

Solidarity vs. "All Lives Matter"

The phrase "All Lives Matter" has been used by many people who have opposed/criticized the Black Lives Matter movement. You as a visitor on this site may wonder why we talk about "solidarity" while at the same time, we get frustrated when people say those words towards BLM activists.

It's not the phrase itself that is the problem, it's the way it's used towards those who are oppressed in either ignorance or bad faith to silence them. We of the Pink Umbrella Society recognize that systemic racism and other forms of oppression exist in the United States and beyond. We also recognize it has real consequences for people and their communities when those problems are left unaddressed. Consequences we've seen over and over again even in the State of Washington. Therefore, we cannot in good conscience oppose or disrespect those of an oppressed group expressing their grievances.

This is essentially what the "All Lives Matter" response represents in the context of BLM. It's a refusal to acknowledge the pain and suffering of Black/African people who have experienced racism in this country. It's a refusal to do anything meaningful to address the issue and being in denial that they have every right to speak up about their experiences.

On the other hand, when we talk about solidarity in this site, we're focusing on the different ways people of different groups are oppressed (BIPOC, LGBTQIA+, neurodivergents, disabled folks, etc.) and how we can work together to understand AND address each other's struggles. In addition, we focus on intersectionality to make clearer the complex forms of discrimination that people that belong in multiple categories deal with (for example, a pansexual black woman dealing with queerphobia, racism, and misogyny).

Setting aside that we do support the Black Lives Matter movement on this site, we ALSO want to uplift all the local movements for the oppressed in this region. We do think the lives of human beings matter. However, just like how the phrase "all men are created equal" was used during the days in which chattel slavery was legal in this country, realize that "All Lives Matter" as used by many people in this context is both unhelpful and insulting to those who've seen for themselves that the U.S. as a whole still falls short in that ideal. We say we should show through our words and actions that "All Lives Matter".

-The Pink Umbrella Society

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