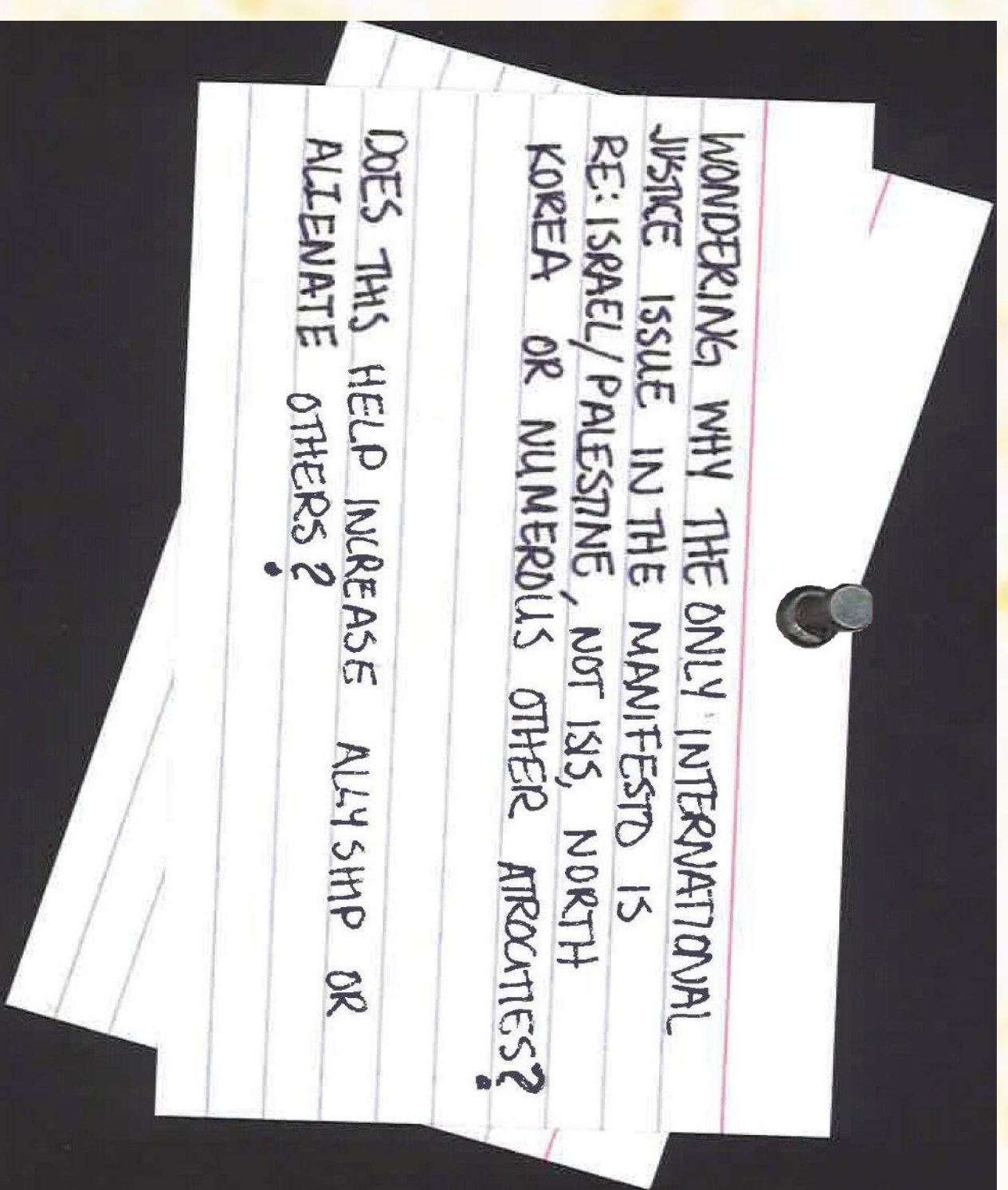


Examining BLM

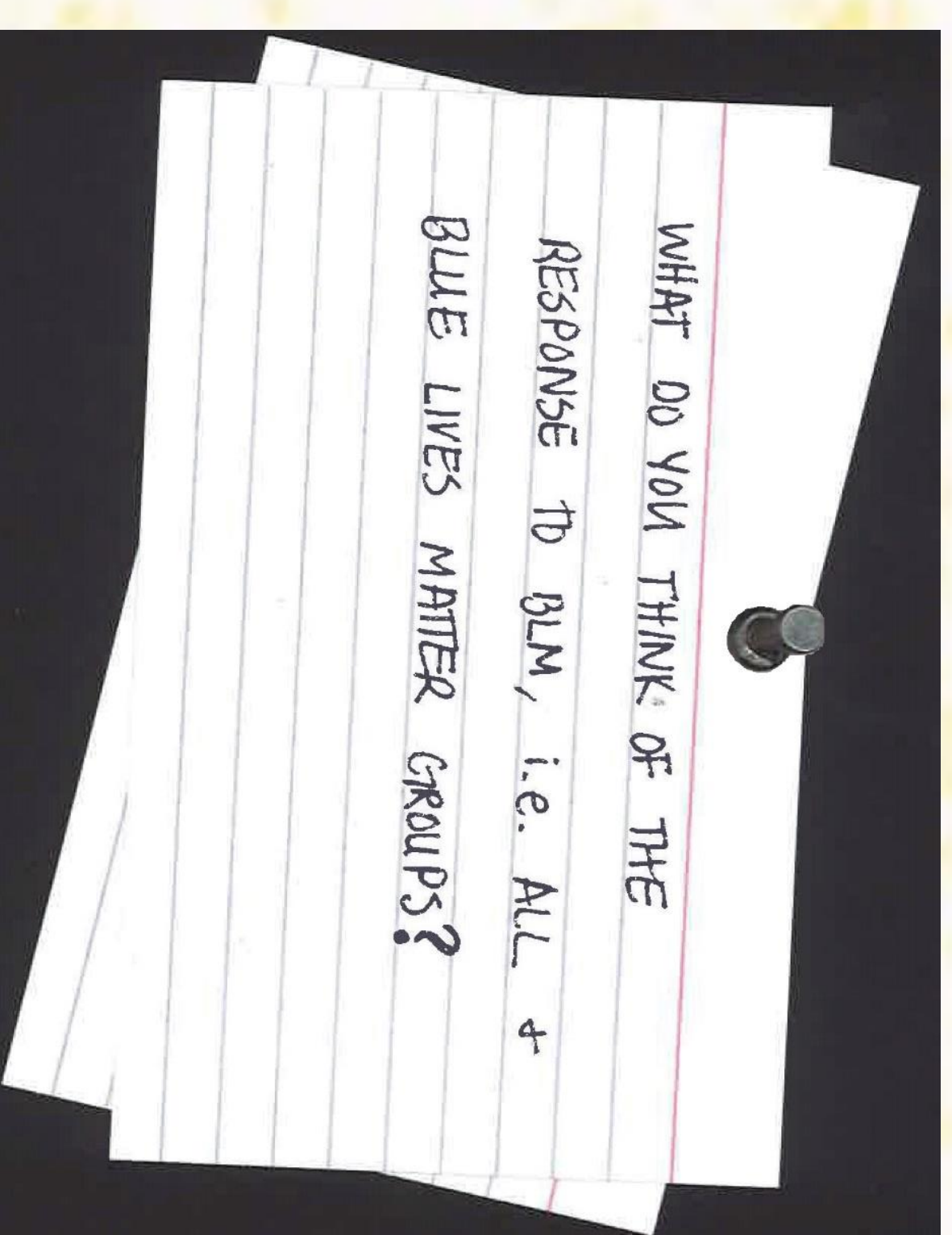
In the previous installation of the BLM exhibit, some of us had some questions. Here are some common responses to help us continue to comprehend the BLM platform and further conceptualize BLM as a multi-layered grassroots movement. Please note these are not responses from the Center for Civic Learning and Community Action. However, in the spirit of social justice it is important to consider the analysis presented.



Under the “Invest-Divest” BLM demand, U.S. foreign aid is viewed as a source of divestment and opportunity to invest in the Black communities within the country. Israel is currently the number one recipient of U.S. direct foreign aid at over \$3 billion dollars a year.[1]

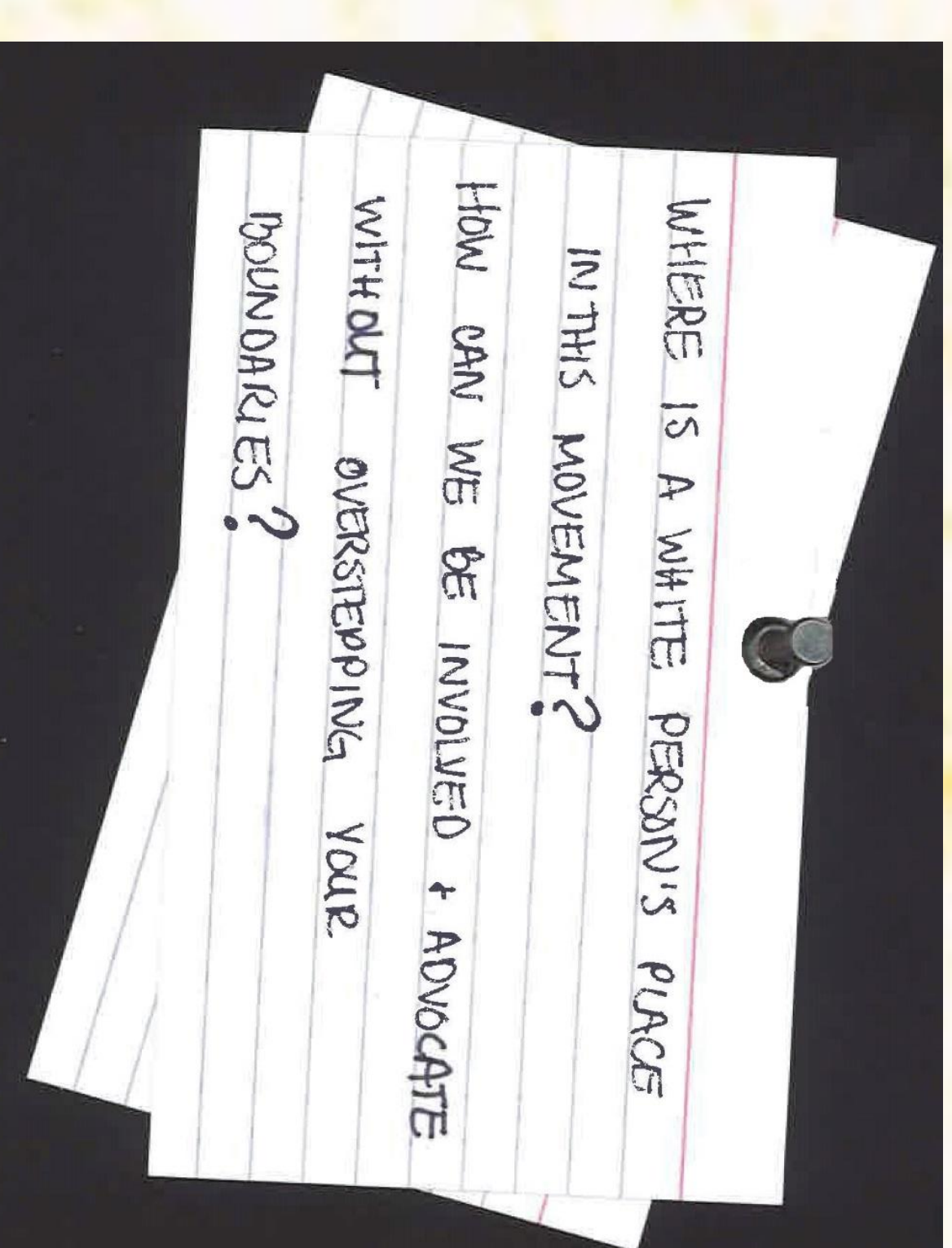
This both increases some allyships and potentially alienates others. The “Invest-Divest” BLM demand labels the treatment of Palestinians by the Israeli government as “genocide,”[2] and has received strong backlash from Jewish groups in the United States and subsequent withdrawal of support from the Movement for Black Lives.[3]

“While the Movement for Black Lives platform drafters may have wanted to express solidarity with Palestinians and the global diaspora, the backlash to their statement shows the near-impossibility of creating a coalition around a global liberation movement. ‘The Movement for Black Lives has tried to articulate not only their narrow concerns, but framed those concerns in a more global and universal context,’ said Greenberg. ‘I think, ultimately, that is the right thing to do. It is the ethical thing to do. It’s the effective thing to do. It’s the moral thing to do.’ But, she added, ‘The problem is, once you articulate a whole vision in which you are a part, you open the door for other people to pick apart those details.’”[4]



Responses to BLM from All and Blue Lives Matter groups “remove focus from the specific grievances of black Americans,” and onto a universal lens that all lives matter. “‘The entire point of Black Lives Matter is to illustrate the extent to which black lives have not mattered in this country.’”[5]

Examples of negative repercussions from this rhetoric can be observed in the Louisiana ‘Blue Lives Matter’ bill. In 2016, Louisiana expanded officers and first responders’ protection under the hate crime statute increasing the penalty or sentence to those who are charged under the law. Traditionally, hate crime laws are enacted to protect groups with personal and immutable characteristics such as race, religion, gender, sexual orientation, and ethnicity.[6] Thus, this extension of the law heightens the protection of an independently chosen profession, one which already enjoys special protection under other statutes. Meanwhile, the same has not been established for Black communities.



Heather Cronk, co-director of Showing Up for Racial Justice, stated in an interview that “there’s a clear role for white folks to play as part of a multiracial movement for racial justice.”[7]

Suggestions taken from an interview with essayist and political commentator Sally Kohn:[8]

“Organize yourselves.”

White liberals and progressives have a responsibility to organize their communities for social justice using an explicitly anti-black racism frame. There is no need to hide behind black or people of color organizations. Commit yourself to organizing poor and working class white folks. We are capable of organizing our communities. Our children need everyday white folks to work harder to ensure that black women don’t have to worry about dying after failing to signal properly, walking while transgender or trying to protect their children.” [Charlene Carruthers](#), national director of [Black Youth Project 100](#)

“Stop saying ‘all lives matter’”

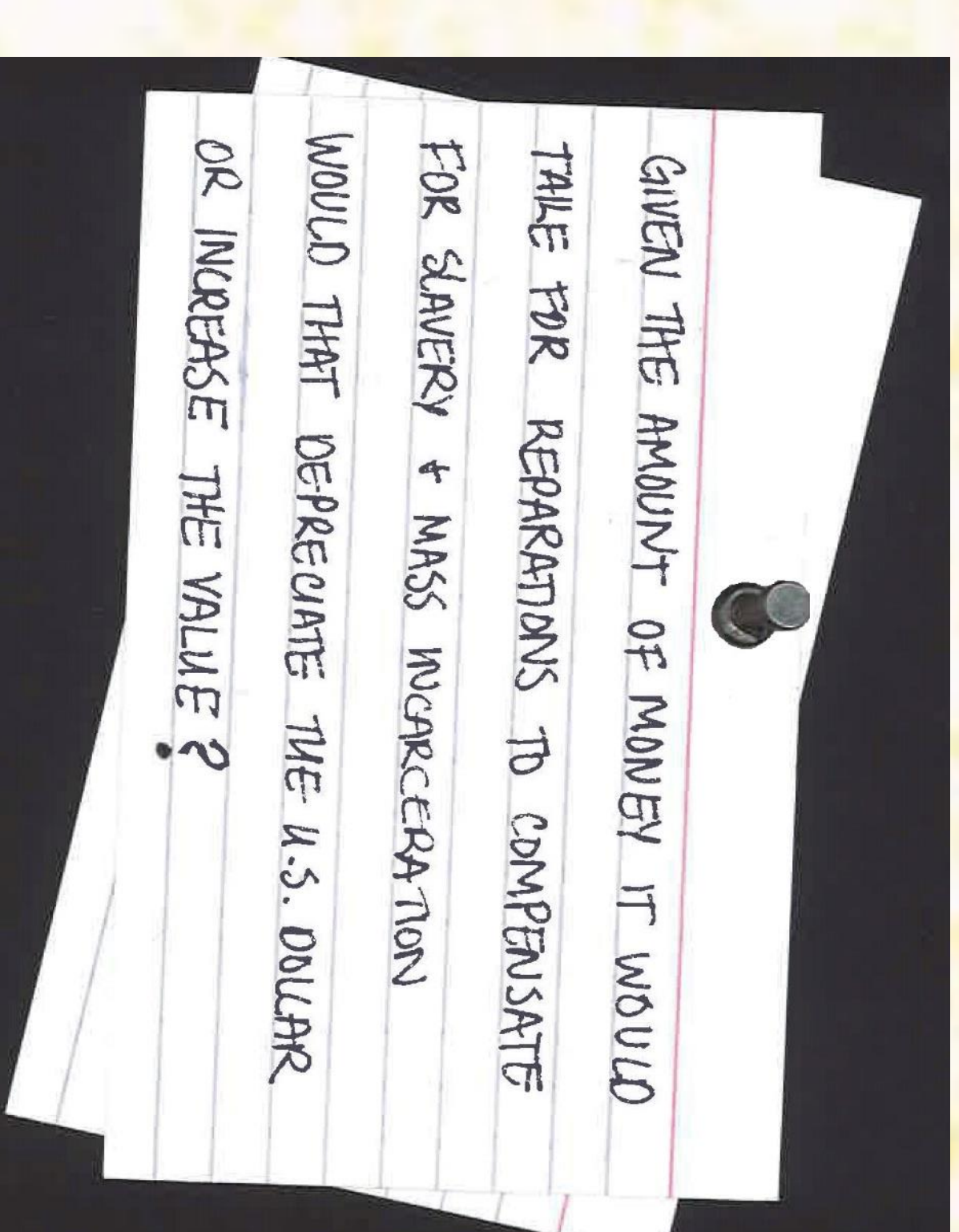
Understand why you can’t say that. Whatever people need to do to understand why that’s not OK, they need to do that. What we’re saying right now is that all lives *will* actually matter *when* black lives matter — and black lives don’t matter right now. So we need to say black lives matter to change that. We need to change that individually, we need to change that within our communities and we need to change that systemically. [Robbie Clark](#), organizer with Black Lives Matter Bay Area

“The real liberatory and radical work begins at home, literally.”

Black people don’t need to be convinced that anti-black racism, structural inequity and skin privilege are facts: white people do... White people have to do the hard work of figuring out the best ways to educate themselves and each other about racism. And I don’t know what that looks like, because that is not my work, or the work of other black people, to figure out. In fact, the demand placed on black people to essentially teach white folk how not to be racist or complicit in structural racism is *itself* an exercise of willful ignorance and laziness. [Darnell L. Moore](#), senior editor at [MJC](#) and co-managing editor of [The Feminist Wire](#)

“Allies are best as accomplices.”

Be complicit in dismantling racist structures by taking risks, putting your bodies on the line in the streets, sharing access to resources (and releasing agency over them), living in some discomfort with difficult conversations in collaboration, knowing when to listen and organizing other white folks. [Mervyn Marcano](#), spokesman for [Ferguson Action](#)



It is difficult to establish as many national and global factors influence the value of the U.S. dollar at a given time. The Under the “Reparations” demand, BLM proposes the following:

“A Universal Basic Income (UBI) [that] provides an unconditional and guaranteed livable income that would meet basic human needs while providing a floor of economic security. UBI would eliminate absolute poverty, ensuring economic security for all by mandating an income floor covering basic needs. Unlike most social welfare and social insurance programs, it is *not* means tested nor does it have any work requirements. All individual adults are eligible...The revenue saved from divesting in criminal justice institutions could be pooled into a fund for UBI; this revenue could be earmarked for the ‘PLUS’ aspect of the policy that would be targeted toward Black Americans. If combined with other funds, it would effectively function as reparations, in a grand bargain with white America: All would benefit, but those who suffered through slavery and continuing racism would benefit slightly more.”[9]

[1] “Invest-Divest,” The Movement for Black Lives, accessed February 16, 2017, <https://policy.mtbl.org/invest-divest/>.

[2] See UN General Assembly, *UN Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide*, December 1948, Article 2.

[3] Sidahmed, Mazin, “Critics Denounce Black Lives Matter Platform Accusing Israel of Genocide,” *The Guardian*, August 11, 2016, accessed February 16, 2017, <https://www.theguardian.com/us-news/2016/aug/11/black-lives-matters-movement-palestine-platform-israel-critics>.

[4] Green, Emma, “Why Do Black Activists Care About Palestine?” *The Atlantic*, August 18, 2016, accessed February 16, 2017, <https://www.theatlantic.com/politics/archive/2016/08/why-did-black-american-activists-start-careng-about-palestine/496088/>.

[5] Taylor, Keearga, “emahatta quoted in Victor, Daniel, “Why ‘All Lives Matter’ is Such a Perilous Phrase,” *The New York Times*, July 15, 2016, accessed February 16, 2017, https://www.nytimes.com/2016/07/16/us/all-lives-matter-black-lives-matter.html?_r=0.

[6] Conlon, Kevin, “Louisiana Governor Signs ‘Blue Lives Matter’ Bill,” *CNN*, May 27, 2016, accessed February 16, 2017, <http://www.cnn.com/2016/05/26/us/louisiana-blue-lives-matter-law/>.

[7] Rodriguez, Matthew, “How to Support the Black Lives Matter Movement as a White Ally,” *Identities*, *Mic*, December 7, 2016, accessed February 16, 2017, <https://mic.com/articles/161214/how-to-support-the-black-lives-matter-movement-as-a-white-ally#:~:q=Q&A=PHG>.

[8] Kohn, Sally, “This is What White People Can Do to Support #BlackLivesMatter,” *The Washington Post*, August 6, 2015, accessed February 16, 2017, https://www.washingtonpost.com/posteverything/wp/2015/08/06/this-is-what-white-people-can-do-to-support-blacklivesmatter/?hpid=hp_term%3D2889221e19f8.

[9] “Reparations,” The Movement for Black Lives, accessed February 16, 2017, <https://policy.mtbl.org/invest-divest/>.