

Opinion: Hashtags add salt to the wound

Posted by [Jacqui Atkielski](#) On 07/07/2016

HOLLYWOOD, MD - Hashtag this, hashtag that. What does the message matter if there is no appropriate action behind it? Cop lives, black lives, all lives really do matter.

The general message behind "All Lives Matter" will not be true until the population can agree to treat others with respect, online and face to face.

I can't ask you to love your neighbor. I have a difficult time loving others, but I try my best to stand and watch life from their camp, to understand their perspective.

Why aren't we standing together, to unite for the cause of equal justice for all?

I'm tired of watching black people being mistreated and dying for no better reason than the cops look like they have overreacted in short video clips. I'm tired of cops being painted as villains. We see the climax and the aftermath of these recorded stories, and not the inciting actions that led to the recording.

Until we choose to unite, we will continue to live divided where it is acceptable to watch men like [Alton Sterling](#) and [Philando Castile](#) are murdered repeatedly like a sick reality horror show. We watch in disbelief that men in uniform commit the recorded heinous acts over and over again.

Families on both sides of the gun hurt because of the recorded incidents, the miscommunication and rash decisions. Nobody deserves to watch their loved ones kill or be killed.

Videos of cops and the black community getting caught up in the wrong are far more popular than those people doing the right thing. Being pillars of their community, being loving parents. All we see is the struggle on the ground, the blood seeping and bubbling from victims, and screaming heartbreak. The hashtags add salt to the wound created when the incidents occur.

We shouldn't need the hashtags to understand that we have to stand together, unite despite the differences, to protect and help one another. Starting small, like teaching children to look past race, or treating others with respect, would be better than sitting back and watching the world go to hell.

I don't want to believe that any cop is capable of letting personal prejudice get in the way of their professional decisions. They are the people I want to turn to when I cannot defend myself.

I want to believe the majority of the black community are just good people, trying to survive in a world where it is acceptable to assume criminal activity based on the color of a person's skin. That's a reality I can never relate to, try as I might.

Real people with families, friends and jobs are in the streets, almost at war with each other. And people continue to stand back with wagging fingers and clucking tongues, saying how things would be different if only this or that. Their hashtags have no actions behind them.

Personal judgments will happen regardless of how much it is preached against. I judge people, but I keep my mouth shut and my actions logical. I smile at everyone and treat them all with respect, because everyone had their struggles. I have no right to treat people poorly just because of an assumption, and neither should anyone else.

Respect for the lives involved in these situations, for both the alleged criminal and the law enforcement official, would go a long way to prevent these terrible incidents from happening.

Instead of relying on hashtags, commit acts of kindness. Treat others with respect, even if they haven't earned it. It'll do more more good than picking a side of the hashtag wars.

I've had my say, now what's yours? Let's share.

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