

## TTR 1: Happy Birthday Breonna Taylor with Michael Moore

### Episode Summary

In this episode of *The Tight Rope*, Academy Award winning filmmaker Michael Moore joins Dr. Cornel West and Professor Tricia Rose to shine light on the current state of crisis in America, white privilege, white fear, and citizen filmmakers. They emphatically connect the catastrophe of the criminal justice system to larger issues and discuss ways to move into a “new normal” that challenges bystander sensibility and police accountability taken out of the larger context of democratic accountability and multiracial solidarity. This is an episode of *The Tight Rope* that you do not want to miss.

### Cornel West

[Dr. Cornel West](#) is Professor of the Practice of Public Philosophy at Harvard University. A prominent democratic intellectual, social critic, and political activist, West also serves as Professor Emeritus at Princeton University. He graduated Magna Cum Laude from Harvard in three years and obtained his M.A. and Ph.D. in Philosophy at Princeton. West has authored 20 books and edited 13. Most known for [Race Matters](#) and [Democracy Matters](#), and his memoir, [Brother West: Living and Loving Out Loud](#), West appears frequently on the *Bill Maher Show*, CNN, C-Span, and Democracy Now. West has appeared in over 25 documentaries and films, including [Examined Life](#), and is the creator of three spoken word albums, including [Never Forget](#). West brings his focus on the role of race, gender, and class in American society to *The Tight Rope* podcast.

### Tricia Rose

[Professor Tricia Rose](#) is Director of the Center for the Study of Race and Ethnicity in America at Brown University. She also holds the Chancellor’s Professorship of Africana Studies and serves as the Associate Dean of the Faculty for Special Initiatives. A graduate of Yale (BA) and Brown University (Ph.D), Rose authored [Black Noise: Rap Music and Black Culture in Contemporary America](#) (1994), [Longing to Tell: Black Women Talk about Sexuality and Intimacy](#) (2003), and [The Hip Hop Wars: What We Talk About When We Talk About Hip Hop and Why It Matters](#) (2008). She also sits on the Boards of the Nathan Cummings Foundation, Color of Change, and Black Girls Rock, Inc. Focusing on issues relating to race in America, mass media, structural inequality, popular culture, gender and sexuality, and art and social justice, Rose engages widely in scholarly and popular audience settings, and now also on *The Tight Rope* podcast.

### Michael Moore

[Michael Moore](#), one of America's best-known documentary filmmakers and political provocateurs, has for over 30 years produced controversial and award-winning films and TV series that tackle critically important political and social issues in American society, including big business, corrupt governments and politicians, capitalism, and health care. Host Cornel West describes Moore as a "towering artist, prophetic figure, activist to the core, [and] a witness."

Moore, from Flint, Michigan, won the Academy Award for best documentary for his 2002 [Bowling for Columbine](#). He continues to produce successful and controversial films, most recently [Planet of the Humans](#) (2019), an eco-documentary and "[full-frontal assault](#)" of the failures of the environmental movement, directed by Jeff Gibbs. Moore examines and jokes about current issues on his own podcast [Rumble with Michael Moore](#).

### Insight from this episode:

- Strategies on remaining hopeful in turbulent and violent times.
- Responses to the question "Now what?"
- Details on how to change the American police system and police accountability to empower communities.
- Strategies on shattering a spectatorial stance and avoiding being a bystander citizen.
- Strategies on creating universal solidarity without downplaying individual suffering.
- A call to commitment and sacrifice in the struggle for freedom and equality.

### Quotes from the show:

- "In the time of Trump, in the time of pandemic, have we been turned into a nation of bystanders?" **–Michael Moore** (quoting Cornel West)
- "If you want to end crime, end poverty. If you want to end crime, empower women." **–Michael Moore**
- "The very first thing in terms of saving Black lives is we have to defund the police departments across the country. We have to demilitarize the police departments. And I want a racism review board in every community." **–Michael Moore**
- "No self-respecting, self-loving people can sit and see a policeman publicly lynch and kill somebody for nearly nine minutes." **–Cornel West**
- On recent arrests of protesters: "[There's] a marvelous new militancy around affirming the rich and precious humanity of Black folk." **–Cornel West**

- “The focus on extreme cop violence actually normalizes the idea that police can be functional... The whole logic of the police are designed really to extract resources and contain the poor, and contain people of color, from segregated white spaces.” **–Tricia Rose**
- On white fear: “If we don’t examine it and expose it, we don’t stand much of a chance of deeply transforming the role of the police because what drives people’s investment in the police is to keep Black people away.” **–Tricia Rose**
- On systemic and structural racism: “The police are just one little cog in a whole set of systems.” **–Tricia Rose**
- “I want this woman [Darnella Frazier] on the stage of the Oscars next year, and I want to honor her and all the other young people who can be citizen filmmakers, and to always pull your camera out and start filming that which you see which is wrong because you then expose it to the rest of the world.” **–Michael Moore**
- On white fear: “If they [white people] have to actually share or maybe even give up some of that privilege, wow, that’s a bridge too far. And that’s what they’re afraid of.” **–Michael Moore**
- “The long-distance win is only going to happen if the short-distance survival takes place.” **–Tricia Rose**
- “Revenge is always blinding. We need people who have broad vision, so that people can see things that other people don’t see and feel more deeply with love that other people don’t feel and most importantly to act more courageously for people who are too conformist and complacent and cowardly.” **–Cornel West**

#### **Documentaries from Michael Moore:**

[Planet of the Humans](#) (2019)  
[Fahrenheit 11/9](#) (2018)  
[Trumpland](#) (2016)  
[Where to Invade Next](#) (2015)  
[Capitalism: A Love Story](#) (2009; on Netflix)  
[Sicko](#) (2009; on Netflix)  
[Slacker Uprising](#) (2007; on Netflix)  
[Fahrenheit 9/11](#) (2004; on Netflix)  
[Bowling for Columbine](#) (2002; on Netflix)  
[The Big One](#) (1997; on Netflix)  
[Pets or Meat: The Return to Flint](#) (1992)  
[Roger & Me](#) (1989; on Netflix)

#### **Stay Connected:**

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