**Janet Mock’s speech “I am My Sister’s Keeper”  
at the Women’s March in Washington D.C.  
January 21, 2017**

**Speech text from:** [**https://janetmock.com/2017/01/21/womens-march-speech/**](https://janetmock.com/2017/01/21/womens-march-speech/)

So we are here. We are here not merely to gather but to move, right? And our movements, our movements require us to do more than just show up and say the right words. It requires us to break out of our comfort zones and be confrontational. It requires us to defend one another when it is difficult and dangerous. It requires us to truly see ourselves and one another.

I stand here today as the daughter of a native Hawaiian woman and a black veteran from Texas. I stand here as the first person in my family to go to college. I stand here as someone who has written herself onto this stage to unapologetically proclaim that I am a trans woman-writer-activist-revolutionary of color. And I stand here today because of the work of my forebears, from Sojourner to Sylvia, from Ella to Audre, from Harriet to Marsha.

I stand here today most of all because I am my sister’s keeper. My sisters and siblings are being beaten and brutalized, neglected and invisibilizied, extinguished and exiled. My sisters and siblings have been pushed out of hostel homes and intolerant schools. My sisters and siblings have been forced into detention facilities and prisons and deeper into poverty. And I hold these harsh truths close. They enrage me and fuel me. But I cannot survive on righteous anger alone. Today, by being here, it is my commitment to getting us free that keeps me marching.

Our approach to freedom need not be identical but it must be intersectional and inclusive. It must extend beyond ourselves. I know with surpassing certainty that my liberation is directly linked to the liberation of the undocumented trans Latina yearning for refuge. The disabled student seeking unequivocal access. The sex worker fighting to make her living safely.

Collective liberation and solidarity is difficult work, it is work that will find us struggling together and struggling with one another. Just because we are oppressed does not mean that we do not ourselves fall victim to enacting the same unconscious policing, shaming, and erasing. We must return to one another with greater accountability and commitment to the work today.

By being here you are making a commitment to this work. Together we are creating a resounding statement, a statement that stakes a claim on our lives and our loves, our bodies and our babies, our identities and our ideals. But a movement – a movement is so much more than a march. A movement is that difficult space between our reality and our vision. Our liberation depends on all of us, all of us returning to our homes and using this experience and all the experiences that have shaped us to act, to organize, to resist. Thank you.