

SCRA Statement in Support of Christchurch, New Zealand, in Condemnation of White Supremacy: Call to Action

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The Society for Community Research and Action (SCRA) - Division 27 of the American Psychological Association, stands in solidarity with the people of Christchurch, New Zealand. The SCRA Council on Cultural, Ethnic and Racial Affairs (CERA) has authored this statement on behalf of SCRA as an offer of deepest condolences to the communities who have suffered at the hands of white supremacist terrorists and to provide recommendations for SCRA members to continue to act in solidarity.

We are committed to working toward the eradication of white supremacy in all its forms, including terrorist attacks, in the western hemisphere and globally. These attacks are crimes against all humanity. The rise in global nationalistic vitriol represents a clear and growing transnational threat and an opportunity to create a global sense of community, committed to healing, resistance and radical transformation. The actions taken against community members of Christchurch are an [example of such hatred and bigotry in action](#).

The hatred, bigotry, xenophobia and racism that forms the basis of white supremacist ideology cannot exist in an equitable world, and the time to take seriously the threats of white supremacy is now. We cannot wait until more innocent people lose their lives in such hate crimes. History continues to remind us that bigotry is one of the roots that perpetuates terrorist attacks, requiring an adoption of anti-racist cultural, institutional, and state sponsored identities to redefine individual and community calls to action. We are also beginning to see research seeking to understand the root causes for why and how individuals engage in terrorist attacks. This research indicates potential roles for Community Psychologists in further understanding and preventing such actions (Spaij, 2010).

LINK WITH SCRA MISSION AND VALUES

We stand by the [existing SCRA statement](#), which condemns all acts of terrorism, either domestic or international, noting that white supremacy has become so entrenched in the Western world that it may become woven into the fabric of our societies unless we take concerted and effective action. There must be a paradigm shift in how we view and negotiate white supremacy and the terror it leaves in its wake. We stand by those who are marginalized by the colonial systems that discriminate and the systemic racism that

seeks to maintain the hierarchies of us and them - superiority and inferiority, sustained by hatred.

As community psychologists, we have “endeavored to be political activists, agents of social change ... to be dissenters and transgressors in pursuit of liberation and empowerment with communities, especially those who are institutionally marginalized. Today, we reflect on this historical call to action, and we emphasize and urge our colleagues to stand for anti-racism, and to condemn white supremacy and race-based domestic [and international] terrorism in all of its implicit, subtle and systemic, blatant forms” (Fernández & Tran, 2019). These values hold absolute significance, and are tested in these moments of violence and hate. Thus, we must rise in resistance to violence in all of its manifestations and speak back to these systems of power and oppression that maintain and reproduce hegemony.

Community psychology is guided by four interconnected concepts, however one of them has the most value and relevance to these conditions of violence that are rooted in white supremacy. This value is *social justice*, which is characterized by the following statement:

“Community psychology will become a field of research and action that makes a significant difference on issues of social change by promoting social justice. Social justice is defined as conditions that promote equitable distribution of resources, equal opportunity for all, non-exploitation, prevention of violence, and active citizenry. The field will explicitly state its commitment to social changes that promote social justice and greater inclusion for historically marginalized groups and will see that commitment manifest in the various aspects of the field's work.”

We believe that as an organization more attention needs to be devoted to the disruption of and end to racialized violence, which must be made explicit in our discourses of social justice, liberation and transformational change. We write this statement to condemn the violence at the intersections of whiteness and xenophobia, and also to invite our fellow community psychologists to consider our role in being advocates, agitators, and practitioners of racial justice-oriented work within and beyond the US.

CALL TO ACTION

We call upon all of us to put into practice the words of two powerful scholar activists and thinkers:

“My silences had not protected me. Your silence will not protect you.” - Audre Lorde

“You seek allies and, together, begin building spiritual/political communities that struggle for personal growth and social justice.” - Gloria E. Anzaldúa

Thus we must speak up against violence, white supremacy and Islamophobia. We must build liberatory and anti-racist coalitions. Below we offer some resources to engage in solidarity.

1. We invite you to take action, and act in solidarity with many others taking similar action: <https://qz.com/1574592/people-are-supporting-mosques-after-new-zealand-shootings/>
2. To sign onto a petition sending love and solidarity to the Muslim families of New Zealand and pledge to fight white nationalism: <https://action.groundswell-mvmt.org/petitions/send-a-message-of-love-solidarity-to-the-muslim-families-of-christchurch>
3. To find ways to further support the victims of the Christchurch shootings, you may be able to contact several groups that offer the power of social sharing and networks for critical and accessible resource development; for details see: <https://www.nytimes.com/2019/03/16/world/asia/christchurch-shooting-charities.html>

For all those affected, we stand with you, as hate is not the answer, but love.

Statement developed and authored on behalf of SCRA by the following CERA members:

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