

Dear Racial and Ethnic Politics Section Members,

The Racial and Ethnic Politics Section of the American Political Science Association strongly and unconditionally condemns the heinous murders of George Floyd, Breonna Taylor, Sean Reed, Ahmaud Arbery, David McAtee, among others, by law enforcement and vigilantes. The events over the past few weeks are a tragic reminder that more work is necessary if there is ever to be justice for people of color in the United States. The REP Section stands in solidarity with the Movement for Black Lives and Say Her Name and supports the goals of these movements.

We also denounce the unjust treatment of protestors and journalists by the President of the United States and law enforcement. For the former, we would hope that the president would use language that recognized the anguish of African Americans and the psychological toll that fearing for one's life during quotidian activities has on the black community. Instead, the president has used racist tropes about protestors and has incited violence, using law enforcement for his personal political gain. This must stop. For the latter, law enforcement's use of violence against the public they have sworn to protect is atrocious and must cease. Police departments must reform not just the tactics they use when engaging with the public, but also a culture which views people of color as less than human.

The murders of African Americans and the violence against protestors is coming at a particularly difficult time for blacks, Latinxs, Asian Americans and Native Americans who are also experiencing disproportionate deaths from COVID-19. The virus' uneven impacts not only underscore the inequality in our health care system, but also that people of color are disproportionately at the front lines of the epidemic as "essential" workers and health care professionals. The necessity to ensure that the terrible treatment of people of color is not ignored moves protestors into the streets and further places these communities at risk. This is another burden that people of color bear to improve the conditions for all. It is important to remember the sacrifices that black, Latinxs, Asian Americans and Native Americans are making for this country. These communities' responses to the current crises represent just a few examples of the numerous costs that people of color have borne throughout our history to make this country better.

While the killing of black and brown people is nothing new in American history, we believe that the fervor for change among brave activists, protesters, and supportive politicians provides a unique opportunity for us to imagine and create a better future. We hope that as scholars who focus on topics of inequality, we work to make sure our research is made readily and accessibly available to the activists and politicians who want to find ways to improve the conditions for people of color in our nation. We must also ensure that our students remain aware of the disparities in opportunities that blacks, Latinxs, Asian Americans, and Native Americans face and provide the next generation with tools to dismantle racial/ethnic hierarchies in the United States. We also encourage our members to donate time, money, expertise, and energy where possible to the communities most affected by these events. Finally, we implore you all to take time for self-care during this troubling period.

Sincerely,

Lisa García Bedolla

Christopher Stout

Co-Presidents, REP Section