

The Sociology Department is in solidarity with the Black Lives Matter movement's efforts to end anti-Black racism.

In light of the many police killings and protests that have erupted across the country (and the world), we members of the Department of Sociology wanted to reach out to all of you to express our solidarity with the Black Lives Matter movement's efforts to end anti-Black racism, in policing and beyond, and to address racial inequalities and racism built into our society's institutions as well.

First, we want to make our values clear. We, the Department of Sociology at Tufts University, **unequivocally condemn** ongoing police violence and anti-Black racism. We recognize that the state-sanctioned killings of Ahmaud Arbery, Breonna Taylor, George Floyd, David McAtee and so many more are part of a long legacy of racialized social control in our country. Similarly, we recognize that the grave racial disparities in COVID-19 deaths reflect structural racism in our health care system, neighborhoods, urban politics, education system, and many other institutions. We stand with our Black students, colleagues, and friends. And we demand an end to over-policing and systemic racism, and call for the investments and resources that would enable Black people to not only survive, but to thrive.

We--as a department and as individuals--commit to doing our part to **uncover and dismantle the systems of oppression** that have contributed to such tragic and senseless deaths. What does this mean? For one, we acknowledge that the discipline of sociology is rooted in imperialism and racism, and that many of our foundational texts overlooked racial inequality and helped to perpetuate it. We commit to including Black scholars and other scholars of color in our syllabi and to teaching about racism and neo-colonialism in contemporary society. We are committed to growing our faculty to include members of groups who have been historically underrepresented in the discipline, as we know that it is imperative to make room for the voices of those most impacted by structures of domination and marginalization. We also commit to making our department an inclusive and supportive environment. We recognize the proven value of targeted mentoring and targeted networking, and we plan to further incorporate these practices into our teaching and advising. We also recognize, however, that there is always room for improvement and we commit to welcoming feedback and suggestions about ways we can do this better.

Second, we recognize the value of sociology in providing us many **tools for understanding and analyzing our current moment**. Our discipline helps us understand the roots of racism by reminding us that the U.S. was built through settler-colonialism, slavery, and imperial expansion. It offers an institutional critique of government practices of mass incarceration and immigration enforcement. It helps us see how racial inequality and racism are enabled through supposedly color-blind social policies, both past and present. And how economic inequality broadly has perpetuated Black poverty and Black unemployment. It links U.S. dynamics to those around the world through attention to colonialism, migration, and globalization. It analyzes the role of the media, politicians, and social movement actors in processes of social change. And it explains the social origins and consequences of epidemics and public health crises. Throughout, it is attentive to how racism intersects with capitalism, patriarchy, nativism, transphobia, ableism, and other structures of domination. In unveiling the social origins of inequality, discrimination, and injustice, it provides frameworks for inquiry, analysis, and change.

Given that so much is happening NOW, Professor Anjuli Fahlberg and Professor Daanika Gordon will be hosting a **Summer Book Club**. We'll hold zoom discussions on two books over

the summer for Sociology students and recent grads--join us! We will discuss [Who Do You Serve? Who Do You Protect?: Police Violence and Resistance in the United States](#) and [Killing Rage: Ending Racism](#), by bell hooks. Please email [anjuli.fahlberg@tufts.edu](mailto:anjuli.fahlberg@tufts.edu) or [daanika.gordon@tufts.edu](mailto:daanika.gordon@tufts.edu) if you would like to participate. We also invite students to host their own sessions, and we can offer support to those interested in doing so.

Third, sociology draws attention to the power of social movements and collective action, and it sheds light on how social change happens. But our discipline asks for more than careful theorizing and empirical study. It also calls for praxis -- **the translation of our knowledge into action**. In response to several requests, we have prepared a list of suggestions about ways that people of all races can do their part to support the BLM movement and all other movements that aim to dismantle racism. This list is by no means exhaustive, and we encourage you to continue your own research and to share materials that you find useful with us and with each other. We will continue to update and add to our collection of resources in coming weeks.

### Resources for Action

Here are two [crowdsourced lists](#) that identify various actions we can take to support protests and movements against police violence and anti-Black racism. And here are some additional articles that may be of interest. Note that different sources address different audiences: [What you can do to lift up Breonna Taylor and other female victims of police brutality](#), [Identifying your role and practicing self-care as a young Black activist](#), [Building solidarity and strengthening ties between the Immigrant Rights and Black Lives Matter movements](#), [South Asians and Black Lives](#), [How to support the struggle against police brutality](#), [Recognizing and dismantling your anti-Blackness](#), [75 things white people can do for racial justice](#), [Ten steps of non-optical allyship](#)

These sources suggest several different avenues for action, which include:

- **Make a donation or volunteer your time:** many groups are organizing or supporting protesters, confronting police brutality, and/or doing anti-racist work. There may be opportunities to contribute to a local organization by volunteering your time. Or, if you have the means to donate, monetary contributions help these agencies do the on-the-ground work. The lists above identify grassroots organizations, bail funds, legal services agencies, and many others.
- **Participate in a protest, if you feel you can do so safely:** the fact that we're in the midst of a global pandemic layers new risks onto direct action. [Here](#) is a guide for how to protest safely right now.
- **Practice self-care:** for those who experience racial trauma, self-care is an act of resistance. As Audre Lordre wrote, "Caring for myself is not self-indulgence, it is self-preservation, and that is an act of political warfare." Here are a few additional resources: [Healing in Action: a toolkit for Black Lives Matter Healing Justice & Direct Action](#), [13 Black women in wellness share what wellness and self-care means to them](#), and [Sista Afya Community Mental Wellness](#)
- **Offer resources to protesters and affected communities:** If you are in an area where protests are occurring, consider getting some supplies to make available -- bottles of water, food, hand sanitizer, masks, etc. Or stock up on groceries, household supplies, or personal protective equipment and donate them to a local center.
- **Join an organization.** Protesting is important, but long-term change takes long-term action. Identify a specific anti-racism policy you want to see changed (or instituted) and identify one concrete (even if small) way you can help make this change.

- **Exercise your political voice:** vote in state and local elections, support political candidates who incorporate racial justice and criminal justice reform into their campaigns, call or email your elected representatives and press them on their plans for ending racial discrimination in law enforcement. If you don't know your local reps, now is a great time to become more informed!
- **Use social media:** use social media to stay informed. Voice your support for the movement and your opposition to racist state violence. Fact check and push back against misinformation.
- **Continue Educating yourself and others:** white people and non-Black POC can pull more people into the conversation by engaging in dialogue within our families, friend groups, and communities. Challenge racism in your social network and share resources that others can use to become more informed.

### Resources for Further Education

Here are several syllabi and reading lists that compile materials on institutional racism, anti-racism, police violence, and the Black Lives Matter movement:

- [Institutionalized Racism: A Syllabus](#)
- [Anti-Racist Reading List from Ibram X. Kendi](#)
- [The Black Lives Matter Syllabus](#)
- [#FergusonSyllabus](#)
- [A reading list to understand police brutality in America.](#)
- The Tufts University Office of the Associate Dean of Student Diversity and Inclusion has compiled an ongoing list of books, articles, videos, podcasts, and websites to support us in gaining more knowledge on how to combat racism in both our personal and professional lives. Here is a link to that [list](#).

In solidarity,  
The faculty and staff of the Department of Sociology