



UCLA College | Social Sciences
Bedari Kindness Institute

June 6, 2020

Statement on Racial Justice

We at the Bedari Kindness Institute mourn the death of George Floyd and express our deepest condolences to the Floyd family and all his relations. The Bedari Kindness Institute strongly and unequivocally condemns racist acts of violence and cruelty perpetrated against African Americans. George Floyd's killing is the most recent caught on camera, but there are countless others tracing back to the institution of slavery.

As a body of faculty and researchers dedicated to the project of kindness, we see the need for the promotion of kindness in many forms. One is through the transformation of institutions and systems that perpetuate racial violence and bigotry. This includes prosecuting state as well as civilian actors who enact such violence, and requiring police accountability and transparency. We also believe that a kinder world would include reductions to policing and carceral institutions with adequate resources redirected to social welfare, medical services, economic survival, educational opportunities, and other critical needs. By addressing underlying problems leading to pronounced racial and gender disparities and injustices that extend to all aspects of our society, it is possible to enhance both justice and public safety. The militarization of policing impairs, rather than promotes, the goal of protecting and serving society's members, particularly those who are most vulnerable -- Black, indigenous, Latino/a peoples, LGBTQIA+ peoples, and many immigrants and refugees in the United States.

At the same time, we recognize that racism is not simply encoded in our societal structures, but is also manifested in, and reproduced by, thinking individuals through both intentional and unintentional acts. Kindness is a philosophy, a type of disposition, as well as a learned behavior. We acknowledge that racial prejudice and bias are products of upbringing, education, societal norms, and even professional practices. To address the problem of racialized state violence, we must also usher in new ways of being and understanding, those that center kindness alongside aspirations of justice, equality, and democracy.

As an institute, we decry the injustices embodied in the lives, and deaths, of George Floyd, Breonna Taylor, Ahmaud Arbery, Tony McDade, and Dion Johnson, to name a few. And we hope to serve as a positive partner for those seeking to dismantle racism in its many nefarious

forms, and to build a just society. Toward that end, we pledge to dedicate resources, energy, and expertise from the UCLA Bedari Kindness Institute to efforts to identify and deploy means of combating white supremacy, anti-Blackness, other forms of prejudice, and their institutional manifestations. These projects, to be designed and conducted in collaboration with community partners, will aim to provide the basis for real and lasting progress in countering the injustices suffered for too long, by too many. As a community, we state clearly: Black Lives Matter.