

George Floyd, May 25, 2020

The death of George Floyd in May 2020 was a pivot point, where I deeply reflected on how best could I be in solidarity with this movement. I could not physically protest and demonstrate as many of my students were journaling, narrating and sharing via my three online “Crime and Punishment: U.S. History” classes at John Jay and Lehman College (CUNY) here in NYC; because I was and still am, the primary caregiver for my Mom. So while my soul longed to struggle, fight and journey alongside the likes of John Lewis and Ida B Wells my physical form was a prisoner of sorts, safe and sound at home.

In a flash of inspiration, I decided to e-mail my Humanities Department Chair, Dr Williams at Westchester Community College (WCC) SUNY with a humble request that if possible, in light of the current state of affairs, I would very much like to be given the opportunity to design and teach an online asynchronous African American history class in addition to the Caribbean History class that I currently teach online. I promised myself that it would be the best curriculum to date that I could design and implement. This is one of the sources I had to include:

<https://interactive.aljazeera.com/aje/2020/know-their-names/index.html>. I also reached out to Kevin Richardson (from the Exonerated Five) who coincidentally I met f2f last year in NJ seeking his perspective and insights.

Dr Williams graciously acquiesced and for Fall 2020 I have been teaching the following: AFRICAN AMERICAN HISTORY FROM 1865: Topics in Modern African American History "The Origins of Black Lives Matter - a history of black social activism". *Course Description:* The Black Lives Matter movement began in 2013 as a way of addressing racial inequality in America in the 21st Century.