

NEVER ★ AGAIN **ACTION**



**COLLECTIVE
ROOTS TO**


**DISRUPTIVE
ACTION**

SPRING 2021



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This is an articulation of our analysis, our stake, and our vision as a movement. This is the heart of the movement translated into words and a leadership training pressed into paper. This is countless hours on zoom throughout a pandemic and an uprising. This is a set of roles and responsibilities that emerged from the burning questions of 2020.

From the beginning, Never Again Action has always known two things to be true. The first is that **sustainable people power comes from deep collective roots.** If we want to show up for the long haul, we need to know what our stake is, what ancestry we invoke, and what political analysis we stand on.

And second – **direct action gets the goods.** We believe that if we build a movement of people taking strategic, powerful, sacrificial, disruptive, sustained direct action, we can shift what's politically possible in the fight for immigrant justice.

In this zine, we'll peel back each layer of the movement, guided by a Jewish reading practice known as Pardes. We'll dig into the possibilities for collective roots and disruptive action at each layer (as illuminated by Pardes). We hope this zine offers an entry point towards deepening our shared analysis. More deeply, we hope this shared analysis moves us towards being in right relationship with our history, with our vision for the future, and with each other.

**WHAT IS
THIS ZINE?**

NEVER AGAIN
NEVER AGAIN
NEVER AGAIN

This zine is adapted from a virtual Never Again Leader's Training. While this zine iteration is not intended to be a precise strategic roadmap or a direct action skills guide, we hope that it provides a foundation from which to explore other resources across the movement.

We encourage you to engage with zine in whatever way will best support you. To that end, feel free to:

- explore on your own
- go through it with a *chevruta* (learning buddy)
- read it with your local chapter
- and more!

There will be questions for reflection throughout to help you reflect on your own stake in the fight for racial, economic, and immigrant justice. We encourage you to get creative! Journal, discuss, make art, ask questions, take action...

For more resources on organizing and Never Again Action, check out our google drive and join our slack & listserv to stay up to date on happenings across the movement!

- **Join our Slack organizing space:** bit.ly/JoinSlackNAA
- **Sign up for the email listserv:** bit.ly/JoinListservNAA
- **Check out our online resources:** bit.ly/ResourcesNAA

HOW TO USE
THIS ZINE



Take a moment to root.

*What beckons you into the fight for
immigrant, racial, and economic justice?*

*What experiences, ancestry, and relationships
have brought you here, now?*

Take a moment to dream.

*If all the barriers (the worries, fears, isolation)
faded away, what action would you take?*

What could become possible?



PARDES

PARDES is a traditional method used to interpret a Jewish text. In rabbinic teachings, a single line from a sacred text can be read on four consecutive (but non-hierarchical) levels.

In this zine, we'll interpret our movement like a text.

PaRDeS is the acronym for these four levels:

- **Pshat** (the literal)
- **Remez** (the allusion)
- **Drash** (the underlying significance) and
- **Sod** (the secret).

PARDES translates to orchard. We use this structure to guide us through the interlocking root systems buried just below the surface of our movement.

PARDÉS

P'SHAT (פְּשָׁט)

the most visible or obvious meaning

What is the visible fight at the forefront of our movement?

Detention & Deportation

REMEZ (רֵמֵז)

the meaning found in allusion or comparing similarities

What is being referenced to reveal a deeper connection?

The Holocaust & Fascism

DRASH (דְּרָשׁ)

the underlying significance/structure

What is the underlying structure that connects all the elements we are fighting against?

Racial Capitalism

SOD (סִוד)

the secret, usually revealed through mystical inspiration

*What we are fighting for?
What is our vision for the future?*

The World-To-Come

A detailed black and white line drawing of a bird's nest filled with fruit and leaves, with two birds perched on the sides.

PISHAT

DETENTION & DEPORTATION

the most visible/literal meaning

The first layer the Rabbis tell us to look at is the most visible, the top line. The detention and deportation machine is a violent, malicious system that dehumanizes immigrants, separates families, and creates terror and fear in communities.

Never Again Action was born in 2019 when a swell of outrage around "kids in cages" swept the country. But we became a movement because our partners told us, *allies never stick around after the big headlines*. It's our job to show up for those most directly impacted through deep relationships that sustain us before, during, and after the headlines.

Our lives and communities
depend on it.

ABRIDGED IMMIGRATION TIMELINE

1994

NAFTA creates open borders for private corporations, and becomes foundation for forced migration and increased militarization under Operation Gatekeeper.

2001

After 9/11, anti-immigrant sentiment dominates politics.

2005-2006

Mega Marches change the narrative around immigration through the largest mobilizations in US history.

2010

Dream Act fight pushes the Dreamer narrative, but is unable to get past Congressional gridlock.

2013-2014

The movement pushes for Comprehensive Immigration Reform but is blocked by Tea party. Parts of the movement realign around grassroots strategy and **#Not1More**.

1986

The Amnesty Act passes into law under Reagan, granting legal status to over 3 Million people. This remains the last major legalization legislation, despite ongoing demands for papers.

1996

Illegal Immigration Reform and Immigrant Responsibility Act restricts access to state benefits and created 287g agreements allowing cooperation between police and ICE.

2003

Creation of DHS signals a clear change in priorities and results in a proliferation of enforcement agencies- ICE, CBP, HSI, etc.

2006-2008

Polarization results in rise of racist militias and Sheriffs like Joe Arpaio in AZ, alongside the election of Obama on pro-immigrant messaging.

2012

DACA becomes the biggest win on immigration since the Amnesty Act, and represents a change in tactic demanding an executive order,

2016

Trump's election polarizes the country around immigration, results in mass protest, the Muslim Ban, attacks on DACA and more.

2021

Biden runs on promises of immigration reform, but continues to deport people at higher rates than Trump or taken major steps to free people from ICE custody.

WHAT ARE THE DOMINANT, MAINSTREAM NARRATIVES AROUND IMMIGRATION?

RIGHT-WING REPUBLICANS SAY:

"Immigrants are criminals who come to America illegally to steal American jobs. Immigrants use US services & infrastructure without contributing anything and pose a threat to 'American' identity. ICE & CBP are hard working organizations that protect our country's borders to keep Americans safe."



CORPORATE DEMOCRATS SAY:

"Some immigrants (DREAMers, refugees, 'essential workers') are good while others (criminals) should be deported. Trump's immigration/family separation policies were inhumane, but Obama deporting 3 million people was okay. ICE & CBP's excessively cruel practices should be challenged, but the essential policy of putting people in cages is necessary."

WHAT IS MISSING OR MADE INVISIBLE ABOUT IMMIGRATION IN BOTH THESE NARRATIVES?

If the dominant narrative in both parties is that (at best) only *some* exceptionally "good" immigrants deserve *some* protections, then the detention and deportation machine is just going to grow and grow.

IMMIGRATION DETENTION MAP



<https://www.freedomforimmigrants.org/map>

Both parties have repeatedly failed to support immigrants. The last time any major legalization legislation passed in this country was under Ronald Reagan in 1986. Since then, Democrats *and* Republicans have built up the infrastructure of border militarization, expanded for-profit detention, and scapegoated or sold out immigrants when politically useful.

Politicians and ICE have been making it harder and harder for undocumented people to simply exist. ICE and DHS were only created in 2003, but have since been given free reign to terrorize immigrants. Even Obama deported 3 million people while in office, earning him the title "deporter-in-chief." This is what's at stake. We need to win transformative change and papers for the 11 million, and we need to do it now.

HOW HAS THE IMMIGRANT RIGHTS MOVEMENT ALREADY BEEN FIGHTING DETENTION & DEPORTATION?

By relentlessly holding politicians in both parties accountable to false promises;



By organizing workers in fields, factories, nail salons, restaurants, in every sector, to demand better working conditions;



By organizing millions to take to the streets in some of the largest mega marches in US history;



By defending against deportations and tracking down those kidnapped by ICE;

By creating networks of mutual aid and healing;

By leading waves of hunger strikes in detention centers across the country;



By demanding protections for young people through the DREAMer movement;

By boycotting companies that mistreat workers or work with ICE;

By protecting personal, familial, and communal information about citizenship status from ICE and the police;



By crossing borders and resisting capture;



By publicly sharing stories about citizenship status;



AND MORE.

All of these tactics have successfully shifted the narrative and polarized the public around immigration. **Because of the Immigrant Rights Movement's fight over the past decades, the majority of the American public supports immigration.** A Gallup poll from June 2020 found 77% of the public thinks immigration is a good thing for the country. So...

WHY HAS INCREASED PUBLIC SUPPORT NOT TRANSLATED INTO PERMANENT WINS FOR IMMIGRANTS?

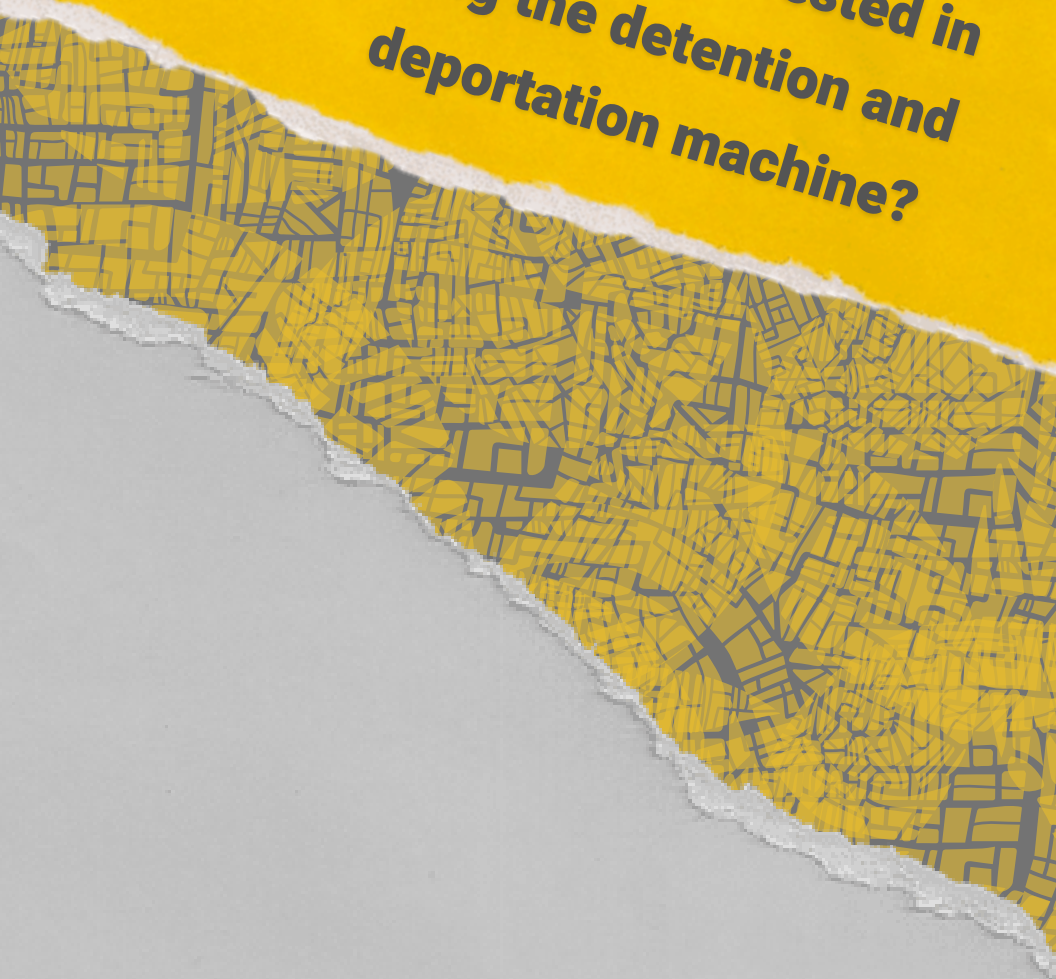


Again, 77% of the American public supports immigration- but that support is overwhelmingly *passive*, while the Right has an extremely active base.

Passive support does not get the goods.

That's where Never Again comes in--to fill the gap in the ecology around organizing allies for the long haul, starting with our own communities. If we can use Jewish-led direct action to move all that passive support to active support, following directly-impacted leadership, we'll be unstoppable.

PROMPT:
**Why are you invested in
disrupting the detention and
deportation machine?**





OUR ROLE

We flank to support our immigrant/directly impacted partners by adding organizing capacity, moving resources, and modeling what direct ally interventions can do both materially and narratively. We throw sand in the gears of the detention and deportation machine wherever we encounter it.



REMEZ

THE HOLOCAUST & FASCISM

**the meaning found in allusion or
comparing similarities**

We take action while remembering a time when millions of Jews, Romani, disabled people, queer people, poor and unhoused people, communists, socialists, and trade unionists were murdered in mass genocide by a Fascist state: the Holocaust.

In the summer of 2019, Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez called immigrant detention centers concentration camps. Many leaders on the right and even in the center attacked her for being antisemitic – instead of attacking the system that keeps millions living in fear. Our movement began because instead of debating what to call detention centers, Jewish-led protesters took direct actions to *shut them down*.

Rather than relying on a Holocaust narrative that isolates and exceptionalizes Jews and Jewish suffering, we can reclaim a Holocaust memory that understands the systems that enabled the Holocaust to happen and leads us to an intersectional fight for collective liberation.

**WHO WAS
TARGETED?**

**PROMPT: WHAT
NARRATIVE DID YOU
RECEIVE ABOUT THE
HOLOCAUST? WHY?**

**HOW COULD
IT HAPPEN?**

WHO RESISTED?

A decorative border of barbed wire runs across the top and bottom of the page. The background is dark grey with three large, downward-pointing chevrons in lighter shades of grey and black, serving as containers for text.

THE 'MAINSTREAM' NARRATIVE SAYS...

6 million Jews were murdered in a one-time, isolated event that transcends history.

BUT OUR RECLAIMED HISTORY KNOWS...

The Holocaust emerged from a history of colonialism. The tools used during the Holocaust had been practiced on colonized people (illegalization, ghettoization, detention, deportation, extermination).

WHO WAS TARGETED?

AND THAT MEANS...

Hitler modeled concentration camps off of Native American reservations and German death camps in Namibia. Parts of Nazi ideology were modeled on the US immigration system. Eugenics, the racist scientific theory that justified the extermination of Jews, disabled people, queer people, and many others during the Holocaust, also justified immigrant restriction policies in the US and the ongoing sterilization of immigrant women in detention centers.

When we situate Jewish trauma within the many overlapping identities we all carry, it shows that our movement ancestry is one of deep, intersectional solidarity. When we say *never again*, we're saying we see how the tools of state violence and colonialism are threaded through history and used against the most marginalized.

**HOW COULD IT
HAPPEN?**

THE 'MAINSTREAM' NARRATIVE SAYS...

*The Holocaust was caused by
Evil that cannot be explained
and exists outside of history.*

BUT OUR RECLAIMED HISTORY KNOWS...

The Holocaust arose out of a liberal democracy that opened the door to a fascist Nazi party. Fascism is a far right ideology advocating for nationalism, racism, authoritarianism, and corporate power.

AND THAT MEANS...

Fascism doesn't come from nowhere. Hitler won in 1933 because he colluded with big business, which owned the media, and he scapegoated Jews for a national economic crisis. Fascism emerges out of racial capitalism. When capitalism is in crisis, capitalists support far-right, racist, anti-democratic movements.

Fascist figureheads like Hitler or Trump aren't flukes- they are the realization of the deep possibility and lived experience of fascism baked into capitalism, even in liberal democracies.

Fascist conditions already exists for many immigrants, low-income people, and people of color.

THE 'MAINSTREAM' NARRATIVE SAYS...

*The US were heroes
who heeded the
moral call to save the
Jews. Jews were led
'like sheep to the
slaughter'.*

WHO RESISTED?

BUT OUR RECLAIMED HISTORY KNOWS...

US policy was never primarily motivated by stopping the genocide. It was designed first and foremost to maximize geopolitical influence. The US also refused entry to Jewish and other refugees and would not grant aid to any group considered Socialist or Communist. But Jews resisted...

JEWS RESISTED WITH EVERY BONE IN THEIR BODY.



By arming themselves and fighting in ghettos, forests, and on the front lines with independent Jewish partisan units, Allied armies and anti-fascist resistance movements;

By sabotaging supply lines, blowing up train tracks, and exploding crematoriums;

By escaping jails, ghettos, and concentration camps; forging documents and crossing borders;

By running secret schools, prayer services, weddings, concerts, and dances;

By creating illegal propaganda and secret newspapers;

By practicing mutual aid; sharing food, medicine, and supplies;

By orchestrating uprisings in Warsaw, Minsk, Bialystok, Bedzin, Mizocz, Lachwa, and Vilna ghettos and in Sobibor, Auschwitz, Kruszyzna, Mink-Mozewiecki, and Janowska concentration camps, and many more.



WHAT ARE THE RISKS & POTENTIAL POWER OF USING NARRATIVES ABOUT THE HOLOCAUST TO FIGHT FASCISM TODAY?

Risks

- Recentring Jews when (white) Jews are not the primary target in the current system.
- Replicating dominant narratives of Ashkenormativity in the American Jewish community.
- Fear-mongering and demobilization

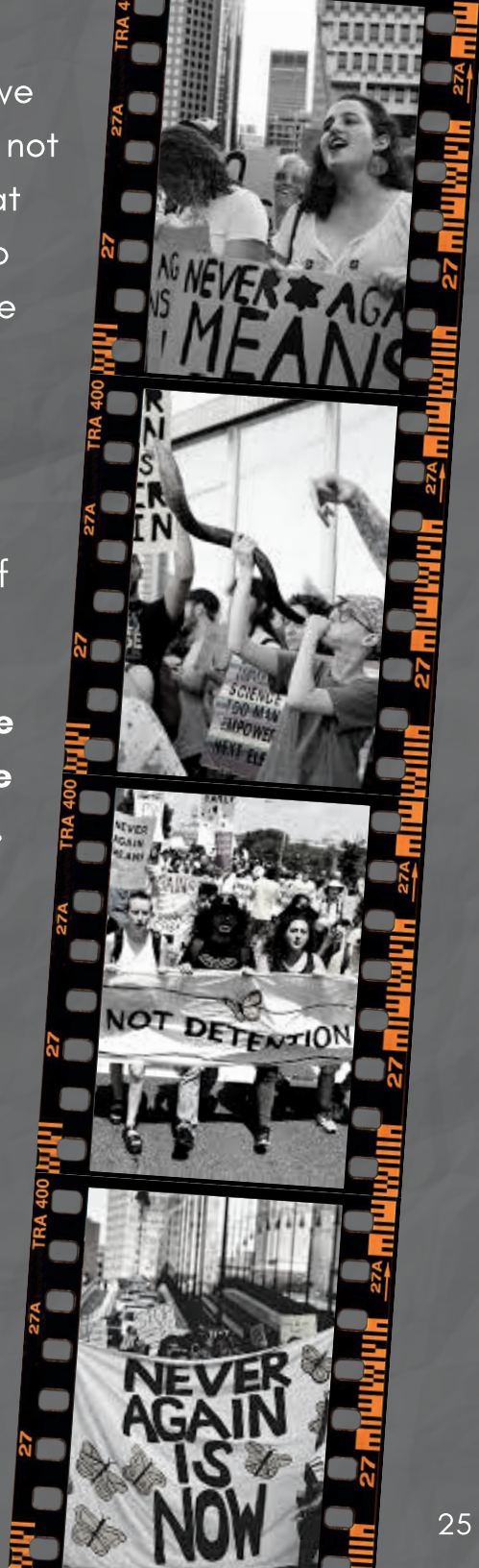
Potential Power

- If we don't use it, the Right will continue to weaponize the Holocaust to push their own agenda and undermine the Left.
- We can fight as a Jewish community to make our ancestors' memories a blessing and engage in deep intergenerational healing. Our story can be a bridge with other struggles.
- It can give us language to come into right relationship with urgency: we don't want to over commit ourselves for a short time and burn out, but we do want to bring the deepest, most serious, most sustainable, sacrificial commitment we can possibly bring. This is not a joke. We have to win.

The mainstream narrative we receive of the Holocaust is not the whole story. In fact, that story is used by the Right to undermine and delegitimize other groups fighting for justice, particularly Black people Palestinians, by positioning Jews as the ultimate and only victims of state violence.

As Never Again, we refuse to cede the memory of the Holocaust to the far right.

Instead, we honor the memory of our Jewish and queer and disabled and socialist ancestors-- and use that memory to power our commitment to solidarity, to recognize and name fascism, and to clarify our role around taking disruptive and sacrificial direct action.



**WHAT
ANCESTRY DO
YOU CLAIM?**

**PROMPT:
HOW MIGHT THIS
HISTORY CALL YOU TO
TAKE SACRIFICIAL AND
DISRUPTIVE ACTION?**

**WHAT DOES
SACRIFICE LOOK LIKE?**

**WHAT DOES
DISRUPTION
LOOK LIKE?**



OUR ROLE

We fight fascism through strategic, disruptive, direct action. We fight in memory of our Jewish, queer, disabled, poor, and socialist ancestors, to make their memories a blessing.

We disrupt attempts by the right to weaponize Jewish trauma against the left through a counter-narrative of solidarity.



DRASH

RACIAL CAPITALISM

the underlying significance or
structure

In Hebrew, the word *drash* means to dig, question, or tease out something below the surface.

There is a common thread and system that underlies the detention and deportation machine, the Holocaust, fascism, and the conditions that led to the political moment we are in now: racial capitalism.

The fights for immigrant justice, Jewish liberation, gender justice, economic justice, racial justice, and disability justice are all deeply entangled and connected to the broader fight against racial capitalism.

WHAT IS RACIAL CAPITALISM?

The term racial capitalism was coined by the Black Marxist scholar Cedric Robinson.

Racial capitalism is the idea that economic exploitation and racial oppression always uphold and enable each other.

In other words, it's easier for corporations and politicians to exploit the rest of us when we are isolated from each other, bribed off by our privileged identities, and oppressed by our marginalized identities.

**How have you/
your communities:**

...benefitted from racial capitalism?

...been harmed by racial capitalism?

The detention and deportation machine is a \$10+ billion dollar industry that corporations from private detention centers to security services profit from and are deeply invested in maintaining and growing.

Illegalized workers are more exploitable.

Deportation and detention is a threat of state violence that stifles working class power.

Creating categories of 'citizen' and 'non-citizen' is the waging of a national identity to distract the multi-racial working class from joining together to fight the elites that exploit their labor.

Anti-immigrant racism and antisemitism are deeply

connected. For example, throughout US history, Jewish immigration has been severely restricted by immigration quotas.

**HOW IS
ANTI-
IMMIGRANT
RACISM
ROOTED IN
RACIAL
CAPITALISM?**

HOW DO JEWS AND ANTISEMITISM FIT INTO RACIAL CAPITALISM?

White Jews have both benefited from and been harmed by racial capitalism. Therefore, white Jews both have a stake in dismantling this system and in upholding it. At the same time, Jews of color and Jewish immigrants experience the intersection of antisemitism and racism, both within and outside of the Jewish community.

Antisemitism is a tool used by those in power to divide and distract movements for racial and economic justice by using Jews as scapegoats and wedges.

Those in power perpetuate conspiracy theories about secret Jewish cabals that are intent on world domination and are secret “puppet masters” pulling the strings in major industries and governments. In moments of social unrest and instability, Jews are blamed and targeted, and therefore often attempt to seek safety by complying and assimilating into the dominant society.

For example, a central tenet of white nationalist ideology is displacement theory, the antisemitic idea that Jews are responsible for bringing black and brown immigrants to the United States to start a race war and eliminate the white race. The shooter at the Tree of Life Synagogue explicitly referenced the synagogue’s relationship with the Hebrew Immigrant Aid Society (HIAS) in his motivations.

**PROMPT: What happens when we see
our organizing as part of a larger
struggle against racial capitalism?**

What kind of accountabilities can it open up?

How can it help us meet the political moment?

How can we fight isolation and build strong
partnerships?



OUR ROLE

We act as a model for the Jewish community (and other communities) of what it looks like to reject, disrupt, and dismantle racial capitalism. We build relationships of solidarity and support with others that are targeted by racial capitalism and white supremacy, and we take direct action to intervene in these systems.



SOD

THE WORLD-TO-COME

the secret, usually revealed
through mystical inspiration

It's not enough to just name out what we have to do. **We also have to win.** We have to win a world without detention and deportation, where no human being is illegal. We have to win a world where Nazism and Fascism are defeated in loving memory of our ancestors. We have to win a world without racial capitalism, where everyone is free to thrive.

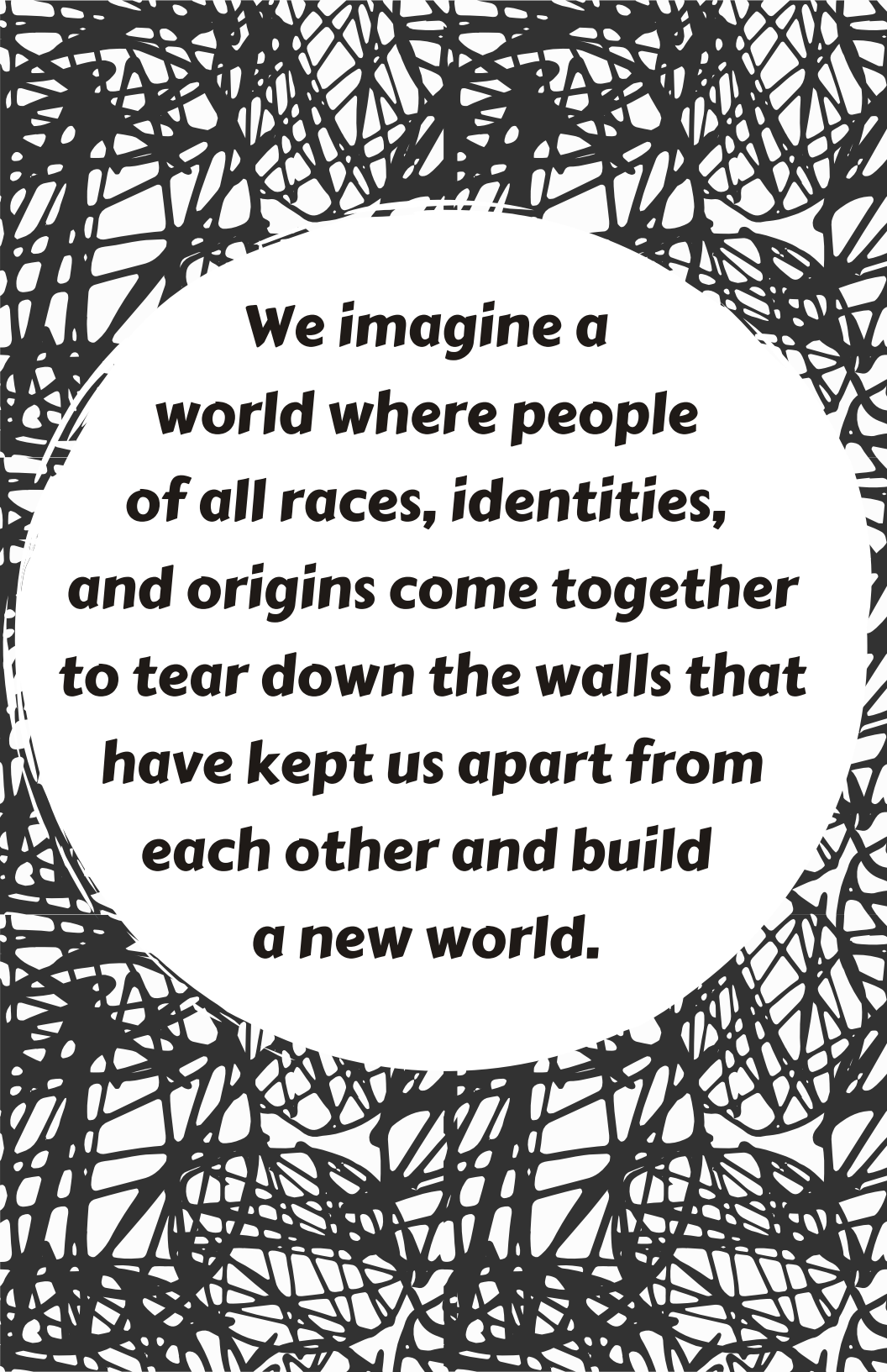
Jews have a rich history of imagining *olam haba*, the world-to-come, which encapsulates a different kind of future, a different kind of world. There's a tradition within Jewish liturgy that suggests that the moment of world revolution and justice and transformation will sneak up on us. That it will happen fast, any day, any moment. Before our eyes our work will turn into an uprising for justice and dignity.

The sod, the secret behind all of this is:
another world is possible.


POETRY PROMPT

What are we fighting for? What will the world look like when we win? What does that world look like/feel like/smell like/sound like?





**We imagine a
world where people
of all races, identities,
and origins come together
to tear down the walls that
have kept us apart from
each other and build
a new world.**



**PROMPT: WHAT DOES IT
LOOK LIKE FOR YOU TO
ORGANIZE AND TAKE
ACTION BOLDLY AND
DISRUPTIVELY
AGAINST DETENTION
AND DEPORTATION,
FASCISM, AND RACIAL
CAPITALISM?**



OUR ROLE

We envision a world-to-come free of detention, oppression, and racial capitalism. We embody that world now by building a political home for Jews and other allies activated by seeing the symptoms of racial capitalism. We create space for community building, political education, and creative action that deepens our relationships and brings us closer to a just world.



WHAT NEXT?

We've spent a lot of time in this zine thinking about our collective roots. **Now it's time to organize and take disruptive action.**

Start organizing locally or get involved in a national team. Keep in touch with the movement on slack and through our email listserv!

[Bit.ly/JoinSlackNAA](https://bit.ly/JoinSlackNAA)

[Bit.ly/JoinListservNAA](https://bit.ly/JoinListservNAA)

bit.ly/ResourcesNAA