

3rd Question: Why on this Night When we Remember the Oppression of Jews Should We Think About the Lives of People of Color?

Contributed by [Becca Goldstein](#)

Source: Jews for Racial and Economic Justice

Because many Jews are people of color. Because racism is a Jewish issue. Because our liberation is connected. White Ashkenazi Jews have a rich history but are only a part of the Jewish story. Mizrahi & Sephardi Jews; Yemeni Jews; Ethiopian Jews; Jews who trace their heritage to the Dominican Republic, to Cuba & Mexico; to Guyana & Trinidad; descendants of enslaved Africans whose ancestors converted or whose parents intermarried. Jews of color are diverse, multihued and proud of it — proud of our Jewishness and proud of our Blackness. But though our lives are joyous and full, racism forces us down a narrow, treacherous path. On the one hand we experience the same oppression that afflicts all people of color in America — racism targets us, our family members, and our friends. On the other hand, the very community that we would turn to for belonging and solidarity — our Jewish community — often doesn't acknowledge our experience.

Jews of color cannot choose to ignore the experiences of people of color everywhere, anymore than we would ignore our Jewishness. We must fully inhabit both communities and we need all Jews to stand with us, forcefully and actively opposing racism and police violence. What our neighbors in communities of color are asking — what the Jews of color in our own communities need from their fellow Jews — is that we push past the comfortable and move to action. In the streets, in our synagogues and homes, with our voices, our bodies, our money and resources, with our imaginations. In doing so we must center the voices and the leadership of Jews of color and other communities of color, while forming deep partnerships and long-term commitments to fight for lasting change.