

June 16, 2020

Call to Action from the White Antiracist Committee (WARC) of the California Faculty Association¹

We extend this call to action recognizing that words alone are woefully inadequate. We have all seen protest signs in response to the murders of George Floyd, Breonna Taylor, Ahmaud Arbery, and other acts of police brutality, systemic racism, state violence, and malign neglect exacerbated by COVID-19:

“White silence is complicity.”
“White silence is white consent.”
“White silence is violence.”

As white faculty, our commitment to antiracism is, [in the words of Becky Thompson](#), “a promise and a way of life.” Our humanity is tied to the ability of Black, Indigenous, and all people of color (BIPOC) to fully realize their own human dignity, free of racist oppression:

“Injustice anywhere is a threat to justice everywhere. We are caught in an inescapable network of mutuality, tied in a single garment of destiny. Whatever affects one directly, affects all indirectly.”
- Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.

We live in a society created on foundations of genocidal settler colonialism and anti-Black racial capitalism built through enslavement, land theft, and the systematic rape of Black and Native women. Today, our society remains one of “racism without racists” (as [Eduardo Bonilla-Silva has taught](#)), where white people benefit from the institutional, cultural, and social structures in which we live without ever having to be intentionally racist. Interrupting this history and changing our institutions requires that each of us overtly and actively contest white supremacy, in coordination with organized, BIPOC-led movements. White people have inherited power and privilege that maintain legacies of white supremacy, resulting in racial disparities, exclusions, pain, suffering, and loss of life. As [Peggy McIntosh has written](#): “White privilege [i]s a bank account that I did not ask for, but that I can choose [how] to spend.”

Our goal is to dismantle racism and white supremacy within ourselves, our institutions, and society at large. As [Ibram X. Kendi reminds us](#), it is nonsensical to say we are “not racist”; we must take antiracist action to address racist policies and practices. As members of WARC, we choose to be antiracist, to become co-conspirators, and to advance antiracist ideas, policies, and practices in the CSU and beyond.

¹ The WARC was formed as part of CFA’s intentional centering of antiracism and social justice in our union work. The group is an informal collective of white-identified faculty who gather to discuss, take action, and hold one another accountable for our continued antiracism work.

We invite you, as white colleagues, in this critical moment to organize for co-liberation alongside and in solidarity with BIPOC! What can we do in this immediate movement moment? We offer a few ideas below – as there is a lifetime of work to do – on our campuses, in our communities, and in our society.

Center voices of Black, Indigenous, and people of color:

- Use your power and privilege to elevate the voices of Black, Indigenous, and people of color – in your teaching, your scholarship, your parenting, your relationships, in your daily life.
Example: <https://www.citeblackwomenscollective.org> (Twitter: @citeblackwomen)
- Sign BIPOC-led petitions in solidarity demanding accountability of police officers through prosecution and ban them from being hired elsewhere.
Example: https://act.colorofchange.org/.../justiceforfloyd_george_floy... and <https://www.change.org/p/mayor-jacob-frey-justice-for-georg...>

Donate to Black organizations who are responding to the urgency of current events, such as:

- Black Lives Matter, Los Angeles: Donations for Activists Bail Fees and Medical Support: <https://linktr.ee/ActionBailFundLA>
- GoFundMe to assist George Floyd's Family: <https://www.gofundme.com/f/georgefloyd>
- Reclaim the Block: a grassroots organization based in Minneapolis: <https://www.reclaimtheblock.org/home/#about>

Invest in Black & Brown-led economies, such as:

- Support Black-owned businesses: <https://www.supportblackowned.com/>
- Black and Brown Founders: <https://blackandbrownfounders.com/>
- Black Female Founders: <https://www.blackfemalefounders.org/>

Educate yourself for self-transformation:

- Listen more than you speak and be open to hearing from BIPOC on how to dismantle racism.
- Don't make it about you. Collective liberation requires some ego dissolution and internal healing. ([Rhonda V. Magee's book, *The Inner Work of Racial Justice*, is useful.](#))
- Practice humility as you hold yourself and others accountable to embody and practice antiracism.
- Be willing to show up with vulnerability and courage. Be compassionate and curious, take risks, make mistakes, keep learning, share lessons.
- Ask when you don't know, but be sure to do the work first to educate yourself. Do not burden BIPOC colleagues with questions or demands until you have taken time to raise your own awareness.
- Learn about white privilege & white supremacy. Become more self-aware!
Example: <http://www.sceneonradio.org/tag/season-2/> "Seeing White" of the podcast, *Scene on Radio*.

- Study the histories of racist oppression from the local to the global. Our learning is lifelong.

Support CFA's demands and efforts:

- Divest from police departments; demilitarize and disarm campus police.
- Increase financial and institutional investment in crisis intervention teams and tenure-line mental health counselors who are competent to work with BIPOC students.
- Support Black student, faculty, and staff resource centers.
- Require de-escalation and unconscious bias training for all campus police and security.
- Offer antiracism education and training for all faculty and staff.
- Support [Assembly Bill 1460](#) to demand a sustained commitment from the CSU to support and fund Ethnic Studies departments.

Concrete actions within the CSU and local campuses:

- Contact your CFA chapter or Council for Racial and Social Justice chair to join the statewide White Antiracist Committee (WARC) or form a WARC at your campus (see list of contacts below in the signatories to this letter).
- Focus on mobilizing your own colleagues to take responsibility for organizing our own people.
- Interrupt racism when you see or hear it. "Call-in" white colleagues engaging in racist behavior.
- Reach out to campus administration to demand the creation and implementation of strategic goals for hiring of Black faculty and staff, especially Black mental health counselors.
- Demand your campus invest in Ethnic Studies, openly support AB1460, and create an Ethnic Studies graduation requirement.
- Promote the creation of, and investment in, Black unity, Black resource centers, and safe spaces for marginalized students.
- Insist that your campus administration discontinue relations with police institutions. We need police-free campuses!
- Contact your Academic Senate of the CSU representatives and demand they rescind AS-3403-19/AA and call for their support of AB 1460.

Concrete actions in your community:

- Protest police violence with the hashtag #EndWhiteSilence, take a picture to bear witness, and share on social media.
- Know your rights! See the ACLU and Black Lives Matter websites for guidelines.
- Join others in the community working to dismantle White supremacy, such as Showing Up for Racial Justice (SURJ), with local chapters:
<https://www.showingupforracialjustice.org>.
- Get involved with a local organization that promotes community oversight of police brutality, violence, and racial profiling. Example: <https://www.aclu.org/>.

- Participate in efforts to challenge city budgets that spend excessive portions of public funds on policing. Example: <https://peoplesbudgetla.com>.
- Contact your local elected officials: Use your power and privileges as a white person, a constituent and voter, to demand justice for BIPOC victimized by police violence.
- Participate in local decision-making forums: Be present in public and civic forums when issues related to racial justice and police accountability are being addressed. Scrutinize budgets and demand monies be directed away from policing and into community programs led by BIPOC.
- Vote! Register others to vote! Take others to the polls to vote!

In solidarity for collective liberation,

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