

Scholars for Social Justice
Statement in Response to Racial Justice Uprisings of 2020

As Scholars for Social Justice, we mourn and express our outrage at the racist police murder of George Floyd in Minneapolis, a murder that has come to symbolize all that is wrong and dangerous about the current systems of policing and incarceration in this country. Floyd's viscous murder captured on video followed the police killings of Breonna Taylor of Louisville, KY and Tony McDade from Tallahassee, Florida. McDade's murder reveals the particular vulnerabilities and invisibilities of black trans people. The senseless devaluation of Black life is a call to action. It is also a provocation to dig deeper and analyze the systemic roots of police violence and state violence more broadly. Across this country Black-led resistance has erupted in every state in the nation. From orderly vigils of thousands of people to spontaneous acts of rebellion, the entire nation has felt the impact of this moment. White, Latinx, Asian, and Arab communities have joined the chorus of voices echoing "Black Lives Matter." In the demands of organizations like the Movement for Black Lives coalition (M4BL.org) we see that the call to defund police and invest in communities is both an anti-racist demand and an economic justice demand. We support those broad demands. We defend the right to protest. And we urge the schools, colleges, universities and institutes with which we are affiliated to do the same. This is not a moment for moral agnosticism. This is not a moment to sit on the sidelines.

SSJ represents hundreds of progressive scholars around the country, including professors, graduate students, independent researchers and community griots.