



At the deaths of **George Floyd, Breonna Taylor, Ahmaud Arbery, Tony McDade** and the many, many others and the failure to bring their killers to justice,

We are enraged, we are sad, and we are tired, but we are not surprised.

**We experience the devaluation of Black life everyday.**

***Police brutality and the murder of Black individuals are not exceptions to popular sentiment. They are the embodiment of it.***

These anti-Black foundations and sentiment are prevalent not just in the justice system, but in many sectors of Canadian society. White supremacy is at the foundation of our institutions and informs our continued collective and prevalent attitudes that recognize white and Eurocentric attributes as the hallmark of what is safe, what is good, what is successful, what is beautiful, who is valued, and who is continually granted the benefit of the doubt whilst negative and false stereotypes of Blackness as dangerous, as ghetto, as less capable, as less valuable persist.

**The idea of Canada as an equal post-racism society is a myth.**

Black individuals in Canada, as in the United States, have historically and to the present day been subject to police brutality and murder and have been deliberately and systematically excluded from education, housing, employment opportunities, fair media reporting, and access to justice.

Canada was formed by (and continues to exist as) white supremacist ideology on stolen Indigenous lands, on Turtle Island. The issues of state violence and negligence on Black and Indigenous peoples are not unique to the United States, they are here at home. **As we say the names of George Floyd, Breonna Taylor, Ahmaud Arbery, we should also say the names of Colton Boushie, Cindy Gladue, Regis Korchinski-Paquet, and Abdi Abdirahman.** We should remember our Black and Indigenous Canadians who are systemically overincarcerated, killed, and neglected.

Prior to its formation as 'Canada', the colonies had a history of 200 years of slavery.

Following slavery, the white supremacist ideals continued, with decades of segregation during the 20<sup>th</sup> century. There were places Black people could not eat, live or enter, ensuring that the gaps in the distribution of wealth, property, resources, and educational achievement remained, despite freedom being obtained.

The last segregated school in Canada closed in 1983.

A top Canadian university had an explicit anti-Black admissions policy in practice until 1965, and on the books until 2018.

Canada, like the United States, also has a mass incarceration problem. At almost every level of the justice system, if you are Black, you are more likely to be policed, be denied bail, be convicted, and receive longer sentences than a white person.

**According to the Ontario Human Rights Commission, if you are Black you are 20 times more likely to be killed by police than a white person is.**



**For the 2019/2020 academic year, at our law school there were a total of 4 Black students in a school with a student body of close to 600.** The four of us have been tirelessly advocating long before you heard of the recent deaths and will continue to do so long after some have forgotten their names.

BLSA UBC forms part of a larger community of Black law students who are always – always -- aware of and working to change the injustices and systemic racism that exist in Canada and the US. **Now we stand with our sibling organizations to ask you to also take on the responsibility of redressing these wrongs, protecting (our) Black bodies and eradicating all forms of racism and the resulting inequalities.**

Below we have listed some resources as a starting point for non-Black folks. In doing so, it is important to note that the changes we seek are not just about supporting Black businesses and community organizations, donating, or posting on social media about justice system reform, or stating that you stand with us. While these actions are critically important, equally important is acknowledging and addressing the widespread acceptance of white supremacy and anti-Black sentiment that exists and leads to systemic oppression, disenfranchisement, and erasure of Black bodies and experiences.

**In addition to the above listed actions, for lasting change, internal reflection from you and your spheres of influence is needed. We ask you to reflect on and combat the anti-black sentiment in your own life, in your ideals, in your upbringing, in our communities and in your organizations. Acknowledge the reality and stratifications of Canadian society and how that benefits you.** The links below are helpful starting places to do the research to see the historical disadvantages and the way these have created and sustained an unequal society. **Acknowledge the power and bias you hold and question your assumptions. Take action to correct those attitudes and the effects they have within your own life and organizations.**

**You are not neutral.**

Sincerely,

UBC BLSA



## **Resources**

**Resources For non-Black folks to support Black communities in Canada/America:** <https://linktr.ee/queensblackacademic>

**Black Legal Action Centre:** <https://www.blacklegalactioncentre.ca/>

### **Books**

- *Policing Black Lives: State Violence in Canada from Slavery to the Present* by Robyn Maynard
- *The Skin We're In* by Desmond Cole
- *Until We Are Free: Reflections on Black Lives Matter in Canada* edited by Rodney Diverlus, Sandy Hudson, and Syrus Marcus Ware
- *How to be an Anti-Racist* by Ibram Kendi,
- *So You Want to Talk About Race* by Ijeoma Olu,
- *White Fragility: Why It's So Hard for White People to Talk About Racism* by Robin DiAngelo

### **Articles**

- [Remembering Black, Indigenous, and Other People of Colour Killed by Canadian Police](#) (Desmond Cole), compiled 29 May
- [Black people more likely to be injured or killed by Toronto Police officers, report finds](#) (Globe and Mail)
- [White Privilege: Unpacking the Invisible Knapsack](#) (Peggy McIntosh)
- [75 Things White People can do for Racial Justice](#) (Medium)
- [Deadly Force: Fatal Encounters with Police in Canada: 2000-2017](#) (CBC)
- [The Guide to Allyship](#)

### **Listening**

- [Code Switch](#) (NPR Podcast)
- [Intersectionality Matters!](#) (Podcast hosted by Kimberle Crenshaw)
- ['1619,' a Podcast From The New York Times](#)

### **Watching**

- ['Rest in Power': All the best Black Lives Matter inspired content](#)

**Donate**, if you are able, to local funds and organizations. There are many funds and organizations doing important work in this area -- we have chosen to highlight some groups specifically operating in and around Vancouver.

- [Black in BC Community Support Fund for COVID-19](#)
- [Black Lives Matter Vancouver](#)
- [Hogan's Alley Society](#)
- [Black Youth Helpline](#)
- [Pivot Legal Society](#)

**Donations** do not need to be purely financial—here are some ways in which you can directly or indirectly support Black community organizations, artists and individuals while preserving your student budget.

- [Youtube Playlist with all ad proceeds donated to associations that offer protester bail funds, pay for family funerals, and advocacy.](#) Please ensure you do not skip ads, keep YouTube volume at 50% or higher, and resolution at 480p or higher