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Black Lives Will Never Matter To our Historical Enemies:  
Amerika's War On Black Men and Boys 2017

### A View From The Bridge

"Black people will never gain full equality in this country. Even those Herculean efforts we hail as successful will produce no more than temporary "peaks of progress", short-lived victories that slide into irrelevance as racial patterns adapt in ways that maintain white dominance. This is a hard-to-accept fact that all history verifies. We must acknowledge it and move on to adopt policies based on what I call: "Racial Realism". This mind-set or philosophy requires us to acknowledge the permanence of our subordinate status. That acknowledgement enables us to avoid despair, and frees us to imagine and implement racial strategies that can bring fulfillment and even triumph".

-Derrick Bell

The unabated murder of Black males in Amerika has a long history; a history whose study is now to be decadent and exclusionary. Despite Black males occupying the bottom of every measure of a population's health and prosperity, this is largely ignored, and little has been done to arrest the actual deaths of Black males in Amerika or advance our understandings of the causes underlying their murder at the hands of an increasingly militarized police state. The disciplinary division asserted between Black men and boys and every other raced, gendered, and classed subject, which is presumed to be "more oppressed" purely from an arithmetic conducted upon race, class, and gender categories a priori, prevents a serious study of the relationship between the historical and political causes of the seemingly endless violence against Black males. Our intersectional conceptualizations of gender progressivism are blind to the sexualized and specific dimensions of Black male death. In failing to address the deeper causes responsible for the death of so many Black men, often at the hands of those seemingly charged with their protection, we

fail to address Amerika's long-standing predilection towards killing Black males that is not easily reduced to the fact of racism.

While Black men and boys continue to die at the hands of the state and white vigilantes, disciplinary morality asserts that scholars should resist the urge to theoretically account for these deaths through any serious philosophical or conceptual study. Black male scholars throughout the university have noted the resistance of journals and various disciplines to seriously consider Black male vulnerability beyond Black feminism or other paradigms which assume Black males to be culturally maladjusted and pathologically violent. Any study of Black male vulnerability is taken to be at odds with and thereby erasing Black female suffering. Conferences are reluctant to accept papers, editors discourage submitting such work for review, and there is a permissible vitriol towards the authors of such work allowing "booing", ridicule, and intimidation throughout the academy. This makes for an implicit, but permissible, censorship within the academy of discussions about Black male vulnerability, be it political, sexual, or economic, as well as a denial of the need for new theories beyond the generic language of intersectionality to speak to the death that disproportionately affects Black males. Black men are disproportionately affected by violence, incarceration, poverty, unemployment, and suicide in this country, yet there is an insistence that the deaths of Black men need not be accounted for beyond "racism" in our current political milieu. This moratorium discourages research into dilemmas peculiar to Black males, ultimately coercing Black men into accepting their erasure as a matter of disciplinarity. This silence takes advantage of the deaths which make Black men underrepresented throughout society, and the racism making it unlikely that they will matriculate from high school, college, and ultimately be present and considered in the academy.

Michael Brown's death, like that of Tamir Rice, Eric Garner, Trayvon Martin, Amadou Diallo, Oscar Grant, John Crawford, Jordan Davis, and Stephen Watts, represents the accumulation of an intellectual failure to grasp the complexities and the motivations implicated within the mass-murder logistics of Amerikan racism. The negrophobia that drove white Amerika to endorse lynching as a technology of murder is the same profound anxiety and fear that now allows the white public to endorse the murder of Black men and boys as "justifiable homicides". Black males are often killed by police officers because the officer claims they fear for their lives. This phobia is a normalized and institutional program (pogrom) used to justify police violence, ostracism, and incarceration—it is a fear that is given so much weight in individual cases precisely because it is a fear that both white Amerika and many racial and ethnic groups in Amerika share as well. The vulnerability of Black men and boys lie in this consensus. The agreement that Black males can be killed and that the individuals responsible for these murders will be ideologically supported in their rationalizations and financially rewarded for their actions. We are particularly concerned by the myth of the so-called "super-predator", and the disciplinary proliferation of similar pathological concepts about Black masculinity used to justify the murder of Black males in society and obscure the full viewing of Black male oppression in Amerika.

## Black Masculinity and Negrophobia

The death of Michael Brown, along with the thousands of other Black men and boys was not an aberration to American so-called "democracy", but the fulfillment of its promises of order and stability for the (white) majority. In other words, anti-Black violence and the societal legitimation of the white agents responsible for the death of Black people serve to maintain societal order, and bolster the implicit ideological power of white supremacy in America. Stated differently, contrary to the democratic calls for justice currently insisted upon by activists and scholars alike, the deaths of Black men and boys in America serve to indicate the health of American democracy not its malaise.

For young Black boys, maleness in a white supremacist society is fraught with difficulty and the all too likely outcome of death. Even as men, this racialized masculinity is not thought to result in a recognizable intellectual maturity, and social standing of a citizen; rather the masculinity impressed upon these Black-male-bodies is known only through uncontrollable excess, its lack of maturation, where any and all transgressions (no matter how small or idiosyncratic) are understood to be demonstrations of the more primitive and uncivilized aspects of a not yet evolved savagery. As Geoffrey Canada, President of the Harlem Children, remarks, "The image of the male as strong is mixed with the image of male as violent. Male is virile get confused with male as promiscuous. Male as adventurous equals male as reckless. Male as intelligent often gets mixed with male as arrogant, racist, and sexist... Boys find themselves pulled and tugged by forces beyond their control as they make the confusing and sometimes perilous trip to manhood". The milieu from which Black manhood springs is saturated with racist caricatures that all seem to legitimate the fear Americans have of Black men. The images and perceptions of Black men as dangerous to society, women, and themselves ultimately create a pattern of thinking that works to justify their seemingly inevitable deaths. The relationship between anti-Black racism (the hate of Blacks) and anti-Black chauvinism (the hate of Black males as the barbarous sex) is not adequately captured by a focus on the manhood denied to Black men and boys. Such positions erroneously depict Black men as purely mimetic creatures incapable of generating identities outside of the decadent tropes offered by white patriarchy. A more correct analysis of racism and chauvinism would understand that Black male oppression and death is rooted in an imposition of a deadly masculine caricature—a barbarism justifying multiple mass-murder logistics and encouraging a racist misandry throughout this society and the disciplines birthed from it. Ultimately, Black male suffering is made generic, thought to only be the function of "racism", so in an era pushing intellectuals and policy-makers alike to be anti-essentialist (problematizing racial explanations of inequality), Black men are deemed "unfit" for study.

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"...Any time you  
beg ANOTHER man  
to set you free-  
YOU WILL NEVER  
BE FREE!

-Malcolm X

The Black male is raced and sexed peculiarly, configured as Barbaric and savage, imagined to be a violent animal, not a human being. His mere existence ignites the negrophobia taken to be the agreed upon justification for his death. Black male death lessens their economic competition with, as well as their political radicality against, white society. It is this fear of Black males that allows society to support the imposition of death on these bodies, and consent to the rationalizations the police state offer as their justification for killing the Black-male beast (the rapist, the criminal, and the deviant thug). The young Black male's death, the death of Black boys, is merely an extension of this logic—the need to destroy the Black beast cub before it matures into full pathology. The Black boy, that child, is seen as the potential Nigger-beast. This anti-Black dynamic which specifically affects the Black boy has been referred to by Elaine Brown as a new kind of racism, a racism built upon the anti-Black mythology of Amerika's Black males as the super-predator. This super-predator mythology not only acts to legitimize the violence responsible for the deaths of Black males, but inculcates the rationalization that given what Black males actually are, Black male death is necessary and an indispensable strategy for the safety and security of Amerikan society. Overlooking the mass-murdering disposition of Amerika towards Black males presents an incomplete diagnosis of the impetus behind the levels of violence and sanctions imposed upon Black communities (Black women, Black families) in an effort to control the lives of young Black males.

Even childhood cannot protect young Black boys from the mass-murdering logistics of Amerikan society. Black boys are seen as more culpable for their actions (i.e., less innocent) within a criminal justice context than are their peers of other races. Because Black boys are actually perceived as older and hence more culpable for their behavior, there is an implicit dehumanization that not only predicts racially disparate perceptions of Black boys but also predicts racially disparate police violence toward Black children in real-world settings. Police often imagine the Black boy—a child—to be physically threatening; the manifestation of the savagery thought to be inherent to his Black maleness; a violent beast and predator. The historical association of Black males with animals, specifically apes and monkeys, diminishes white Americans, along with white folks in general, sympathies for Black humanity, but also the acceptance of greater levels of violence directed towards Black people. The racist association between the so-called "negro" and ape is not simply an abstract and detached stereotype, but rather a historical trope used to justify the dehumanization of Black people which individuals and social groups are targeted for cruelty, social degradation, and state-sanctioned violence and/or murder. Black male death and dying is the result of this engineered societal program (pogrom), and the machinations of this apparatus obscures and in many cases denies our ability to see the lives of Black men and boys as worthwhile.

#### A Study of Black Male Death and Dying

Black men and boys are seen as deserving death in Amerika. Because Black men are thought to be "not human", there is a tendency to embrace their sociological condition as their essential characteristics. Black males are thought to be the origins of their conditions rather than their conditions being the origins of their problems. The designation

of Black males as problems in society, simultaneously enforced by our academic theories demanding the de-emphasis of their plight allows such ideologies to operate without challenge. Such conceptualizations allow for the incarceration and the elimination of young Black males by ostensibly normal and everyday means. Similarly, Dr. Huey P. Newton has argued in "Fear and Doubt" that "society responds to poor Black men as a thing, a beast, a nonentity, something to be ignored or stepped on. He is asked to respect laws that do not respect him". Ultimately, it is the Black men and boys who remain isolated, condemned, and ignored by theory that "have been made to pay the "sacrificial costs" for the relatively improved conditions since the 1960s that have impelled many Black so-called "Amerikans" out of the ghettos and into the suburbs". Black males are the depositories of the negativity traditionally associated with Blackness that makes transcendence, socially, politically and conceptually, possible for other Black bodies.

There is an eerie connection between the deaths of Black males in society and the erasure of Black men from the realm of theory. In reality, Black males are presented as non-human and animalistic in the minds of whites, but our theories relish assigning the death of Black males to the generic description of racism, a notion not thoroughly analyzed in identity scholarship and unable to inadequately capture the specific kind of oppression and violence that defines Black male existence. Michael Brown (all Black men and boys in Amerika) was a victim; a display of the power white life has over this kind of Black existence—a demonstration of the seemingly endless limit of white individuals' power to enforce the anti-Black consensus of society towards these specific Black-male kinds. His death—Black Male Death—shows that racism is not simply racial antipathy, but the power whites assert over the world, thereby making Black life inconsequential in its rush to acquire ownership over reality; a dynamic creating the orders of knowledge as an extension of the order of society necessary to maintain anti-Blackness and preserve white supremacy. Because this racist societal architecture is de-emphasized, academic discourse(s) of race-class-gender—presupposing the infinite power of all male bodies—prefigures a conceptual calculus dedicated to eradicating the vulnerability of Black men because they are men. Black men are thought to be mimetic (white) patriarchs; an untenable theoretical position given the empirical evidence of Black male disadvantage, but one that serves to affirm society's assuredness in holding that his death is the only way to remedy the dangers he poses to society. We can see the corpses of thousands upon thousands of Black men and boys, but do we really understand the vulnerability of Black men and boys enough to theorize their lives?

To fully understand the above essay I highly recommend that you study deeply the following two books:

- 1.) The Isis Papers: The Keys To The Colors by Dr. Frances Cress-Welsing
- 2.) Yurugu: An Afrikan-Centered Critique of European Cultural Thought and Behavior by Dr. Marimba Ani

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