

**From:** [David Kraemer](#)  
**To:** [Covid Affiliate Archives](#)  
**Subject:** FW: One Person's Response to Communal Fear 5.27.20  
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**From:** Morris Allen <mojo210al@icloud.com>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, May 27, 2020 9:02 AM  
**To:** mojo210al@gmail.com  
**Subject:** One Person's Response to Communal Fear 5.27.20

WAGON WHEEL CENSUS (rain delay-only equivalent of 4-ining walk—thus not an official walk and so not a full-length piece) 1 Car 2 Walkers and 1 ISD#197 School Bus #1916

I never knew George Floyd (OBM). I never met him and now never will. What I do know about him is the horrible death he suffered and which we have now witnessed. A Minneapolis police officer sitting on top of him with his knee pressed into Floyd's neck. What I do know about him are the last words ever spoke in this land of the living— "I can't breathe." What I do know about him is that even after he let out his last breath, the police officer continued to sit on top of him for several more minutes until an ambulance came and took Floyd to the hospital where he was pronounced dead. Sure, in the hours following his death, we learned other things about his life—that he was a dear friend, was engaged, a caring employee and a gregarious presence. He moved here from Houston and embraced the life that Minnesota had to offer. He was arrested for supposedly forgery and he died because of an equally or even more deadly form of a contagion than Covid-19 called racism. It is systemic and it is toxic and it is connected to other forms of hatred and it is and remains America's original sin.

Over the weekend, outside the home of Kentucky's white Governor, proponents of the 2<sup>nd</sup> Amendment and opposed to Gov. Beshear's handling of the Covid-19 pandemic inside the state, were filmed hanging him in effigy with children watching and Lee Greenwood's "Proud To Be An American" blasting in the background. The meta-message of the song and display was that lynching is as American as apple pie and Chevrolet. The response to that scene was minimal as the response to an unforced error by Joe Biden about African Americans filled the news headlines. But make no mistake about it—the racists loved Joe Biden's error and immediately made it topic #1 and remained silent about the imagery of a lynching on the grounds of the Kentucky governor's home. As a Jew, I know that racism and its cousins—anti-Semitism and xenophobia are never too far behind—and often are at the front of the line. As a kid, my dad told me to read the book "Scottsboro Boys", upon completing "To Kill a Mockingbird" in school. When I finished it, he said "did you notice that the fate of the boys was dependent upon the work of the Jews in their defense. Where there is one, there is usually the other." In the 1960's the shared work for human dignity was captured in the picture of Rabbi Heschel and MLK marching hand-in-hand. And yet many roads have been traveled since those days on the roads in Alabama and we are at a critical juncture in our travels. Just yesterday, a federal judge ruled that the East Ramapo school board engaged in systemic violations in their

election process ensuring that that Latino and African American students suffered as a result. The reason—the school board is dominated by members of the Jewish community who have cut the public-school budgets and its levies as a result of sending their own kids to private schools. While this issue is also a serious challenge to the erosion of the public school system as a part of American culture(to which I am guilty of doing on behalf of my own children), it signals a serious lack of interest in the betterment of our society and the inevitable perpetuation of a two-tiered system of education that was borne in the south to avoid integration. But in truth I digress...

Today is a day to mourn. To mourn the loss of George Floyd's life. To mourn the loss of life as a result of human animus and hatred. It is a day to mourn the presence of such vile behavior among those charged with our protection. It is a day to mourn the inability of by-standers to do anything more than film a scene filled with imagery of death. It is a day to mourn the inability of our country to truly come to grips with the presence of such racial animus. America is in trouble—hatred is as present today as it was in the violence of the 60's—it is just much more masked and now much more a part of the daily discourse of too many who wiled power and authority. Today, more than ever, reach out across divides to those you encounter and engage in conversation, be willing to listen, sit inside an African American church [this Sunday](#) and hear the preaching and share in the responsibility for changing a culture step by step a little here and a little there. Our lives depend on it—don't ever forget that as well. Morris

Sent by my iPad