

## Why Black Lives Matter - Alicia Garza

*Alicia Garza is an African-American civil rights activist and writer known for co-founding the Black Lives Matter movement. She presented the speech at the Citizen University Annual National Conference 2016, an event dedicated to activists, on 18th of March 2016.*

It is important to us that we understand that movements are not begun by any one person. That this movement actually was begun in 1619 when black people were brought here in chains  
5 and at the bottoms of boats. And certainly we should be reminded that it is the combined effort of so many incredibly courageous and bold and fearless and wise people that some, you will never know their names. But you should know  
10 that they too are co-creators of what it is that we are experiencing and participating in today. With that being said, our role has been to remind us of our humanity. To remind us that black lives matter, too. To remind us that we are still living  
15 in a time when that is a contested statement. And it should not be.

(...) my citizenship is conditional<sup>1</sup>. This is the harsh<sup>2</sup> reality for black people in America today. That we are expected to participate in democracy while receiving conditional citizenship in return.  
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(...)  
In 2009, Oscar Grant was shot at a BART<sup>3</sup> station platform just three blocks from my home on  
25 New Year's Day. His last words to the world were, "You shot me. I have a daughter." (...)

In 2011, an innocent man named Troy Davis was put to death in Georgia.

In 2012, Jordan Davis was executed in Jacksonville, Florida for being guilty of playing his music too loud in a gas station. His killer immediately afterwards went home and ate pizza with his girlfriend. (...)  
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In 2013, George Zimmerman was acquitted in  
35 the murder of Trayvon Martin.

In 2014, Michael Brown was murdered just steps from his mother's home in Ferguson, Missouri. And just two months later, 12-year-old Tamir Rice was shot and killed by police officers in  
40 Cleveland while playing alone in a park. (...)

We've been living in an era where everything and nothing is about race. Where expectations of the events that I just described are often cast aside<sup>4</sup> as the result of a few bad apples, or an unfortunate consequence of what happens to people who don't try hard enough to succeed.  
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Each year, there are more than one thousand fatal shootings that occur by on-duty police officers. Each year, less than five of those shootings  
50 on average result in a charge of murder or manslaughter against those officers. Now, in the last few years the number of officers who are being held accountable has tripled, but let's put this into context: from five to fifteen every year.  
55 It's nowhere near close to enough. It is in no way the solution to police violence and police brutality. The solution to police violence and police brutality is not to lock up killer cops. The solution is to reimagine what kind of safety do we want  
60 and deserve.

This generation of black resistance says that we are not satisfied with the crumbs that may fall from the table of power, and we are not satisfied with merely sitting at the tables of power. This  
65 generation of black resistance, of black organizing, says that we aim to completely transform the way that power is distributed, the way that power functions. And that we aim for a new kind

<sup>1</sup> bedingt

<sup>2</sup> = hard

<sup>3</sup> comparable to *Deutsche Bahn*

<sup>4</sup> = put aside, ignored

## I Ain't Waiting - John Boyega

*John Adedayo Bamidele Adegboyega, known professionally as John Boyega, is a well known British actor of Nigerian descent. He joined the peaceful Black Lives Matter protest in Hyde Park, where he delivered the speech on June 3, 2020.*

This is very important. This is very vital. Black lives have always mattered, we have always been important, we have always met suffering, we have always succeeded, regardless. And now is  
5 the time. I ain't waiting. I ain't waiting. I have been born in this country. I'm 28-years-old. Born and raised in London. And for a time, every black person understands and realizes the first time you are reminded that you were black. You re-  
10 member. Every black person in here remembered when another person reminded you that you were black.

I need you guys to understand. I need you guys to understand. I need you to understand how  
15 painful this shit is. I need you to understand how painful it is. To be reminded every day that your race means nothing. And that isn't the case anymore. There is never a case anymore. We are going to try it today. We are a physical representation of our support for George Floyd. We are a  
20 physical representation in our support for Sandra Bland. We are a physical representation on our support for Trayvon Martin. We are a physical representation of our support for Stephen  
25 Lawrence, for Mark Duggan.

It is very, very important that we keep control to this moment and we make this as peaceful as possible. We make this as peaceful and as organized as possible. Because you know what guys,  
30 they want us to mess up. They want us to be disorganized, but not today. Not today. Not today. (beep<sup>1</sup>).

This message is specifically for black men. Black men [Boyega stops the speech and starts crying].  
35 Black men, black men, we need to take care of

our black women. We need to care of them. [with a broken voice]. They are us. They are us. They are our future. We cannot demonize our own. We are the pillars of the family. Imagine this, a  
40 nation that is set up with individual families that are thriving, that are healthy, that communicate, that raise their children in love. Have a better rate of becoming better human beings. And that's what we need to create. Black men, it  
45 starts with you.

Hey, it's bad man. We can't be trust no more. We have to be better. You don't understand. I'm speaking to you from my heart. Look, I don't know if I'm going to have a career off that this  
50 (beep<sup>1</sup>).

Today is about innocent people who were halfway through that process. We don't know what George Floyd could have achieved. We don't know what Sandra Bland could have  
55 achieved, but today we're going to make sure that that won't be an alien thought to our young ones. I'm sure you all came today, you left your kids, and when you see your kids, they're aimlessly playing. They don't understand what's  
60 going on. Today's the day that we remind them that we are dedicated, and this is a lifelong dedication. Guys, we don't leave here and stop. We don't leave here and stop. This is longevity<sup>2</sup>.

Some of you are artists. Some of you are  
65 bankers. Some of you are lawyers. Some of you own shop stores, you are important. Your individual power, your individual right is very, very important. We can all join together to make this a better world. We can all do it together to make  
70 this special. We can all join together.

<sup>1</sup> censured because of vulgar language

<sup>2</sup> = forever