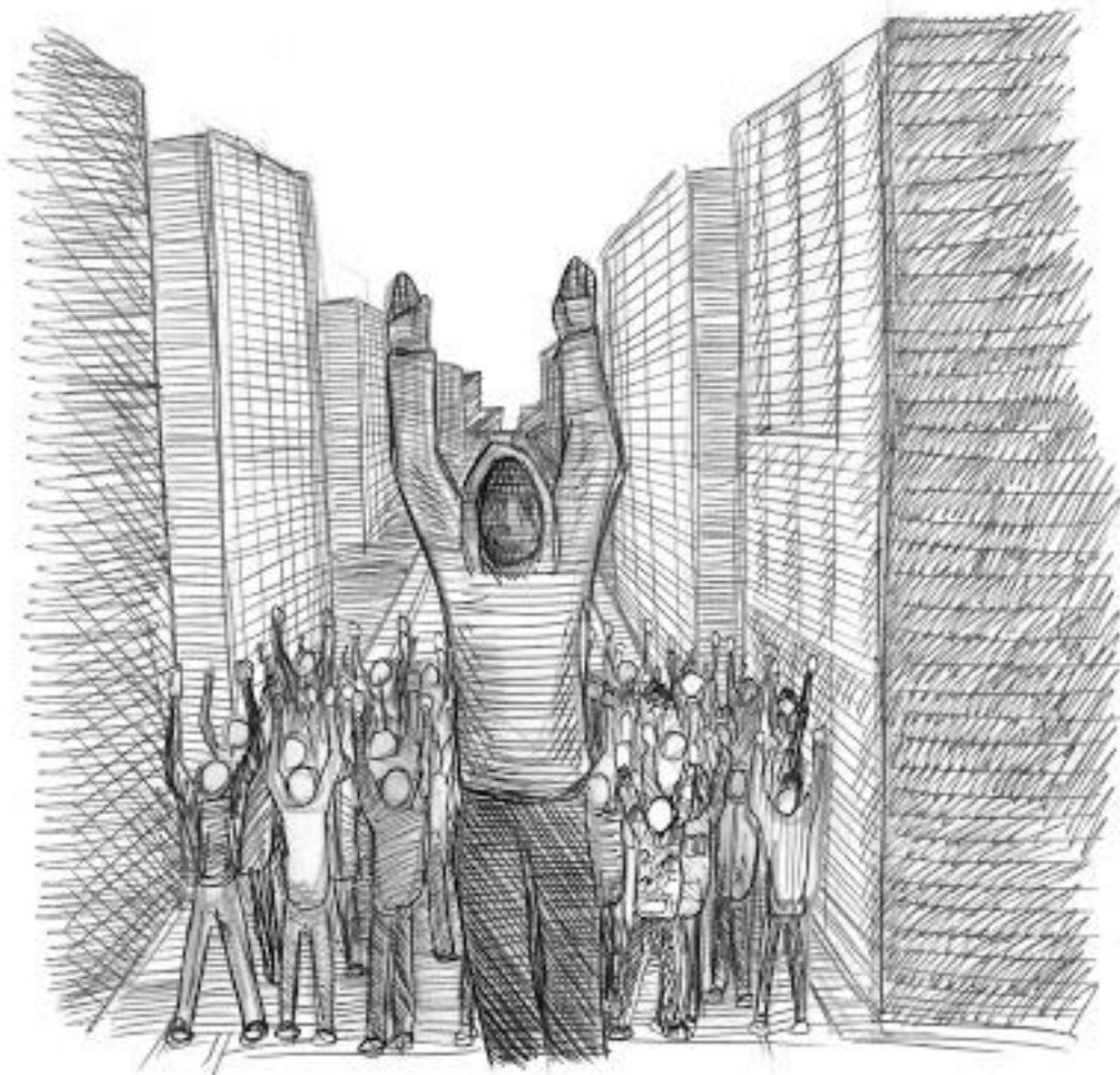


# Stone's Throw



## The Ferguson Issue

Issue #2

December 2014

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### "The Ferguson Issue"

#### Contributing Poets

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Stone's Throw #2

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# Introduction

My thanks to everyone who contributed to this issue. Particularly cover artist Adric Giles and the poet who introduced me to him, DiDi Delgado, who also introduced me to a number of poets who are part of this issue. There is good a reason she is in here twice. Rest assured you will see her in this journal again, though maybe in a different capacity.

Furthermore, there's a good reason everyone's work is in this journal.

Maybe it's the false security blanket of not having George W. Bush in the white house, but I have mostly shied away from directly political poems for a long time. In this age of copying, reblogging and reimagining preexisting work ad infinitum, to actually think you could create something new and then attempt it seemed to me the most political act you could accomplish.

When Michael Brown was killed in Ferguson, Missouri, the poetry world was bombarded with the reactions of countless poets, the likes of which I haven't seen since before the U.S. invaded Iraq in 2003. This was accompanied by a passionate display of activism I haven't seen since the 2000 elections.

Such energy is inspiring, contagious and shouldn't go undocumented.

As a venue host and editor, I've tried to gather as much of this important work for as possible as large an audience as I can gather. What you'll read here is just a small time-capsule sized sample of work that's worth discovering now.

—*Chad Parenteau*

## Cracked Candles

streets on fire  
my people lit up the world  
oppression burnin down  
change rising up out the smoke

better days blaze ahead son  
matchbox prayers finally struck home  
hellfire engulfs united injustice  
revolution ignited for all

let everyone witness  
just how HOT we are

dying hearts rekindled  
embers evolved

COAL BLACK DIVINE SPARK  
you'll never put an eternal light out

so they boarded up their windows  
and we still shinin through dark times

hate on our flames all day

dusted minds  
still wanna be like us  
except without any ashiness

can't help  
my knees, elbows, hands, feet  
rough, rubbed raw

been strugglin for freedom  
since I was kickin in mama's womb

brotha minors  
judged with full grown gavels

every action  
misunderstood as ghetto evil

threatened by living proof  
of the one's who've had enough

NO  
won't be calm  
not until y'all stop  
this violent madness patrol

Where is the Love?

—*Secret Genius*

## He Be Black (Michael Brown)

He be black  
he be 18  
he be alive  
he be loved  
He be innocent  
he be intentionally ripped away from the be all you can be  
he be almost going to college  
But almost don't count  
when his  
killer of hope and life and all possibilities  
Be police officer  
Be races  
Be hater  
Be one that lack patience, lack understanding  
and lack the ability to be a hero  
and the wisdom to protect and serve  
he be murderer that shot and killed 18 yr old black male  
I want to know did he not think Michael brown had parents  
Or did he just not think  
Not think  
That his action would leave parent broken  
Making their torn hearts the highlight  
Of CNN News  
Parent be what the fuck  
Parents be crying  
Parents be in pain  
Parents be devastated  
Parents be burying 18 yr old son  
Police officer hate is what you sleep with at night  
and Fear is what fuels your heart  
But I learned one hates only what one fear  
And police officer you build up an enormous amount of fear for 18 yr old black males  
Walking down streets not on sidewalks talking and smiling  
About favorite foods, sports and video games  
perhaps how good it feels to be

A 18 yr old black male graduated from  
High School and on his way to college  
Coward I mean police Office  
Did you know 18 yr old black males fear guns  
The type of guns you carry  
Shoot shoot shoot shoot shoot shoot  
Police officer  
you be shooting 18 yr old black male  
Did you not think he mattered  
or did you just not think how  
He be black, he be 18  
He be innocent  
He be a live  
he be loved  
He be murdered  
By you police officer  
he be taken to soon  
He be dead lying in the street for hours  
He be Michael Brown  
and now we be fighting for Justice for Him

—*Navah the Buddaphliiii*

## A Start

The most haunting phrase I've heard is  
"history repeats itself"  
We have seen it with voting rights  
We have seen it with wars  
But we seem to forget the wars happening today  
Happening here  
We are still repeating history  
Whether it be centuries  
Decades  
Even hours

Every 28 hours an unarmed person of color is killed by police  
Recently, many people can spit this factoid  
And they say they're annoyed  
But why are people still dying?

I heard that gunfire rings as if it owns the city  
That disparities are distributed like germs  
I heard the air is made of tear gas and mace  
That there is no space for those cries to be heard  
But people are screaming louder than ever

As voices finally raise  
They lift others with them  
Flooding the streets that have been flooded with blood

I heard the majority white police force rules a majority  
non-white community  
They have tear gas and tanks  
They once beat a man and sued him for destroying government  
property  
Because his blood got on their uniforms

They have attacked people  
Shot people  
Who did not pose a threat  
Yet it is still said that the shooting was defense

Even when a young man holds his hands in the air  
The police take this as an open door to his body  
Crashing through it with bullets

Silenced screams have come to the surface  
Joined by a chorus of supporters  
But people forget there are more untold stories

Mangled bodies  
Stinging eyes  
Suffocating on chemicals

But we can destroy the chains  
It takes one voice to raise the volumes of others  
One body rising joins hands that join hands that join hands

The greatest lesson we can learn from history is  
We need to start learning from history

—*Rachel Copans*

## **A Trial by the Fire**

Another night.  
Another fire.  
Violence.  
Gunshots.  
Blazing embers.  
Remembering  
when we were unified  
together.

The streets are on fire in Ferguson.  
Broken hearts and backs batoned.  
Peaceful protests, long gone.

Running gasoline in the streets.  
Hard to be.  
Hard to leave.  
Hard to believe.  
Hard to see.  
Freedom leaving Ferguson.

Freedom already went  
when the sentence  
didn't make sense  
and the guilty set free.  
Just us, know the truth  
Lady justice is blind.

A murder in Ferguson.  
No justice.

Remember  
Michael Brown.

The burned down buildings  
will be a reminder.

That Justice has left the city screaming  
And no one knows where to find her.

Worried that the ruling  
gas made justice blinder.  
Definitely lost a lot of hope  
in a trial by the fire.

In the smoke I see fleeing angels  
and hear them sing hymns.  
Tears cried in the cathedrals.  
Prayers in the streets for the victims.

Please  
deliver us from evil.

We need shovels in Buffalo  
And healing in the streets of Ferguson

prayers of hope and  
heal the hearts  
of those broken.

Heal those wounds left open  
in the freezing winter weather.  
Lets unify  
and build.

Build the broken  
in Ferguson.

We need to rebuild  
together.

—*Jason Wright*

## **A War of My Own :**

*Poem from "Staying on 94: Tales from a Misguided Soul"*

I don't need to go to Iraq, when I'm in a war of my own  
Watching a new dream here be shattered with chrome  
Going on is all of this shit that we can't condone  
Yet there's a Judas in every crew,  
And it's worse when you're alone.  
How are we going to accept these visuals, influencing intellectuals?  
Who think we're a bunch of animals, because of some individuals?  
This is critical, people not wanting to hear any of the spirituals  
And men aren't loving our women; much rather these  
Materials.  
See on this side, we're gentrified and don't feel saved.  
chains around my neck and wrist, I'm the new America slave.  
Rivals amongst my group and with others  
Yet how are we enemies and we're suppose to be brothers  
And why are we hitting our women? Aren't we supposed to be lovers?  
Have we really stooped down to disgracing our mothers?

Before that, my ancestors were being whipped on their back  
Even that wasn't me; I can still feel that blood from the stripped skin  
Off my Back.  
I can still feel the pain and the scars are not done  
I'm Kunta in my own way, trying to run for freedom  
But there is none. Everywhere I go there are dead ends and roadblocks  
"The others" going through walls when they Milwaukee,  
And "Buck" shots.  
They're quick to catch Kobe but not the murders of Biggie and Pac  
By this you can find out who's in and who's not  
And these same people planned for me to follow in their Path  
With my light skin, but I can't follow in their path 'cause of my past  
So under my eyes are bags while my fathers wore rags  
And they still get mad because I stay glad  
Then they wonder why we get stuck in the system  
Live and die by the system, get screwed by the system  
So we say fuck "your" system

I've already been handed a "hood" death sentence  
I don't need to be retold with a judge and jury in my presence.  
See sometimes tv convincing but if i'm not me,  
I have Latin people, Asian people, and even White people  
Who want to be me.

Is there something they see that I'm just blind to?  
Or is it because they're getting tired of being viewed?  
See you want to get mad when I call most of these authorities thieves  
But don't forget you stole me and this land you call "the free"  
So lets get this straight this isn't the land of the free  
This is the land of the prison and  
legal criminals and I can't leave  
Where I can't breathe in the truth, just inhale lies  
outside see the facade, swarming to this rotting country like flies  
But I don't like them taking what's mine  
Is that the capitalist in me, or a part of me conditioned to die  
I can't decide, but I need to stop complaining about me  
Because there are immigrants that want to be  
Where I be.

—*D. Ruff*

## After

Grand Jury preannounce  
carries soundtrack swell.

Klans of Twitters tweet  
sweet for satellite sweeps

eyeing outrage preset  
to flame. Here we go!

Herald chimes Boston  
quiet in wake of hearing.

I sleep too soon in silence  
leave oven on.

Girlfriend wakes in time  
douses hell's white heat.

Next to section eight housing  
where fireworks snap you to sleep

from June to October  
sleep uncrackled.

dream averted wake  
three families claimed

armchair aristocrats  
deeming neighbors animal

us patron saints status quo  
Boston little less quiet.

—*Chad Parenteau*

## Pennies

Throw us in the change bucket.  
Let us clink together and jingle jangle  
until our copper scent wafts  
to the nostrils of your morals,  
straight from the bottom.  
You rub us the wrong way.  
Mad because you brought us here naked  
clothed and made us civilized,  
Our sagging pants defy you dude?  
Daquan and them's just trying to find  
The courage to bring that fad back  
You keep us bottom of bags  
You let crumbs collect around our heads,  
all of your bullshit suffocating the fuck  
out of our worth, until you need us...  
need to breed us to be entertained,  
we corner store candy to your gluttonous feasts,  
We Boston Arizona Iced Tea Parties  
We Ferguson Skittles scattered on concrete after  
Whatever happened at a convenience store.  
We "good parts" of  
Roxbury, Dorchester and Mattapan,  
why I need to explain to my white friends  
that I'm the same type of black  
as those who who stand  
on hood corners and sling,  
you ever been slung?  
We ain't never been skiing.  
You need us to pacify  
your soul's cleanliness with God  
when the homeless woman asks you  
for spare change and you spare her  
Your "I did something good starter package"  
you hand her 25 of us with the lint  
and empty gum rappers

from forgotten corners in your pocket ....  
You need us to get by,  
To get through tolls,  
pay exact change on what something costs.  
Money is money honey, you say.  
All lives matter, you say.  
When's the last time you paid your rent in pennies?  
Our high numbers are worth more  
than your weight in a stack of dollar dollar bills ya'll  
but somewhere down the line  
somebody told us we something we ain't  
That we something to hate  
Something to fear  
That we should aspire to be something else  
Look like, act like, you "talk white"  
My skin say you lying to feel comfortable  
your privilege is suffocating you  
why you twerking, tanning and talken bout  
who's yo' nigga...  
when the truth is  
not even niggas  
wanna be niggas.  
See we got Indian in our family.  
If all lives matter  
then you won't mind  
if I move in with you right?  
The South End was our home  
but your greed got the best of you.  
You MAD about METCO  
Bout how we bussing these kids  
out of the ghetto  
The same kind of mad when Boston  
desegregated the schools  
We want our kids to live a better life  
but you laugh and point  
Say... we still monkeys  
But monkey see what monkey do  
that's why when this monkey see

what your monkey ass do,  
I do it better than you  
I make it fresher than you  
I mentos your freshmaker  
I cardiac arrest you  
put you on that pacemaker  
but you're smarter than me  
I gotta give you that  
cause you know to make a dollar off my 15 cents.  
You was doing it on the auction block  
You was doing it - slave ships  
Amistad  
30 years a slave,  
now I'm awoke  
We gon' get our pennies in order  
We gon' need you to  
Get your weight up.

—*DiDi Delgado*

## **White on Rice**

Didn't need a receipt

Didn't fit any suspect descriptions

Didn't get searched

Didn't get any looks walking through the neighborhood

Didn't think about it

Didn't get harassed for walking down the street

Didn't have a cop watch me

Didn't have a gun pointed at me

Didn't have to put my hands up

Didn't get shot

Didn't realize what I

Didn't have to worry about

—*Andrew Borne*

## Immigration (Go Back to Europe)

They say "No More immigration"  
They say they want to save our great nation  
from folks who can't speak English  
For the indigenous peoples of this land  
"No More immigration" is a long unanswered wish  
Protect the Texas border,  
uphold decency and order  
but Texas WAS part of Mexico  
before the USA stole it away  
Yes, I remember the Alamo  
and so do they  
Go Back to Europe!  
We could all yell  
Since for some the American dream is a living hell  
They pit the browns against the Blacks  
So we won't have the energy to attack racism at it's very core  
When you sort by skin color it's easy to make sure  
Who you want to keep rich  
Who you want to make poor  
It's far too easy for them to sift us out by our looks  
They make us feel like we are beggars  
for asking back what they took  
I'm not stealing or robbing when I reclaim what is mine  
Though they lie and say I committed a crime  
Go back to Europe!  
We could all scream  
since you have to be white  
to achieve the American dream  
Without pay my ancestors helped to build this country so rich  
Yet when I'm assertive to further my career  
I'm called a bossy Black bitch  
The cultured northern whites won't dare say that to my face  
But their expressions clearly show their distaste  
Now that the country is starting to return to brown  
White America is afraid its values will drown

Go Back to Europe! We should all shout  
Take back our land, push them all out  
Go back to Europe!  
We could demand, reclaim our dignity  
Take back our land

—*Radiant Jasmin*

## **WeMattersYEAHWeMatters**

*rebuttal to a social media post that said and I quote "As much as cops suck, cancer and the Fed are a bigger problem"*

Dear DeeJay LightSkint,

....who Musta .....forgot Frankie Knuckles - inventor of House Music  
(he Black inventive Life)

....or how Lacking Henrietta's children - STILL are- digression diGRESSION

....and when you write "As much as cops suck" that actually belittles mi Sobrinos My Daddy My Cousins  
Them Knuckles Brown Lives

...We's Matter OUR MUSIC is your Inspiration - well - at least maybe the AfriCANBaseLines

...and they killing Your inspiration in STREETS Daily - you care / or are you inspired enuff...already

....does your minor success in PeachWashedWorld force your forgetfulNess bout our AntiBlack System  
(Sometimes it forces Mine - I'll admit it)

...and you who deeJaySweetly, who I'll dance to on occasion  
on A LANE ----in sum city

....inna club where hip-hop (invented by My Peeps) got b-boys spinning to your Afroid beats (cause your  
muSick in ParTICKular is BlackLike)

....are you actually "passing", if yes

.... stay out the SummerSun OR you ChocolateNess will miss yourCabYourJobYourLifeInTrouble if you  
pop Mouth Spicy to Da Man

....when the poet wondered upon meeting him 'is he Black' STARE  
'cause he could pass' - almost like my Daddy can

.....SO now eye can ask...are you Black . . .be honest Cmonnnnn

(love our music/ makeMoneyOffa /and Looooove our Music dough)

well are you Black . . .you can tell me

....How Many Bars Hun - How manyBARS to transition (I know this instinctively)

...and youse may say Dag whyYouSoSeriousFor - yaOuttaLineBrownie-----yet

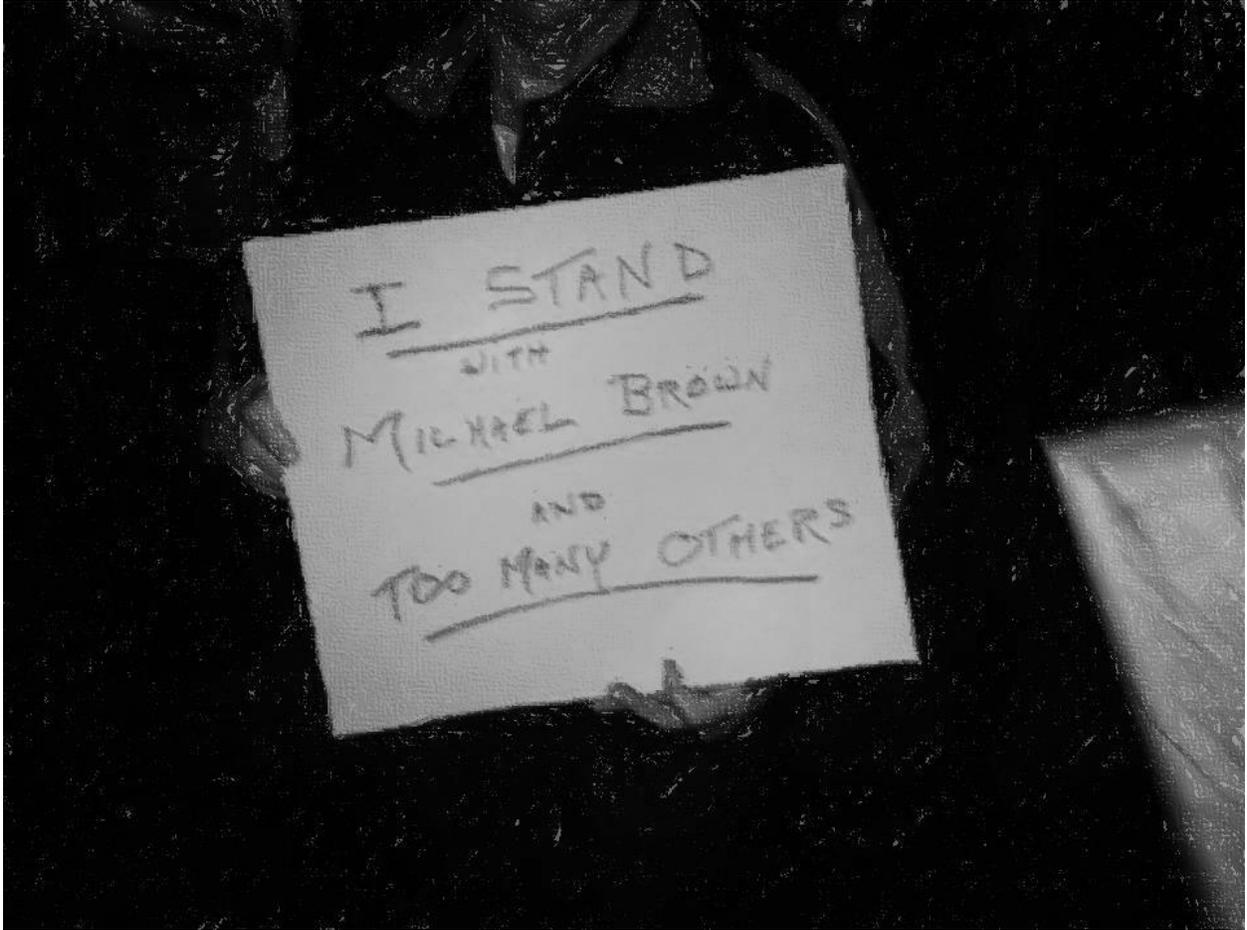
....I wonder if them Hott club Posters ever featured CoCo Flesh Plus AfroBooTay on 'em - wud "they" still come (they may) -

...but Meh - we all have our preferences....

....when You Know - confused UnFreaks would make said A-Double-Ess all political instead of Sexy

....Cause Black Life Matters - and 'MeriKKKa, and the world and folk in this sphere Cops a sucky attitude and say - it aint so

—*Toni Bee*



Who's Mike Brown?

Burgeoning college student shot six times.

Hey Mike, how do we not forget you?

How long til' you know who's Mike Brown?

There will be many yous

There will be black and brown salty-teared peppered face unarmed youths.

Sea coasts filled with the slain in vains.

They will forget you & the many yous Mike.

They will add your name to lists and say

We ain't violating EVERYONE'S civil rights.

This keeps black folks unaffected, asking

Who's Mike Brown?

—*DiDi Delgado*