

JUSTICE STUDIES ASSOCIATION

The Justice Studies Association shares in the heartbreak at the killing of George Floyd and countless other Black men, women, and youth victims of police brutality and state violence.

We are living in a historic moment that holds the promise of social change. People are organizing and fighting for racial justice on the streets with calls to dismantle police practices that kill, criminalize and cage people of color in disproportionate numbers. From over-policing impoverished communities, to racial profiling, to high conviction rates and lengthy prison sentences, the racism of the criminal justice system cannot be denied and must be confronted, challenged, and changed. This extends from local departments to the efforts of Federal agencies such as the U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) and Border Patrol.

The loss of life, violence, and oppression exerted is just too much and while long overdue, it seems as though more and more people in society are reaching a breaking point, demanding real accountability and real reform in greater numbers than we've seen in recent years. This year, before its cancellation due to the COVID-19 pandemic, JSA's conference theme was to address the intersections of violence and waste as they pertain to social injustice and the criminal justice system. We were to discuss the question of *What and Who is treated as "disposable?"* The deaths of George Floyd, Breonna Taylor, Ahmaud Arbery and Rayshard Brooks in the last months by those who perceived their lives as disposable show us the urgent need to keep discussing and fighting for racial, economic, and social justice. However, the growing number of voices, the endurance and persistence demonstrated by those marching in the streets give us hope that our society is developing the capacity to imagine justice differently.

JSA is in solidarity with the effort for creating justice without violence and for social structural change. Since its inception, JSA's mission has been to foster writing, research, and activism for social justice and to tackle pressing issues of criminal, social, restorative, and economic justice. We remain committed to our mission and stand in solidarity with Black Lives Matter. We pledge our conference as a forum to celebrate, showcase, and amplify Black voices and those who are engaged in the scholarship and activism work of producing transformative and social justice. The annual meeting and the JSA-affiliated journal, *Contemporary Justice Review* will continue to recruit and showcase the scholarship, activism, and community involvement of those who are working on these goals and issues.

JSA wants to honor the lives of all Black people who have died at the hands of police and as a result of an oppressive racist system. *We say their names*, George Floyd, Breonna Taylor, Ahmaud Arbery, Tony McDade, Eric Garner, Treyvon Martin, Tamir Rice, Stephon Clark, Alton Sterling, Philando Castile, Dominique Clayton, Bettie Jones, Ezell Ford, Atatiana Jefferson, Botham Jean, Walter Scott, Michael Brown, Lackquan McDonald, Rayshard Brooks and the many others who have died and continue to be killed by the police.