

Solidarity Syllabus – March 2018

A New Vision of Safety

The March 2018 episode of *Solidarity Is This*, "[A New Vision of Safety](#)," is live! Host Deepa Iyer speaks with [Dante Barry](#), executive director of the [Million Hoodies Movement for Justice](#).

Gun Violence & Mass Criminalization

Schools:

Since the Sandy Hook shooting in 2014, there have been [63 fatal school shootings](#), in which 35 children and 5 adults were killed. In response, policymakers and schools often seek to increase security equipment and [police presence](#) in schools – measures which intensify the criminalization of [Black, Latinx](#), and [Native](#) students. More and more, schools are pushing students of color out of the classroom and into the juvenile justice system: a phenomenon called the [school-to-prison pipeline](#).

- Black students are [three times more likely](#) to be suspended or expelled than white students – and these disciplinary disparities start as early as [preschool](#).
- Black girls are the [fastest growing population](#) in the juvenile justice system. [Monique W. Morris](#) delves into this in [her book](#) *Pushout: The Criminalization of Black Girls in Schools*.

Police Brutality & Community Safety:

Systemic racism pervades in policing, and officers are [three times more likely](#) to use force against Black civilians than white ones. Police are also [disproportionately employed](#) in communities of color.

- In recent years, young black men were a staggering [21 times more likely](#) than white men to be killed in police encounters. [Nearly a quarter](#) of people killed by police are Black men, even though Black men only make up 6% of the population.

- According to the CDC, Native Americans are killed in police encounters at a [higher rate](#) than any other racial group, and these [deaths are underreported](#) in studies and media coverage.
- According to a 2013 report from the [Anti-Violence Project](#), transgender people of color were 6 times more likely to be the victims of police violence than their white cisgender counterparts.

Narrative-Building = Power

Dante Barry asks: How do we open up a new vision about what safety could look like? He talks about an exercise that he walks people through to help answer this question.

Imagine what makes you feel safe. Close your eyes and think: Where are you? Who are you with? What does it sound like? What is your emotional, sensory experience of feeling safe? What comes to mind? Food, shelter, employment, family? Raise your hand if police, prisons, or surveillance come into your mind.

This exercise opens up new questions: Why does society equate safety with policing, guns, and detention centers? How do we begin to reorient our institutions in a way that actually creates safety and peace of mind?

Solutions

- Safety Beyond Policing: [Investing in community services](#) like transportation, workforce development and access to mental healthcare helps strengthen communities and “repair the damage of mass criminalization.”
- The Community Justice Reform Coalition explains different evidence-based, [proven strategies](#) to empower communities of color and decrease systemic violence by practicing transformative justice, re-investing in communities, and taking a public health approach to gun violence.
- [#NoCopsNoGuns](#) in Schools: As an alternative to zero-tolerance policies and [increased policing](#), schools should invest in [restorative justice](#) frameworks and [end the presence](#) of law enforcement in schools.

Readings: Racial Solidarity in the Movement to End Gun Violence

"Why It Hurts When the World Loves Everyone but Us" – [Janaya Khan](#) in The Root.
– *"Why was it so easy to support the Parkland youths when the youths in the Movement for Black Lives were repudiated and disregarded?"*

"Any March for Our Lives Must Include Kids Like Trayvon Martin" – [Dante Barry](#) in HuffPost.

"What Happens When You Put Young People of Color at the Center of #NeverAgain" – [Lori Bezahler](#) in The Nation.

Community Organizations & Resources

[Freedom Cities](#) seeks to make cities and neighborhoods safe and healthy for all oppressed groups with a comprehensive platform for community justice.

[Dignity in Schools](#) and [The Advancement Project](#) are working to end the school-to-prison pipeline and mass criminalization through community-based solutions.

[Desis Rising Up and Moving](#) (DRUM) in New York City and [Dream Defenders](#) in Florida are local, multigenerational movements focused on [building community safety](#) and ending the [epidemic of police brutality](#).

Solidarity Practice for the Month

March is [Dalit History Month](#) – a "participatory radical history project dedicated to sharing the contributions and resistance of Dalits everywhere." Follow along on [Facebook](#) or Twitter with the hashtag [#DalitHistory](#), and check out this [survey from Equality Labs](#) about the types and rates of caste discrimination in the United States.