

Faculty and staff of the William S. Richardson School of Law Library at the University of Hawai'i at Mānoa support the end of violence against Black, Indigenous and People of Color, and the peaceful movement toward a progressive society in which all citizens equally enjoy the benefits of a democratic government. We join the national outpouring of anguish at the recent killings of [Philando Castile](#), [George Floyd](#), [Eric Garner](#), [Freddie Gray](#), [Atatiana Jefferson](#), [Breonna Taylor](#), and numerous others that continue the centuries of violence against Black people in our country. The heinous societal, economic, and law enforcement injustices against the African American community highlight the desperate need for neighbors and communities to come together to continually (and loudly) encourage and force the systemic change necessary to combat these prejudices.

Black people are underrepresented in desirable categories like higher education levels, better wages, and homeownership, and overrepresented in undesirable categories like higher mortality rates, incarcerations, and victims of voter suppression. Of equal sorrow and outrage is the devastating impact of systemic racism found in the pandemic of COVID-19, which has resulted in disproportionate fatalities in communities of color. The cruelty experienced by our Black sisters and brothers is not limited to physical persecution. In *Between the World and Me*, Ta-Nehisi Coates tells his son:

Racism is a visceral experience that dislodges brains, blocks airways, rips muscle, extracts organs, cracks bones, breaks teeth. You must never look away from this. You must always remember that the sociology, the history, the economics, the graphs, the charts, the regressions all land, with great violence, upon the body.

It must stop. Black Lives Matter.

There are historical and current inequities inherent in legacy institutions, including libraries. Librarianship is predominantly a 'white' profession. But, this does not mean libraries cannot help educate and fight against racial inequalities. We make choices every day that affect individual and institutional commitments to dissolve barriers for marginalized people. We choose what resources to purchase, whose stories we collect and preserve, the materials we prioritize for discovery and access, the language we use to describe them, how we engage our community (online and in person), and are vigilant in combatting the internal biases we bring to these interactions.

Restoring our community in the face of ongoing injustice and a global pandemic is a necessary and difficult mission. As a Law Library, we are called to empower and inspire communities of legal scholars and activists representing all people of all races. We understand that the policies and procedures we implement, and the time we commit to helping our community find and understand the legal underpinning of a civil and just society, have the potential to honor and

support equality and justice. We will continue to support individuals as they peacefully seek and speak their truth. Our commitment to these values remains strong and everlasting. We see you, we hear you, and you matter.

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