PEOPLE.

By German Lopez, Dec 1, 2014 via Vox.com

In New York magazine’s new Q&A with Chris Rock, interviewer Frank Rich asked the comedian about issues ranging from the events in Ferguson, Missouri, to Bill Cosby’s rape allegations. But perhaps the most insightful part of Rock’s interview came when he dismantled the idea of “black progress”:

When we talk about race relations in America or racial progress, it’s all nonsense. There are no race relations. White people were crazy. Now they’re not as crazy. To say that black people have made progress would be to say they deserve what happened to them before...

So, to say Obama is progress is saying that he’s the first black person that is qualified to be president. That’s not black progress. That’s white progress. There’s been black people qualified to be president for hundreds of years. If you saw Tina Turner and Ike having a lovely breakfast over there, would you say their relationship’s improved? Some people would. But a smart person would go, “Oh, he stopped punching her in the face.” It’s not up to her. Ike and Tina Turner’s relationship has nothing to do with Tina Turner. Nothing. It just doesn’t. The question is, you know, my kids are smart, educated, beautiful, polite children. There have been smart, educated, beautiful, polite black children for hundreds of years. The advantage that my children have is that my children are encountering the nicest white people that America has ever produced. Let’s hope America keeps producing nicer white people.

Rock is essentially flipping the formula. It’s not that black people as a whole have somehow changed and can now serve in the highest political office in the country. It’s that enough white people — the majority of Americans — have shed their racist beliefs to vote in a black president.

GUIDING QUESTIONS:

• What do you think about this interview and the way Chris Rock dismantles the idea of “black progress?” Do you agree or disagree?

• How does the conversation change by viewing racial progress as “white progress” and not “black progress?”

• What internal work needs to be done within the white community for America to “keep producing nicer white people?”
Beit Midrash*: Jewish Perspectives on Civil Rights

ITEMS NEEDED:

- Copies of letters (see enclosed)

INSTRUCTIONS: Share the below framing with guests and hand out copies of attached letters and Guiding Questions. Ask guests to find a partner and read through the documents together, referring to the Guiding Questions to prompt discussion.

Framing

In honor of MLK Jr. Day, in this Beit Midrash you will look at the ways different Jewish leaders and thinkers reacted to the civil rights movement during the time of MLK Jr., and use it to reflect on how some of the Jewish community is reacting today to “Ferguson” and the myriad of ways racial justice issues have come to light in the mainstream media and dialogue in its wake. As you go through these sources, try to imagine the context from which they emerged. Is the conversation that the Jewish community had during “the Civil Rights Movement” the same conversation we are having today? Why or why not? If so, what does this mean? As always, bring your own analyses of power and privilege (internal and structural) into your reading.

A Note about Guiding Questions: The Guiding Questions listed at the end of the texts are a jump-off point for your conversation. They are not meant to constrain your conversation but to provide a trigger for a deeper, more organic dialogue with a partner.

Beit Midrash Guideline: Remember to read each source out loud together with a partner. Spend some time wondering about it out loud together before referring to the guiding questions. Read the guiding questions together. Allow space for each partner have the opportunity to share a response. This is a dialogue and a conversation! Sometimes sources won’t make sense. Sometimes they challenge your perspectives. That’s ok. Struggle with the sources! It is part of the total experience.

Sources

Primary Sources: Letters to and from the Union of American Hebrew Congregation debating the movement’s position on segregation as well as the honoring of Dr. MLK Jr. The attached documents are from the Jewish Women’s Archive

Context: "In the 1950s and 1960s, the Union of American Hebrew Congregations, now the Union for Reform Judaism, supported the work of the Civil Rights Movement. While many Reform Jews and their congregations applauded the work that the UAHC was doing, some synagogues felt that they were over-stepping their authority. In a series of letters that span a decade, board members of Hebrew Union Congregation in Greenville, Mississippi, outlined their position as Southern Jews. The Union of American Hebrew Congregations outlines its position in a response". - Jewish Women’s Archive

*Beit Midrash is Hebrew for “house of study,” or place where the students of Jewish Law gather to listen to the discourse or exposition of the Law. Here this term designates a space to engage together in text study.
May 1, 1956

Rabbi Maurice H. Eisendrath, President
The Union of American Hebrew Congregations
838 Fifth Avenue
New York 21, N.Y.

Dear Rabbi Eisendrath:

Your letter addressed to Mr. Sam Weil as President of the Greenville Hebrew Union Congregation was presented to the Board of Directors for discussion.

It was the unanimous opinion of the Board that segregation is not a religious issue and is not a Jewish issue. It is further felt by the Board that regardless of the merits or demerits of either side of the question, there should be no one or no organization that makes a public utterance which may be interpreted as speaking for the Jews of America as a whole.

We know full well that any public utterance showing the Jews as a whole favor desegregation will have the direct effect of hurting the Jews' position in the South and would not reflect their true sentiment. This is especially true as the Southern Jews have established a very fine relationship with the white non-Jews of the South. We believe this harmonious relationship between the Jews and the non-Jews in the South is due in a large respect to the personal conduct, cultural progress and adherence to the customs which make for harmony between the Jews and non-Jews.

The Jews in this community have been accepted in all social and educational activities without prejudice or discrimination. The Jews in this community mingle with the white non-Jews and form a large per cent of their country clubs, business clubs and civic activities in general.

The white South will not desegregate without a long and bitter fight.

In communities such as Greenville, if integration is had at this time it would mean 60% of the enrollment of our grammar schools would be negro students. A large
per cent of these negro children come from homes with no social background or environment and a large per cent of them are the result of illegitimacy. It would only retard the white Jewish children as well as the white Gentiles to have their children placed under this integration and environment.

Feeling as we do, we respectfully urge that your fine organization not embarrass and injure the Jews of this community and other Southern communities who feel as we do, by having it broadcast that the Jews as a whole are actively working to desegregate the South.

If, in spite of the feelings of the Southern Jews such as we, the organization should continue to attempt to speak for the Jews as a whole, it will ultimately cause a breach in our ranks because we will be forced to publicly express the opinion of the Southern Jew as we know it. We hope this situation may be avoided by Jewish organizations not becoming active in the negro segregation issue.

Sincerely,

HEBREW UNION CONGREGATION
Greenville, Mississippi

Jerome S. Hafer, Chairman

Eugene Raphael

Earl Solomon

Joe Weinberg
November 7, 1963

Board of Trustees
Union of American Hebrew Congregations
838 Fifth Avenue
New York 21, New York

Gentlemen:

At its monthly meeting on November 4, 1963, the Board of Directors of the Hebrew Union Congregation of Greenville, Mississippi, voted to express its protest upon learning of the arrangements for the banquet program of the forthcoming Biennial Convention.

Our tradition cautions us to aid and protect the welfare of our brethren of the Household of Israel wherever they may live. The selection of a controversial figure as a featured speaker, regardless of his ability and achievements, with its attendant publicity places undue and unnecessary pressure upon our already exposed people in this area of the country. We deem the arrangements for the Biennial program to have been ill-timed and ill-advised, and clearly fraught with anxieties for our membership.

We feel deeply distressed and chagrined that the leadership of the Union of American Hebrew Congregations did not deem it vital, in so delicate a matter, to consult with our Rabbi and lay leadership before arranging this program. We believe that had our leadership been consulted in advance, and our position given a fair hearing, other arrangements might have been made in the Biennial program, and the feeling of distress which has arisen among our members would have been avoided.

Yours truly,

Bernard Goodman, President

cc: Dr. Maurice N. Eisendrath, President, UAHC
Judge Emile Baer, Board of Trustees Chm., UAHC
Rabbi Solomon K. Kaplan, Regional Director, Southwest Council, UAHC
Mr. Bernard Goodman, President
Hebrew Union Congregation
Post Office Box 212
Greenville, Mississippi

Dear Mr. Goodman:

Thank you very much for your letter of November 7 conveying the results of the meeting of your Board of Directors and the protest about the Biennial Assembly. I have read your letter with great care and am deeply distressed with the anguish that has been caused you. I so regret that the invitation to have Dr. King address our Biennial has created such unhappiness for you.

I want to assure you that every action taken in the various areas of Social Action enlists the most careful consideration, the deep and sensitive concern for the difficult position of our fellow Reform Jews in the exposed areas of the South. The many meetings with our southern congregations have created and continue to create that consciousness.

There is much soul-wrestling at the UAEC, much consultation and widespread probing before any action is taken. Our congregants in the South have made clear their position and the dynamics of the situation in the various states, through which there are great variations between states and communities, and the UAEC administration is exceedingly cautious and ever strives to tread that narrow path between inaction and reckless action. I believe it does so admirably.

There are many requests made of us by kindred organizations, church bodies and synagogue groups, Jewish and Christian civil rights organizations as well, and by many individuals to take part in a host of activities or to initiate them. Many of these suggestions are attractive in that they would serve splendidly to advance the ideals to which we are committed, would help reduce or bring attention to discrimination based on color.

It is because of the careful sifting and cautious weighing that many of these are not undertaken. We are frequently criticized for being too sensitive to the requests of our southern congregations, of lagging behind other religious groups, of failing to fulfill the mandate of the majority of our congregants. There is frequently justice in this accusation.

We know that any positive step we take, though these steps be too infrequent, and only the most modest of gestures made, will be castigated sharply by some in the southern congregations.
In candid, I contend we ought to be apologizing to the majority of our congregations who expect more from us than the mere participation in the Washington March, the statement entitled "A Call to Racial Justice" and the invitation extended to Dr. King to address the Biennial banquet. Yet even these pitifully inadequate gestures are the recipients of endless, bitter complaint.

We have done too little. We have heeded too much the complaints of those who disagree with our position on integration and, if the truth be told, we are far behind every other religious organization and far behind what our ideals demand.

Our Conservative counterpart, the United Synagogue, is having its Biennial the same week as ours and are also having Dr. King address them. In addition, they are giving him their Solomon Schechter Award, the highest award their movement can bestow upon distinguished leaders in contemporary American life. We have spoken to them repeatedly to discern if they are receiving protests and threats. To their pride and our shame, they are receiving no such response. Last Sunday, Dr. King received the St. Francis Peace Medal from a national organization of 100,000 Roman Catholic clergymen and laymen.

Dr. King has changed the nature of the Negro revolt. He has given it spirituality and dignity. He has impressed upon his people the necessity for a non-violent approach to their revolution. If it were not for Dr. King, we would today be witnessing savagery and brutality from both sides. Many are convinced that this nation is so deeply in his debt because he has saved us from an experience that is horrible even to contemplate. Not only has he saved us from the degradation of a violent or physical confrontation between fellow Americans, he has made certain that his people and all Americans see the striving toward equality by the American Negro as part of the basic religious precepts to which we all pay homage or at least lip service. If we do not uphold his hand, if we do not support his effort, others will take his place who will bring us to calamity.

Dr. King was invited because of the noble sense of religious idealism he represents, because of the high principles he has brought into play. He stands as a mountain among the foothills and to have invited another would have been to undermine his stature and to have given strength to his foes.

Sincerely yours,

Maurice N. Eisendrath
GUIDING QUESTIONS:

• What do you make of these exchanges?
• How do you think the conversation about civil rights has progressed in the Jewish community since these letters were sent?
• Do any of these arguments echo anything you have felt, read or heard in recent months?
DISCUSSION ENTRÉE OPTION 4

BLACK RAGE by Lauryn Hill (via SoundCloud)

Black rage is founded on two-thirds a person
“Rapings” and beatings and suffering that worsens
Black human packages tied up with strings
Black rage can come from this kinds of things
Squeezed economics, subsistence survival,
Deafening silence and social control
Black Rage is founded on wounds on the soul

When the dog bites
And the bee stings
And I’m feeling mad
I simply remember all these kinds of things
And then I don’t fear so bad...

Black rage is founded who fed us self hatred
Lies and abuse while we waited and waited
Spiritual treason
This grid and it’s cages
Black rage was founded on these kinds of things

Black rage is founded on dreaming and draining
Threatening your freedom
To stop your complaining
Poisoning your water
While they say it’s raining
Then call you mad
For complaining, complaining
Old time bureaucracy
Drugging the youth
Black rage is founded on blocking the truth
Murder and crime
Compromise and distortion
Sacrifice, sacrifice

Who makes this fortune?
Greed, falsely called progress
Such human contortion
Black rage is founded on these kinds of things

So when the dog bites
And the bee stings
And I’m feeling mad
I simply remember all these kinds of things
And then I don’t fear so bad

Free enterprise
Is it myth or illusion
Forcing you back into purposed confusion
Black human trafficking
Or blood transfusion
Black rage is founded on these kinds of things
Victims of violence
Both psyche and body
Life out of context is living ungodly
Politics, politics
Greed falsely called wealth
Black rage is founded on denying of self
Black human packages
Tied and subsistence
Having to justify your very existence
Try if you must
But you can’t have my soul
Black rage is founded on ungodly control
So when the dog bites
And the beatings
And I’m feeling so sad
I simply remember all these kinds of things
And then I don’t feel so bad

So Bad!

INSTRUCTIONS: Read the lyrics or listen to Lauryn Hill’s song Black Rage. Then use the guiding questions to prompt discussion.

GUIDING QUESTIONS:

• What are your reactions to this song?
• What does Lauryn Hill mean by “black rage” and why might she be singing about it now?
• What does Lauryn Hill suggest about the experience of being black in America?
• Do you agree with her sentiments? Why or why not?
Create Your Own!

Have you come across an engaging video, article or piece that you want to use a prompt for discussion with your guests? Interested in facilitating a conversation without a source? Want to ask your guests to bring interesting sources that they’ve come across to the dinner and use those to prompt discussion? Go for it!

We recommend creating guiding questions beforehand, or asking guests to bring guiding questions with them, and then wrapping up your dinner with the Closing Activity.

If you do choose this route, please share your resources and customized activities with us – post using @RepairtheWorld #TurntheTables or email us at jillian@werepair.org.
Closing Activity

After your discussion, we encourage you and your guests to reflect on the experience and process information presented in your discussion.

We recommend the Triangle-Square-Circle method, which asks participants to share either:

- 3 points they took away from this discussion (Triangle)
- Anything that “squares” with their thinking or anything they agree with (Square)
- Something that’s still circling around in their head (Circle)