

# Is Lip Service All You Offer?

*Kamaria Washington, a third-year DPT student, first performed this piece as a spoken-word presentation at the student-led IHP Black Lives Matter vigil in June.*

Let's start this piece off with what it won't be  
Let me make it clear that this won't be a heart on my sleeves  
Ed Hardy plea  
It won't be a retelling of how, when, or where black bodies were murdered  
...Black bodies are still being murdered...  
It won't be an education piece of why I am angry, distracted, full of sorrow, and distant  
Per my last e-mail, we have educated enough  
Gotten degrees in illustrating our pain only to have our pages of history and life be met with blind eyes that ask for an audio book instead  
It's easier to listen to our cries when you don't have to stop carrying on with your own lies  
I mean, LIVES  
Let me make it clear that this won't be a stone thrown at my community for burning down whatever they see in sight...  
Let me say it again for those who just clutched their pearls of privilege and had their faces flush with fright.  
This won't be a stone thrown at my community for burning down whatever they see in sight...  
He who is without sin should cast the first stone  
Confess the burning of your torches when you stole this land and the cop cars you set on fire and blamed on protestors before you bloody the white angel costume you try to parade in.  
This won't be, AND NEVER SHOULD BE, an instruction manual on how people of color should heal  
Or process  
When did it ever become someone else's business to manage the survival tactics of others  
We  
Are not the bosses of others' strategies for perseverance  
We  
Are not the authorities over personal laws of making it to see another day  
This is not another blanket statement provided when asked "How are you doing today?"  
  
This is not another hashtag.  
Another awareness post



Kamaria Washington, DPT '21

Another black screen to black out your timeline  
Another reminder that all lives won't matter until black ones do  
This is not another well-intentioned prayer from praying hands that aren't dirtied from doing the work  
This is not a provision of space for comfort nor passivity  
We have coddled, double tapped, and exercised our thumbs with mindless scrolling long enough  
  
This is a call for ACTION...  
This is a call for ACTION!  
Night lights and body cameras didn't stop the action  
Lights, camera, action  
We are still performing our daily tasks with hands up to prevent bullet for black life transactions  
This is a push to the polls  
November the 3rd  
Write it down  
Take a friend, or an elder, or your neighbor  
Anyone over 18  
This is a restructuring of power systems  
An amplification of melanated voices that have been, and always will be, about resistance  
This is a revamping of our curriculums;  
How can we push an education onto black and brown bodies that don't see themselves reflected in it?  
This is an outline for reform  
Scrap the blueprint norm  
We see more of our men in cages for petty crimes

More than we see them crossing capitalist stages for clever coveted rhymes.  
This is a strong whip to the back of mass incarceration.  
Y'all might not like this one  
But this is a push-back on "12" and its head lock on liberation  
I believe in GOOD cops just like I believe in BAD systems  
We have a better chance of survival if we DEFUND this system  
The safest communities don't have the most cops;  
They have the most resources  
Reallocate our dollars to our needs  
If we all take a stand we can demand no longer using our necks to take a knee  
  
I'll Campaign til the timer reaches Zero  
Black Life my Matter until the streets can stop burying heroes  
I will Know My Rights from my wrongs like Camps and Kaepernicks  
Reclaim the Block and house the people they kept from it  
Color of Change, color of fight  
Color of God, color our politicians to engage in our plight  
I will keep adding my efforts to this work until it Equals Justice in every Initiative  
They will censor our words and label them as promiscuous  
This is a conviction for ANTI-RACISM, instead of not being a demonstrator of racism  
Know the difference.  
If you watch a fellow gardener plant a seed...  
Actually, no...  
If you watch a fellow gardener RIP a flower from its native ground and transplant it in soil that has no nutrients for it to breathe and you swear you'd never treat a flower like that a day in your life...  
Doesn't the flower still die?  
  
See, this is a statement for intervention  
A call for more disruptors of the soil  
For those who will make sure every flower has room and right to breathe  
There are no sidelines when bodies are being chalk outlined  
This is a reimagining of the future  
A plan to make sure there are still black people in it  
This is the work  
This is and always should be OUR work.  
So miss me with the thoughtless double taps and the complacency of your sympathy  
This is a call for ACTION!