

Netflix Releases Black Lives Matter Collection as Streamers Highlight Black Storytelling

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Key insights:

- Netflix's collection is timed to this week's premiere of the Spike Lee film *Da 5 Bloods*.
- Netflix acted on increased searches for George Floyd to serve up content centered on racial justice.

Beginning today, Netflix users who search the name "George Floyd" on the streaming service will be served up a collection of shows and movies centered on racial injustice. But subscribers won't need the search function to find that content: Netflix is promoting the collection, titled *Black Lives Matter*, to all of its users in the U.S. with a pop-up recommendation urging viewers to browse the titles.

The collection takes its name from the same movement and rallying cry at the center of ongoing international protests against police brutality and racial injustice. The curated list of programming highlights nonfiction and fiction shows and movies about Black experiences. Some of the titles in Netflix's *Black Lives Matter* collection include the documentary *13th* and miniseries *When They See Us*, both award-winning projects from director Ava DuVernay, along with movies like *Moonlight* and *Mudbound*, and series including Marvel's *Luke Cage*.

In all, Netflix has selected more than 40 titles in an effort to amplify Black storytellers and highlight its bench of TV shows and movies reflecting Black experiences. The effort comes a time when national interest in racial injustice has spiked due to the wave of worldwide protests against police violence and racism—and Netflix isn't the only streamer looking to surface Black stories for its users.

"We believe that one of the ways Netflix can have a direct positive impact is through our stories," a Netflix spokesperson said. "The Black Lives Matter collection speaks to racial injustice and the Black experience in America, and we hope that highlighting these titles can help increase empathy and understanding."

Netflix will recommend its Black Lives Matter collection to those searching Floyd's name in response to recent search trends on Netflix and on Google Trends, the spokesperson said. Floyd, a 46-year-old African American man killed by police in May when an officer pressed his knee into Floyd's neck for nearly nine minutes, has spurred a movement for police accountability and justice for Black Americans killed at the hands of law enforcement.

In addition to Floyd's name, viewers who search for the names of other victims of police and racist violence, including Ahmaud Arbery, Breonna Taylor and Tony McDade, will also be directed to Netflix's Black Lives Matter collection. Arbery was a 25-year-old African American man gunned down by white residents while he was jogging in Georgia in February. Taylor was a 26-year-old African American woman shot and killed by police in March. McDade was a 38-year-old African American trans man who was shot and killed by police in May.

At Netflix, the rollout of the collection has been a long time in the making, part of larger category called Black Stories, which reflects a broader array of themes, tones and stories, a spokesperson told Adweek. The streaming service aimed to get

the Black Lives Matter collection ready in advance of the upcoming Netflix original film *Da 5 Bloods*, a war drama from director and producer Spike Lee slated for a June 12 release.

The company made some adjustments in response to recent events and a new interest among some viewers in watching programming reflecting Black experiences. Notably, the Black Lives Matter collection does not include *The Help*, a 2011 drama that takes place during the Civil Rights Movement that made it to the top of Netflix's Top 10 list over the weekend despite criticism the film has faced for its depiction of Black experiences.

Actress Bryce Dallas Howard, who appeared in the film, urged her fans not to view it in a recent Instagram post and to instead watch other films and series. "The Help is a fictional story told through the perspective of a white character and was created by predominantly white storytellers," she wrote. "We can all go further."

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