

Black Lives Matter: The Story Of A Slogan

By *Alexander Baron* - Feb 17, 2016



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This [BBC World Service documentary](#) tries to look at both sides of this issue, and succeeds, to a degree, but are there really only two sides, and are the two we see both equally valid?

In the first place, wannabe cop George Zimmerman was not white, and [Michael Brown was no saint](#). And are they really going to change the world by chanting things like “Pigs in a blanket – fry them like bacon.” ?? That certainly won’t win the Islamic vote!

We hear from quite a few people, there is the usual nonsense about the Confederate flag, statues to dead white men being an insult or even an incitement, and of course, slavery. So what are the real issues? Broadly speaking there are three: America’s insane gun culture, the attitude of the police, and issues related to poverty.

In the first place, in a country or more specifically in a part of a country where much of the population is obsessed with gun ownership, you are going to have ugly incidents, period. Add the police to this, if you have an armed citizenry, you can't have an unarmed police force, and where there are confrontations, the police may (and the American police do) tend to shoot first and ask questions later. What is needed is better training, better discipline, more restraint, and painful consequences for those officers who clearly overstep the mark, as in the **dreadful Walter Scott case**.

The third issue, poverty, relates also to crime, much of which is due to the war on drugs. There is a large and growing underclass in America, and the fact that much of this underclass is black is neither here nor there. There are solutions to these problems, but neither of them – **basic income** and **decriminalisation of recreational drugs** – is related to *racism*, much less slavery.

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