

**BLACK POWER COURSE**  
**SOCIAL VENTURE PARTNERS – LOS ANGELES**

Class Meets: Wednesdays 12-1PM  
Professor: Dr. Melina Abdullah  
Email Contact: info@svpla.org  
Social Media: @DocMellyMel

**Land, Labor and Life Acknowledgment:**

BREATH

This land on which we inhabit is physically situated in the original Ancestral homelands of the Tongva people. We pay respect to the Tongva and all Indigenous people – past, present, and future – and their continuing presence in the homeland and throughout their historical diaspora.

BREATH

We pay homage to those who were stolen from Africa, placed in bondage, falsely named as chattel, and forced into labor, who were called “slaves,” but never submitted as such, who have always been fully human, with an unbroken connection to the Divine and to each other. We honor our African Ancestors for the still-unpaid labor which built what is now the Americas.

BREATH

To both our Indigenous and African forebears, we commit to the continued struggle for liberation and reparations, for it is only through freedom and justice that we truly give honor.

AHO! ASHE!

**Course Overview:**

This class is structured to encourage you and provide you with the tools necessary 1) to analyze the way that power circulates in society and the particular ways that race and Blackness affect power, 2) to identify ways that a more egalitarian and free society can come to be, and 3) to view yourself as a vehicle for change. Through an examination of ways in which positions of privilege and oppression impact access to power, we will identify areas where change is necessary and devise strategies through which we can begin to create a more just world.

We will begin the term with a close read of *Black Power* by Kwame Ture and Charles Hamilton, the foundational text for Black power. From there, we will begin to

collectively vision the world that we want to build, drawing from the reading *Freedom Dreams* by Robin Kelley, intended to spark our own radical imaginings that prompt us to engage the world as malleable and capable of change when we collectively work for it. Finally, we will read Patrisse Cullors' *When They Call You a Terrorist*, and focus on Black Lives Matter as a contemporary Black Power movement. Our approach to this class is one that seeks to tie traditional academic methods to more hands-on learning practices. As such, our learning sources include lectures/seminars, presentations from community practitioners and open discussions of student experiences.

### **This Black Lives Matter Moment:**

We cannot genuinely study Black Power without engaging in the work that is happening on-the-ground right now. Black Lives Matter (BLM) has been named the [largest movement in U.S. history](#), and possibly world history. Continuing along the Black radical tradition, BLM can be considered a part of the current iteration of Black Power. As such, considerable discussion and engagement will be integrated into the course.

### **Social Venture Partners-Los Angeles (SVPLA):**

Creating lasting social change rarely happens through one person acting alone. More often, change happens when many of us come together around a common purpose.

That's what SVP is all about. We connect individuals who want to give their time and money to make their communities stronger and the nonprofits leading the way with disruptive ideas to tackle Los Angeles' toughest challenges.

### **Differently-Abled Students and Accessibility:**

We are grateful to partner with Pro Bono ASL for this course. ASL interpretation is offered for each online session and most in-person community-engagement opportunities. For more on Pro Bono ASL, please visit [probonoasl.com](http://probonoasl.com).

We are working as hard as we can to make the course as accessible as possible. If there are additional items to consider, please do not hesitate to reach out by email to [info@svpla.org](mailto:info@svpla.org), who is offering additional support for the class.

### **Reading/Materials:**

- Ture, Kwame and Charles Hamilton. 1967. *Black Power: The Politics of Liberation*. New York: Random House.
- Kelley, Robin D.G. 2002. *Freedom Dreams: The Black Radical Imagination*. Boston: Beacon Press.
- Cullors, Patrisse Khan. 2018. *When They Call You a Terrorist: A Black Lives Matter Memoir*. New York: St. Martin's Press.

### **Suggested Reading:**

- Armour, Jody. 2020. *N\*gga Theory: Race, Language, Unequal Justice, and the Law*. Los Angeles: Los Angeles Review of Books.

**Class Schedule:**

<b>DATE</b>	<b>TOPIC</b>	<b>ASSIGNMENT DUE</b>
<b>WEEK ONE</b>		
Wednesday, April 21, 2021	Course Introduction/ Syllabus Review Defining Black Power	BP – Chapters 1-3
<b>WEEK TWO</b>		
Wednesday, April 28, 2021	Politics, Solidarity and The Myths of Coalition	BP – Chapters 4-6
<b>WEEKS THREE</b>		
Wednesday, May 5, 2021	The Search for New Forms	BP – Chapters 7-8
<b>WEEK FOUR</b>		
Wednesday, May 12, 2021	Freedom Dreams and Black Radical Imagination	FD – Praface - Chapter 3
<b>WEEK FIVE</b>		
Wednesday, May 19, 2021	Reclaiming Our Dreams	FD – 4 - Conclusion
<b>WEEK SIX</b>		
Wednesday, May 26, 2021	Black Survival as Black Power	WTCYAT – Foreword – Chapter 7
<b>WEEK SEVEN</b>		
Wednesday, June 2, 2021	Birthing Black Lives Matter	WTCYAT – Chapters 8-16
<b>WEEK EIGHT</b>		
Wednesday, June 9, 2021	Making Black Lives Matter	No additional readings.