

**AS BLACK AS
RESISTANCE:**

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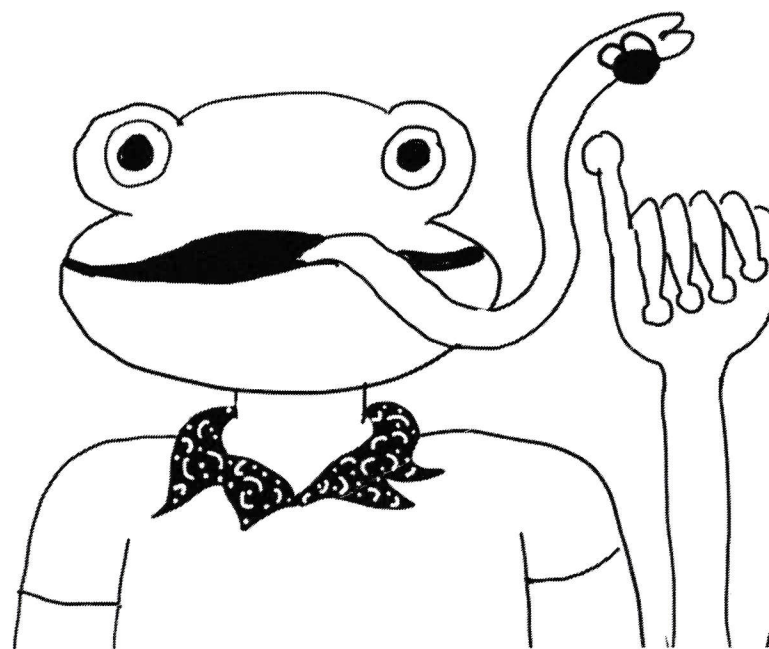
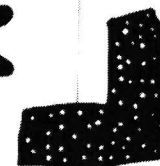



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THE END!

Thank  you!

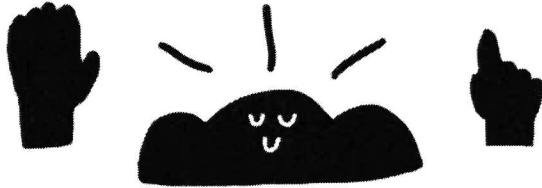
**THIS ZINE WAS ADAPTED FROM THE BOOK
"AS BLACK AS RESISTANCE" BY ZOE
SAMUDZI AND WILLIAM C. ANDERSON**



Welcome to As Black As Resistance: 4 kidz! Let me introduce myself, I'm your guide, Conrad McFrog, the most radical frog this side of the Mississippi. Our journey through this zine is about **learning** and **un-learning**. We're going to learn about ideas from the book *As Black As Resistance* by Zoé Samudzi and William C. Anderson. We're going to learn about colonialism, anti-blackness, intersectionality, self-defense and more! You might have heard some of these words before, but maybe they are new to you. We are going to learn what they mean and how they affect our lives and the world around us. Follow me as we un-learn U.S. History, learn about new relationships to the land and to each other, and answer the question: what is self defense? The ideas in this zine come from a long history of Black organizers, thinkers, and revolutionaries. What better way to understand what is happening around us with the Black Lives Matter protests than to learn from them.

Let's go!

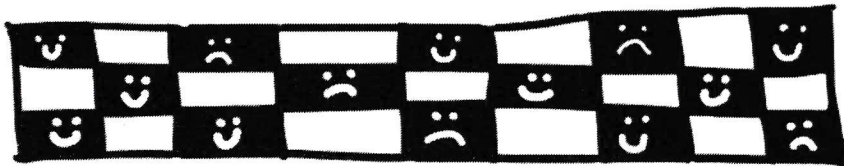
Big Ideas



To begin our journey, my fellow frogs, we're going to start with some important words and ideas. You might have heard some of these words, but many of them might be new. Read over the definitions of these big ideas, and then test your skills at matching them to the examples on the next page. I'll just wait here and chew on some flies while you work on that...

Anti-blackness: Anti-blackness is not just about holding racist beliefs about Black people, it is about the way that our society is organized to exclude Black people. This highlights the difference between individual racism and a system of anti-blackness. The United States is a system of anti-blackness, and anti-blackness shows up in everything from slavery, to segregation, to gentrification, to mass incarceration, to police brutality.

White Supremacy: White supremacy is the false belief that White people are superior to everyone else. White supremacy is used to justify violence, like the killing of native americans when europeans colonized the United States, because they claimed that White people were more civilized and superior than native americans. White supremacy was also used to justify slavery, and is still used today to justify mass incarceration and other forms of systemic racism.



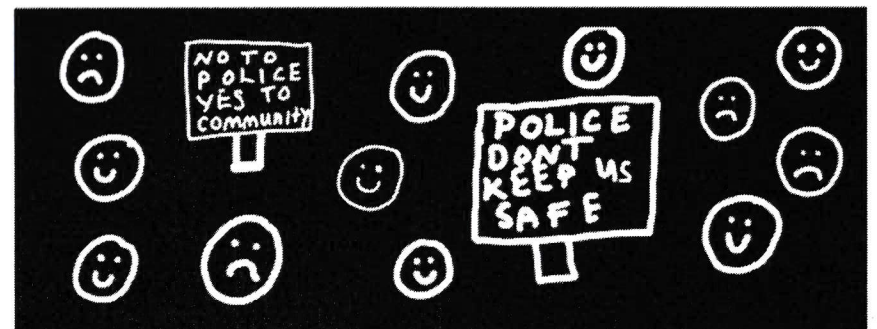
Activity: What world do you want to live in?

Whew, what a wild ride! I told you I was the most radical frog this side of the Mississippi (we don't talk about the frogs on the other side of the Mississippi...) Now that we have an understanding of all the ways in which our world is messed up, and how all of our struggles are connected, and how everything we do to build a better world is a form of self-defense, let's end on a happy note. Let's think about the world we want to live in! It takes a lot of time and work to change the world, and you have to keep your eyes on the prize. Draw the world that you are fighting for! Think about what needs to change, and how you can help get us there.



Colonialism: Colonialism is a process of invading a place, taking it over, and using violence to murder and take advantage of the people who originally lived there. We usually learn in school about explorers and discoverers, like Christopher Columbus and James Cook. In reality, these people were violent colonizers. The places that they "discovered" already had people living there, and when Christopher Columbus arrived in North America, he started a process of violent colonization where Europeans invaded indigenous lands and killed indigenous people. It is also important to understand that colonialism is not something that happened in the past, it is still happening today. European settlers never left North America, and Native Americans are still fight to keep their cultures alive.

Self-defense: Protecting yourself and your community from getting hurt. We might think of karate or boxing as self defense, but really it is much more than that. When we think about self-defense at the community level, we have to ask: what is hurting our community? For example, racism and police brutality is hurting Black communities. So the Black Lives Matter protests are a form of community self-defense. Demanding an end to police is a form of self-defense.





Intersectionality: Intersectionality is the idea that we all have many different identities (race, gender, wealth, immigration status, sexuality, ability, and more) that overlap and combine to give us privileges and disadvantages. For example, you might have privileges for being wealthy and a citizen of the United States, but experience the disadvantages of racism because you are Black.

Capitalism: Capitalism is the economic system of the United States. Capitalism is all about making money, which comes at the expense of people and the environment. Under capitalism, workers often experience exploitation, and the earth's resources are used up in ways that are harmful to the planet.



On the next page: See if you can match the examples on the next page to the big ideas we just covered. Write the big idea next to the example it belongs with!

Another important thing about self defense is working to build a new world where we don't get hurt at all. It isn't enough for me to keep slapping away the hand that is pulling on my tiny frog legs, I want that person to stop pulling my legs completely! The same idea is true at the community level: we want to live in a world where Black people and Indigenous people don't have to fight for their lives and don't have to experience violence. This means that at the same time that we are defending ourselves against violence, we need to be building a world where we don't experience violence at all. For example, while some people are protesting on the streets, other people are putting refrigerators outside on the sidewalk full of food for anyone to take, or raising money for a black trans neighbor so they can pay their rent.

We've probably come a long way from what we initially thought of as self defense. Let's be honest, when you read the words "self-defense", did you think of a fridge full of free food? But when we think about self defense at the community level, and we understand that our society is built on violence against Black and Indigenous people, it starts to make more sense that self-defense means everything from protesting, to the Black Panther Breakfast program, to Indigenous resistance to Christopher Columbus, to helping your neighbors right here in Portland! Self defense means protecting ourselves from harm today and building a world where we are free from violence tomorrow.





You might be thinking: self defense sounds violent, and I want to live in a world without violence. We all want to live in a world free of violence! But unfortunately, that isn't the world that we live in today, that is the world we are trying to build for tomorrow. If someone is pulling on my lil frog leg, and I slap their hand out of the way, am I the one being violent, or is it the person trying to tug on my my legs while I'm just trying to live my life? Now jump back to the community level: if the United States is based on violence against Black people, Black people have the right to defend themselves.

We are seeing that happening right before our eyes in Portland! Our whole lives we have seen news stories of police killing Black people: from Trayvon Martin, to Tamir Rice, to Quanice Hayes, to Breonna Taylor, to George Floyd. And we know that the list of names goes back hundreds of years to the founding of the United States. The protests that we are seeing now are a form of community self- defense. People are standing up to defend Black people from the violence of police brutality and white supremacy. You might hear people saying that protests are violent, or that protesters need to be more respectful and not do graffiti or break windows. But is it the protesters who are being violent? Or is it the police and the racist system that they are defending themselves against? Can you really be violent to a piece of property, like a store window, the same way a police officer is violent toward a black person in your community? This is what we mean when we talk about community self defense.

EXAMPLES

- 1:** Black women are 3x more likely to die while giving birth than white women because of barriers to accessing quality health care. _____
- 2:** Interracial marriage (people from different races getting married) was illegal in many states until 1967 because white people didn't want to "mix" races. _____
- 3:** The Dakota Access Pipeline was a project to build an oil pipeline right through places that were sacred to the Standing Rock Sioux tribe. Native American people protested the pipeline, but the US government attacked protesters and built the pipeline anyway. _____
- 4:** In Cherán, Mexico, the local people kicked out the police and the drug cartels, who were both causing problems for the town. Now they have a community group that keeps the town safe. _____
- 5:** Marcus is a queer, cis-gender boy who was born in the United States. He experiences privileges because of his gender and the fact that he is a U.S. citizen, and at the same time he experiences disadvantages because of racism and homophobia (anti-gay beliefs). _____
- 6:** Smart phones are made with minerals that are dug out of the ground in huge mines. The workers in these mines are sometimes worked to death! And the natural environment around the mines has been polluted. _____

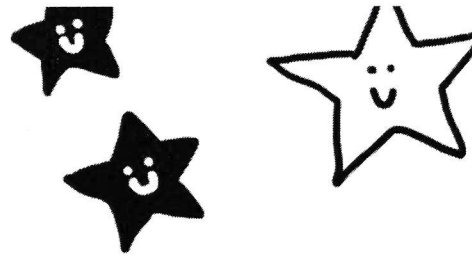


Who was the United States built for?

This summer, did you notice people celebrating the 4th of July, or America's "independence day"? Did you see american flags, red white and blue decorations, and fireworks? For some people, America represents freedom and brings patriotic feelings. For others, America represents violence, oppression, and a painful past. How can people feel the polar opposite about the exact same thing?

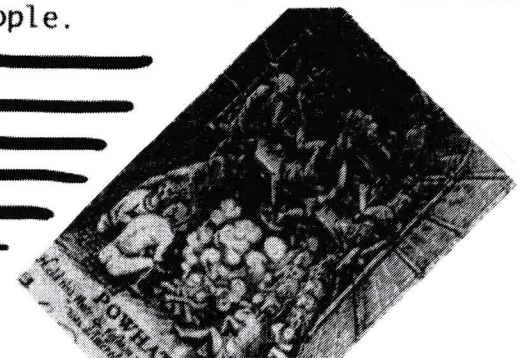
The United States was formed as a settler colony. When European people came to America, they saw a land of opportunity, but with one issue: there were already people here using the land. These were Indigenous people, or native americans. In order to take this land and use it for their own plans, the european people had to remove and erase the Indigenous people, and they did this in a very violent way. When people invade a place, take it over, and take advantage of and kill the people who originally lived there, this is called colonization.

While the European settlers were hurting, killing, and forcing the indigenous people away, they were also kidnapping African people and claiming them as property. This is called slavery. It is important that we understand how both African and Indigenous people were oppressed, hurt, and killed so European people could do what they wanted with the land. The settlers wanted to create a brand new society, but they did not want to include Black or Indigenous people in their plans. Some people like to think that excluding Black and



Zapatistas: The Zapatistas are a group of rural indigenous people in Chiapas, in Southern Mexico, who have fought for indigenous control over land and resources, and defended themselves against military attacks from the Mexican government, as well as against harmful economic policies that hurt their communities. They have successfully organized their own society separate from the Mexican government since the 1990's!

Native resistance to settler colonialism: There are so many examples of Native American resistance to colonization. In History class we learn about the "Indian Wars," which were wars between colonizers and Native Americans that went on for 200 years between the 1600's and the 1800's! These wars were examples of Native Americans trying to defend themselves from colonizers who were taking their land and killing their people.

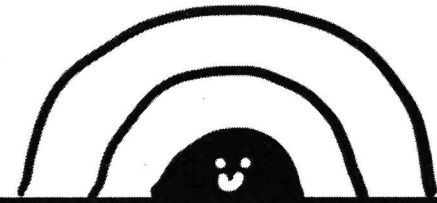
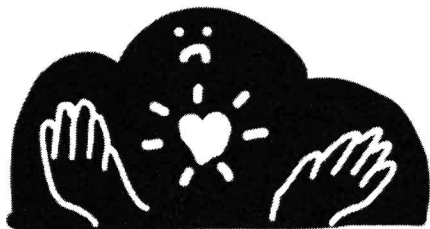




What is self-defense?

Here comes another curveball. Now we're talking about self defense! No, I don't mean karate (although I am a black belt). So, what is self defense? If someone is hurting you and you protect yourself, this is self defense. For example, if someone pulls on one of my little frog legs, I would slap their hand out of the way. It is easy to imagine lots of examples of self defense when we're thinking about the individual level, but what about self defense for a whole community? What does self-defense look like for Black communities? Or indigenous communities? It is not as easy as slapping someone's hand away when the thing that is hurting you is the way society is organized. Good thing there are lots of examples of community self-defense, you have probably even heard of some of them!

Black Panthers: The Black Panthers fought for Black liberation in Oakland, California in the 1960's. They defended their community against police brutality by having neighborhood patrols, and they also defended their community by providing free breakfast to 10,000 kids every day, opening a community school for poor Black kids, and opening free medical clinics for Black communities.

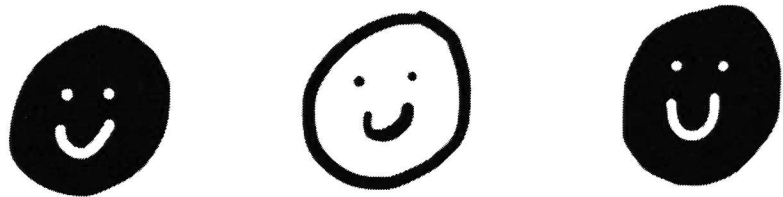


Indigenous people from society is something that only happened in the past, but it is important to understand that it is still a part of our society today.

When the United States was built, it was built for white people - Black and Indigenous people were not even considered fully human! White supremacy is the belief that white people are superior to everyone else on earth, and that belief is how colonizers justified murdering Indigenous people and taking their land, or kidnapping African people and claiming them as property. This racism is built into the bones of our country, and we can see the ways it still has an impact today: Indigenous people are forced to live on reservations, and Black people are put in prison at extremely high rates. White supremacy is still used to justify police murdering black people. It is the same belief that makes people say "all lives matter" when they hear "black lives matter".

Some people think that the racism that we see today is because our country is broken, and we need to fix it to get it back to how it was before. But it is important to understand that our country has always been this way. It isn't broken at all, it is working the way that it was designed to work, because the people who designed it back in 1776 believed that white people were superior to everyone else. This is why some people do not like to celebrate America or the 4th of July, because they believe that it does not stand for pride and freedom, but that it stands for racism and violence.

Activity: Was the United States built for you?

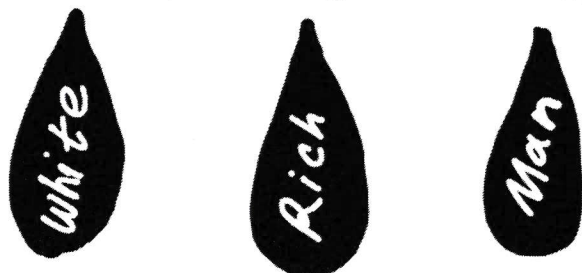


"We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights, that among these are Life, Liberty and the pursuit of Happiness." - Declaration of Independence

When the Declaration of Independence was written, they said "all men are created equal," but they did not mean everyone. Only white men who owned property (AKA rich) were allowed to vote. So, were they talking about you?

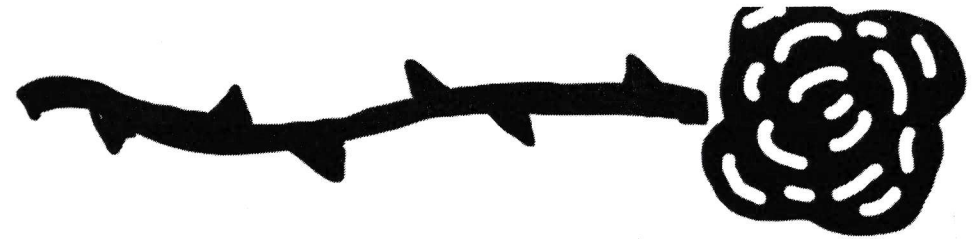
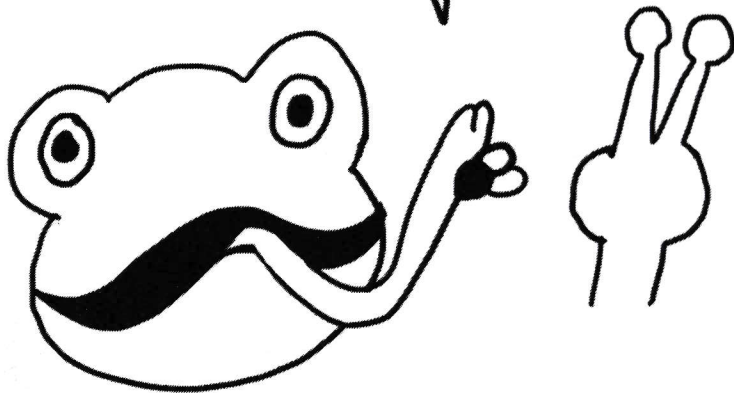
**White
Man
Rich**

Do these identities apply to you? You might have some of these identities, but not others. For example, you might be white but a woman. So, the United States protects you as a white person, but it wasn't built for you as a woman. Me personally, I am a frog, I am green, but I am incredibly rich. It's a long story. Anyway, think about the ways your different identities give you advantages and disadvantages.



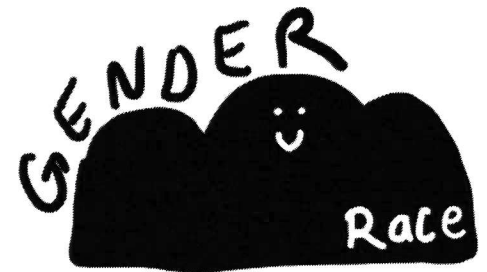
Activity: Draw your relationship with nature

Everyone's relationship with nature is a little different. It isn't as easy as picking one of these two relationships to nature, because yours is probably a combination of parts of both. Make a drawing that represents YOUR relationship to nature, and think about what parts come from a relationship based on harmony with nature, and what parts come from a relationship based on dominating over nature. There are no wrong answers, just make sure you include a frog. I need to feel included.



Intersectionality

Intersectionality is the idea that we all have many different identities (race, gender, wealth, immigration status, sexuality, ability, and more) that overlap and combine to give us privileges and disadvantages. For example, you might have privileges for being wealthy and a citizen of the United States, but experience the disadvantages of racism because you are Black.





New Relationships to Nature

You might be thinking, what does nature have to do with racism, colonialism, and all the other stuff we were just talking about? Well just hang on for a second and by the end of this page I think you'll know the answer! Let's start by talking about two different ways that people think about nature: As a frog, I see myself as part of nature. I don't see a separation between me, you humans, and the trees. I depend on nature for my food, my shelter, my friends, and nature depends on me for.... I'm not really sure, but nature definitely depends on me too. So I see myself as related to everything in the natural world and that makes me want to protect it and live in harmony with it. This is the type of relationship to nature that a lot of Indigenous people have.

The other type of relationship to nature is one that sees humans as separate from animals, separate from trees, separate from anything in nature. It sees nature as just a bunch of resources that humans use to survive. This relationship to nature sees humans as better than nature, and believes that in order to survive, humans need to dominate over nature. This attitude towards nature is based in capitalism, which is the economic system of the United States, and capitalism was spread around the world through colonialism. So, when European colonizers came to North America, or when English colonizers went to India or Africa, they brought a new relationship towards nature with them. These same colonizers were the ones who were enslaving African people, and at the time, they saw African people as



less than human. They kept them as property, and compared them to animals. They saw African people as just another resource that they needed to dominate and use for their own benefit.

Now fast forward to today. We now see that this capitalist, colonizer relationship to nature has caused climate change. Indigenous people lived on earth for thousands of years with no environmental damage, but in just a few hundred years, the dominate-over-nature attitude has caused damage that could mean death for our planet. When we understand that the climate change and racism that we see today are connected back to the way our country was founded, we can understand why some people believe that it is not enough to just drive electric cars or change a few government policies. We need to change the way we relate to nature and to each other to build a world where we live in harmony, instead of trying to dominate everything and everyone around us.

It can feel really overwhelming to see how climate change, colonialism, capitalism, and racism are all connected. But at the same time, it means that whatever we choose to work on to change the world, all of our struggles are connected. This can help us make new connections and new allies, for example between Native Americans at the Dakota Access Pipeline and the Black Lives Matter movement and the Anti-Capitalist movement.