

THE KEHS RELEASE

FOR THE STUDENTS, BY THE STUDENTS

THE LAST 8 MINUTES AND 46 SECONDS OF HIS LIFE

The story of George Floyd's death

On May 25, 2020, George Floyd, a 46-year-old black man, locally known as 'the gentle giant,' was killed in Minneapolis, Minnesota after white police officer Derek Chauvin knelt on his neck while Floyd was handcuffed and lying face down on the street.

"I can't breathe," Mr Floyd said repeatedly, pleading for his mother and begging "please, please, please". For eight minutes and 46 seconds, Mr Chauvin kept his knee on Mr Floyd's neck, the prosecutors' report says.

Now reread the above imagining the victim was your dad or your brother. In a word: heartbreaking. His death was no accident: it was a public execution, a murder and in essence a lynching.

See page 5 for more

Riya Raja

IN THIS EDITION...

HOW TO HELP THE BLM MOVEMENT:

SIGNING PETITIONS, EDUCATING YOURSELF, WRITING TO YOUR
LOCAL MP pages 2-3

THE BLACK LIVES MATTER MOVEMENT

A BRIEF HISTORY, RELEVANCE IN THE UK, WHY IT IS NECESSARY
pages 4-6

HOW TO ACTIVELY STAND UP FOR THE CAUSE:

BEING ANTIRACIST, UNDERSTANDING WHITE PRIVILEGE,
FIGHTING FOR EDUCATION ON RACISM pages 7-8

RACISM IN ART page 9

POEMS pages 10-11

THE BLM MOVEMENT FROM A NON-BLACK POC'S
POINT OF VIEW page 12

AN INSIGHT INTO THE BIRMINGHAM PROTEST
page 13

HOW TO HELP

**SIGN PETITIONS, EDUCATE YOURSELF AND FAMILY MEMBERS,
WRITE TO YOUR LOCAL MP**

WAYS TO SHOW YOUR SUPPORT

1. Check in on your black friends, family and loved ones

For the black community, these times are very difficult and stressful which is why it is so important that you check in with everyone. A simple text asking if they are alright and a message to show your support towards them is actually one of the simplest but most meaningful things you can do to show your aid.

2. Keep signing as many petitions as possible

To most people, they believe petitions don't make a difference; however, we have a chance to make a difference, we are giving our opinion about what changes we want to happen. If we can get people to sign all the petitions then we can reform the systems and bring justice. We can come together as a community to fight for the rights of the black community.

Please see the links for petitions in the email.

3. Educate yourself about what's going on

Don't expect your black friends to tell you what to do or teach you about everything. Take initiative. It is

your responsibility to read books, articles and watch documentaries created about racial inequality. Start your education from anti-racist resources as then you can get informed. It is essential that you normalise changing your opinion when you learn new information and accept your mistakes.

See the next page for what to watch and what to read.

4. Be aware of your privilege and use your platform

Through social media, share posts about what you learn about from the black lives matter movement and use your platform to educate others. You have a voice and you can use it to spread awareness about the black community. Accept your privilege and do everything you can do to help the matter. Email your MPs in support of the movement and don't be silent and hide behind a shield of your privilege.

It shouldn't take an act of brutality or the virality of the situation for you to suddenly show your support towards the black lives matter movement. Keep showing your support through charitable organisations, protests and petitions whilst continuing to do your work even after the attention has died.

Aditi Ajithkumar

WRITING TO YOUR LOCAL MP

After reading and educating yourself about the roots of systemic racism not only in the USA but worldwide, the next step is action. Many of you may not be able to attend protests and are looking for another way to help. Writing to your MP can be a great way for them to hear about your concerns about the 'Black Lives Matter' movement; applying pressure to our political representatives reminds them that this campaign for equality is not a fleeting issue. If

you are unsure of who your local MP is, then you can visit the website **Write To Them**, which will identify your council representatives and members of Parliament. If you would rather use the MP's direct email address, use the **Find My MP** tool on the Government's website.

For ideas on issues to discuss in your letter, see page 8.

Krithika Manigandan

HOW TO EDUCATE YOURSELF

WHAT TO WATCH

- ▶ 13th (Netflix) [15]
- ▶ When They See Us (Netflix) [15]
- ▶ Self Made (Netflix) [15]
- ▶ 12 Years a Slave (Netflix) (Amazon Prime) [15]
- ▶ Selma (Amazon Prime) [12A]
- ▶ I Am Not Your Negro (Amazon Prime) [12A]
- ▶ The Butler (Amazon Prime) [12A]
- ▶ The Help (Amazon Prime) [12]
- ▶ Coach Carter (Netflix) [12]
- ▶ The Hate U Give (Sky) (Amazon Prime) [12]
- ▶ Imitation of Life (Amazon Prime) [12]
- ▶ Glory Road (Disney+) (Amazon Prime) [PG]
- ▶ Hidden Figures (Amazon Prime) [PG]
- ▶ Same Kind of Different as Me (Netflix) [12]

List compiled by Aditi Ajithkumar and Jade Mullin

WHAT TO READ

- ▶ *The Color Purple* by Alice Walker
- ▶ *Small Great Things* by Jodi Picoult
- ▶ *Between the World and Me* by Ta-Nehisi Coates
- ▶ *White Fragility* by Robin DiAngelo
- ▶ *Heavy: An American Memoir* by Kiese Laymon
- ▶ *The Hate U Give* by Angie Thomas
- ▶ *I Know Why The Caged Bird Sings* by Maya Angelo
- ▶ *Me and White Supremacy* by Layla F Saad
- ▶ *How To Be An Antiracist* by Ibram X Kendi
- ▶ *So You Want To Talk About Race* by Ijeoma Oluo
- ▶ *Why I Am No Longer Talking To White People About Race* by Reni Edda-Lodge

List compiled by Aditi Ajithkumar and Ayesha Begum

Further Resources (LINKED IN EMAIL):

- ▶ A Guide to Allyship
- ▶ The Implicit Association Test
- ▶ Actively help in fighting for social change

List compiled by Victoria Chu

Waves of anger, shock and horror were felt across the globe as the new name of 'George Floyd' was added to a long list of victims from police brutality. This needless and senseless act of violence is not alone. In fact, the list of victims of senseless violence dates back before our account of history. We need change. But we must embody that change. If we want to change the system for the better, we must search within ourselves, our internal biases and the privilege that we take for granted.

Ayesha Begum

THE BLACK LIVES MATTER MOVEMENT

THE ORIGIN OF THE BLACK LIVES MATTER MOVEMENT

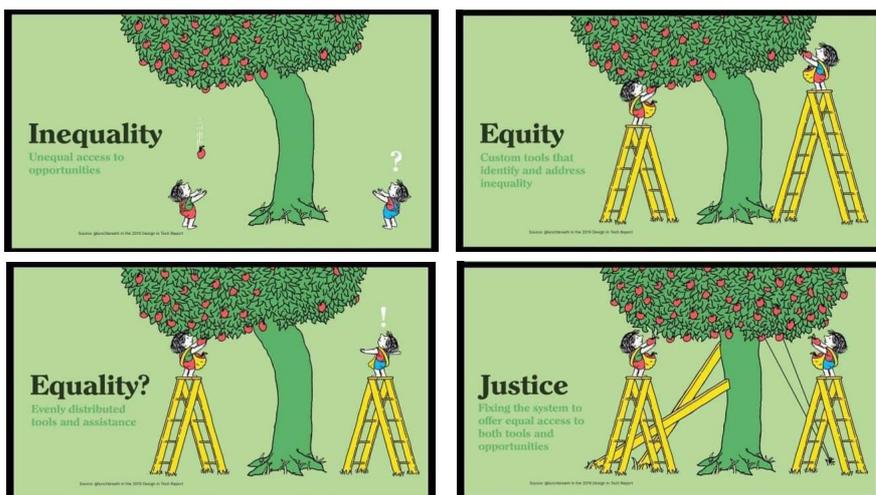
The 'Black Lives Matter' movement was founded in 2010 and works to extinguish racism for good. Trevon Martin, 17, was killed by a neighbourhood watch volunteer (George Zimmerman) on the 26th February, 2012. He was on his way to buy sweets from his local convenience store in Florida when he was shot by someone who was meant to be a figure of authority, there to protect all people within the neighbourhood. Zimmerman was not initially charged. Why not? A crime is a crime, right? It took a public outcry for him to be charged with second degree murder and manslaughter. The BLM movement officially started after Zimmerman's later acquittal. There appears no justification for Martin's death; many conclude he was shot because he was black and Zimmerman was not charged because of the institutional racism etched into society. The system failed Trevon Martin. Unfortunately, many others have also been victims of heartless racist attacks. Sadly, this is just one of the many examples exposing active racism that's occurring in the modern world.

The world experienced, first hand, the recent tragedy of George Floyd. A jolt of horror, disbelief and sadness was shared globally via social

media. His death and the lack of justice subsequent to it kick-started a global movement to demand justice. Protests have taken place across the world with riots initially breaking out throughout the United States. Peaceful protests are a vital part in publicising the movement for social justice and equality. They are a good way of spreading awareness, uniting people and driving change. Despite these benefits, the public should not need to protest in order for a murderer to be charged with murder, as done with George Floyd. It shows a failure of the legal system, one that is influenced based on the colour of one's skin.

In today's society it is not enough to simply not be racist. We have to be anti-racist and have to talk about these issues in order to educate both ourselves and others about the racial injustices and prejudices that have gone on for far too long. We all have a voice, we all have a right to speak out and help create an equal society. We need to use our human right to free speech to fight for what is right. Our generation has the ability to reform the corrupt systems and promote both equality and peace. Black lives do matter, so let's fight for them.

Erin Quinn



THE ISSUE WITH 'ALL LIVES MATTER'



THE LAST 8 MINUTES AND 46 SECONDS OF HIS LIFE CONT'D

This senseless act of racially motivated violence is not the only one of its kind. 2019 statistics show that black Americans were nearly three times more likely to die from police than white Americans. Other statistics showed that black Americans were nearly one-and-a-half times more likely to be unarmed before their death. Illinois, New York and Washington D.C., carrying some of the largest discrepancies by state, with a black population of under 50 percent, had almost 90 percent of all police killings be against black Americans.

It is easy to think the UK is innocent but it is most surely not. In fact, people of colour in the UK are twice as likely to die in police custody than their white equals. UK police use restraint on black people four times as often as with their white

counterparts, and whilst black people only make up 3 percent of our population, they account for almost 15 percent of police altercations in which officers use force.

The UK, contrary to popular belief, is not innocent- racism is engraved in our society. Shukri Abdi was just 12 years old when she was found in the River Irwell. Her death was never properly investigated and police claimed she swam in the river to cool off, ignoring the fact she could not swim and was terrified of water. Her body was covered in bite marks yet her murderers suffered no consequences. This Somalian refugee's case was completely ignored. Mark Duggan, Belly Mujinga, Sarah Reed and Julian McDonald are just a few more people the police have let down due to their race.

Every single person worldwide has a part to play in dissolving institutional racism. Whilst there is still a long way to go, every hashtag, petition and donation is slowly dismantling societal systems that oppress black lives.

One innocent man's death has sparked a huge human rights movement, proudly known as #BlackLivesMatter. Dozens of countries and hundreds of cities have participated in rallies, protests and peaceful demonstrations. Almost 25 million people are calling for justice on Instagram alone. Whilst this may seem like an overreaction- George Floyd's murder was merely a tipping point. Oppression has been around for hundreds of years but 2020 is the year of revolution.

Riya Raja

WHY THE UK IS NOT INNOCENT

Being a black or asian person in the UK or even anywhere in the world means existing knowing that many of your white counterparts do not acknowledge your history. They have not been forced to adopt centuries worth of trauma, or come from mother countries that have been subject to slavery, imperialism and colonialism and the enormous impact that has had on people.

Black people and POC suffer from racism more often than thought in many different forms whether it is overt or covert. Even a small comment such as 'You are pretty, for a black girl,' can be incredibly hurtful. Someone may think this is a compliment but it is actually covertly racist because by saying this you automatically separate this girl based on her race.

People have seen all over social media that the UK is not innocent and it is important to bring this to light. In the UK, racism is just wrapped up in a nicer, politer package than in America. However, it's just as bad. The report of hate crimes have steadily increased over the past couple of years and there was a significant increase

after Brexit. The British Criminal Justice System is institutionally racist and has led to the death of many black men and women. Some heartbreaking examples include Julian Cole, a student who was refused entry into a nightclub. The police were called on him and he was tackled to the ground and handcuffed. He suffered a broken neck and was left brain damaged and paralysed. Azelle Rodney was shot at 8 times from a two metre distance in his car as police falsely believed he was armed and he died almost instantly. Rodney was the third victim the officer had shot dead in his career but was cleared of all charges.

These terrible examples were only given attention recently after the murder of George Floyd however their family and friends suffered silently as these cases were never given the media coverage they deserved at the right time.

Educate yourself and others. Sign petitions. Donate whatever you can. Make a difference.

Sharmila Biswas

WHY THE BLM MOVEMENT IS NECESSARY

AUTHORITATIVE VIOLENCE IN AMERICA

Two weeks on from the brutal killing of George Floyd by police officers in Minneapolis we have all no doubt seen that the Black Lives Matter campaign and those similar to it have yet again been thrown back into mainstream media. On almost every social media site and news platform, we have seen scenes and clips from protests all over the world. In order to understand these protests, it is vital that we all make a conscious effort to educate ourselves on the points in history leading up to today.

Police brutality and racial discrimination against minorities in America dates back to slavery which began in the early 15th century. Slave patrols were formed by authorities to hunt down runaway slaves throughout the country with harsh punishment awaiting them if they were caught. The Emancipation Proclamation was signed by Abraham Lincoln in 1863, stating that all those held as slaves were to be freed. This went along with the 13th amendment being introduced stating that no man would be forced to 'involuntary servitude, except as a punishment for crime'. Though this was undoubtedly a pivotal moment for black people in America, heavy discrimination and racial segregation still ensued. After slavery, many African-Americans were imprisoned at high rates for trivial crimes

compared to white people, forcing them to work in free hard manual labour (through 'the 13th amendment loophole') yet again to rebuild the economy of the South after war. Not to mention organisations like the Klu Klux Klan were formed to lynch and torment minorities all across America. Negative stereotypes of black people were also enforced on the popular culture of America. For example, in *The Birth of a Nation* (1915), African-American men were portrayed as aggressive, uneducated rapists who were a threat to white women and families. Although this film was presented to audiences over 100 years ago, these stereotypes are still prevalent today. As a large black opposition began to form in the mid-20th century against this racial discrimination and segregation, many of their leaders were targeted by the police and authorities. Notably, many members of the Black Panther Party (who were advocates for black empowerment and strength) were targeted by authorities; many were killed and beaten by police or sentenced to long amounts of time in prison.

All of this brings us to today, where these stereotypes and violence against minorities still plagues today's society. Our job, however, is to remove the prejudices that have been forced by society and take the time to value everyone's life and integrity as much as our own. This will help to continue to improve and make the world better for those who come after us.

Jade Mullin

BLUE MIRROR

America is submerged in waves of sustained unrest which haven't resurfaced since the 1960s: a tsunami finally toppled by a single act of police brutality. Accounts of tear-gas canisters and lethal rubber bullets used to break up peaceful protests only catalyse the widening social chasm between U.S. citizens and the long, blood-stained arm of the law.

For young black men, being killed by police remains the sixth most common cause of death, and African-Americans are 3 times more likely than white Americans to face this fate. But these unequivocal statistics do not exist in a vacuum.

Discrimination against African-Americans in housing, job opportunities and education fuels a wealth disparity already supplemented by a gap in inherited assets. It makes this demographic more vulnerable to

crime, and continued prejudices in courts make black people more likely to be incarcerated - in fact, 5 times more - than white people who have committed the same crime. Refusal to rehire convicted felons make African-Americans overrepresented in unemployment. The cycle continues without a hitch.

These patterns of discrimination so deeply entrenched and institutionalised in society do not stand out as much as the explicit police brutality which shocks us to the core. But those racked with disbelief or shock by the events of the past month shouldn't be. George Floyd, Breonna Taylor, Eric Garner and Tamir Rice only represent the tip of the iceberg. They reflect the festering holes of the society around them.

Shivanii Arun

MAKING A STAND

CHANGE THE FUTURE WITH EDUCATION

How can we change the future? Well, as you may have noticed, the root of these problems comes from attitudes. Ignorance is the main issue and there is a somewhat simple solution to it: Education.

Most children spend 15% of their childhood at school. This includes all: holidays, weekends, nights and pre-education; thus showing how much of an impact what you learn has on a person's development. Therefore, if schools taught about the history of racism; the impact of microaggressions and how frequently they occur, perhaps the problems would be addressed. The impact of people using their voices and speaking up could shape a new tomorrow where everyone is aware of their actions and can prevent racism from occurring again. Even if this changed the attitude of one person in

the class, that would impact the world in such a more positive way.

The UK government currently highlights on www.gov.uk that under the compulsory curriculum from year 7 onwards, all schools must be taught on sex and relationship education and religious education. It should also teach students about what they can do if they are racially discriminated against and highlight that it is a criminal offence that should not be tolerated. Therefore it would make an incredible difference if we were taught about racism as well. The inclusion of the teaching of racism needs to be mandatory from a young age and until that action is made by the government, we will have to fight harder to educate people and to eliminate racism for good.

Jiya Undre

HOW TO ACTIVELY BE ANTI-RACIST

Upon hearing the term 'antiracist' you may wonder what exactly it entails. Up until two weeks ago, I had never even heard the term and I assumed that being 'not racist' was the equivalent of being 'anti-racist'. I was wrong.

To be 'not racist' is to acknowledge that all humans have an equal right to respect and tolerance, regardless of their race. This means you do not see one race as being more deserving than another. However, this does not mean that you are not complicit in a society where systemic racism awards benefits or privileges to those of a 'desirable' race. Benefits such as higher incomes, more political power, better access to education and healthcare and so much more. Now, this is where being 'anti-racist' comes in to place.

By being 'anti-racist', you actively try to combat systemic racism by doing more than just saying 'I am not racist'.

This includes:

- Confronting the racist ideas you have held and how they uphold systemic racism
- Speaking up when you hear a racist joke among friends, family or coworkers
- Donating to reputable causes that aid groups marginalised as a result of systemic racism
- Learning where your privilege comes from and how it impacts others negatively (see *White Privilege* article on page 8)

Though these actions may seem small, their impact is so much larger than you can imagine- especially when you confront the racist ideas of others and get them thinking of how to be 'anti-racist'. So, next time you hear a racist joke or come across a racial bias, be vocal about the impropriety and prevent it from happening again. Whilst we may not be able to abolish racism overnight, we can hasten the demon's downfall by actively speaking out against it.

If you are neutral in situations of injustice, you have chosen the side of the oppressor - Desmond Tutu

Priya Rajput

HOW TO USE YOUR WHITE PRIVILEGE TO FIGHT RACISM

The death of George Floyd opened my eyes to the harsh extent of the racism and injustice black people still face today. As a white person, I have come to reflect on my own privileges and the ways in which I can use my white privilege to support the black community. I am still learning and the learning process is a continuous one but I would like to share what I have come to understand so far.

I believe that the first step in supporting the black lives matter movement as white people involves self reflection. We must begin by recognising our privilege; our lives may be difficult but, if we are white, they are not difficult because of our skin colour. We cannot use our white privilege for good until we have acknowledged this. Secondly, we must admit to ignorance and be prepared to learn and be challenged and be uncomfortable, in order to grow. We will not always get it right and it is important that we recognise that and allow ourselves to be corrected and educated. Thirdly, we should investigate any racial bias that we might hold and any ways that we are contributing towards racism. You can take Harvard's implicit association test online (<https://implicit.harvard.edu/implicit/takeatest.htmlpinkmantaray.com/links>) in order to learn about unconscious bias you might hold. By identifying unconscious bias, you can begin working towards dissecting them. This work may

involve questioning the reasons behind your unconscious bias and educating yourself further.

Finally, we should educate ourselves on the issues that black people face and how to become a better ally. There are tons of books, websites, blogs and instagram pages that we can learn from as seen by the articles on page 3. Once we have started educating ourselves, we can and should also educate our friends and family where necessary.

Whilst we are working towards all of the above, it is important that we stand up for black people and amplify their voices, without speaking for them. Spread awareness, information and resources on social media platforms and amongst friends and family. Sign petitions, attend protests when they occur if you are able and donate to black lives matter related charities. Risk comfort to dismantle anti-blackness when we encounter it. This means not tolerating racism but rather challenging those around us, even and especially when no black people are present. Bring this topic up with your friends and family.

You have a voice and you can make a difference, so please join me in the fight against racism.

'I always wondered why somebody didn't do something about that. Then I realised I was somebody.' - Lily Tomlin

Arwen Williams

IDEAS FOR WRITING TO YOUR LOCAL MP

When writing to your MPs, here are some issues you can bring up:

- Please write to Dominic Raab MP and ask him to condemn the words and actions of the President of the USA, and call for him to suspend the attack on protesters;
- Please write to the Prime Minister and ask him to denounce Trump's militarisation of the protests in the USA
- Please write to the Home Secretary Priti Patel and ask her to make assurances that UK protesters will not be met with excessive use of force

- Call on the government to immediately suspend license for tear gas, riot shields and rubber bullets to the USA.
- Release the delayed report into BAME COVID-19 deaths and tackle the death rate.

In the email are some more templates for inspiration which you can use and personalise. It is important to edit these to make it your own personalised letter, as too many similarly worded emails will automatically begin to register as junk or spam.

Krithika Manigandan

RACISM IN ART

The important topic of racism has been featured in artwork for centuries, both subtly and explicitly. From the Black Arts Movement during the 1960s and 70s to poetry, films and music, racism is a theme frequently featured in the arts. The art world itself is guilty of discrimination towards the black community and women, as shown by this poster published by a group of anonymous American female artists called the "Guerrilla Girls".

Since 1984, the group have been working to expose sexual and racial discrimination, particularly in New York. Notably, they inserted

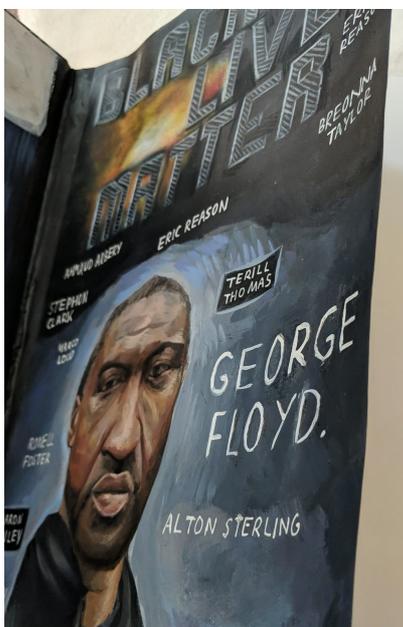
flyers inside the covers of all the books in the Guggenheim Museum's bookstore, and with the 1987 Whitney Biennial (a survey of American art), made an exhibition exposing the museum's inadequate record of exhibiting women and artists of colour. From this, we can see that systemic racism leaks into all fields of work and not only threatens individual artists' success but skews our view on what art is entirely.

I urge all of you to look past the heavily featured work of white men, and instead focus your energy on supporting women and of course artists of colour.

HERE'S HOW YOU CAN HELP:

- ▶ If you want to be involved in ideas for an art project regarding BLM and/or the painting of a (potential) mural in school, email me (Amy Smith) at 1519@kehsmail.co.uk. All years are welcome to express their ideas and I'd love to hear them.
- ▶ Watch Zoe Amira's YouTube video on how to support BLM for free- the video features black artists and all ad revenue "will be donated to associations that offer protestor bail funds, help pay for family funerals, and advocacy listed in the beginning of the video".
- ▶ Research! There are masses of websites dedicated to sharing the work of black artists, all it takes is one Google search.
- ▶ If you want to learn more about the Guerrilla Girls/how to support black artists, the best articles I have found are linked in the email.

Amy Smith



Artwork by Amy Smith

WHEN RACISM & SEXISM ARE NO LONGER FASHIONABLE, WHAT WILL YOUR ART COLLECTION BE WORTH?

The art market won't bestow mega-buck prices on the work of a few white males forever. For the 177 million you just spent on a single Jasper Johns painting, you could have bought at least one work by all of these women and artists of color:

Bernice Abbott	Elaine de Kooning	Dorothea Lange	Sarah Peale
Anni Albers	Lavinia Fontana	Marie Laurencin	Ljubava Popova
Sofonisba Anguissola	Mela Warwick Fuller	Edmonia Lewis	Olga Rosanova
Diane Arbus	Artemisia Gentileschi	Judith Leyster	Nellie Mae Rowe
Vanessa Bell	Marguerite Gérard	Barbara Longhi	Rachel Ruysch
Isabel Bishop	Natalia Goncharova	Dora Maar	Kay Sage
Rosa Bonheur	Kate Greenaway	Lee Miller	Augusta Savage
Elizabeth Bougereau	Barbara Hepworth	Lisette Model	Yvanna Stepanova
Margaret Bourke-White	Eva Hesse	Paula Modersohn-Becker	Florine Stettheimer
Romaine Brooks	Hannah Hoch	Tina Modotti	Sophie Taeuber-Arp
Julia Margaret Cameron	Anna Huntington	Berthe Morisot	Alma Thomas
Emily Carr	May Howard Jackson	Grandma Moses	Marietta Robusti Tintoretto
Rosalba Carriera	Frida Kahlo	Gabrielle Münter	Suzanne Valadon
Mary Cassatt	Angelica Kauffmann	Alice Neel	Remedios Varo
Constance Marie Charpentier	Hilma af Klimt	Louise Nevelson	Elizabeth Vigée Le Brun
Imogen Cunningham	Kathe Kollwitz	Georgia O'Keeffe	Laura Wheeling Waring
Sonia Delaunay	Lee Krasner	Meret Oppenheim	

Information courtesy of Christie's, Sotheby's, Mayer's International Auction Records and Leonard's Annual Price Index of Auctions.

Please send \$ and comments to: **GUERRILLA GIRLS** CONSCIENCE OF THE ART WORLD
Box 1056 Cooper Sta. NY, NY 10276

POEMS

“I CAN’T BREATHE”

“I can’t breathe,”
 the chains around my neck are too tight
 but in silent solidarity
 we promise to survive,
 picking cotton on farms, bent backs, at twilight
 so the next generation will have a better life.
 “I can’t breathe,”
 too many people at the back of this bus,
 one day the only colour the world will see
 is love,
 so I’m not sitting down, I’m standing up
 because I know it will get better for us.
 “I can’t breathe,”
 I don’t understand why they can’t see
 the vision I have
 because I have a dream:
 my children will go to school with kids who are
 white
 Brothers and Sisters, that is why we fight.
 “I can’t breathe,”
 smoke in my house from a burning cross
 as I sit there crying because Daddy’s gone
 but for some reason, everyone’s telling me we
 won?
 The walk to true freedom continues on.
 “I can’t breathe,”
 an officer’s knee on my neck
 and I’m crying for my Mom
 with my dying breaths.
 They keep trying to tell me racism is dead
 but it’s by my eyes, not news articles,
 that I am led.
 “I can’t breathe”, there are so many things we
 need to change about this life,
 I asked a black boy what he wanted to be in
 the future
 and he said,
 “Alive.”

Alexandra Akins

POET LAUREATE’S POEM

I can’t breathe.’.

George Floyd repeated this
 Over and over
 As his breathing stopped.
 He called for help and
 Was met with years of
 Unequivocal,
 Institutionalised,
 Ingrained racism
 That led to his death.
 Yes, we need justice for George Floyd.
 And we need justice for Ahmaud Arbery.
 And we need justice for Sandra Bland.
 The horrifying truth is
 We need justice for so many more than can be named.
 We need justice for an entire community.
 Don’t tell me that ‘all lives matter’ when
 Systematic oppression is the plague of our society.
 All lives cannot matter until black lives matter.
 Ignorance is not bliss.
 Ignorance is complacency.
 Ignorance is choosing the side of the oppressor and
 Staying silent is choosing to keep the blindfold on.

Natalie Shah

POEMS

BIGGER THAN ONE DEATH

George Floyd.
Bigger than one death,
bigger than one name,
it was a world having to accept
we are past the time for change.
Black Lives Matter
means all lives matter too,
but until black lives are equal,
how is that statement true?
We're standing for a world
where you're not scared to walk down the street,
where you're not pulled over in your car,
sweating in your seat.
A world where you don't grow up scared of the police.
You're not followed around the shop by a security
guard,
à world where you're not killed
because of a forfeit card.
It's not just in America,
it's in Britain, hidden more
and it's important to learn about it,
it's necessary to talk
about the names we've had to say,
and the things that have been done,
that when social media is silent,
racism isn't gone.
George Floyd
isn't one death,
it's not an overreaction,
it's a system with people who are oppressed,
the uproar had to happen.
Black Lives Matter was a movement before we were
born,
and it's the reason Angela, Martin, Malcolm and
Mandela all fought.
It's time to open our eyes, we NEED to learn more
because we can change society, but we need to get to its
core.

Alexandra Akins

The BLM Movement, From The Eyes Of A Non-Black POC

'I can't breathe man. Please, the knee in my neck!'

Lucky enough to be filmed and viralised this time, but definitely not the first time it has happened. You may think 'I'm not black, this has nothing to do with me,' but the truth is, as non-black people in today's world, we all live and benefit from a society built around and thriving off racism.

Why YOU Need To Be Actively Anti-Racist

Racism is everywhere and no matter who you are, you have to take action now to set it right.

As a British Asian, seeing Officer Tou Thao's indolence made my heart drop. Not because I was shocked that an Asian person could be racist, but because I realised that it could have easily been me standing there.

You see—racism is structural; there have to be multiple institutions/ people that collectively uphold racist policies/attitudes for it to advance; the very video of George Floyd's murder is evidence.

A Hmong American officer standing by his colleague killing an innocent life, a clerk in an Arab American owned shop calling the police on a black man, three white officers pinning down an unarmed man. Without any of these participants, George Floyd would still be here.

When we stay silent (especially as POC), we become the cops beside Officer Chauvin—assets to a racist injustice, assets to a murder.

What About My Community's Struggles? - Debunking 'All Lives Matter'

Someone else's oppression doesn't invalidate your hardships. Remember, not everyone suffers equally from the effects of institutional racism. Unarmed Black people are killed by police at the highest rate; they're least likely to be promoted in a workplace; Black children are 9 times more likely to have a parent in jail than white children; the statistics are endless.

Yes, your struggles matter, but don't try and 'one- up' someone else's struggles just because you feel that yours aren't heard. 'All lives matter' has no goal except for diminishing the power of the BLM movement. In fact, it classifies all minority struggles as one, and is actually counterproductive. Think of it this way—you wouldn't go to a cancer fundraiser saying other diseases matter too.

How To Be An Ally

Start small:

Reevaluate your attitude, how would you react when facing someone ignorant about racism? Do your research, amplify (online and in real life) the voices of those without your privilege, and go on from there.

It will be daunting and overwhelming, and you'll be in awkward/ distressing conversations, situations and experiences. But being an ally doesn't necessarily mean you fully understand what it feels like to be oppressed, it means you're taking on the struggle as your own. Remember, this is a process, an ongoing fight, it won't be easy or comfortable, but it is absolutely necessary.

Victoria Chu

AN INSIGHT INTO THE BIRMINGHAM PROTEST

The first protest, sparked by the murder of George Floyd and the oppression of the black community in America and around the world, first took place in the Minnesota State where Floyd died. People flocked to the streets to protest the lack of consequences the officers faced, as well as the murders of many other black US citizens. If you watched the news, you may think that these protesters were not good people, that they were violent and took advantage of the situation by looting and rioting. However this is incorrect. I am not disputing that there was disorderly behaviour, but video footage tells you that the protesters were not partaking in such activity. It appeared as though the police were inciting violence and stealing, and reporting that it was the protesters to try to villainize them.

The Minnesota protest was the first of many for BLM. Soon afterwards, protests were held in all 50 states and in many countries around the world. I attended the Birmingham protest, which was amazing; the energy was untoppable. Everyone was extremely united and kind, offering water, food and masks. We knew exactly what we were there for, remaining respectful to the cause, whilst having a good time. To be among a crowd of people homogeneous to such an important cause is truly an eye-opening and unforgettable experience. We observed many moments of silence and kneeling to honour the victims of racism.

Many have received backlash for attending protests, with others angry about the possible spread of coronavirus and rendering the protests as useless. Their concerns are understandable, but all protesters were wearing

masks, reducing possible transmission significantly. Many people think that these protests should wait, but who is anyone to tell black people to wait for equality? We have been waiting for hundreds of years to be treated as equal, having been oppressed because of the colour of the skin. While we wait, the systemic racism in the UK will continue to subjugate us. 'Waiting' is no longer a possibility for us; we need to take action now. It hurts to have to watch countless black people be murdered for no reason, again and again. For society to change for the better, everyone needs to be less passive and more active.

As I mentioned earlier some people dispute that protesting is useless and gets nothing done. But thanks to our protests, Derek Chauvin is being charged for 2nd degree murder and manslaughter, and the other officers, who was set to get away with aiding and abetting the death of George Floyd have also been charged. Cases such as Breonna Taylor's and Belly Mujinga's have been reopened due to public interest. Cases such as the murder of 12-year-old Tamir Rice are starting to gain attention as people call out their governments for allowing their officers to be above the law. Especially in the UK, people are starting to recognise the oppressive systemic racism and call on the government to make a change. Getting up and going out is not the only way to effectively protest. Educating yourself and others as well as spreading awareness and signing petitions are ways we can combat racism and create a better world. You are never too young to learn about racism. Educating yourself is never a negative.

Danielle Taylor