

## Our Namesake

We, at the Black Lives Collective, borrow the term “Collective” from the *Combahee River Collective* (CRC), which was a foundational “Black feminist organization” that Barbara Smith, her sister Beverly Smith, and Demita Frazier formed in 1974. The CRC was named after “Harriet Tubman’s 1853 raid on the Combahee River in South Carolina that freed 750 enslaved people” (Keeanga-Yamata Taylor, “How We Get Free” p. 4). The reason the CRC was formed was to highlight the marginalization of Black women’s voices in contemporary Feminist movements that were operating in academic circles, since the progressive era (Taylor). The CRC wanted to make known that Feminism should be a movement for ALL WOMEN. And the CRC’s most pivotal contributions to this argument, to Feminism, and to Social Justice in general, was introducing the world to “terms such as ‘interlocking oppression’ and ‘identity politics’” (Taylor).

These important terms are concepts that articulate *Race as political access*, as white feminists were afforded access to political conversations that Black feminists were denied. Thus is the CRC’s objective, to make the argument that the same “identity politics” that held (and still hold) men over women, are also the same “identity politics” that held (and still hold) white feminists over feminists of color. This important articulation of *Race as political access* also paved the way for other pioneers, like Kimberlé Crenshaw, who articulated the term “intersectionality” in 1989, which further highlights “the idea that multiple oppressions reinforce each other to create new categories of suffering” (Taylor).

We, at the Black Lives Collective, stand firm with the CRC, and its objective to isolate, define, and counteract the oppression of identities, be that by Race, gender, sexual orientation, disability, or any other intersectional identity that might be politically oppressed -- to make Central, South Carolina, a peaceful, equal home for ALL.