



NORTHERN ILLINOIS UNIVERSITY

Center for Black Studies

The Center for Black Studies abhors the racist and transphobic events that are impacting this country. As if dealing with a pandemic where Blacks who do not have access to quality food options and health care, thus dying at alarmingly disproportionate rates, was not enough. We also have to endure the public murder of our people.

I am a granddaughter. I am an aunt (to a niece and nephew). I am a sister. And, I am a Black woman, and I have grown numb to these atrocities. In a world where these senseless killings of Black people of all gender identities and expressions, I am concerned that Black people cannot exercise, sleep in their home, walk in their neighborhoods, or be accused of a crime without the threat of death. I am concerned that we are apprehensive of trusting our public servants. It is important to note that not all police officers ascribe to racist, sexist, transphobic ideals.

To those who are angry and protesting, or are simply angry, now is the time for solutions. I implore you to use your voice and to keep that same energy when it is time to vote for leadership locally and nationally. Are you registered to vote?

Please do not take my silence for apathy, I am in state of shock because we have personally witnessed multiple murders and have not seen justice. This is traumatic. It reminds me of the various pictures of lynchings that reminded our ancestors of what would happen when they stepped out of line. While I do not condone violence, I understand the feeling of anger. There needs to be healing and we cannot wait on someone else to do it for us. We must heal our own communities and hold those who harm us accountable.

Black women, men, and trans bodies matter. It is neither a tag line, a sound bite, nor a catch phrase. Our lives, our stories, our purpose matters. Enough is enough. The senseless, wanton killing of our people must stop and those who do must be held accountable. We must mobilize, organize, and take this moment to work toward lasting systemic and institutional change.

The Center for Black Studies has and will continue to serve as a supportive space (even virtually). The leadership of the Center has felt the heaviness of the events and shares in our community's shared concerns. We do not want to let this moment pass without hearing from you and understanding how we can be supportive as we move into the fall semester. To that end the Center for Black Studies will host a virtual Town hall for Black students on Thursday, June 11th from 6-8pm. The goal for the town hall will be to provide a space for conversation and to hear your ideas on solutions and pathways for Black students at NIU.

Yours in the Movement,
Anne Marie Edwards, Acting Director
Center for Black Studies