



SHOWING UP FOR RACIAL JUSTICE

Justice for Trayvon Action Kit

Showing up for Racial Justice (SURJ) was formed in 2009 by white people from across the US to respond to the significant increase of targeting and violence against people of color in the aftermath of the election of Barack Obama. The case of George Zimmerman is the latest in a long series of extrajudicial (outside the law) killings of people of color in the United States. We mourn the loss of life, see the impact on communities of color and **believe that white people must partner across race and other differences to create social change. SURJ is here to provide resources and support for white people to make this happen.**

We look to each other to change the world we live in one conversation and action at a time, and our efforts are to build a broad and deep movement of engaged white people to work in partnership with communities of color for real racial justice in the US and everywhere. Please join us as we build on a long tradition of white people engaged in racial justice work in our local communities, our states, and around the world.

What We Can Do

As white people, we must show up in the struggle for human rights and dignity, and demand an end to targeting people of color. This can happen in small and large ways every day.

Below are actions you can take in response to the Zimmerman verdict and violence against people of color, ranging from one minute to a lifetime of action. Please join

us in making a commitment to take one or more of these actions in this important time.

Education

- Get Informed

Short Actions

- 1 Minute Action: Join SURJ
- 2 Minute Action: Sign petitions
- 3 Minute Action: Tweet
- 5 minute Action: Post a picture or video on Facebook, Google+, Instagram

Medium Actions

- 10 Minute Action: Donate to a racial justice organization
- 15 Minute Action: Get your story out on Wearenottrayvon.com
- 30 minute Action: Engage people in your life: talk about it
- One Hour Action: Write about it: letters to the editor or online comments

Long-Term Actions

- One Hour+ Action: Take part in direct action or hold a house party
- Ongoing Action: Support the Voting Rights Acts
- Ongoing Action: Join a local organization and/or get involved with SURJ

As white people, it is not too much to commit our lives to ending racism. It is, in fact, only right in the light of our history, and through our collective vision and action it is possible. In my shock and grief I can only recommit myself and work hard for a better world for my daughter — and all the children who deserve safety, love, security, opportunity, and the basic right to walk home in

Get Informed

Read about and watch videos on the aftermath of the Zimmerman trial and discuss them with white friends, family, and organizations. Check out these links:

Videos

- [Let's turn Outrage into Action](#), Angela Glover Blackwell, Policylink
- [Trayvon Martin, a Moral Response](#), Rev. William J. Barber II, NAACP

Articles

- [The Zimmerman Verdict is a Wakeup Call...](#), by Makani Themba, Praxis Project
- [Trayvon and the Road Ahead](#), by Ricardo Levins Morales
- [The US v. Trayvon Martin](#), Robin D.G Kelley
- ["Neighborhood Watch" Groups Like Zimmerman's and in Much of the Deep South Are Hardly Different Than Slave Patrols of Old](#), by Thom Hartmann
- [White Supremacy, Meet Black Rage](#), by Brittney Cooper for Slate
- [Want Justice for Trayvon? Start Turning to your Neighbors](#), by Sarah Van Gelder for Yes Magazine

Blogs

- [We are not Trayvon Martin](#)
- [Black Lives Matter](#)
- [Colorlines](#)
- [Crunk Feminist Collective](#)

On this day I consider myself utterly lucky to have had the company of many people who refused to accept these misgivings, rather than do what is considered “polite” in our culture and passively ignore them, or worse to join me in slipping into a denial where they can believe wholly that they are not any kind of problem.

Because this evening has made it very apparent to me that I would rather be called out, embarrassed, shamed, flunked, fired, pummeled in the street, or called the worst of the worst — a racist — by my closest friends, colleagues, or people on the street than to be allowed by them to continue nurturing ideas, intentionally or unintentionally, taught to me from birth or not, that support a system where an armed white man can stalk an unarmed black teenage

ONE MINUTE ACTION: Join SURJ

[SURJ](#) is a national volunteer-led organization of white people engaging other white people in racial justice work. We have chapters across the country and are always looking for new members. To join, [go here](#) and we will connect you with other people in your area.

TWO MINUTE ACTION: Sign petitions

Petitions are one way for us to show a united force. Please take a minute and sign these important petitions.

- [Sign on to urge the Department of Justice to take on the Zimmerman case](#)
- [Sign on to support Florida’s Dream Defenders — demand that Governor Scott call a special session to repeal so-called “Stand your Ground” Law](#)
- [Sign on to Governor Rick Scott of Florida to Free Marissa Alexander](#)
- [Sign on to End “Stand Your Ground” Laws](#)
- [Sign on to urge your representative to pass the Voting Rights Act recently gutted by the Supreme Court](#)

THREE MINUTE ACTION: Spread the word through Twitter

Use the hash-tags

- #blacklivesmatter, #WeAreNotTrayvon, #JusticeForTrayvon, #Showup4RJ

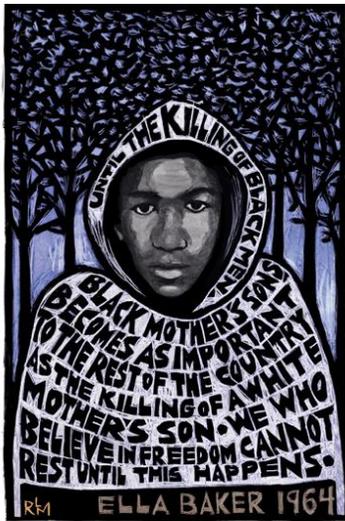
Sample Tweets

- Until the killing of black men, black mothers' sons, is as important as the killing of white men, white mothers' sons #blacklivesmatter #Showup4RJ
- An injustice anywhere is a threat to justice everywhere @MLKing #JusticeforTrayvon #Showup4RJ
- Tell the Department of Justice to file a civil rights action and give your feedback:<http://wapo.st/15G9Qbc> #JusticeforTrayvon #Showup4RJ
- White privilege is the difference between life and death. My white son will never be murdered by George Zimmerman. #WeAreNotTrayvon #Showup4RJ
- Where was Marissa Alexander's ground to stand? Release Marissa. tinyurl.com/SYGinequity #blacklivesmatter #Showup4RJ
- Speak out against racial profiling. No more Trayvons. #blacklivesmatter #JusticeForTrayvon #Showup4RJ
- Every 28 hours there's another Trayvon. <http://mxgm.org/report-on-the-extrajudicial-killings-of-120-black-people> #blacklivesmatter #Showup4RJ
- Has anyone ever followed you with a gun because you looked like a threat to their neighborhood? #WeAreNotTrayvon #JusticeForTrayvon #Showup4RJ

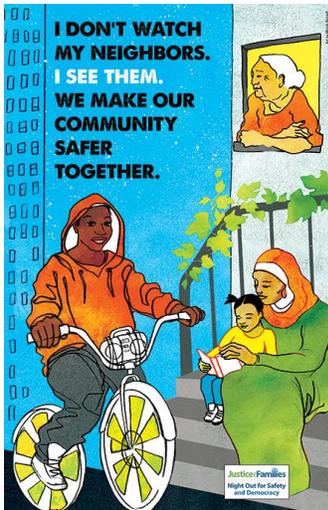
It's not about being "surprised" by the acquittal of George Zimmerman for the brutal murder of a child, an innocent Black teenager named Trayvon Martin. On a conceptual level, I understand that – more than baseball or apple pie — racism is what defines the United States of America. But I will never stop being shocked and heartbroken at this nation's absolute and profound

5 MINUTE ACTION: Spread the Word Through Art

Share one of the following images on your Facebook page and write a message about why it is important to you as a white person. Thanks to the artists who have offered to use their artwork for this project. Visit their websites to see more of their art. Paste the link onto Facebook, Twitter or Instagram if you post the picture.



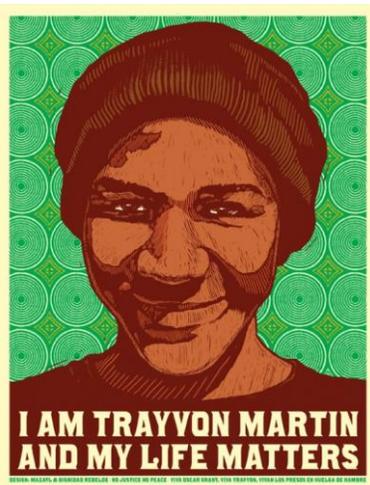
Ricardo Levins-Morales
<http://tinyurl.com/k748y7y>



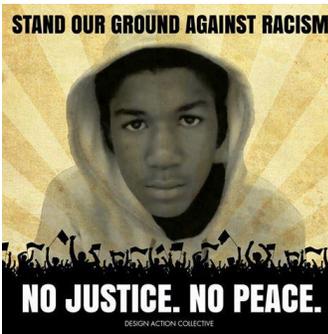
Micah Bazant
<http://tinyurl.com/m7xqdrh>



Amaryllis DeJesus Moleski
<http://tinyurl.com/loc8mxp>



Melanie Cervantes &
Jesus Barraza



Design Action
<http://tinyurl.com/mormxvz>



Tes One
<http://tinyurl.com/l8xj95>

10 MINUTE ACTION: Donate to a racial justice organization

There are thousands of organizations that are working to combat structural racism in different ways, nationally and in local communities around the country. These organizations depend on the donations of people: 85% of funding for non-profits comes from individuals. Whether you can give \$5 or \$500, it is a valuable action to contribute your money to make sure that this organizing, educating, and mobilizing continues.

Think about the work that you find most inspiring. Do you think national or local work is more important? Legal strategies? Education? Mobilization? Policy change?

- Look for organizations that are led by and working with people of color.
- Ask a trusted friend which organizations they think are doing good racial justice work.
- Make a gift. Write a check. Put it on your credit card. Sign up as a monthly donor. Whatever you can give will help them do their work more successfully.

Here are a few networks of great racial justice coalitions with local members across the country:

- [Florida New Majority](#): which includes [Dream Defenders](#), [Power U](#), [Miami Workers Center](#), and others
- [NAACP](#)
- [Southern Movement Alliance](#)
- [Right to the City](#)
- [National Domestic Workers Alliance](#)
- [National Day Labor Organizing Network](#)
- [Grassroots Global Justice](#)

15 MINUTE ACTION: Write a Message and Snap a Photo

We are not Trayvon Martin: Spend a few minutes writing about how you have benefited from your whiteness. This can be in terms of education, housing, medical care, travel, police conduct, etc.

Post it with your photo at [We are not Trayvon Martin](#).

30 MINUTE ACTION: Talk to people in your life about race

Don't be in such a hurry to condemn a person because he doesn't do what you do or think what you think. There was a time when you didn't know what

It is tempting to separate ourselves from other white people who disagree with us on this or other racial justice matters. It can be painful to know that someone you know or care about holds views that you know to be biased. However, as white people committed to racial justice, **a powerful way to create change is to engage other white people in dialogue, to see talking about race with them as our responsibility.**

Think back to how your analysis and perspective were shaped:

- Listen well to what the other person is saying, and why they see things the way that they do.
- Ask questions to help clarify.
- Withhold judgement. The goal is to move them forward, not to prove something about yourself.
- How did the people in your life move you through dialogue? When was it about the presentation of facts that you didn't know, and when was it about shifting a framework, asking questions, or a deeper connection?

The following are some suggestions for how to respond to conclusions white people often come to around George Zimmerman's recent acquittal for killing Trayvon Martin. The goal is not to read these as a script. Feel free to modify as makes sense for your conversations and life:

Comment: "But the legal system worked the way it is supposed to. If Zimmerman were guilty, he would have been convicted."

Response: "The legal system is biased against people of color. For example, African Americans are twice as likely as whites to receive the death penalty. If Trayvon had been white, Zimmerman would have done time."

Follow-up Question: "How do you see bias in the criminal justice system playing out in your neighborhood, town, region?"

Comment: "The problem was the Florida law, with its broad definition of self-defense. It would not have happened in another state."

Response: "The only thing different about this case is that we heard about it. People of color are being shot and killed all the time, under so-called fair laws."

Question: "What long did it take for past unjust laws to end or change (like Jim Crow, slavery, DOMA)?"

Comment: "The prosecution was incompetent."

Response: "That may well have been true, but the real problem was that the judge prohibited any talk about race and racial profiling. That's what the case was about."

Comment: "But George Zimmerman is Latino. So it can't be about race."

Response: "It's about race because his actions and decisions that night and the coverage and prosecution of the case reflected and held to racist ideology, that

automatically deems a young man of color a suspect, and then guilty of his own death.”

Question: “How might structural racism impact the views of people of color differently than white people?”

Comment: “Well, it’s all over now. Time to get on with our lives.”

Response: “It’s not all over. Trayvon’s family can still file a civil suit, which has a more relaxed standard of evidence. And these laws are still on the books around the country. What would it be like if this had happened to your child?”

Question: “What do you think would keep this real in white peoples’ lives when the headlines fade?”

Comment: “Then why not let the legal system play itself out.”

Response: “That can take years. What about all the African Americans and other people of color who face the threat of vigilante attacks and biased arrests every day?”

Question: “What do you think could make the legal system work for all people?”

Comment: “Even if people are upset, holding rallies doesn’t help anything.”

Response: “White people need to stand up for racial justice in a public, visible way. Only action can prevent more Trayvon Martins. What can we do today?”

Question: “What can we do today to engage more people more deeply?”

Comment: “I think there’s been too much focus on this one case. It’s time to move on.”

Response: “People aren’t concerned just about what happens to George Zimmerman, but about the ways in which the outcome here continues our society’s

precedent of devaluing black life. It makes young black people more vulnerable to being a target for anyone who sees them as a threat.”

Question: “How do you think we can show that all lives—including African Americans and other people of color— matter?”

Comment: “But George Zimmerman is Latino/ Hispanic. How can he be racist?”

Response: “In this country, white skin/light skin people get certain privileges. While Zimmerman is Latino, he benefits from a system that prioritizes white people.

Question: “How have you seen white people benefit in terms of education, housing, health care, immigration? I know in my family history, some people received ____ advantage. What about it yours?”

ONE HOUR ACTION: Do some writing

Letter to the Editor: Write an LTE about why this is an important issue for you and what needs to change. Send it to your friends, family, organizations, and to the local papers. Post it on [our Facebook page](#).

[Click here](#) for tips on writing an LTE.

Here are some writing prompts:

- As a white person, this case matters to me because...
- The fact that a jury ruled that it was lawful for George Zimmerman to shoot Trayvon Martin demonstrates...
- Trayvon Martin would still be alive today if...

Now is an opportunity to check ourselves through some honest reflection and let that lead us to thoughtful action.

—**Claudia Horowitz**, [Stone Circles](#)

ONE HOUR+ ACTION: Take a day off your usual grind and spend a few hours in the street!

For any action, meeting, or in-person event please take pictures or a short video and upload it to the [SURJ Facebook page](#).

Go to a local action: There will be a National Day of Action this Saturday, July 20th, and many more to come. See if there is a local action near you and go with some friends. Make some signs to get your message out.



SURJ contingent in NYC march for Trayvon Martin, July 14, 2013

Great messages to use:

- Black lives matter
- Racial justice, not racial profiling
- Showing up for Racial Justice
- Abolish "Stand Your Ground"

At the action: Engage with other white people. Talk to them about why they are there and whether they're involved with local racial justice efforts.

Hold a house party: To discuss the Zimmerman trial and its connections to other issues such as racial profiling, the mass incarcerations and criminalization of people of color, and/or the impact of stand your ground laws in your state.

Use video to spark conversation: Use YouTube videos, a short movie, or an article on the Zimmerman trial to spark conversation with people in your community. Or go to a movie with a racial justice theme — like [Fruitvale Station](#), about the killing of

Oscar Grant by the transit police in Oakland, California — and meet for discussion afterwards.

In addition to the videos listed earlier, here are some possible videos to show:

- [Michelle Alexander: "Zimmerman Mindset" Endangers Young Black Lives With Poverty, Prison & Murder, Democracy Now!](#)
- [Trayvon Martin's Unpunished Shooting Death Among 100+ Extrajudicial Killings of Unarmed Blacks, Democracy Now!](#)

Additional Resources:

- [Racial Profiling Resources, Rights Working Group](#)
- [It IS about Race: Study Finds Significant Racial Bias In 'Stand Your Ground' Laws, Lorraine Devon Wilke](#)
- [Report on the Extrajudicial Killing of 120 Black People, Malcolm X Grassroots Movement](#)

ONGOING ACTION: Support the Voting Rights Act

With the Supreme Court's recent decision to invalidate key sections of the Voting Rights Act there is a strong need to make sure everyone has access to a vote—particularly in communities of color. Support the Voting Rights Act. There will be national week of action August 24-28th with local actions around the country in honor of the 50th anniversary of the March on Washington. Join a Day of Dignity on August 28th. More details to come.

ONGOING ACTION: Join a local organization; get involved with SURJ!

We meet a lot of white people who care about the issue of equity and justice, but often feel alone and isolated in their neighborhoods, communities, and families. Within SURJ, many of us have also felt ostracized for not going along with the “norm” of how racism happens. That is part of why we come together—so that we have a like-minded, like-valued community who deeply cares that every single human being deserves to be treated with love and respect—and that with a supportive community we are able to take a stand, speak the truth, and be part of creating a better America and beyond.

[Contact us](#) to be connected to a local SURJ group or tell help form a local chapter.

Conclusion

If you have come to help me, you are wasting your time. But if you have come because your liberation is bound up with mine, then let us work together.

This is a historic moment. There is an opportunity to decide what type of person you want to be — someone who stands up against injustice in all its forms or someone who sits back and watches. What values do you want your peers and colleagues, family members and spiritual community, children and grandchildren to learn from you? As a white person, you have the opportunity to dig down deep and find the person you want to be and live it out loud.

Will you stand up for what is right? Will you dare to speak above the status quo? Will you rise to the challenge of being your best self?

PLEASE DO! We need you! We need your voice, your brilliance, your heart, your soul... we need you to be part of this moment, right here, right now, to create the

world we want to all live in. Be bold with us, be courageous with us! No one is free until we are all free!

More About Us

SURJ is a national network of white groups and individuals organizing white people for racial justice. Through community organizing, mobilizing, and education, SURJ moves white people to act as part of a multi-racial majority for justice with passion and accountability. We work to connect people across the country while supporting and collaborating with local and national racial justice organizing efforts. SURJ provides a space to build relationships, skills, and political analysis to act for change.

Website: <http://www.showingupforracialjustice.org>

Facebook: <http://www.facebook.com/ShowingUpForRacialJusticesurj>

Twitter: <http://www.twitter.com/showup4rj>

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