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MY FUTURE

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DELIVER BLACK DREAMS

MESSAGE GUIDE

2020



**DELIVER
BLACK
DREAMS**

WHAT IS DELIVER BLACK DREAMS?

Deliver Black Dreams is a fully executed brand to express our winning narrative with an intentionally Black aesthetic. The brand and this messaging guide are based on rigorous research into perception and persuasion, and provide specific recommendations to engage our base and persuade the middle, while keeping Black people in both groups centered. This is done with the keen implementation of knowledge that Black people are not a monolith, they have the potential to be persuaded by oppositional rhetoric, *and* they largely prefer messages that show cross racial solidarity. The core of this work is the Race Class Narrative, an approach that weaves together economic empowerment, racial justice and gender equity, using language proven to work to mobilize and persuade voters - and in this case, Black voters.

Deliver Black Dreams was developed by Black Popular Front of Race Class Narrative Action. Learn more about RCNA at: raceclassnarrativeaction.com.



HOW TO USE DELIVER BLACK DREAMS

Deliver Black Dreams was created to complement, as opposed to supplement, your current narrative strategy. This is intended to expand your capacity and make more possible for you and your organizational goals - not add more work to your already robust program.

This is nationally tested messaging, proven to mobilize and motivate behavior change, as opposed to just getting people to agree with you.

The basic frame is: Values, Villains and Vision.

1. You lift up a shared value that cuts across race and class.
2. Then you name how that value has been violated, along with the villain and their intentions (explicitly as possible).
3. Then you come back to the vision of what's possible when we work together.

There are multiple ways to use this in your organizing and mobilizing strategy: in conversations on a canvass or among allies; in public statements, letters, and op-eds; in interviews and speeches; on social media and more. While they can be memorized like a script, they can also be adapted to your particular needs and circumstances. Below are examples.



OUR WINNING MESSAGES

All too often, progressives are asked to keep issues of racial justice and economic empowerment separate -- or to remain silent about the former at the risk of alienating the mythical middle we're told we must appease. But our research shows that the way to persuade the middle is to mobilize our supporters to relentless repetition and that requires that we speak effectively on issues of race and class. Moreover, we find that effective messaging on multi-racial populism engages persuadable Black voters and acts as a critical response to the division and fear the opposition keeps peddling.

OVERALL BRANDED NARRATIVE

ELEMENTS OF A SUCCESSFUL NARRATIVE

Freedom is for everyone.

Begins rooted in unity and shared values, overtly naming race in a way that includes everyone

But time and again, we have witnessed evidence of horrors committed against Black people by police, while certain politicians shame and blame the very victims of this brutality to distract us from their failures to ensure we have the care, security and support we need.

Names racial scapegoating as a weapon that enables economic harms to all of us

They know that when we join together across race and use our collective voice, we can make the dreams of justice, equity and fairness, a reality.

Emphasizes unity and collective action to solve problems

[OPTIONAL ADDITION] ...in the same way that we've already created several cop-free schools and removed white supremacist statues and flags from public spaces in states across the country.

Counters cynicism by evoking previous wins through cross racial solidarity. Cynicism is the true opposition to people leaning into progressive values.

Together, we marched to defend Black lives, and now, we vote to deliver Black dreams. Political power is for all of us.

Connects working together to positive benefits for all, activating the brand

WORDS TO EMBRACE AND REPLACE

SAY THIS...	INSTEAD OF...	BECAUSE...
People of different races and from different places; white, Black or brown; native or newcomer; Latino, Asian or white; etc.	All people; everyone	Explicit reference to race engages people of color while keeping white listeners on board
No matter our differences, most of us want pretty similar things	United we stand, divided we fall	"United we stand" can be a confusing set up from which to move to explicit division; it may be heard as a description of the present not an aspiration for the future
Join together across racial differences	Join together in our communities	Making racial reference increases interest of our base and persuadables
Our opponents blame new immigrants, Black people, and people struggling to make ends meet for our hard times	Our opponents are racist against new immigrants, Black people, and Muslims	Reframing racism as scapegoating helps draw the causal connection to economic concerns shared across races
Wealthy few who rig the rules; greedy few	Powerful elites; the wealthy	Critical to specify we mean only certain people, thus adding "few," and to name by behavior, not category or class

Corporation	Company	Company evokes small and local; people are measurably more hostile to "corporations"
Working people	Workers	Calling people workers reduces them to the role they play and eclipses their basic needs and desires as humans
Certain politicians deliberately deprive schools in Black and brown communities, denying students have the resources to thrive; a powerful few choose who will live and who will die through color-coded barriers to healthcare; corporations rig the rules to take from working people	Education/achievement gap between Black and white students; most fatal for people of color; growing disparities between rich and poor	The language of "disparities" and "gaps" obscures how these differing outcomes came to be, suggesting that they exist naturally -- or worse, that the people harmed are the ones to blame (e.g. Black students aren't working hard enough).
Shared contribution; contribute our fair share	Tax burden; tax relief	"Burden" and "relief" reinforce the notion of taxes as an affliction
Residents; community members	Taxpayers	Labeling people taxpayers foregrounds finances and anti-government biases
Schools where our kids learn; roads we drive on; buses we take to work	Public education; infrastructure; public transit	The more tangible we can make our messages, the more people are drawn to and motivated by them
Fair return on our work	Hard work should be rewarded; we need a raise	We must make clear that the money to pay people comes from the work that we do

<p>Take resources from our communities; undermine our schools; free ride off what we contribute</p>	<p>Tax breaks; avoid paying taxes; get away with not paying taxes</p>	<p>People resent taxes and thus understand desire to avoid them; we must foreground what taxes buy, not the taxes themselves</p>
<p>Ensure our schools and communities have the resources they need; ensure we can stay in our homes</p>	<p>Close corporate loopholes; end tax breaks; stop rent gauging</p>	<p>We must affirm what we are for, not merely what we oppose</p>
<p>Resource our schools; provide community services</p>	<p>Generate \$X billion dollars; pocketing \$X</p>	<p>Bringing money top of mind makes people more selfish and primes individualism</p>
<p>Be a voter</p>	<p>Vote; go vote</p>	<p>Identity precedes action for GOTV. In other words, the key to getting someone to vote is to first get them to identify <i>as a voter</i>. Always ask people to “be a voter” rather than to vote.</p>
<p>Safe communities; communities/homes/streets where we feel safe</p>	<p>Public safety; safety</p>	<p>People still have a large tendency to associate “safety” with traditional policing as the necessity to make it possible. So even when saying “public safety beyond policing” the mind finds this to be an oxymoron. “Creating safe communities” gives more fertile space for alternatives to norm.</p>



DELIVER BLACK DREAMS

ADAPTING DBD FOR SPECIFIC ISSUES

The basic structure of the Race Class Narrative can be adapted for any number of issues. For the purpose of the *Deliver Black Dreams* frame, we are providing a few examples below.



COVID-19

No matter what we look like, where we live, or what's in our wallets, getting sick reminds us that at our core, we're all human.

But for too long, we've let a powerful few divide us by pointing the finger at Black, brown and poor people as the reason we can't afford to ensure paid time to recover from illness and care for our loved ones. On the backend, those powerful few pad their own profits by making life and health a product for sale.

We deliver Black dreams by ensuring everyone can access the care that we need without fearing we'll go bankrupt to do it. By joining together as voters, we can elect leaders who govern for all of us, no exceptions.





COVID-19

We pull through by pulling together, like we have done in the past. This means going all in for all of us to demand the care and paid time to recover everyone needs.

We stand united against a handful of politicians and corporate insurance and pharma industries that would use this crisis to generate profits and keep us from getting the testing, vaccines and treatments we need to get and stay well.

We know that we can see through those who feed us lies. They want to keep us divided because they know if we come together, we will demand proven solutions like healthcare for all, paid time to recover and care for our loved ones, and protections that keep us in our homes and ensure we make ends meet.

United as voters, we can deliver Black dreams by electing new leaders who respect our rights and will fund our lives, creating the services and care we all need to weather this crisis and thrive long after it.

For more guidance on talking about COVID, check out Race Class Narrative Action's [National COVID-19 Messaging Guide](#).



COVID AND INCARCERATION

We all want quality healthcare for ourselves and our loved ones, no matter what we look like or where we call home. This is true every day, especially during a global pandemic.

But today, some of the most medically compromised people in our society are incarcerated in close quarters, unable to protect themselves or access the care they need. Certain politicians [name specific leader(s) if possible] are putting the health and safety of our loved ones in jails and prisons at risk.

Holding millions of people in life-threatening conditions is a choice we don't have to keep making. We urge [name] to immediately address the dangers of these facilities -- and release people with health vulnerabilities, people over the age of 60, people with six months or less remaining on their sentence, and people serving for technical and drug related offenses.

When we unite as voters, we can deliver Black dreams and ensure justice, safety, and community prevail for all of our loved ones.





COVID AND RACIAL JUSTICE

When any one of us is barred from being able to prevent, detect, treat and recover from this illness, all of us are at risk.

Today, a handful of our elected leaders are picking and choosing who will live and who will die from this virus based on age-old color-coded barriers to getting necessary care. Allowing COVID-19 to destroy Black, brown, and Indigenous communities is a choice we don't need to keep making.

We deliver Black dreams by coming together to demand information about how this virus is impacting each community and implement proven strategies that ensure every one of us - regardless of where we live or what we look like - gets the care and treatment that we need. By linking arms as voters, we can elect leaders who govern for all of us, no exceptions. Together, we can deliver Black dreams.

For more guidance on talking about COVID-19 and racial justice, check out **Race Class Narrative Action's [Justice in Healing Guide](#)**.



EDUCATION

Every child, of every race, religion and background, is deserving of world class education in a supportive, culturally competent environment that sets them up to achieve their dreams.

But for too long, a handful of the top wealthiest's lobbyists have pushed for taking fifth and sixth helpings of our children's resources, when our kids haven't even had a first. They have a handful of legislators help them sequester Black children and children of color to failing schools, while under paying and under resourcing their educators. They rig the rules and then point the blame at parents and families trying to make ends meet.

But when we come together, across skin color and school districts, we can ensure that those who have skipped out, will now pay their fair share. We can elect leaders who put families and our children's futures first, holding accountable those who've been taking our collective resources. Together, we can make all of kids' dreams a reality by first delivering Black dreams.



EDUCATION

School is a place where childhood happens. Most of us believe that every child, whatever their color, background or zip code, has the right to learn in a supportive environment that respects their humanity, upholds their dignity, and responds fairly to mistakes and mis-steps.

But today, certain politicians fuel racial divisions so they can take resources away from our schools while they let the wealthiest few get away with not paying their fair share. They then blame parents, educators and students to distract us from these failures. They send police into our schools to harm our students and children for making mistakes that -- for wealthy white kids -- are deemed part of growing up and learning.

Our schools must treat every child as equal, especially in situations of conflict.

Our children hold the dreams of future generations, and by joining together - parents and teachers, Black, white, and brown - we can make every neighborhood public school a place where all children can learn, grow, and thrive. Together, we can deliver Black dreams.



WAGES, WORK AND UNIONS

No matter what our color, where we come from, or what we do for a living, most of us want a good life for our families, dignity for our elders, and our kids to have the love, care and opportunities they need to pursue their dreams.

But for too long, certain politicians and their greedy lobbyists have blocked working people from earning a good living, defunded our schools, and threatened seniors with cuts to Medicare and Social Security - all so they can hand kickbacks to their cronies in the richest 1%. Those same politicians then blame the hardships they created on Black people, scapegoating us to try to distract everyone from their greedy actions, while they continue to deny Black communities the adequate resources that everyone deserves.

But we know better. The greedy few only try to divide us based on our race, place, or gender because they know that the many have power over the money. By coming together, Black, white and brown, indigenous and immigrant, we can rewrite the rules, take back our democracy, and #DeliverBlackDreams. Join us by being a voter to ensure we elect leaders who govern for all of us, no exceptions.





FUND OUR FUTURES BEYOND POLICING

Whether we're Black or white, Latino or Asian, Indigenous or newcomer, we want our families to be vibrant and whole.

But over and over again the people entrusted to serve and protect our communities target, detain and even kill Black people without consequences. All the while, a handful of politicians throw out lies to divide us. They think that if we're made to fear each other, we'll ignore it when police officers meant to uphold the law harm our communities. And they hope we'll look the other way when politicians elected to govern in our name hand millions to corporations to militarize law enforcement and deny resources for the schools and healthcare we actually need.

But this election season voters are demanding change. They are mailing in ballots and showing up at the polls to ensure that this country is better and safer for every one of us regardless of where we live or what we look like. Because together we can achieve liberty and justice for all. Are you a voter?



FUND OUR FUTURES BEYOND POLICING

Most of us, no matter our color, want America to be a place where freedom is for everyone.

But time and again, we have witnessed evidence of horrors committed against Black people by police, while certain politicians shame and blame the very victims of this brutality to distract us from their failures to ensure we have the care, security and support we need.

We are coming together to demand that liberty and justice be for all by moving our money to the services and supports we need and away from the policing that hurts our communities.

Together, we've already redefined safe schools in some cities and removed monuments dedicated to those who meant us harm.

United as voters, we can elect new leaders who respect our rights and will fund our lives, creating the schools, services and care we all need.

For more guidance on talking about protests and policing, check out Race Class Narrative Action's guide [Messaging This Moment: Mobilizing our Base and Persuading the Middle on Policing, Protest, and Racial Injustice.](#)



VOTER REGISTRATION, VOTE BY MAIL AND GOTV

Most of us believe that, no matter what we look like or where we live, we should all have an equal say in our democracy.

But today, a powerful few try to divide us by race and by place so we won't join together to demand what all of our families need.

We are long overdue to rewrite the rules and take back our democracy. It is only by showing that the many are willing to stand up to the money that we have the power to get the care and respect every one of us deserves.

Together, we can deliver Black dreams. Join us by being a voter to ensure we elect leaders who govern for all of us.



VOTER REGISTRATION, VOTE BY MAIL AND GOTV

Millions of us, young and old, from cities to suburbs, across race and place of origin, have just signed up to vote by mail -- joining millions of others in states like Colorado, Oregon and Utah who have been voting by mail for years.

While a powerful few make false claims about mail-in voting to try and keep us from making our voices heard so they can stay in power, we know better.

Deliver Black dreams by joining together as voters. Request your mail-in ballot, delivered right to your door, here by [deadline]:
[link]

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VOTER REGISTRATION, VOTE BY MAIL AND GOTV

Whatever our color, origin or zip code, our vote is our power. Being a voter by mail is a safe and easy way for us to exercise that power.

The 2016 election was decided by incredibly few voters, and this year we have the chance to turn our outrage and energy into change by electing new leaders who reject the politics of division and who will govern for every one of us, whether we're young or old, Black or white, native or newcomer.

Together, as voters, we can deliver Black dreams.



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GENERAL MESSAGE

Most people, no matter our skin color, desire similar things - to care for ourselves and our families, to live happy, vibrant lives, and to have this experience now and for generations to come. We are promised this possibility through a myth of the "American Dream." But we know better. The American dream can never be realized for anyone until we collectively deliver Black dreams. #BeAVoter #DeliverBlackDreams



INSPIRATIONAL QUOTES FROM THE CULTURE!

"No matter where you are from your dreams are valid."

– Lupita Nyong'o

"Never limit yourself because of others' limited imagination; never limit others because of your own limited imagination."

– Mae Jemison

"Every great dream begins with a dreamer. Always remember, you have within you the strength, the patience, and the passion to reach for the stars to change the world."

– Harriet Tubman

"You don't have to see the whole staircase, just take the first step."

– Martin Luther King, Jr.

Dreams of realities peace

Blow steam in the face of the beast

The sky can fall down, the wind can cry now

The strong in me, I still smile

– Kendrick Lamar

"Hold fast to dreams for if dreams die, life is a broken-winged bird that cannot fly."

– Langston Hughes

"The key to realizing a dream is to focus not on success but significance – and then even the small steps and little victories along your path will take on greater meaning."

– Oprah Winfrey

"You can't make decisions based on fear and the possibility of what might happen."

– Michelle Obama.

"Magic lies in challenging what seems impossible."

– Carol Moseley Braun

"What's the world for if you can't make it up the way you want it?"

– Toni Morrison

"Knowing what must be done does away with fear."

– Rosa Parks

"A life is not important except in the impact it has on other lives."

– Jackie Robinson

"I find freedom sexy. I find freedom so sexy, I can't even explain it to you. You wake up every day and feel like you can do anything."

– Prince

"As long as there is poverty in the world I can never be rich, even if I have a billion dollars. As long as diseases are rampant and millions of people in this world cannot expect to live more than twenty-eight or thirty years, I can never be totally healthy even if I just got a good checkup at Mayo Clinic. I can never be what I ought to be until you are what you ought to be. This is the way our world is made. No individual or nation can stand out boasting of being independent. We are interdependent."

– Martin Luther King, Jr.

"No one should negotiate their dreams. Dreams must be free to flee and fly high. No government, no legislature, has a right to limit your dreams. You should never agree to surrender your dreams."

– Jesse Jackson

"Reclaiming the right to dream the future, strengthening the muscle to imagine together as Black people, is a revolutionary decolonizing activity."

– Adrienne Maree Brown





**DELIVER
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DREAMS**