
Trickle-down Holocaust: Why Black Lives Must Matter to People of Faith

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This trickle-down holocaust
Has frayed my natural nerves
The daily deaths of my brothers and sisters
Killed by “cophthority”
And defenders of demonarchy
Keep taking a mind-blowing toll
On this knee-bowed, body-bent soul
Sleep has fled and taken my eyesight
And despite my critical insight
On State apparatuses
I keep checking the statuses
Of my friends to make sure they are okay
Ready to face the day, who,
Though pressed, stressed and crying
And grieving the dying
Are also resistant, defiant
On the collective Self and God-reliant
To end this 400-year-long nightmare
Of murder by murder
Grief by grief
Slander by slander—
A trickle-down affront to the
Righteousness that is. ¹

Americans and international readers of all ethnicities, physical abilities, intellectual and emotional capacities, gender identities, sexual orientations and social class backgrounds have varying, shifting, and relative degrees of privilege with which to navigate the crises that have long beset us as citizens of our nation, world, and cosmos. These realities of our lives, along with our religious and spiritual identities—constructed from our individual and collective experiences, whether painful or celebrated—spawn competing claims about whose lives matter. The zero-sum mentality, in which the perquisites of citizenship and “somebodiness” have historically been negotiated, determines whose lives matter most and whose matter least.

Black, Indigenous and other people of color have most

1. JoAnne Marie Terrell, “Trickle-Down Holocaust” (unpublished poem, written 27 July 2015).

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endured the stigma of being regarded as “the least of these.”² For Black people, this indisputable truth is forever enshrined in American legislative history and sacred documents, in the 3/5ths Compromise struck during the Constitutional Convention of 1787 that, for the purpose of apportioning representation and levying taxes to the states: a) enumerated free persons, who were mostly White; as well as indentured servants, who were “bound to Service for a Term of Years,” again, who were mostly White; b) exempted the native population because they were not taxed; and c) counted “three fifths of all other persons,” that is, the primarily Black, enslaved population.³ Furthermore, the loophole in the Thirteenth Amendment to the Constitution (1865) that abolished chattel slavery but permits slavery as “punishment for crime whereof the party shall have been duly convicted” led to the existence of chain gangs as well as to the contemporary crisis of mass incarceration⁴ that disproportionately affects the African American community. Even though the 3/5 Compromise is effectively elided from the Constitution in the Fourteenth Amendment, the southern states’ history of and revived efforts at voter interposition and nullification⁵ in the present must be seen against

2. Matthew 25:40.

3. Article 1, Section 2, Clause 3 of the United States Constitution.

4. Cf. Ashley Nellis, “The Color of Justice: Racial and Ethnic Disparity in State Prisons,” www.sentencingproject.org, June 14, 2016, accessed 07 July 2021.

5. According to the Brennan Center for Justice, “As of June 21, 17 states enacted 28 new laws that restrict access to the vote. With some state legislatures still in session, more laws will certainly follow... [Update]...at least 61 bills with restrictive provisions are moving through 18 state legislatures. More specifically, 31 have passed at least one chamber, while another 30 have had some sort of committee action (e.g., a hearing, an amendment, or a committee vote). Overall,

the backdrop of a longer history that includes the creation of a poorly paid class of servants in the labor pool after slavery ended, severely delimiting the options of the formerly enslaved; the vigorous enforcement of the doctrine of “separate but equal” in matters of education, public accommodations, transportation, housing, etc.; and the final censuring of Black children, women, and men through terroristic lynching,⁶ reduplicated in the extra-judicial police and vigilante violence I call a “trickle-down holocaust,” that continues to this day.

Throughout its 402-year sojourn here, the African American community has had no option but to create and to re-create itself, spiritually, religiously, culturally and socially, and its members are compelled to recalibrate our lives again and again as economic, moral and artistic agents in an insidiously hostile context, a system to which premier womanist theologian Delores S. Williams refers as *demonarchy*.⁷ Demonarchy is rule by demonic spirits that are reified in institutions, documented in writing, and evinced in moral behaviors, that seek to displace God, the Supreme Being, as the Source of Goodness, Arbiter of Justice, and Fountain of Delight, and as the uncontested Governor of our human and planetary destiny. In the context of the principalities and powers that rule America today, nearly thirty years after Williams coined the term, “demonarchy” seems as good a term as any as a conceptualization of the thing against which Black people must battle for survival, liberation, and creative self-expression.

The brutality in African Americans’ collective story is amply attested to in slave testimonies and narratives.⁸ The implicit and explicit biases of the major players in the abolitionist and suffragist movements of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, like those in the #BlackLivesMatter movement today, were based on presumptions about human and civil rights as staples of democratic, representative, and *just* government. Yet the idea that the Civil War was fought to preserve “states’ rights” was more accurately a bid for states to keep slaves in perpetuity, antithetical to the impetus of freedom—at least for White men—in the rhetoric of the founding documents, the Declaration of Independence, the Articles of Confederation, and the Constitution.

In a speech given in 1852, Sojourner Truth, the mystic proto-womanist, former slave, abolitionist, and suffragette, related a vision in which God had shown her a sheaf of wheat with a boll weevil in it and asked her, “Sojourner, what ails this sheaf of wheat?” To which she responded, “It’s got a weevil in it.” After that, God showed her a copy of the Constitution and asked her,

lawmakers have introduced at least 389 restrictive bills in 48 states the 2021 legislative sessions.” www.brennancenter.org/our-work/research-reports/voting-law-roundup-may-2021, accessed 07 July 2021.

6. Cf. James H. Cone, *The Cross and the Lynching Tree* (Maryknoll: Orbis, 2011).

7. Delores S. Williams, “Womanist Theology: Black Women’s Voices,” *Christianity and Crisis*, March 2, 1987, p. 69.

8. See John W. Blasingame, *The Slave Community: Plantation Life in the Antebellum South* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1972); and *Slave Testimony: Two Centuries of Letters, Speeches, Interviews and Autobiographies* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1977).

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“Sojourner, what ails this Constitution?” to which Sojourner Truth astutely retorted that the Constitution also has a “weevil in it.” She was referring to the omission altogether of Black and White women from representation and the electorate. She also meant by this the Three-Fifths Compromise that relegated Black men to that amount of humanity for legislative representation and taxation purposes.

I do feel that the viciousness of the backlash against Black people’s hard-won freedom from slavery—such that our plight is hardly ever reckoned as a cause of the Civil War and such that scholars, pundits, and journalists alike can completely ignore the subsequent history of lynching, the burning, and massacres of whole Black towns that had been flourishing such as Tulsa and Rosewood, the harsh reality of Jim and Jane Crow segregation, the belittling of Black pain, and the extrajudicial and vigilante killings of Black children, women, and men with impunity—has parallels in the biblical story of Amnon, the son of King David, who lured his sister Tamar into his chambers and raped her with impunity.¹⁰ Even though she extended to him the opportunity to repent and to deploy the viable option of restorative justice, he despised her and left her violated, desolate, and vulnerable. I also believe that a backlash against women’s empowerment through suffrage, sexual revolution, and reproductive agency is a subtext of the violence against Black bodies because White men’s undeniably extensive,

9. Cited in Virginia Hamilton, *Many Thousand Gone* (New York: Alfred Knopf, 1993), 73. See Sojourner Truth, *Narrative of Sojourner Truth*, as told to Olive Gilbert (Battle Creek, 1881). See also JoAnne Marie Terrell, “Sojourner Truth Day,” Years A, B, C, in Dale Andrews, Ron Allen, and Dawn Ottoni-Wilhelm, *Preaching God’s Transformative Justice: A Lectionary/Commentary* (Louisville: Westminster/John Knox Press, 2011).

10. 2 Samuel 13:1-22.

legalized rape of Black women and their catastrophic emasculation of Black men through lynching during and since slavery comports with the markers of misogyny, through their attempts to minimize women's and Black men's human agency and self-worth through their violent, rapacious acts.

Black history and concurrent reality are replete with evidence of White violence and staunch, institutionalized anti-Blackness. Anti-Blackness that is memorialized in every kind of art form, in linguistic cues, and in legislation that incrementally accords Black people's rights and removes them by fiat, according to the caprice of our former shameless, entitled Executive branch, of politicized courts, of self-interested state legislators, of ill-trained and over-equipped police and, not least, of a multiracial society. Society is inured to Black suffering because of the prerequisites of whiteness, simulated whiteness and proximity to whiteness, and because of conditioned enthrallment to white standards of beauty, intellect, and morality, and this is true among many non-white individuals and in many non-white communities.

Violence against Black bodies did not end with slavery's end and is not today merely a function of poor policing, nor of the insidious conditioning to accept the *imago* whiteness as the default of everything that is "good, acceptable and perfect." Black people's struggle for equal treatment under the law in matters of housing, healthcare, education, employment, and the whole litany of benefits in a supposedly democratic society is also endless.

As in ancient imperial Rome, so in postmodern America: the demons we face are Legion.¹¹ Here their leader likewise has a name: White Supremacy, the overtly and covertly violent, institutionalized, and personally embodied system of thoughts, beliefs, and actions that vigorously conditions White people to presume their unique fitness to subordinate and lead the world, and to make themselves—and those who can approximate whiteness—the standard of everything, from beauty, to intellect, to morality, by any and all means.

For North and South Americans of African descent, demonarchy entails a history of enslavement, and beyond that massive travesty of human trafficking and theft of labor designed to enrich Europeans in perpetuity. It meant and still means *permanent* economic subservience in the workforce throughout the post-slavery agrarian, industrial, and digital ages. For Africa, demonarchy meant and means the brutal legacies of colonialism and ongoing, thoroughgoing exploitation of the continent's abundant natural resources as well as the continuous anthropological impoverishment¹² of its peoples. For the Caribbean nations and other parts of the diaspora, it means a stranglehold on whole economies through

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the debt servicing schemas of the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank, which in effect, compel many of them to this day to repay European nations like England, France, and America for the loss of income after slavery's end. For Haiti, that great exemplar of Black resistance and self-determination, it means the longest, most punitive economic embargo throughout the duration of its 217-year history, the crippling of its sugar, rice, and other industries in recent history,¹³ and consignment to perpetual poverty through the creation of a charity-based economy via the presence of more than 3,000 non-governmental and church-based organizations, and through political destabilization.¹⁴

Everywhere Black people live, demonarchy means the brutal maintenance of a demonic lie imputing *relativity* to Black peoples' humanity quotient. It is a lie that is enshrined in the U.S. Constitution. It is a lie with traction because it lives in most Americans – who believe they are Christian – just below the surface of conscious thought, and I am not excluding Black people from the implications of the statement about where the lie "lives," or about the questionable belief that those who are at all swayed by the lie are Christian in truth. That is just how accustomed we are to living with the lie and having the lie live in us. It is a lie that permits the scientific community to ignore its own claims to objectivity; a lie that allows the medical community, operating as an apartheid regime, to withhold treatment, conduct experiments on, underdiagnose and minimize the reported physical pain of Black people.¹⁵ The medical history encompassed within *this* statement

11. Mark 5:9.

12. The late Cameroonian theologian and artist, Father Engelbert Mveng, S.J., coined the term "anthropological poverty" to describe the emasculation and theft of the material and spiritual resources of African peoples. Brutally murdered in his own home in 1995, the highly revered Jesuit priest was a major principal in the negritude movement in Africa and a charter member of the Ecumenical Association of Third World Theologians (EATWOT). See Engelbert Mveng, *L'Afrique dans l'Eglise: Paroles d'un Croyant* (Paris: L'Harmattan, 1985).

13. See Michael Kastner, "How US Crop Dumping Keeps Haiti Poor and Dependent," Foundation for Economic Education (FEE), www.fee.org, accessed September 2020.

14. As of this date, Haiti's Parliament is dissolved and the President Jovenel Moise was assassinated on 07 July 2021. Although the late President had appointed a new Prime Minister who had not been installed, the Acting President is Claude Joseph, the outgoing Prime Minister.

15. See Harriet A. Washington, *Medical Apartheid: The Dark*

has followed us doggedly into this present moment and unfolds in the apparent dispensability of 606 million souls¹⁶ a wildly disproportionate number of whom were Black and Brown.

In a *New York Times* article called, “It’s Not Obesity. It’s Slavery,” Dr. Sabrina Strings cites a 240-700% disparity between White Americans and African Americans in fatalities from COVID-19.¹⁷ (The range indicates national, regional and local statistics). She makes it clear that when the choice is made as to who receives advanced treatment, especially ventilator triage, a number of state and local guidelines disqualify people on the basis of their baseline health and prognosis for recovery. She wrote, “[w]hen I learned about guidelines suggesting that doctors may use existing health conditions, including obesity, to deny or limit eligibility to lifesaving coronavirus treatments, I couldn’t help but think of the slavery-era debates I’ve studied about whether or not so-called ‘constitutionally weak’ African Americans should receive medical care.”¹⁸

Dr. Strings’s statement above echoes Reinhold Niebuhr’s discussion of what he called the “racial weakness” of America’s so-called “negroes” that he claimed, ignorantly, “prevented” the Black masses from rising up against their slaveholders.¹⁹ There were many slave revolts, many of which the success of the Haitian Revolution inspired.²⁰ Some are notated for the historical record and others are part of family lore. I think Niebuhr meant by the phrase “racial weakness” the social positionality of Black people and that is admirable, especially when other White theologians were silent when it came to affirming anything about Black people or reckoning with the racism that possesses this society. Nevertheless, his own social positionality prevented him from naming the lie and the demonarchical structures that undergird it. The lie continues to unfold in the willingness of our government as well as the pharmaceutical industry to make poor and vulnerable peoples the subjects of intense vaccine research. And it unfolds in the reasonable fear of treatment and cooperation in the Black community.

The lie about the relativity of Black peoples’ humanity quotient persists in the criminalizing and mass incarceration of Black people, and the criminalizing of Blackness itself, so that almost

History of Medical Experimentation on Black Americans from Colonial Times to the Present (New York: Doubleday Books, 2007).

16. At the time I gave the lecture, the death count from COVID-19 was at approximately 250,000.

17. Sabrina Strings, MD. “It’s Not Obesity. It’s Slavery,” *New York Times*, May 25, 2020, www.nytimes.com, accessed September 2020.

18. Strings, “It’s Not Obesity. It’s Slavery.”

19. Reinhold Niebuhr, *Moral Man and Immoral Society* (New York: Charles Scribner’s Sons, 1932), 268.

20. For discussion of the resistance tradition among slaves and its role in overturning the institution of slavery, see Herbert Aptheker, *American Negro Slave Revolts* (New York: International Publishers, 1987 - fifth edition); see also Eugene Genovese, *From Rebellion to Revolution: Afro-American Slave Revolts in the Making of the Modern World* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1979); and C.W. Larison, M.D., *Sylvia DuBois: A Biography of the Slave Who Whipped Her Mistress and Gave Her Freedom*, ed. Jared C. Loddell (New York: Oxford University Press, 1988).

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every day in America, police and self-appointed vigilantes, goaded by a *former* Administration that has not backed down from its claims of a “stolen election,” murder Black children, women, men, and our allies with impunity, or shoot us, or attack us in other ways without provocation or demonstrated remorse.²¹

In my experience, it is almost pointless to argue with people who object to the declarative, “#BlackLivesMatter,” for which the contemporary iteration of movements for Black peoples’ human and civil rights in America is named. Some people object to the simple nomenclature #BlackLivesMatter because it is too difficult for them to think beyond the individualistic, pietistic, strictures of evangelicalism that is the mainstay of American civil religion. These include, ironically, the biblically unsound proposition to “love everybody,” and purport to a universalism that seeks to harmonize human experience and to gloss over the particular, painful experiences of particular people, especially if they are Black. Judeo-Christian scripture enjoins love of God, self, and neighbor,²² the near persons, which can mean *anybody*—including one’s enemies—but can never mean *everybody* because love is a verb connoting action and not merely an emotion compelling no action, no matter how imbued with goodwill it is.

Other people who object to the words, “Black Lives Matter,” fear that the hashtag facilitates the erasure of their distinctive, individual, and collective identities, stories, and experiences of struggle and censure in a nation and world built on Europeans’ thirst for empire and what womanist historian, my colleague, Dr. Julia Speller calls the “presumption of uniqueness”²³ that undergirds the doctrine of white supremacy. Although the Protestant version of the nation’s history begins in England and was initially framed as a quest for religious freedom, the vast agricultural and

21. On 01 June 2020, former President Donald Trump used his photo-op at St. John’s Episcopal Church in Washington, D.C., as the occasion to invoke “law and order” and compel riot officers to use tear-gas on people who were peacefully protesting the death of yet another Black man, George Floyd, in Minneapolis, Minnesota, at the hands (under the knee) of Police Officer Derek Chauvin.

22. Deuteronomy 6:4-5; Mark 12:28-34.

23. Julia M. Speller, *Walkin’ the Talk: Keepin’ the Faith in Africentric Congregations* (Cleveland: The Pilgrim Press, 2005).

mineral resources of the land rather quickly gave excuse for the decimation, subordination, emiseration, and utter ruination of the indigenous peoples to whom the land belonged, the tribes of the Iroquois (including the Mohawk, Oneida, Onondaga, Cayuga, and Seneca peoples), the tribes of the Abenaki, including the Eastern and Western Abenaki and Kennebec peoples; and the tribes of the Anishinaabeg (including the Algonquin, Nipissing, Ojibwe, Mississaugas, Salteaux, Odawa, and Potawatomi peoples). In the southwest and southeast, a few generations before the Mayflower, the Spanish and Catholic conquistadores captured, slaughtered, and decimated the Pueblo, Apache, and Navajo peoples and the Cherokee, Choctaw, Chickasaw, Creek, and Seminole peoples respectively, with the guns and the diseases that they brought with them from Europe.²⁴

Still other people who came from Ireland, Moravia, Mongolia, China, Japan, Korea, Indonesia, India, Iran, Iraq, Pakistan, Syria, and other parts of the world to populate this fledgling, sprawling country have stories of flight from religious persecution and/or abject poverty from their countries of origin to a nation of promise, that had billed itself as the “New Jerusalem,” and like African Americans, have stories of ill-treatment, social ostracization, and economic debilitation. Some of them successfully assimilated into American culture and engage the African American community in solidarity, while others live in denial of the privileges that their tacit consent to the doctrine of white supremacy currently affords them.²⁵

These are the demonarchal conditions that I have to navigate as a Black woman of faith in a reality that I deeply experience as power and grace within me and beyond me, the Source of Creation, the Dynamic Cause of generative love and hope. I am compelled to bear witness to this Immanent/Transcendent Imminence, the very thing that makes me value love and hope, and I live in relationship to it every moment, fully aware of the grave injustices that my people have experienced and do experience. This is why I believe it is incumbent upon me to learn how other people are experiencing injustice as well. Good theology begins wherever the pain is, and not just mine.

As a spiritual eclectic, I am an ordained Christian minister and an ordained Buddhist Lama, fully authorized to teach in the Zen and Vajrayana traditions of Buddhism.²⁶ I have a natural and an

24. Cf. Laurelyn Whitt and Alan W. Clarke, *North American Genocides: Indigenous Nations, Settler Colonialism, and International Law* (Boston: Cambridge University Press, 2019).

25. In Chicago, the Inner-City Muslim Action Network (IMAN) is a positive example of solidarity-building between the Arabic-speaking Muslim-American community, the non-Arabic speaking Muslim community and the religiously diverse, primarily Christian African American community. Their self-description is “a community organization that fosters health, wellness, and healing in the inner-city by organizing for social change, cultivating the arts, and operating a holistic health center.” www.imacentral.org.

26. On 15 June 2021, my teacher, the Venerable Heiwa No Bushi (Peaceful Warrior), promoted me to the status of Lama in the OSHB (Order of the Sacred Human Being) of the BodhiChristo sangha. The BodhiChristo sangha affirms both Buddhist and Christian

As I sift my understanding of Black experience through the Abrahamic and Buddhist concepts of neighborliness and mindfulness, and through the dictum that a womanist “Loves herself. Regardless,” I learn to draw the circle of my concern ever wider, and, moreover, because of these insights from my Teachers, divine and human, I have learned never, ever to exclude myself from the circle of my concern.

abiding affinity for all religious and philosophical traditions that teach the values of reflexive love and neighborliness (another name for mindfulness), and that inculcate hope for an enlightened and redeemed cosmos. This, of course, includes my personal enlightenment and redemption, love and neighborliness coming from me and back to me simply because my Black womanish life matters in the grand scheme of things. Taking for granted, as my late mentor, James H. Cone taught, that Black experience is valid both as a source and a norm of doing theology²⁷ and taking his personal example of speaking truth to power as intrinsic to the vocation of a theologian. As I sift my understanding of Black experience through the Abrahamic and Buddhist concepts of neighborliness and mindfulness, and through the dictum that a womanist “Loves herself. Regardless,”²⁸ I learn to draw the circle of my concern ever wider, and, moreover, because of these insights from my Teachers, divine and human, I have learned never, ever to exclude myself from the circle of my concern.

To me, this prophetic, pastoral, and priestly posture toward the world of which I am an integral and indispensable part is the difference between love that is insipid, unaware, uninspiring, conditional, and perhaps rhetorical; and love that is great because it is historically aware or is willing to learn, aspires to neighborliness, and is accountable to a wider and wider swath of a well-beloved Creation. This sacramentality is the non-legalistic meaning of intersectionality. To me it comports with the great

identity simultaneously – spiritual eclecticism, or multiple religious belonging.

27. Cf. James H. Cone, *A Black Theology of Liberation*, 50th Anniversary Edition (Maryknoll: Orbis Books, 2020; first published in 1970).

28. Alice Walker, *In Search of Our Mothers' Gardens* (Orlando: Harcourt, Brace, Jovanovich, 1982), iii.

commandment found in the gospel of Mark: “You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, all your soul, all your mind and all your strength, and your neighbor as yourself.” As the Tao te Ching states, “Great means far reaching, return. Far-farther reaching, return. Far-far-farther reaching, return.” In other words, according to the powerful, wonderful ancient testimonies that I am here privileging, “The smaller the circle, the smaller the person.” The greater the circle, the greater the person. This is less about personality and more about fewer or greater possibilities a person, a community, a city, a state, or a nation may have to encounter wisdom, knowledge, genius, felicity, creativity, beauty, and beatitude in others. Surely this is what I have encountered in every place I have been in the world, likely because I expected to find these things in which I place my energy and faith, and why I believe all people of faith and goodwill must affirm that #BlackLivesMatter. But there is often a cognitive dissonance between what I expect from others and what others expect of me as a Black woman. These intersectional realities cohere in my existence and challenge me to live freely, truthfully and in authentic relationship, in bonafide connection to others.

None of us can afford the luxury of having historical amnesia, or be guilty of not realizing the importance of time and history as fractals, as part of our glorious and inglorious past, as part of our present, on the ground realities, and as part of our future, hoped for possibilities. Although we would much rather have faith in something grand and uplifting for, what happened in Portland, what happened in Kenosha, in Chicago and around the world is a clash of bodies and ideas about the past, about the all-too-familiar causes of our present groaning—Black death shrouded in injustice, in the ongoing trickle-down holocaust, in the midst of a voracious pandemic that has cost so many of us our lives and our loved ones’ lives. In any other context, the number of lives lost due to police and vigilante violence in addition to those unnecessarily lost to COVID-19 due to complications of racism would most certainly be called genocide. The genocidal intent of white supremacist policy in whatever systems it is found is that horrible reality against which Black and Brown people and our allies should maintain, in the words of Delores Williams, “a permanent posture of self-defense.”²⁹

Finally, the confrontations that have been happening all over the nation and world, that will continue happening, are most certainly about different subsets of humanity’s competing visions of the hoped-for future. If what we say about the future can only ever be speculative at best, why not speculate what we hope for? Rather than taking the time to articulate a beatific vision and actively working to make it so, many overtly religious people cannot even articulate what they hope for, we have taken as certainty the doom we can foresee in the rash of authoritarian, populist, xenophobic, jingoistic governments throughout the world, in climate change, in the lurking threat of all-out race war—even global thermonuclear

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war-based on the cultivation of demonic lies.

Religious people, in particular, who desire to be faithful to an idea or ideas about the Transcendent, need not only to understand our own stories but also other peoples’ stories and the relationship of their stories to the ecologies we have to navigate in our quotidian, or day to day, existence, in order to realize the relative merits—and demerits—of our religious posturing. One does not have to be religious to listen, but maybe one is already being spiritual in the act of listening. Taking the time to listen and to learn deeply from others’ stories is a place to start the process of becoming intersectional allies. We simply do not know enough—and may not even be aware that we do not know enough—about the people of Earth to dismiss their stories out of hand, as if they cannot tell us something wise or beneficial about what it means to be human, as if their circumambulation of the idea of God cannot save or enlighten us, their fellow journey men, journey women and journey folks; as if their creativity cannot delight us; as if their joy; as if their pain; as if their lives do not matter.

#BLACKLIVESMATTER.

29. Delores S. Williams, *Sisters in the Wilderness: The Challenge of Womanist God-Talk* (Maryknoll: Orbis, 1993).