

HOODS UP

Trayvon Martin was not simply murdered by George Zimmerman. He was murdered by the State, which is responsible for the creation and perpetuation of the Justice system wherein youth of color can be gunned down with impunity. Trayvon was murdered by the media, which is responsible for his continuous character assassination and that of his loved ones and supporters. Trayvon was murdered by the jurors, who are responsible for perpetuating systemic racist violence through collaboration with the court.

Now the police, the politicians, and the clergymen murder Trayvon's memory. They plead for us to "remain calm," and tell us to "raise [our] voice[s], not [our] hand[s]." They demand peace and submission from all those whose bodies ache with pain, whose blood boils with anger, whose memories are not short enough to allow themselves to forget the countless lives ended at the hands of racist, wannabe cops. Would Trayvon Martin's memory be truly respected and honored if we stifled our discontent? If we expressed our rage merely by shuffling our feet on the sidewalk under the hateful gaze of the police?

The Justice system thrives off the exploitation of the many for the prosperity of the few. The end of racist violence will never be achieved by pandering to the apparatus that depends on it. Justice will never serve the interests of the downtrodden and abused.

How are we to react? Remain passive in the face of the ever-increasingly violent reality of day-to-day life? Or get with a crew and make our rage known?

For Trayvon, Marissa Alexander, Aiyana Stanley, Jordan Davis, Oscar Grant, Kenneth Harding, John T. Williams, and for ourselves; keep your hoods up, honor the dead, and fight like hell for the living.

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