



REPARATIVE JOURNALISM:  
A THREE-PART VIDEO SERIES

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REFLECTION &  
DISCUSSION GUIDE

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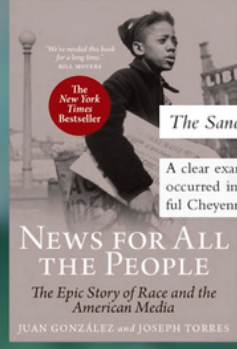
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## WELCOME

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Welcome to the Reparative Journalism Video Series, a visual roadmap of what's both required and possible when we prioritize reparative processes in journalism.

The first video in our series explores the anti-Black foundations of journalism, which set the stage for newspapers to commit harm against communities of color. From newspapers applauding massacres of Cheyenne and Arapaho people in Sand Creek, Colorado, to publishers inflaming anti-Japanese sentiments on the West Coast during World War II, there is a long legacy of harm. Journalism must contend with its entrenched history of violence.

While this first video describes the harmful roots of U.S. journalism, the rest of the series explores what might be possible in terms of building infrastructural and communal repair. Taking notes from the broader reparations movement, LANDBACK and the truth commissions in South Africa, we explore how journalism can be used to explore, uncover and mend its history of exclusion, marginalization and division.

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## BACKGROUND

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Since 2022, Diamond Hardiman, Free Press’ reparative narrative and creative strategy director, has been researching how to apply a reparations model to the journalism industry in service of a future of media reparations. She’s studied global repair movements like LANDBACK, spoken with journalists around the world about how to implement repair into journalistic practices and attended community sessions focused on repairing the harms of anti-Blackness across institutions and society.

Hardiman and colleagues Qing A. Saville and Courtney Morrison created this video series. Free Press’ News Voices project has informed and managed the series with the support and scholarship of Media 2070.

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## KEYWORDS

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**ANTI-BLACK RACISM** We define anti-Black racism (through the work of Joy James, Claudia Jones and Robin D.G. Kelley) as a global phenomenon stemming from the legacy of colonialism and African enslavement. This legacy created racial hierarchies in which Black people were constructed as inferior, subhuman and exploitable. Anti-Black racism is enforced through economic, political and cultural channels to maintain Western empire and racial capitalism.

**MEDIA SYSTEM** We primarily use this term in reference to corporate-owned print, radio, television and online media outlets that provide the majority of mass communications and information to the U.S. public. This white-controlled system is defined by policies and narrative practices that uphold a white-racial hierarchy – even amid efforts to diversify newsrooms and on-screen representation. This system also encompasses government policies that ensure white-owned media companies control the broader media infrastructure.

**COMMUNITY INFORMATION** “Basic information needs that individuals need met to navigate everyday life, and that communities need to have met in order to thrive. While fundamental in nature, these needs are not static but rather subject to redefinition by changing technologies, economic status and demographic shifts.”<sup>1</sup>

Information needs include but are not limited to:

1. emergencies and risks
2. health and welfare
3. education
4. economic opportunities
5. environment
6. civic information



<sup>1</sup> Lewis Friedland, Philip Napoli, Katherine Ognyanova, Carola Weil and Ernest J. Wilson III, *Review of the Literature Regarding Critical Information Needs of the American Public*, USC Annenberg School for Communication and Journalism, 2012

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## VIDEO 1: A JOURNEY TOWARD REPARATIVE JOURNALISM

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The journalism industry has a history of harming Black communities and other communities of color by inciting violence, spreading anti-Black myths and amplifying hateful ideas. Much of this history isn't discussed in journalism schools, newsroom orientations or conference panels, but it is central to how journalism is created and experienced by all of us today. Check out this video to learn more about why it's important to grapple with the industry's roots in anti-Black harm on the journey toward repair.



### DISCUSS

- Free Press' Joseph Torres says, "We have seen the long history of anti-Black racism in the media system, how the media system itself is like any other system that was created in our country to uphold a white-racial hierarchy." Do you see similarities between the media system and other systems within the United States?
- The video says that "anti-Blackness is the fulcrum of white supremacy, and our failure to address our media's anti-Blackness impacts all communities of color." What do you think it means for anti-Blackness to be a *fulcrum* of white supremacy?
- What is one example of how news outlets still cause media harm today?
- In what ways have journalists and media makers worked to address the media industry's connection to violence and harm? What are some positive values you want the journalism industry to uphold – and why?

### ENGAGE

#### *Documenting Media Harm*

Pick a partner and head to your school's research database or library. Find an article from a major news source like the Associated Press, *The New York Times* or *The Washington Post*. Browse stories that are harmful. Look for examples of headlines and articles that reprint police narratives without question; profit off the oppression of specific groups; or influence a harmful law or policy.

Talk with your partner about how these kinds of articles could have negatively impacted a person, family or community.

### LISTEN

*Learn more about the media's role in anti-Black racism.*

- ▶ ["How the Media Harms Black Lives"](#) Free Press Live, featuring Tauhid Chappell and Tia Osó
- ▶ [Episode 1: "The Bee and the Ship"](#) [Cotton Capital podcast](#) *The Guardian*, hosted by Maya Wolfe-Robinson

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## VIDEO 2: WHAT JOURNALISTS CAN LEARN FROM GLOBAL REPAIR MOVEMENTS

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In the second video in Free Press' Reparative Journalism Video Series, we study three different social-justice movements and highlight how journalists can incorporate practices of repair into their reporting. We study how truth commissions create space to correct the public record, how LANDBACK helps us consider what it means to be in "right relationship" with the community around us and how reparations can teach us to investigate the lasting legacy of anti-Blackness in our community infrastructures.



### DISCUSS

- Why is it important to include multiple perspectives when reporting on events, especially ones involving harm, loss or violence?
- What's one historic event (local, regional, national or international) that you wish had more media coverage?
- What are the different ways a journalist can understand a specific community's information needs?
- Why is it important for journalists to learn practices from communities outside of their own?
- What other communities, geographies or fields can journalists learn from?

### LISTEN

*Learn more about the media's role in anti-Black racism.*



["Āina Back for the Hawaiian Kingdom"](#)  
LANDBACK for the People, featuring André Perez and Camille Kalama



["Realizing Reparations Series with Venneikia Williams and Trevor Smith"](#) Rising Up with Sonali

### ENGAGE

#### *Enriching Narratives*

Think about a local, regional, national or international historic event that you wish had either more media coverage or more accurate coverage. Make a list of five strategies that you and other journalists could employ to take better care of this community story. See our guide [The Moment Is Magic](#) for inspiration.

Ask yourself questions like:

- Which individuals and communities did this event most impact?
- How do you think they may have been impacted at the material, social and/or heart levels? And how can a journalist be thoughtful about those impacts during the reporting process?
- Who in this community – apart from government officials and academic leaders – has expertise on this topic? What ways can you include their voices?
- What historical context may be missing from this story?
- What's one meaningful care practice from the *Moment Is Magic* guide – or from your life – that you could bring to your reporting?

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## VIDEO 3: REPARATIVE JOURNALISM: THE HEALING POWER OF STORYTELLING

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In the third video in Free Press' Reparative Journalism Video Series, we sit with DaLyah Jones and Tonia Hill, two Black journalists who share their lived experiences of practicing reparative journalism. In our video, DaLyah and Tonia reflect on how their work reclaims the lineage of storytelling. They emphasize how storytelling can shift conditions to create the space necessary to facilitate individual, communal and societal-level healing.



### DISCUSS

- What is your personal connection to storytelling?
- How does DaLyah define reparative journalism? What do you think reparative journalism is – or could be?
- What values do DaLyah and Tonia bring to their journalistic work?
- If you were a journalist, what communities would you want to serve?
- What does a feeling of “freedom within our bodies, within our minds” have to do with journalism?


### ENGAGE

#### *Treasuring Our Lineages*

Describe your own storytelling journey. Pick three artifacts from your life and explore the role of storytelling in your life, and how that influences the values and principles you want to bring to your storytelling going forward. (Artifacts could be a photo, a family story, something you've made, a book, a personal item, a creative tool, etc.)

### LISTEN

*Learn more about the power of reparative journalism to transform society.*

 [“Reparative Journalism: Healing Narratives for Social Justice”](#) Infinite Patterns, a podcast of the Racial Equity in Journalism Fund at Borealis Philanthropy, featuring Damaso Reyes and Gabe Schneider

 [“Movement Journalism”](#) The View from Somewhere, a podcast by Lewis Raven-Wallace, featuring Tina Vasquez







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## RESOURCES

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[Ida's Legacy: How BIPOC Journalists and Publishers Became the Authority on Truth and Democracy](#) by Alicia Bell, Brittany Carter and T.D. Bailey (aka DaLyah Jones), Prism Reports

[Repairing Journalism's History of Anti-Black Harm](#) by Joseph Torres and Collette Watson, The ANNALS of the American Academy of Political and Social Science

[Black in the Newsroom](#), a Media 2070 documentary | [Discussion Guide](#)

[An Invitation to Dream Up Media Reparations](#) by Joseph Torres, Alicia Bell, Collette Watson, Tauhid Chappell, Diamond Hardiman and Christina Pierce, Media 2070 | [Reflection & Discussion Guide](#)

[The View from Somewhere: Undoing the Myth of Journalistic Objectivity](#) by Lewis Raven Wallace

[Bearing Witness While Black: African Americans, Smartphones, and the New Protest #Journalism](#) by Allissa V. Richardson, PhD

*Free Press is a 501(c)(3) nonpartisan organization fighting for your rights to connect and communicate.*

*Our News Voices program organizes with communities, journalists and newsrooms to build power and advocate for the news, information and narratives that people need to thrive. Since 2015, we've held dozens of public forums that brought together community members and journalists, launched creative community-led journalism collaborations, partnered with newsrooms to work more closely with their audiences, run workshops to train reporters on how to use organizing strategies in their newsgathering, developed resources for the public to amplify news coverage of untold stories, and campaigned for legislation to invest in innovative news and information projects.*

*The Media 2070 project uses the framework of media reparations to call on media companies, the government, philanthropy and the broader public to reckon with and repair the historical and ongoing harm our nation's media system has caused Black people. Launched in 2020 by Free Press' Black caucus, the project's home lies within the broader reparations field. Media 2070 is a continuation of a lineage of racial-justice organizing and movement mobilization that seeks to shift systemic power to repair centuries of harm, enslavement and colonialism. Media 2070 works in alignment with new economic systems that serve intersectional Black liberation and Indigenous sovereignty.*

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