



postscript

G E O R G E
F L O Y D
8 : 4 6
S I L E N C E
IS VIOLENCE

Dear Derek Chauvin's knee,

You have been blamed for cutting off the air of George Floyd, of leaning on his neck while he begged for breath and his mother, and Derek Chauvin now stands accused of murder in the second degree. We are now entering the third week of growing protests to what your uninterrupted eight minutes and forty six seconds mean in this country, the long minutes of "I can't breathe I can't breathe" ignored by Derek Chauvin and three officers who didn't stop you from Floyd's neck as bystanders said you're killing him you've probably killed him get off do something, a kneeling that would later call to mind Colin Kaepernick's knee protesting uninterrupted brutality of police that absurdly and eventually lost Kaepernick his job after the President said Get that son of a bitch off the field right now he's fired, and later, Derek Chauvin's knee, after you stopped George Floyd's breath, the President and his approving 42% angrily decried movement on the streets saying Why can't you protest peacefully, and the protesters say to the police but also to you, I can't breathe.

I learned about unarmed Michael Stewart being strangled by transit police who were acquitted of his absurd murder. I learned about unarmed Amadou Diallo who was caught in a hailstorm of 42 bullets by police acquitted of his absurd murder. I learned about woodcarver John Williams who was shot multiple times by police never charged with his absurd murder. I learned about unarmed teenager Trayvon Martin shot by neighborhood watch who was acquitted of his absurd murder. I learned about unarmed boy Tamir Rice who was shot playing in a playground by police who were cleared of his absurd murder. I learned about unarmed hands-up Michael Brown who was shot six times by police who was acquitted of his absurd murder. I learned about handcuffed Freddie Gray who died from a rough ride delivered by police who were acquitted of his absurd murder. I learned about armed but not reaching Philando Castile who was shot seven times by police who was acquitted of his absurd murder. I learned about unarmed Charleena Lyles shot in her apartment by the very police she called and who were then cleared of her absurd murder. I learned about unarmed Botham Jean who was shot in his apartment by police who at last was charged with his absurd murder. I learned about unarmed Breonna Taylor who was shot in her apartment by police in a no-knock midnight raid under current investigation. And I learned about unarmed Eric Garner who begged the same fucking thing we heard six years later from George Floyd when police didn't let up and killed him and who were never indicted for his absurd murder, even after he said, and George Floyd said, and thousands and thousands and thousands of African Americans on the streets begging for air said, I can't breathe.

That was you on George Floyd. That was my knee on America's neck, for far longer than eight minutes and forty six seconds, Black America gagging as I did and said nothing.



Police brutality, echos of Nazis...
DEFUND THE POLICE.
Allocate funds to help people.

'LIGHTS' CAME OUT PRIOR TO GEORGE FLOYD & THE GLOBAL PROTESTS, AT THE RISK OF AN UPTICK IN COVID CASES. THIS POSTSCRIPT IS FOR THE INCLUSION OF THIS HISTORICAL MOMENT, AS WELL AS BECAUSE SILENCE IS COMPLICIT.

Masked protestors appear as metaphor, that the citizens of the world can't / won't breathe this toxic air anymore. AWARE OF OUR BREATH, AS WE BREATHE LESS COMFORTABLY THROUGH MASKS, NO ONE HAS THE RIGHT TO TAKE OUR BREATH—OUR LIFE—AWAY. PROTESTING WITH MASKS, A SLIGHT VISCERAL REMINDER OF GEORGE FLOYD'S PLEAS FOR HIS OWN. The world-wide quarantine, brought on in large part by our destruction of forests, was the pause that jarred us out of our lives. Covid-19 stopped the noise of busy routines and made us take note of spikes ripping our canvas, spikes we weren't paying close enough attention to. Never again!

RACISM IS UNDENIABLY A PUBLIC HEALTH ISSUE (APHA'S GEORGES BENJAMIN IN POPULAR SCIENCE)

At the end of the *The Two Popes*, during a montage of speeches around the globe, the new Pope says: "We become used to the suffering of others...I don't have anything to do with it.

It must be someone else. Certainly, not me.

When no one is to blame,
everyone is to blame."

My grandfather used to say,

"We are all equal. No one is above me, and I am above no one else."

My grandparents were Holocaust survivors from Poland.

My father was born at the end of the war, in Russia and spent his first five years in a displaced persons camp in Germany before taking a boat to America. His first language was Yiddish, and he had yet to learn English when he began attending a South Beach, Miami elementary school. He felt embarrassed to be dressed differently in European short pants and shoes. However, he wondered why everyone was speaking gibberish and didn't make sense, unlike himself. Yet, he couldn't be more proud to be an American. This sentiment is both sweet and sad. How proud can we be that this is our America? May our children and the following generations do better than we have. And yet, we can be proud of the positive movement and change, to know that most people want to work towards a more just, equal, accepting, healthier world.

I am dedicating this last section to my family. I didn't mean to, it just happened that way. My father and Aunt Donna Slotsky sometimes remind us of a principle of Judaism, **TIKKUN OLAM**, a Hebrew phrase that means **TO REPAIR THE WORLD**.

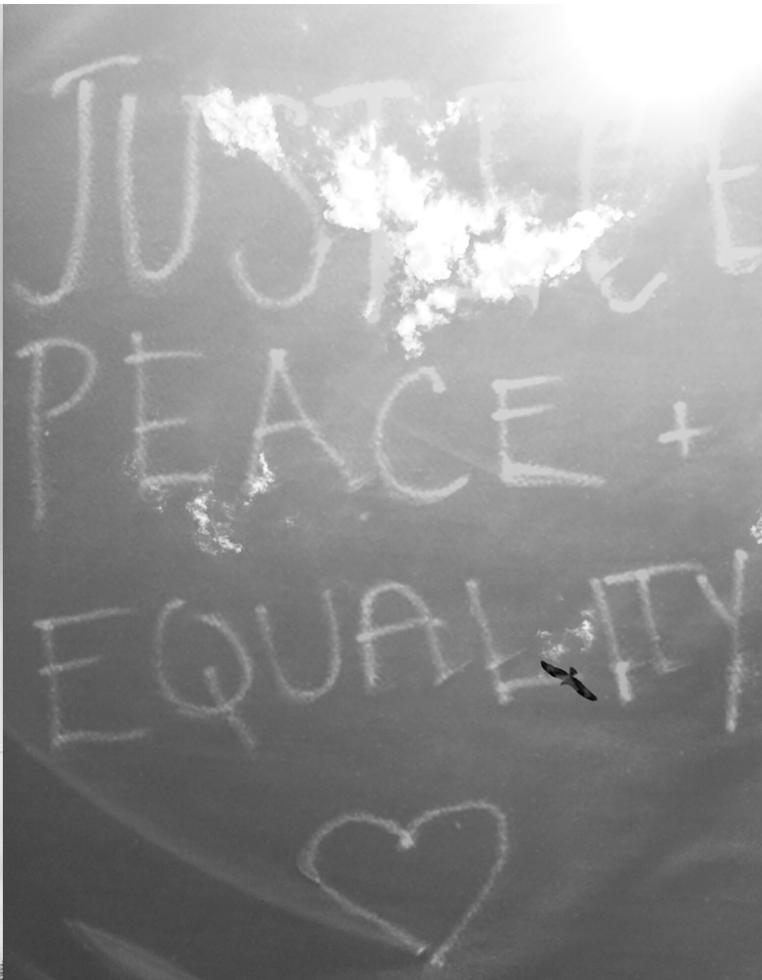
The other day, my Dad, Barry Grosskopf, said a feeling I have had as well before, however in different words, *"mother nature made this world so beautiful and gave us an appreciation for aesthetics, to give us some graciousness. Covid was like a slap from nature, [like flicking fleas off herself as he demonstrated], that if we don't do something, in 20-30-100 years, humidity could be at 90 percent, temps at 95—most of us can't survive that... [And] Trump was the catalyst for this, bringing out the ugliest of white supremacy that came out in full force with his backing. The police have been acting like a gang, by having each other's backs."*



Trump and his people are 'LIKE' a mafia family. Can we please have more liberals in positions of power forever? The polarism is exhausting and often progress-defeating. My parents and their friends were/are peace and equal rights activists. It's how I grew up.

I love this picture recently sent to me of my Mom, Myrna Grosskopf, later to come out as lesbian and became a public defender (1945-1990), flipping the bird. I'm giving this to the cops, to bigotry, to an unfair economic and justice system, to the white-supremacists, neo-nazis, to the billionaires not sharing their wealth, to our life and nature-threatening economy and medical system that is fueled by money before people, wildlife and the planet; and to

the lack of massive policy reforms that have yet to be made, that would ensure the environmental protection absolutely necessary right now and for the future. For a few years, I thought it would take a revolution, pressure has been building from every angle of society and millions of people are on the same page. This is the beginning. We need a grand remodel! All the infrastructure and every room in the house. It's time for an upgrade.



My hand written protest-shirt against Lincoln Park's sky.

My daughter, Maude,
protesting & cheering for
BLACK LIVES MATTER

Feminist from day one, of her own accord, and a love for Martin Luther King, Jr.,
there is no doubt that we can continue the efforts to repair the world with heartfelt,
peaceful care, as she unintentionally is symbolizing here.

EXCERPT FROM:

**SPEAK TO THE MOUNTAIN,
THE TOMMY WAITES STORY
AS TOLD BY DR. BESSIE W. BLAKE,
PLEASUREBOATSTUDIO.COM**

FROM THE INSIDE FLAP:

"Tommie's journey of endurance and ultimate victory over poverty, sickness, racism, sexism and the abusive relationship of an alcoholic husband, coupled with her stamina to sustain a vital ministry into the new millennium, is a testament to the resilience of the human spirit. Her story inspires the hopeless and strengthens the faithful as she reminds us to rise above our circumstances.... I am happy to endorse *Speak to the Mountain*.... Read this book. Your spirit will soar and you too will be encouraged to stand against the odds."

-from the Foreword by Gordon Parks

I imagine you know the story of the widow woman. It's in the eighteenth chapter of Luke starting at the first verse. You can go and read it for yourself, but I want to speak in plain English and make her story relevant to us today:

The widow woman went before an unjust judge and asked him to do something about her adversary. He was going to ignore her, but she persisted in going to him. We don't know if he was harsh in his tone with her. We do know, however, that he did not help her. She didn't give up though. She kept returning with her request: "I want you to do something about my adversary."

...

"Ma'am, what you waiting on?"

"Oh, the judge is going to avenge me of my adversary today."

"Well, you've been coming everyday and he hasn't done anything."

"Yeah, but he is going to do it today."

Sometimes, we have to get positive about what we want from the Lord. On her first trip to the judge, she might have said, "I came to see if he can avenge me." Next day, maybe it was, "I sure hope he can get to me today." However, that last day she came in with boldness, "The judge IS going to avenge me of my adversary today."

When we ask God for something, we are supposed to ask with a positive attitude...Finally the judge got tired of his aide coming in to report, "The little widow is back out there."

"You mean that woman came back? She's been here all these days? She must be crazy. Well, I will have to do something 'cause she's worrying me. She's getting on my nerves." She didn't care about getting on his nerves. All she wanted was justice.

More of us need to be like the widow woman: don't give up and don't let the devil upset us; all he has to work with is fear. We need to resist the devil and overcome the evil we encounter...

Some of us never would have gotten restitution because we would have been too busy getting the judge told. Not the little widow woman! She didn't mind being ignored. She waited confidently on the judge to do his job. We're too quick to throw up our hands but that woman was patient and persistent and that's what it is going to take for us. If we want to make heaven our home, we must be patient and persistent. Regardless to who gives up...a parable to this end, that men ought always to pray, and not to faint.

In other words, don't give up. Have faith.

Some of us might not relate to the prayer idea, but the message is potent from this ancestor of slaves, a foundational element to this country, after the annihilation of Native Americans, currently shaking its roots from old, hardened ground. Periods of history bring fierce fights or revolution, but every step towards human rights is a step in the right direction.

**B L A C K
L I V E S
M A T T E R**