

Why are people in America rioting?



Courtesy Shirien Damra

The News: There are mass protests and curfews across America. People from 30 cities are marching in the streets, parks, squares and plazas demanding justice. While the demonstrations started peacefully, some have become violent. People have clashed with police officials and some have broken store windows and even stolen items from inside. Several US cities have imposed curfews to try to cut down the violence.



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Why are so many Americans protesting? They want justice for a black man named George Floyd, and equality in treatment for black people. They want an end to racial inequality and injustice.

What is racism? When people who look or speak different than the majority are treated poorly because of the colour of their skin, language, culture, or where they person were born. **Racism has existed throughout human history.**

What happened to George Floyd? Floyd a resident of Minneapolis, Minnesota, was arrested on May 25, 2020. The cops thought Floyd had used a fake (counterfeit) \$20 bill at a store. He was unarmed. They held him down on the ground, and one officer pressed his knee on Floyd's neck. Although Floyd said he couldn't breathe, the police officer didn't listen and Floyd died shortly after.

Have the police been punished? Four police officers were present when this happened. They were all fired from their jobs the next day. The policeman with his knee on Floyd's neck was taken into custody and charged for murder.

People don't think this is punishment is enough. Why? People aren't only speaking up for George Floyd but for better treatment for all Black Americans.

The truth of the matter is George Floyd is not the only unarmed black person to die in an interaction with the police. The US newspaper *The Washington Post* has been tracking police shootings since 2015. It reports that the police have killed at least 98 unarmed black men between 2015 to 2019. Police are more likely to question or arrest a person of colour, especially black men.

People are angry and frustrated and are calling to end police violence and white violence against black people. The movement has taken the world by storm, especially at this time where the coronavirus pandemic has brought other inequalities glaringly to the surface. Where those with access to money, a health system and houses to isolate themselves in are faring much better than those without. In addition, in this year of the US Presidential election, American President Donald Trump has also been behaving in an insensitive manner, and has been causing a lot of controversy. Many frustrations are being acted out on the streets of America today.

Citizens of all races, businesses leaders and celebrities are coming out to stand in solidarity with the Black Community and

their demands for equal justice. Here is Nike's new post that has struck a chord with many!



Let's all be part of the change. #UntilWeAllWin

A post shared by Nike (@nike) on May 29, 2020 at 3:50pm PDT

Book Recommendation: "The Hate U Give" By Angie Thomas

Age: 13 years plus. This best-selling young adult novel casts a spotlight on racism and police brutality.