

Nov 20, 2014

## Open Letter of Solidarity from the Women, Gender & Sexuality Studies Faculty

We, the faculty and staff of the Women, Gender, and Sexuality Program at Oregon State University, express our solidarity with the family of Michael Brown and the people of Ferguson, Missouri. We stand with those who have gathered to protest, march, and support one another against police brutality, the devaluation of Black lives, racism, civil disenfranchisement and police militarization. We stand with you from across the nation, in love, support, and sadness. We stand with you in acknowledging that this instance of brutality and the systems supporting it need to end.

We are deeply disturbed and saddened by the murder of Michael Brown and the acts of violence and disenfranchisement enacted against protesters. We encourage the community and the nation to take very seriously the discourse of racism, power, privilege and violence that are being actively practiced on the ground in Ferguson and being enacted against Black bodies, and other marginalized people nation wide.

We stand with you.

We recognize that the disregard for Black life is endemic to the systems of violence and disenfranchisement that are prevalent across the nation. Here, in Oregon, our program is dedicated to engaging in teaching and activism that fights against these systems of oppression in hopes of ending racism, sexism, the devaluing of marginalized bodies. We fight against the discourses that support these ideas. We teach, make art, and work in order to transform our students, our communities, and ourselves to move away from all forms of oppression. Our work is not meant to stay in the boundaries of the state. We intend for our activism to connect with the larger society. It is imperative for us to speak out against injustice. It is vital for us to speak in solidarity with the protestors, the family of Michael Brown, and the thousand fold victims of the system that killed him.

We know that Michael Brown is tragically one of many Black bodies cut down by a racist and violent system. We acknowledge and support of the acts of protest, civil disobedience, and mourning. We call on the OS community, the St. Louis Community, and the Nation as a whole to work to end the devaluation of Black lives, the militarized policing of communities, and the violence endemic to our culture as a whole.

Solidarity in the Struggle.

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