



Los Angeles County Commission on Human Relations
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Statement of the Los Angeles County Human Relations Commission Affirming that Black Lives Matter

As actions continue in Los Angeles and throughout the nation in the wake of the decision not to indict Ferguson, Missouri, police officer Darren Wilson for the killing of unarmed 18-year-old Black teenager Michael Brown, and in light of the recent decision not to indict New York City police officer Daniel Pantaleo for the killing of Eric Garner, an unarmed Black man, in Staten Island, the Los Angeles County Human Relations Commission affirms the call of peaceful protestors that "Black Lives Matter."

The continuing violence that results in a Black person being killed at a rate of one every 28 hours by persons acting in an official police or private capacity for alleged community, public or personal safety, is simply unacceptable and emblematic of a society that systematically devalues and targets Black life.

The Commission further supports the rights of peaceful demonstrators to raise societal awareness of the issue and seek justice through a range of means. While disruptions may cause temporary inconveniences, such efforts have long provided the foundation for historic change, especially as it relates to race. Insurgencies helped to bring chattel slavery to an end. Activist journalism and demonstrations helped quell lynchings. The rights of Black workers were affirmed through work stoppages. Civil rights were made real through boycotts and mass demonstrations. Apartheid was toppled through global acts of civil disobedience. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. was one of many honored leaders who advocated for and practiced non-violent direct action. The Commission recognizes such tools as viable and valid, while standing strongly for the principles and practices of non-violence.

Finally, as the nation and the county continue to grapple with making "Black Lives Matter," the Commission continues to be dedicated to exploring tangible ways to transform the system by uncovering implicit biases, fostering intergroup understandings, examining the ways in which systems and structures perpetuate systems of privilege and oppression, and working with communities to develop and implement viable solutions for a fair, just and free society.