



Why We Rage

Sometimes an action of poetry is the best way to explain.

June 3, 2020 By [Matthew Rose](#)

This last week has truly been a trying time. With so many elements of my life having to handle unimaginable grief, pain, and trauma. And of course, the ever present systemic racism that I have to deal with as a black gay man living in America. I have tried to offer insight to many in this time and conversation that help open up space forward progress. But at the end of the day trying to care for my own mind and body and spirit, I am left with this expression. Please watch this video (above) and consider why we rage. For sometimes an action of poetry is the best way to explain.

Why we rage

It's not because we are tired,
It is not because we have grown weary
of being held down by the weight of the world,
The cruel whip breaking the sacred skin of our backs,
it's not because the world doesn't believe that we can succeed,
Or that we've been handed the short end of the stick,
It's not because of those forgotten places,
Those silent disappeared faces,
it's not those lost chances that we were never given,
it's not the places at the table that we've always wanted,
It's not reliving the same old story for the rest of our lives,
We rage to move,
To occupy the space that can move us,
and our communities with us
We rage to draw your eye, ear, heart and hand,
To make you see we are the who's
who need

To be given what we have achieved
Because we are long overdue
What the nation has promised us
A place among equals
not a hollow handshake,
An empty gesture,
The silent words on your social media
A single moment that is supposed to
make up for generations of neglect,
For the pain that existed in the heart and soul of a people
We rage so we can get on the stage
to demand that you hear our words,
That you not tell us that our protest
makes us
Unpalatable to your ears your sight
your hearing
For if you cared before
You might have given a damn to change
The way we were seen, the way we were treated
By a system that was designed without us in mind
We continue to rage for the struggles of our people
from now until the beyond
We rage so that our songs can be heard
A narrative that demands you to listen
You take the time to understand
To not just claim that privilege exists
But you use it to change the system
We ask that you walk with us
Creating space that was never meant for us
And make a new place for all of us
That stops negativity, the shaming and shunning
The world that watched us die again and again

And then promised us that no more
We rage because we are tired of needing mass graves
To understand the pain of our community
To bury us behind unknown names in figures and in spaces
To forget our contributions to your world
To your place your space your race
To bury black bodies in unknown graves
Trying to disappear who we have been
We rage so that that you will learn
To engage
We rage because it's our last hope
To make you listen
We rage because
We are tired of being children born into a world
that teaches them how to survive toxic air
Rather than trying to clean the air
We rage because we imagine a time that we could potentially be free
And we wonder when you will join us in that reality
Not about the looting, the pillaging, the burning, the questioning
The changing the circumstances that pushed us to the extreme
The only thing we could do was unleash our rage upon this place
And hope that will at least make you notice
Maybe make you care
We try to make you understand
That deep inside us is unimaginable generational pain
Screaming for release
Wishing to be healed
But we alone cannot get there
We hope, we pray, that you will
understand why we rage
And make it so we have to rage no more

