

From the Department of Theatre, Dance, and Performance Studies

We are in the midst of two major epidemics, Anti-Black racism and Covid-19, which have disproportionately impacted poor, Black communities. We must address the social and structural conditions that sustain these inequalities.

We commit to this work to honor the lives of George Floyd, David McAtee, Breonna Taylor, Ahmaud Arbery, Tony McDade, and many others who have been killed at the hands of the police. Police violence broadly includes negligence in investigating Black deaths, vigilante patrols in the name of “safety,” ICE, and the carceral system. We maintain that immigrant justice, justice for trans people, indigenous land protections, disability justice, and the dismantling of white supremacy are interconnected in the fight for Black life. As a community and as individuals, we must ask: what is our responsibility as artists, activists, and academics?

These days artists are often asked to post "content warnings" on our doors, cautioning spectators that a performance may be "disturbing," or that it may evoke pain, suffering, or even horror. But what could offer a more horrifying spectacle than the nation's ongoing scenes of racism and brutality against Black and Brown bodies? What play, dance, artwork, or musical score could compel more genuine trauma than the grotesque parody of justice so many members of our community endure on a daily basis? Anti-Black racism is present on our campuses, and in our intellectual and creative communities.

In the face of that suffering, that violence, and that injustice -- crises which have dragged on for more than four centuries -- what role can we play and what possible solace can we offer? How can we fashion our work into a tool for social justice that can be wielded beyond a single performance? How can we use the power of our practice to shift not only the dialogue, but the *outcome*?

We may feel physically and mentally exhausted by the many conversations about the inequities of American society. And the urgency of daily injustice can diminish under the pressure of other concerns. When the taste of constant outrage becomes too bitter, those of us who have the luxury of *not* drinking from that poisoned cup may shift our attention elsewhere until a new crisis -- such as the filmed murder of George Floyd -- erupts and rekindles a sense of pain that has *never* subsided among those living under constant threat.

Performance is about action. Actors don't exist in a state of "being" onstage. To "be outraged" is to *do*.

As a department and a community, we claim solidarity with the mass protests, in the US and beyond, that demand dignity, justice, and the redistribution of

resources for Black life. We commit to transforming ourselves and our communities through action and invite you to join us in this urgent effort. Below you will find resources on campus, opportunities to educate yourself and others, places to donate, upcoming protest actions and proposed legislation against police brutality, ways to celebrate Black life, and the TDPS Department's action steps.

RESOURCES:

TUFTS CAMPUS RESOURCES

Tufts has created a number of community resources to support students, faculty, and staff around issues of diversity, equity, and inclusion. The university's efforts are helmed by Chief Diversity Officers and Associate Provosts Robert Mack and Joyce Sackey, as well as the Diversity and Inclusion Leadership Council. Its programs include the "Bridging Differences Task Force," the Joint Council on Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion, and a host of initiatives supporting students from K-12, undergraduate and graduate levels, and beyond.

Campus resources centers include the Africana Center, the Asian American Center, the Center for the Study of Race and Democracy, the FIRST Resource Center, the Latino Center, the LGBT Center, and the Women's Center. To link to these communities and learn more about their ongoing work, visit:

<https://diversity.tufts.edu/what-we-do/campus-resources/>

For more information on Tufts's resources supporting diversity and inclusion, visit: <https://diversity.tufts.edu/> and to contact the office of the Chief Diversity Officer, visit: <https://diversity.tufts.edu/contact-us/>

EDUCATE YOURSELF AND OTHERS

- Read, Learn, and Listen to Black Lives Matter Organizers (Movement for Black Lives, M4BL). For years, they have had clear plans, goals and demands for the survival of Black people. Talk about what is happening with family and friends, which are sometimes the hardest conversations to have.
- Support [the Movement for Black Lives \(M4LB\)](#)
- [Alicia Garza: A Herstory of the Black Lives Matter movement](#)
- [The Reader Guide to understanding Police Abolition](#)
- [What White People Can do for Racial Justice](#)
- A.R.T.'s Diana Oh's ***White People Read: Reading List***
- [Anti-racism resources](#)

- Black Lives Matter Resources Toolkit
<https://blacklivesmatter.com/resources/>
- [The End of Policing by Alex S. Vitale](#) (the Ebook version is FREE)
- [Black* Transwoman to Black Cis/Transman: An Open Letter/Poem for Trayvon and the Rest of Us](#)

DONATE

- [Official George Floyd Family Fund](#)
- [Black Lives Matter Boston](#)
- [Black Visions Collective Minnesota](#)

ORGANIZE AND PARTICIPATE

- Support proposed legislation against police brutality (June 1, 2020 7-9 PM) TONIGHT--Virtual Event
<https://www.facebook.com/events/271303777608509/>
The Eric Garner Law
The Andrew Kearsse Act
The Stephon Clark Law
- [Not One More! Rally and Vigil for George Floyd, Breonna Taylor, and Ahmaud Arbery](#)
[JUN 2 at 5PM](#)
Organized by Violence in Boston and Black Lives Matter Boston
Franklin Park, Boston (meeting near Shattuck Hospital)
- [Become a pen-pal with queer Black folks on the inside with Black and Pink Boston. Attend meetings, learn about prison abolition.](#)

CELEBRATE BLACK LIFE

- Aleshea Harris' *What to Send Up When It Goes Down Online, specifically Love Letters to Black People:*
<https://www.bagofbeans.net/love-letters-to-black-people>
- Support the [Front Porch Arts Collective](#)
- Howlround Black Joy Series: <https://howlround.com/black-joy>
 - Video of “black girl love adaptation project”
<https://howlround.com/happenings/performance-black-girl-love-adaptation-project>
- Listen and support [Daughters of Lorraine](#) a Podcast on Black Theatre
- [Let's celebrate black trans women's lives not deaths](#)

TDPS ACTIONS

1. As scholars and artists, we have been and we remain committed to thinking, writing, and creating platforms for performance as a survival for Black people. We will be hosting online conversations about the history and legacy of Black survival, performance, and protest.
2. Virtual and physical resources of TDPS will be marshalled to support anti-racist art-making, programming, and organizing.
3. As we look towards the fall, we will collaborate with other departments and units on campus in support of the Movement for Blacks Lives and an end to policing.
4. We will listen to critiques of our programming, curricula, and pedagogy, and implement necessary changes, in order to cultivate an environment in which our most vulnerable communities can thrive.

This is just the beginning, and this is an incomplete list. We have so much work to do in this fight for justice.

--The Department of Theatre, Dance, and Performance Studies