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Save the Children: Black Liberation in the Age of the Modern Oligarchy

Senior Project Submitted to
The Division of Social Studies
of Bard College

by

Isaiah Rice

Annandale-on-Hudson, New York
May 2016

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Introduction

My original idea for my Senior Project was to explore hyper-masculinity within urban spatial environments. As a resident of a low-income neighborhood, I found it strange that my acceptance amongst my neighbors was rejected being that I have lived there since early childhood. We came from similar backgrounds and were a part of the same struggle, so why was there a division between us? Why was I an outsider? My alienation became more apparent to me as I got older and realized the difference in my mentality and others, and when I received looks of bewilderment when I would hold my girlfriend's hand while we walked down the street to get to my family's apartment. When I pitched this political Senior Project fantasy my junior year I was told the idea was fascinating, but not necessarily a political. I agreed and swallowed the bitter truth with a grain of salt, and continued to think of the factors that separated me from the people who lived in my neighborhood. Besides my choice to go to college to receive long-term stability and their instant gratification fast lifestyle, I knew there were intangible structures that pitted us against one another.

The painful deaths that have occurred during my stint at Bard from 2012-2016 that has been sensationalized through media outlets reached an all-time high when Dylan Roof went to the historical Church in Charleston, South Carolina and executed nine individuals with the intention of exterminating the root of societal chaos. His bias led to the death of several individuals that belonged to families and had ambitions just like Dylan Roof. Roof believed that statistics revealed Black individuals were criminals that terrorized society, but he did not take into account the complexities that are involved in

the narrative of Black plight. The psychological image that depicts Blacks as inferior and the adverse environments they live in that encourage stagnation are a couple of the major factors why Blacks individuals feel it is necessary to act in irrational means.

The dominant narrative that depicts Black individuals as predators intentionally leaves out the accountability of those who have created the conditions that these same individuals are forced to adapt to for the sake of their survival. Black Lives Matter (BLM) answers the question that people unknowingly struggle to answer. The violence inflicted upon one another and from the state would object to say otherwise, but that is precisely why BLM is important as a social movement.

Chapter 1: Consequences of Devalued Black Bodies

Michelle Alexander states in *The New Jim Crow*:

> There was no contradiction in the bold claim made by Thomas Jefferson in the Declaration of Independence that 'all men are created equal' if Africans were not really people. Racism operated as a deeply held belief system based on 'truths' beyond question or doubt. This deep faith in white supremacy not only justified an economic and political system in which plantation owners acquired land and great wealth through the brutality, torture, coercion of other human beings; it also endured, like most articles of faith, long after the historical circumstances that gave rise to the religion passed away… After the death of slavery, the idea of race lived on.[1]

Liberation for Black lives has revealed itself in a variety of ways, e.g., Emancipation, civil rights acts but ultimately has proven to be elusive, and has even been rigidly blocked in many ways. In the land of the free where capitalist structures emphasize mass production and democracy symbolizes egalitarian principles, the political and societal exclusion of particular groups makes one question how much an individual's identity has to do with the level of equality they are granted. Michelle Alexander directs her readers to the idea of white supremacy to explain the instability (environmental danger and societal, political, and financial inequality) Blacks face on their quest for equality alongside the pursuit of White dominance. The recent deaths of Black individuals (Trayvon Martin, Eric Gardner, Michael Brown, Tamir Rice, Sandra Bland, Tanisha Anderson, and many more) have been memorialized through the media as symbols of heartbreak. Individuals within the Black community have become so personally attached to these deaths because it represents not only the longstanding injustices that have plagued the Black community, but also the lack of value placed on Black bodies. As of now, Black Lives Matter (BLM), the latest phase of the Black Freedom Struggle,

[1] Michelle Alexander, *The New Jim Crow: Mass Incarceration in the age of Colorblindness,* (New York, The New Press, 2010] 26.

addresses the sense of insecurity the Black population faces because their survival is in constant jeopardy (due to multiple factors we will explore within this chapter).

On the surface BLM as a social movement has a wide-reaching, disparate agenda and has received critiques for its supposed lack of focus. It seems to be all over the place. Some believe the agenda to be anti-police, others claim it is a hidden queer equality movement, and most notably people make the claim the name of the movement should be "All Lives Matter". Clarifying BLM's guiding principles is vital to evaluating BLM as a social movement. BLM also has an agenda for police reform called Campaign Zero, but for the purposes of this project we will narrowly focus on their guiding principles which include: 1) Diversity- emphasizing the acceptance of all identities regardless of race, class, gender, or body functionality. 2) Restorative Justice- advocating for a system that focuses on rehabilitation of criminal offenders that allows them to repair the harm they committed to the victims and community involved. 3) Unapologetically Black- to surround the reasoning of the movement within a context that is rooted in freedom for Blacks and an unwillingness to separate from this purpose. 4) Globalism- spread of awareness of Black Lives abroad and recognizing their struggles within the political communities they belong too. 5) Black Women- straying away from the victimizing depiction of Black women towards an empowered image that has been hidden because of dominant patriarchal tolerance. 6) Collective Value- the inclusion of all Black lives no matter their beliefs or capabilities. 7) Transgender Affirming- disassembling the dominant narrative of the only acceptable relationships or identities to be heterosexual, and to stop senseless violence against transgender men and woman who are marginalized because they are perceived to be unequal. 8) Black Villages- to offer an alternative to the

classic idea of what a nuclear family is by emphasizing community bonds to create unconditional support. 9) Empathy- promotion of interconnectedness regardless of identity and sympathy for one's fellow comrades. 10) Black Families- allowing mothers to participate within the movement by creating a welcoming environment for their children so mothers would not have to separate the two duties. 11) Loving Engagement- executing demonstrations rooted in peace in the pursuit of liberty and justice. 12) Queer Affirming- straying away from hetero-normative narratives that victimize and silence members of the LGBTQ community. 13) Intergenerational- elimination of ageism with the expectation that individuals of all ages can contribute to the cause through active participation.[2] Throughout this project we will continue to unpack BLM and its distinct agenda and focus on looking at the Black Freedom Struggle as a whole, why is BLM needed after the Civil Rights Movement and Black Panther Party, and how likely is it to succeed?

Black Body Human Security (BBHS)

[2] *We affirm that all Black Lives Matter: Guiding Principles*, (http://blacklivesmatter.com/guiding-principles/) accessed April 19, 2016.

Photo 1: Eric Garner pleading “I can’t breathe” while being choked during arrest.[3]

Photo 2: March against police brutality in October, 2015 in New York City.[4]

BLM's protestation against structural violence lies within the perceived need for Black Body Human Security (BBHS). The central responsibility of the state most commonly, has been focused on protecting the state from external threats that emanate from other states. In this view, threats are conceptualized largely in terms of power, where the threat of war risks the death of a multitude of individuals and in the extreme, loss of statehood altogether. For example during the Cold War the threat of a global

[3] Ben Dreyfuss, *Grand Jury Doesn't Indict Staten Island Cop in Death of Eric Garner*, (http://www.motherjones.com/mojo/2014/12/grand-jury-doesnt-indict-staten-island-cop-death-eric-garner) accessed May 2, 2016.
[4] Melina Abdullah, *Black Lives Matter and the Building of a Mass Movement*, (https://www.kcet.org/shows/departures/black-lives-matter-and-the-building-of-a-mass-movement) accessed May 2, 2016.

nuclear war was ever present. The U.S. and the U.S.S.R. formed an adversarial relationship pitting communism against democracy in pursuit of attaining dominance in the international community.

Following the end of the Cold War the understanding of security began to shift beyond its narrow focus of the state to a nuanced interpretation focused on the human. Political actors within the international community believed the traditional definition of security did not capture the multiple ways individuals within the state could be threatened. The term human security first appeared in the 1994 Human Development Report, an annual publication of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP).[5] Human security "can be said to have two main aspects. It means, first, safety from chronic threats as hunger, disease or repression. And second, it means protection from sudden and hurtful disruptions in the patterns of daily life-whether in homes, in jobs or in communities."[6] Most importantly, the idea of Human Security represented a paradigmatic shift in thinking about security because it pointed to the state as the source of insecurity. Within this new model, individuals become the referent object of security, and this logic makes itself applicable to all states regardless of their hegemonic status or position in the global balance of power. Because the concept of human security was developed from an IR perspective which includes nations with notorious histories of subjugation of its own population (e.g. North Korea, Uganda, Afghanistan) the U.S. is often overlooked as a violator. Human security intersects with the heart of BLM's dissent because of their emphasis on structural violence as the source of their unequal citizenship Blacks lives experience involuntarily. Guaranteeing Black Body Human Security

[5] Roland Paris, "Human security: Paradigm shift or hot air?" *International security 26, no. 2* (2001): 89.
[6] Paris, 89.

(BBHS) defeats the dehumanizing image that society's gatekeepers (policy makers) has of the Black population.

Now let's explore the dimensions that have perpetuated dehumanization and led to the notion that Black lives do not matter. The death of Michael Brown reinvigorated the memory of the 1961 Freedom Rides when sympathizers from several cities gathered to recreate the BLM Ride. Recent police mishandling of Black individuals served as reminders that the full struggle for full citizenship rights civil rights activist fought on the behalf for was only partly successful. Police interactions with Brown, Tamir Rice, Tanisha Anderson, and Sandra Bland all began as minor incidents, but resulted in their demise. Brown's interaction started with officer Darren Wilson stopping him because he was blocking traffic. Rice, a twelve-year-old with a pellet gun was shot to death on arrival at a bus stop in Cleveland because he was thought to be a nineteen-twenty year-old Black threatening male with a pistol. Anderson a woman diagnosed with bi-polar disorder was attempting to leave her house in a disoriented state of mind, but was stopped after her brother called the police, but little did they know after they were ordered to retreat back into their homes her family would never see their loved one again. Bland who was stopped in her vehicle for failure to signal a lane change, was removed out of her vehicle because she refused to put out her cigarette during her interaction with officer Brian Encinia, was slammed to the ground when she exited her vehicle and then taken to jail where she would end up hung inside of her cell only a few days after her arrival. Keep in mind these were not coincidences that occurred where police needed to abandon their protocol because extreme threats jeopardized their livelihood. This is the way many officers handle situations with Black men and women who they and society deem to be

threats to the American public. BLM's agenda stands the stigmatized image of Black selfhood on its head and instead articulates the variety of ways in which Black have been victimized by American society.

Dominant narratives have created false notions of the reality of the Black experience. They promote the idea that Blacks generate societal destruction, are inherently intellectually inferior to their racial counterparts, and are lazy. Such narratives encourage a belief among many Whites that society would be better off without Blacks. These myths work to validate the devaluation of the Black body. BLM values the equality that Black freedom fighters sacrificed their lives for and never fully received. Racist structures that have worked against BBHS were blatant in the past and the issues that affected Black communities still exist at this time. BLM principles "diversity", "unapologetically black", and "globalism" represent the rejection of the debasement projected onto the Black community, and instead asserts that Black lives are important and valuable. What BLM activists are attempting to instill is racial pride, which pushes for the acceptance of difference in identity, sexual orientation, and gender while stressing the importance of Black lives domestically and internationally. Similar to Dubois's advocacy for human rights in his appeal to the United Nations in 1947, BLM attempts to shed light on the lack of human regard for people of color in order to ensure their security.[7] This can be demonstrated by elaborating on several of BLM's principles.

Black Women, Transgender/Queer Affirming, Black Villages, Collective Value

BLM's visions for Black women are broad, but can be narrowed for the purposes of this paper to focus on maternal mortality rates and susceptibility to rape. Maternal

[7] James L Clark, "American Black Leaders: The Response to Colonialism and the Cold War, 1943-1953," *Boston University African Studies Center Volume 4* (1971): 261.

mortality has had a great effect on the deaths of Black women, but the evidence is somewhat hard to trace because there are no national standards or federal requirements to report on these types of deaths.[8] The Center for Disease Control and Prevention compiled in 2007 through their Pregnancy Mortality Surveillance System branch, that for White women there were 11 deaths per 100,000 live births, 15.7 deaths per live births for other races, and 34.8 deaths per 100,000 live births for Black women.[9] The disparity between maternal mortality rates is apparent, but understanding what variables contribute to this disparity amongst those groups has been intangible. President and CEO of Black Women's Health Imperative Eleanor Hinton Hoytt believes the hidden factors are reliant upon two issues: access to care and actual quality care as opposed to doctors only being patient-oriented when severe illnesses are present within Black women.[10] Lower income levels deny women of receiving the care quality attention that is needed during developmental fetus stages.[11] What is also believed to combat maternal mortality rates within the studies of maternal mortality rates are "early entry to prenatal care, and the reduction of pregnancy-related morbidity (hemorrhage, hypertensive disorders, and cardiomyopathy)."[12] These medical conditions in conjunction with pregnancy show:

> 53% of women who died from hypertensive disorders were non-Hispanic Black, 31% were non-Hispanic White, and 16% were Hispanic or other races. Non-Hispanic Black women had a higher pregnancy-related mortality ratio due to hypertensive disorders

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[8] Belle Taylor-McGhee, *High Mortality Rates for Black Moms Still a Mystery*, (http://msmagazine.com/blog/2012/12/17/high-maternal-mortality-rates-for-black-moms-still-a mystery/) accessed April 23, 2016.

[9] McGhee, *High Mortality Rates for Black Moms still a Mystery*.

[10] Ibid.

[11] Ibid.

[12] *Black-White Disparities in Maternal Mortality*, (http://www.floridahealth.gov/programs-and-services/womens-health/pregnancy/4__2015-title-v-brief-bw-disparities-in-maternal-mortality-final-11-06-2014.pdf) accessed April 25, 2016.

> (PRMRH) of 6.9 compared with non-Hispanic White or Hispanic and non-Hispanic other races at 1.9 and 1.7 pregnancy related deaths (PRDs) per 100,000 live births.[13]

Drawing from these statistics we see that hypertensive conditions have adverse effects on the body, and highly increases the risk of death for soon to be mothers. In this case, Black women mostly suffer from these conditions that threaten the security of successfully delivering their children while maintaining their own well-being. In relation to hypertension, pregnant women who have these disorders are more likely to have a cesarean delivery.[14] This also raises pregnancy insecurity according to the Florida Department of Health Division of Community Health Promotion Pregnancy-Associated Mortality Review, which shows "Sixty-eight percent of women who died from hypertensive disorders had a cesarean delivery. Women who delivered by cesarean had a higher PRMRH of 4.8 compared to the PRMRH of 1.1 PRDs per 100,000 live births for women who had a vaginal delivery."[15] Recognizing that Black women are mostly susceptible to hypertensive disorders, and that these disorders mainly require more high risk procedures for delivery such as the cesarean, sheds light on what contributes to Black women's maternal death. The last link I would like to draw in relation to Black maternal mortality insecurity is "hypertensive women may have a higher risk of preterm births. Women who had a gestational age of 28 weeks or less or between 29 and 36 weeks had a higher PRMRH of 47.0 and 10.2 PRDs per 100,000 live births compared with women who had a gestational age of 37 weeks or more."[16] Disorders as such make pregnancy dangerous for both the mother and the fetus because their relationship is reliant upon each

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[13] *Pregnancy-Related Deaths Due to Hypertensive Disorders 1999-2012,* (http://www.floridahealth.gov/statistics-and-data/pamr/_documents/pregnancy-related-deaths-due-to-hypertensivedisorders-2009-2012.pdf) accessed April 25, 2016.
[14] Ibid.
[15] Ibid.
[16] Ibid.

other. In these cases, they both have a considerably high probability to die. The contributors to hypertension have been commonly related to: stress, family history of high blood pressure, sleep apnea, lack of physical activity, chronic kidney failure, adrenal and thyroid disorders, heavy amounts of salt intake, smoking, and obesity.[17]

Black women's susceptibility to rape reveals another form of body insecurity that is unique to the experience of being a woman of color. The narrative related to Black women's sexuality is one that is complicated for two reasons essentially. One being, Black women are marketed as sexually insatiable beings; in other words, they are perceived to be indiscriminate towards their sexual preferences, behavior, and activities. Second being, the secrecy shrouded around this issue within Black culture. What makes these issues precarious is that it allows people to believe Black Women either behave or dress ways that encourage sexual invitation and the act of rape itself is not a serious offense because they simply were a casualty to a man's uncontrollable sexual desire.[18] Which leaves the only option for these women to remain strong and forget about the violation of their body because the foundation of being a Black woman is to persevere regardless of what they must overcome. [19] Labels like "promiscuous, Black Jezebels, and exotic" according to the *Women of Color Network Facts and Stats Collections of Sexual Violence* "perpetuate the notion that African American women are willing participants in their own victimization. However these myths only serve to demean, obstruct appropriate legal remedies, and minimize the seriousness of sexual violence perpetrated against

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[17] *Hypertension/High Blood Pressure Health Center*, (http://www.webmd.com/hypertension-high-blood-pressure/guide/blood-pressure-causes) accessed April 25, 2016.
[18] Women of Color Network Facts and Stats Collection of Sexual Violence, (http://www.doj.state.or.us/victims/pdf/women_of_color_network_facts_sexual_violence_2006.pdf) accessed April 25, 2016.
[19] Ibid.

African American women."[20] The tradition of making Black women feel responsible for these nonconsensual acts they must leave behind in their past reproduces "a culture of silence". [21] Author of city paper article *why are black women less likely to report rape?* Allante Adams reminds readers "rape of African-American women goes back to before they reached the Americas. Slave women were routinely raped by crew members during the transatlantic voyage. There were few consequences for rapists—regardless of race."[22] The silence surrounded around this uncomfortable topic is derived from the idea that their offenders will not face repercussions. Women find it hard to bare the shame society places on them once they are aware of the defiling they involuntarily experienced. One of the specific environments where these non-consensual acts rapidly take place is among teenage youth on college campuses. According to the article by Adams:

> Among female college students who are raped, 80 percent never report the crime, according to a 2014 U.S. Department of Justice report. The reasons vary. Twenty-six percent of U.S. students said they did not report the incident to the police because it was "personal." Another 12 percent said the incident was "not important enough" to report. Nine percent believed the police couldn't or wouldn't be helpful. Because about 80 percent of student victims knew their attackers, another 10 percent did not report the crime because they did not want to get their assailant in trouble with the law.[23]

What is odd about these conclusions is that the victims of these offenses deliberately choose not to put their faith into the justice systems that are supposed to amend these abuses. Losing the privacy of their bodies, assumes that they lose ownership of their womanhood, thus by grieving publicly, people become aware of this instance and permanently depict these women as victims as a result to the subjection these women

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[20] Ibid.
[21] *Trying to Break A 'Culture of Silence' On Rape*, (http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2006/05/29/AR2006052901012_2.html) accessed April 25, 2016.
[22] Allante Adams "*Why are black women less likely to report rape?"* (http://www.citypaper.com/news/mobtownbeat/bcpnews-why-are-black-women-less-likely-to-report-rape-20150609-story.html) accessed April 25, 2016.
[23] Ibid.

were forced to be a part of. Being socially dispossessed reduces women to victims, rather than women.

In the case of Black female college students:

> A 2010 National Institute of Justice report, one of the few that focused specifically on HBCUs, drew on a survey of nearly 4,000 students who were questioned in the fall of 2008. At HBCUs, 14 percent of rape survivors who were physically forced and 7 percent of those who were incapacitated said they did not believe the police would think the incident was "serious enough," according to the study, "The Historically Black College and University Campus Sexual Assault Study (HBCU-CSA)." Nearly 20 percent of those physically forced and 15 percent of those incapacitated said they did not report the crime because they did not want to get the person in trouble.

The insensitivity authoritative figures show towards these women is exemplified in President of Lincoln University comments on the issue of nonconsensual sex when he alluded to the idea "how the young women shouldn't file false reports of rape just because 'the relationship didn't turn out the way they wanted it to."[24] This demeaning attitude suggests women use their vulnerability to manipulate figures of authority because of the disappointment they faced from being in a flawed relationship. Women in this scenario are portrayed as fabricators. In a system that distrusts the validity of such a claim by women, what would possibly make them feel secure enough to confess this information that would potentially publicly tarnish their womanhood and lead to unjust an outcome?

Being a Black Gay male within many Black communities is the equivalent to abandoning one's manhood because the idea of masculinity is often narrowly rooted in being dominant, while being homosexual is associated with femininity and weakness.[25] Black heterosexual homophobic separation from the Gay community appropriates the systemic White attitude towards Blacks, which is reliant upon the dynamics of being

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[24] Ibid.

[25] Marlon T. Riggs, "Black Macho Revisited: Reflections of a Snap! Queen," *African American Review (St. Louis University*, 1991): 390 & 394.

superior to an "other". This other is labeled bizarre, and therefore subject to unequal treatment because of their supposed abnormality, which perpetuates the idea that Black men are "intrinsically corrupt" and are "diseased, promiscuous, destructive-of self and others".[26] What is missing within this type of thought amongst Blacks who are homophobic is that demonizing those who are homosexual does not restore order or pride to Black culture. It actually does the opposite. This hostility is simultaneously generated from White conservative communities towards the entire LGBTQ community. Many interactions between members of the LGBTQ community and anti-gay individuals have ended up in violent clashes. Islan Nettles, a Black twenty-one-year-old transgender woman died from experiencing excessive force to her head in Harlem 2013 when she was attacked by Paris Wilson, a stranger who assaulted Nettles because of a verbal exchange he initiated after shouting trans-phobic slurs.[27] After being taken to the hospital, Nettles eventually died three days later.[28] The violence that rises within individuals simply because members of the LGBTQ community do not identify with heteronormative standards has been a longstanding issue. The security of these individuals are put at risk from the moment they leave the privacy of their homes into the public and according to the guardian statistics that state "The Human Rights Campaign report documented 21 transgender homicide victims so far in 2015, almost all of them transgender women of color, and likely an underestimate due to the difficulty of tracking the homicides. Among

[26] Riggs 393.
[27] Parker Marie Malloy, *Charges Dropped in Transgender Woman Islan Nettles' Murder: What Now?* (http://www.huffingtonpost.com/parker-marie-molloy/charges-dropped-islan-nettles-murder_b_4309549.html) accessed May 1, 2016.
[28] Ibid.

all 53 transgender murders from 2013 to 2015, not a single one was prosecuted or reported as a hate crime, the report found."[29]

BLM enforces the idea of Black Villages to create a new, much needed community that gives unconditional support its members. In a system where one has to work relentlessly to remain economically stable, it is easy for Blacks to think of other Blacks who are not relatives as strangers to whom you are not connected and to whom you are in competition with.[30] In a system that enforces punitive legal consequences towards Blacks, attempting to overcome social obstacles alone increases one's insecurity and vulnerability. In a sense although BLM targets structural inequalities between Blacks and Whites, its insistence on Black Villages implicitly recognizes the ways Black communities have turned on themselves unknowingly because of these same very systemic issues. Within Black ghettos, blocked opportunity, lack of social mobility, and isolation cause inhabitants to create a subculture that reject middle class values (doing well academically, finding employment, purchasing a car and home, and creating a stable family) because access to a middle class lifestyle seems unimaginable. Sociologist Robert Merton recognizes this sub-culture and the mindset that feeds it within his Social Strain Theory. In relation to this concept "poverty and ignorance confine the youth of the lowest economic classes in a low and loose world… With less opportunity for recognition through education money and status the youth of these families more often seek their self-assurance in the freedom of sex or in a reputation for physical prowess, or being a

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[29] Zach Stafford *Transgender homicide rate hits historic high in US, says new report,(http://www.theguardian.com/us-news/2015/nov/13/transgender-homicide-victims-us-has-hit-historic-high)* accessed May 1, 2016.

[30] Richard Swedberg "Max Weber and the Idea of Economic Sociology," (*Princeton University Press*: 1998): 120.

bad man, or in other anti-social forms of behavior."[31] BLM activists view this behavior as negative because it encourages social stagnation and contains no progressive elements. BLM's critique is that social psychological entrapment of ghettoized Blacks causes them to conform to Whites' expectations of Black inferiority and causes Blacks to prey upon and victimize rather than cooperate with other Blacks.

Collective Value through Black Villages is affirmed by the way BLM implicitly understands the perniciousness of Black systemic residential segregation. In fact the ghetto is a form of holistic environmental insecurity for Black Bodies. Black households within underserved communities, for instance, struggle with maintaining enough food supplies to prevent themselves from hunger. Food insecurity is a major problem that affects members of Black households and their overall well-being. According to the website of the non-profit organization Feeding America "One in four (26%) African American households are food insecure as compared with one in 10 (11%) of Caucasian households and one in seven (14%) households overall" and "More than one in three African American children (34%) live in food-insecure households as compared to one in seven (15%) Caucasian children."[32] Malnutrition leads to chronic health diseases such as high blood pressure and diabetes, which obviously pose threats to one's livelihood.[33] In their attempt to combat food insecurity within low-income households, Feeding America have alerted the public that "currently, more than half (58%) of the households served by the Feeding America network of food banks have at least one member living with high

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[31] David P. Ausubel and Martin Meyer Grossack *Mental Health and Segregation*, (Springer: 1963): 45.
[32] "*African American Poverty: African American Hunger Fact Sheet*" (http://www.feedingamerica.org/hunger-in-america/impact-of-hunger/african-american-hunger/african-american-hunger-fact-sheet.html?referrer=https://www.google.com/) accessed April 20, 2016
[33]*African American Poverty: African American Hunger Fact Sheet*.

blood pressure, and more than one-third (33%) has a member with diabetes. Unfortunately, not only are food insecure clients at a higher risk of diet-sensitive chronic disease but they also face many more challenges in managing their disease once it occurs."[34] Program assistance for instances like these are helpful, but do not fully resolve the issue at hand, which is poverty. In this equation, money equals access to food that is nutritional, but most people within these neighborhoods are unaware of what foods are conducive for a healthy lifestyle. So when they are given money for food purchases, they buy what is either affordable or popularly known, which in many cases does not result in healthy food choices (needs footnote document it)

Another environmental danger that mostly affects Black households is lead poisoning, which is a result of low standard housing. This is most dangerous for the development of youth because their bodies are not mature enough to fight off its infections. Health issues related to lead poisoning exposure are ADHD, irreversible brain damage, as well as damage to the central nervous system.[35] The Center for Disease Control and Prevention states:

> Children of color whose families are poor and who live in housing built before 1950 have the highest lead poisoning risk. On average, between 1999 and 2004, black children were 1.6 times more likely to test positive for lead in their blood than white children. And among children who tested positive for extremely high lead levels (≥10 micrograms per deciliter), the disparity was even more stark. Black children were nearly three times more likely than white children to have highly elevated blood-lead levels, the type of lead poisoning where the most damaging health outcomes occur.[36]

Health conditions of these children are affected at high levels, which gives incite to how frequent this environmental injustice occurs within Black communities. This exposure

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[34] Ibid.
[35] *Lead Poisoning Is Still A Public Health Crisis For African-Americans*, (http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2015/07/13/black-children-at-risk-for-lead-poisoning-_n_7672920.html?) accessed April 20, 2016.
[36] Ibid.

makes children susceptible to life altering diseases that affect their ability to function within school and professional settings, which are both instrumental environments for maturation and success.

Another measure of life-chance insecurity is relatively high infant mortality rates of Black children. Although there has been a decrease from 1993, which was 11.3 per 100,000, the death of Black children under five-years-old is the highest among all races domestically.[37] In a Population Reference Bureau article written by Rogelio Saenz, data was extrapolated from the National Center for Health Statistics to suggest that Black babies are 2.5 more likely to die than White babies before reaching one-years old.[38] According to Saenz, Blacks had the "highest infant mortality rate during the 2002-2004 period (a three-year period yields greater statistical stability), when nearly 14 black infants died for every 1,000 births" and this occurs because of "significant cuts in programs designed to assist the poor and an erosion of benefits in jobs held by many poverty-level workers."[39] BLM implicitly calls attention to the link between systemic poverty and low-life expectancy for Black children. [40]

Restorative Justice, Empathy

Restorative Justice is a principle that offers alternatives to those Blacks who have encountered the justice system. What stands out is that these individuals are given a chance to repair the harm done to the community as well as the victim. This method

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[37] Alexia Cooper and Erica L Smith, *Homicide trends in the United States, 1980–2008*," (Washington District of Columbia Bureau of Justice Statistics 2011) 6.
[38] Rogelio Saenz *The Growing Color Divide in U.S. Infant Mortality* (http://www.prb.org/Publications/Articles/2007/ColorDivideinInfantMortality.aspx) accessed April 19, 2016.
[39] Ibid.
[40] Another disturbing measure of the vulnerability of Black children are The Bureau of Justice Statistics from 2008 showing there were 7.2 per 100,000 homicides of Black children under the age of five in that year while in contrast, White children under the age of five homicide rates were 2.3 per 100,000.

allows individuals to avoid going through the legal system and experiencing the damnation that is the prison experience and the effects it has after you are released. The U.S. prison population is unique because of its stark pattern. Author Kathleen Miles of *Just How Much the War on Drugs Impacts Our Overcrowded Prisons, In One Chart* states that over 50% of the prison population is incarcerated for drug offenses.[41] In relation to this statistic it was also noted that 40% of the prison population is Black.[42] It is safe to assume the connection between the two is not a coincidence.

Given the clear correlation between the two, the necessary question that must be raised is why? Non-violent crimes do have negative effects on communities, but are the effects damaging enough to imprison the individuals involved? It is sort of absurd when you think about the variations of higher degree crimes that threaten society and you see the staggering numbers of who really resides within the prison population. What should also not go overlooked is that if the numbers of offenders in prison for drug offenses continue to rise, then putting people in jail fails to solve the problem.

As mentioned earlier, the Black body was perceived to be dangerous. In the late nineteenth century, whites began seeing free black men especially as threats. Historian George Frederickson, for instance, discussed "Southern Negrophobia." He noted "how ready white Americans were by the end of the [nineteenth] century to believe the worst about Negro character and prospects."[43] These beliefs were based on pseudo-scientific

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[41] Kathleen Miles *Just How Much The War On Drugs Impacts Our Overcrowded Prisons, In One Chart* (http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2014/03/10/war-on-drugs-prisons-infographic_n_4914884.html) accessed April 20, 29016.
[42] Leah Sakala "*Breaking Down Mass Incarceration in the 2010 Census: State-by-State Incarceration Rates by Race/Ethnicity" (http://www.prisonpolicy.org/reports/rates.html)* accessed April 20, 2016.
[43] George Frederickson, *The Black Image in the White Mind: Debates on Afro-American Character and Destiny, 1817-1914* (Hanover, NH: Wesleyan University Press, 1987), 256-282.

work by so-called experts who saw Blacks and Whites in a Darwinian competition against each other for survival, and who compiled data, according to historian Khalil Muhammad, to show the degradation of blacks.[44] Therefore equality for Blacks equated to oppression for Whites, which was unacceptable for their security. Such thinking continued into the twentieth century and explains the Jim Crow system of racial segregation in the South and racial discrimination in the North.[45] Michelle Alexander highlighted:

> For more than a decade-from the mid 1950s until the late 1960s-conservatives systemically and strategically linked opposition to civil rights legislation to call for law and order, arguing that Martin Luther King Jr.'s philosophy of civil disobedience was a leading cause of crime. Civil rights protest were frequently depicted as criminal rather than political in nature, and federal courts were accused of excessive 'lenience' toward lawlessness, thereby contributing to the spread of crime.[46]

This is what gave birth to mass incarceration. Regardless of the Black activist's emphasis on non-violence and peaceful protest, these individuals were still stereotyped because of their pigmentation, and since they were upfront about changing laws and policies, their civil disobedience could be marketed as a reason for an increase in broken laws. The intent of protesters was to make changes to the system that oppressed them, but ultimately their activism would not be seen beyond something unruly, which was believed to be inherent in the nature of Black individuals. Once again another pattern emerged to halt the progression of Blacks by using the prison industrial complex as a substitution for enslavement.

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[44] Khalil Gibran Muhammad, *The Condemnation of Blackness: Race, Crime, and The Making of Modern Urban America* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2011).
[45] Raymond D'Angelo, *The American Civil Rights Movement: Readings and Interpretations* (Dushkin Pub Group) 581.
[46] Michelle Alexander "*The New Jim Crow: Mass Incarceration in the Age of Colorblindness*," (The New Press, 2010) 40-41.

Angela Davis was interviewed on this topic by author Avery Gordon and he transcribed their conversation. During the discussion Davis asserted:

> Imprisonment has become the response of first resort to far too many of the social problems that burden people ensconced in poverty. These problems are often veiled by being conveniently grouped together under the category 'crime' and by the automatic attribution of criminal behavior to people of colour, especially Black and Latino/a men and women. Homelessness, unemployment, drug addiction, and illiteracy are only a few of the problems that disappear from public view when the human beings contending with them are relegated to cages… Prisons do not disappear problems, they disappear human beings and the practice of disappearing vast numbers of people from poor, immigrant and racially marginalized communities has become a big business.[47]

One must question the intentions of a state when they use incarceration instead of rehabilitation for those who have committed legal offenses. Homelessness, unemployment, and the other social issues listed above spawn within low-income communities because of severe resource deprivation. The neglect of these neighborhoods allows the conditions to perpetuate, which makes the citizens immersed within the subculture, and thus become perfect candidates for prison. The means that individuals resort too are out of desperation to survive and to cope with the oppressive reality they are subjected too. What Davis attempts to extract from these moments is that the problems the poor have to face are the reasons why they end up in prison, so if this is known, then why not create solutions these communities desperately need to prevent the continuance of incarceration? This is where profit and production come into the picture and who else would be better to assist in this plot than those who are consistently dehumanized?

What it takes to be incarcerated is minimal, especially in a contemporary context because most people in prison are there for non-violent crimes. One of the biggest

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[47] Avery F. Gordon "*Globalism and the prison industrial complex: an interview with Angela Davis*" (Race and Class, 1999) 146-147.

reasons for this increase is framed this way by Alexander who explains "the reason is simple: Convictions for drug offenses are the single most important cause of the explosion in incarceration rates in the United States. Drug offenses alone account for two thirds of the rise in the federal inmate population and more than half of the rise in state prisoners between 1985 and 2000."[48] Drugs were easy to attain within low-income neighborhoods as people searched for any temporary moment of escape from their present conditions. For dealers, the allure of drug dealing was that it was a fast way to earn money, and since preserving one's self through education employment was hard enough, many people decided to take the risk of the easier route. Stop and frisk policies became implemented during these time periods to search the belongings of any individual who seemed suspicious and posed a threat to the safety of the officers and people within that community.[49] In the words of Davis "historically, people of African descent consigned to slavery in the US were certainly not treated as rights bearing individuals and therefore were not considered worthy of the moral re-education that was the announced philosophical goal of the penitentiary… The abolition of slavery thus corresponded to the authorisation of slavery as punishment."[50] The production aspect of inmates lies in their labor being used to benefit corporations and their global capital. Davis listed "IBM, Motorola, Compaq, Texas Instruments, Honeywell, Microsoft and Boeing"[51] as corporations that use prison labor. She goes on to reveal "Nordstrom department stores sell jeans that are marketed as 'Prison Blues' and t-shirts and jackets made in Oregon prisons. Maryland prisoners inspect glass bottles and jars used by Revlon and Pierre

[48] Alexander, 60.
[49] Ibid.
[50] Gordon "*Globalism and the Prison Industrial Complex: An Interview with Angela Davis*" 153.
[51] Ibid 149.

Cardin, and graduation caps and gowns made by South Carolina prisoners are purchased by schools throughout the world."[52] What we observe about these prisoners is that their human aspects are ignored, yet their ability to produce commodities is fully utilized to benefit corporations that already are superfluously wealthy. Is this the moral rehabilitation prisoners need to be integrated back into society for mistakes they made because they were trying to survive under conditions that jeopardized their existence? The incentive behind corporate profit for inmates are "federal, state, and county governments pay private companies a fee for each inmate, which means that private companies have a stake in retaining prisoners as long as possible, and in keeping their facilities filled."[53] So as the problems within low-income neighborhoods go unsolved, prison populations continue to rise, which increases the likelihood for Black youth to be arrested, most likely for a crime as low as a misdemeanor. In the words of Judith Butler:

> Certain lives are not considered lives at all, they cannot be humanized, that they fit no dominant frame for the human, and that their dehumanization occurs first, at this level, and that this level then gives rise to a physical violence that in some sense delivers the message of dehumanization that is already at work in the culture… The matter is not a simple one, for if a life is not grievable, it is not quite a life; it does not qualify as a life and is not worth a note.[54]

Empathy is regarded as a principle that BLM practices, but ultimately, they want outsiders to have empathy towards Black lives. It has been shown here that he Black Body has become vulnerable and devalued by Whites, and that Black people themselves have participated to some extent in that devaluation because of a lack of understanding of systemic racism. The breadth of BLM platform is a reflection of its attempt to expose and address all forms and sources of human insecurity through degradation of Black

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[52] Ibid 149.
[53] Ibid 153.
[54] Butler, Judith. Precarious life: The powers of mourning and violence. (*Verso*, 2006): 34.

people. There are many assumptions about the character of Black individuals before any individual is given a moment to speak. These assumptions put Blacks at risk of death at the hands of police who too often assume Black people to be guilty of crimes against society. Tension between Blacks and police has always been high. Historians Thomas Sugrue and Khalil Muhammad show this has been the case historically.[55] But this is true now more so than before, especially because of social media. Many videos of police harassment have gone viral and expose mind boggling interactions between police and Black citizens.[56] The part that befuddles the viewer is the escalation of violence for matters that could be handled verbally or by following the conduct police are supposed to follow. There are also many material deprivations which put Blacks at risk of early death, as shown above. The conditions Blacks must face separate them from the experiences of others, but what BLM's platform asserts is that Black individuals search for the same things as any other group would regardless of race, identity, sexual orientation, or class.

[55] Sugrue, *Sweet Land of Liberty*,313-355; Muhammad, *The Condemnation of Blackness*, 146-278.
[56] Damien Cave and Rochelle Oliver, "The Videos That Are Putting Race and Policing into Sharp Relief," (http://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2015/07/30/us/police-videos-race.html?_r=0) accessed April 23, 2016.

Chapter 2: Social Movement Theory and Unifying BLM into the Black Freedom Struggle: Lessons from the Civil Rights Movement

Black Lives Matter is only the latest phase of what is often called the Black Freedom Struggle.[57] The idea of a continuous battle for Black rights is based on historical studies of African Americans and their leaders including such people as Frederick Douglass (1818-1895), Booker T. Washington (1856-1915), W.E.B. DuBois (1868-1963), Marcus Garvey (1887-1940), A. Phillip Randolph (1889-1979), Charles Hamilton Houston (1895-1950), Thurgood Marshall (1908-1993), Bayard Rustin (1912-1987), Martin Luther King Jr. (1929-1968), and Stokely Carmichael/Kwame Touré (1941-1998). To combat the idea that the Black Freedom Struggle started only with the Civil Rights Movement of the 1950s, historian Jacqueline Dowd Hall argues for a "Long Civil Rights Movement" dating back to the 1930s and focusing on economic issues, not just legal issues.[58] The Struggle has included Black nationalists, Black socialists, Black pacifists, Black Pan-Africanists, Black accommodationists, and Black integrationists. However, it's this last group and their efforts in the Civil Rights Movement (CRM) from 1954-1968 that has been the most studied as a social movement. This is probably because it is considered successful through the Brown v. Board of Education U.S. Supreme Court decision, the Civil Rights Act of 1964, the Civil Rights Act of 1965, and the Fair Housing Act. We will look at various explanations for why the CRM was

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[57] Clayborne Carson, "Black Freedom Movement," in *Encyclopedia of Southern Culture*, edited by Charles Reagan Wilson and William Ferris (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1989).
[58] Jacqueline Dowd Hall, "The Long Civil Rights Movement and the Political Uses of the Past," *The Journal of American History*, Vol. 91, No.4 (March 2005): 1233-1263.

necessary, why the CRM worked, and how it compares to BLM.

Social Strain Theory

One of the early arguments why local and large scale Social Movements (SMs) emerged in the Black Freedom Struggle was a social psychological explanation. Social Strain Theory argued that as Black people encountered inequality, and exclusion, SMs are a positive reaction to such strains. The alternative negative reaction is crime. Underresourced communities are hindered from development because the conditions fail to change, therefore, the detrimental cycle poverty breeds is allowed to continue.

According to Paul R. Vowell and David C. May "delinquent subculture emerges through a process of adaptations by youth to what they perceive as blocked access to middle-class status."[59] The typical vision of attaining the "American Dream" or socially elevating one's position entails the purchase of a house, car, start of a family, and a stable income. This checklist is not the end all be all, but is considered to be the minimum for success. A big factor in blocked access to success for blacks living in underresourced neighborhoods is the community's isolation. In the article "The Formation of the U.S. Racialized Urban Ghetto" Bloch alluded to the point (quoted in Tony L. Whitehead):

> What this meant for residents of low income inner city communities, was that job opportunities were rapidly declining where there were predominantly blacks and other non-whites minorities reside, they were rapidly increasing in locations in which the percentage of blacks and non-white ethnics were miniscule. For those inner city dwellers who might have the skills or desires for jobs in the new economy now located outside of their communities, there were now problems of transportation and commuting time and costs.[60]

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[59] Paul R. Vowell, David C. May, "Another look at classic strain theory: Poverty status, perceived blocked opportunity, and gang membership as predictors of adolescent violent behavior," *Sociological inquiry 70, no. 1* (2000): 42-60.

[60] Tony L. Whitehead, "The Formation of the U.S. Racialized Urban Ghetto," College Park (MD) Cultural Systems Analysis Group, (2000): 9.

Policies like such deliberately placed hardships on those who lived in low-income neighborhoods and decreased their likelihood to find the type of employment they would need to attain financial stability. Immobilizing the residents would make them stagnant, and would allow for the cycle of poverty and deviance to endlessly continue.

Another psychological strain within underresourced neighborhoods is education. The youth are negatively impacted because "all children are held to the standards of the 'middle-class measuring rod', but some lower-class youth have difficulty meeting those standards. Conversely, endeavors by teachers to compensate for any shortcomings that lower-class students may have only confirm these inadequacies."[61] Holding students from these backgrounds to middle-class standards fails to consider that the differing circumstances between the two. Those who especially suffer from a lack of support systems and resources become susceptible to creating dissident values to oppose the ascribed goals set to them since it is difficult to reach it such as joining gangs. Vowell and May claims that this accomplishes "this alternative value system allows the gang member to acquire prestige by way of delinquency... resulting from the inability to compete effectively with middle-class students in the school environment. In other words, the gang strikes out at the very system that has denied them entrance."[6] What is problematic about corrupting the youth psychologically is that they barely have resources to understand how their minds have been conditioned under their circumstances and what are the repercussions are to fulfilling their predestined prophecies (failure). Carrying the mindset that these underresourced communities often produce (because of intercepted

[61] Paul R. Vowell, David C. May, “Another look at classic strain theory: Poverty status, perceived blocked opportunity, and gang membership as predictors of adolescent violent behavior,” 45.

opportunity) is also problematic because these affected individuals will reproduce children and continue to live underneath the iron boot of social strain.

Given this reality, SMs are a way for poor communities to deal, not only with their material deprivation, but also to fight against the social stigmas they endure. SMs in these communities emerge to empower black lives and combat white supremacy through advocacy for the primary value of humankind, equality. A good example of how deprived conditions affect the psyche of Blacks to connect with SMs is Anne Moody. In her famous autobiography, she explains how growing up in rural Mississippi, she dealt with her family's poverty, the fear of whites on the part of her mother, and an unequal educational system. She talks about how these things disturbed her so badly during her teenage years that she often had chronic headaches whenever she asked the Black adults around her to explain things and they didn't. In one incident, she learned that the white children she had been sent to play with were actually her cousins, but that she shouldn't tell the white children this. When she asked about Emmett Till's murder, her mother shushed her. She cleaned a white woman's house after school but this woman was the head of the local chapter of the local white supremacist Citizens League. Yet it was Anne who helped tutor the white woman's son so that he could pass mathematics. These silences and absurdities caused her emotional distress. Anne found a way out of her pain by joining the Congress on Racial Equality (CORE), and becoming a civil rights worker in her college years of the early 1960s.[62]

The groups that stand on the outskirts of inclusivity are burdened with a strain

[62] Anne Moody, *Coming of Age in Mississippi* (New York: Doubleday, 1968).

(lack of opportunity) that limits their lives within civil society and ultimately places their citizenship in question because of the blatant inequality. These pre-determined disadvantages led to grievance. Out of such conditions, Social Movements (SMs) become normalized as a habitual practice to challenge the accepted commonalities within civil society. Past theorists who studied Social Movements believed grievance to be the general precondition for insurgency. This is certainly the case with the supporters of BLM, as we have seen. BLM supporters individually and as a group feel that Black people in America are aggrieved by racial injustice, and the thirteen principles are comprehensive articulations of those grievances. Therefore they call for a new phase of the Black Freedom Struggle.

Resource Mobilization Theory

How do social movements gain traction? It is not enough for Blacks to call for action. In order to be effective, BLM has to organize well. Resource Mobilization Theory (RMT) explains how one phase of the Freedom Struggle, the CRM phase, and other social movements of the 1960s were able to get off the ground and gain widespread support. John D. McCarthy and Mayer N. Zald defined a social movement as a "set of opinions and beliefs in a population which represents preferences for changing some elements of the social structure and/ or reward distribution of society."[63] The dependence on networks cooperating to make a social movement run fluidly was vital because the political power of the government outweighed those of the citizens; therefore, external resources were needed to achieve their goals. Resource Mobilization Theory "emphasizes

[63] John D. McCarthy and Mayer N. Zald, "Resource mobilization and social movements: A partial theory," *American Journal of Sociology* (1977): 1217.

both societal support and constraint of social movement phenomena. It examines the variety of resources that must be mobilized, the linkages of social movements to other groups, the dependence of movements upon external support for success, and the tactics used by the authorities to control or incorporate movements."[64] Because of the goals of Social Movement Organizations (SMOs) is to make changes within civil society that will affect the lives of individuals, SMOs have to either convince citizens that they would become beneficiaries to these changes or assure them their changes would result in positive universal gains. Significant resources include money, labor, connections, media broadcast, and facilities. Acquisition of these resources distinguished established SMOs from movements that failed to gain traction. RMT suggest that securing these resources allowed for SMOs to receive state recognition. As McCarthy and Zald explain, SMO "adherents are those individuals and organizations that believe in the goals of the movement. The constituents of a SMO are those providing resources for it."[65] These affiliations are key to collective action and without either an SMO cannot begin to mobilize their agenda. RMT suggests that although this is a pivotal aspect for SMs, this does not give them full access to all resources. In fact "mass constituents, adherents, bystander publics, and opponents are those individuals and groups controlling very limited resource pools. The most limited resource pool which individuals can control is their own time and labor. Elites are those who control larger resource pools."[66]

For McCarthy and Zald SMOs are the essential units of a SM. When SMOs "have as their goal the attainment of the broadest preferences of a social movement, they help to

[64] McCarthy and Zald, 1221.
[65] Ibid.
[66] Ibid, 1219.

constitute a social movement industry (SMI)-the organizational analogue of a social movement."[67] SMIs approach issues in a broad way to cause total reformation on a societal issue rather than searching for an alternative, temporary solution, or gradual transformation. The objectives of SMOs vary because some desire small scale changes for satisfaction, while other SMs advocate for comparable goals on a larger scale. A transparent example of this was expressed when McCarthy and Zald's stated: "one may speak of the SMI which aims at liberalized alterations in laws, practices, and public opinion concerning abortion. This SMI would include a number of SMOs. But these SMO's may also be considered part of the broader SMI which is commonly referred to as the 'women's liberation movement' or they could be part of the 'population control movement."[68] What is noticeable is the emergence of SMO's surrounding issues like abortion, but less SMIs that focus on women inequality as a whole. These SMO's serve as smaller pieces to the larger issue that attempts to be addressed.

Another example of this scenario were the various movements that spawned from the Black Freedom Struggle. Some of the SMOs produced were the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee (SNCC), the Southern Christian Leadership Conference (SCLC), The Black Panther Party (BPP), and the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP). All of these movements sought out black liberation, but addressed the issue in particularly different ways.

One example that demonstrates the use of RMT was the Farm Workers Movement during the years of 1950-1960s. J. Craig Jenkins and Charles Perrow

[67] Ibid, 1220.
[68] Ibid.

collaborated to dissect the relevance of the farmers movement in relation to RMT to highlight the various facets involved for a SM to be successful (such as political opportunity, importance of external resources, participant involvement, resistance within the public sphere, and significance of support from those who hold larger resource pools).[69] The National Farm Labor Union (NFLU) united during the 50's to demand better working conditions, opportunities, and pay for immigrants that newly entered the country. The advocacy for such a movement was prevalent, but as Perrow and Jenkins explain, "the vast majority of farm workers, regardless of job commitment or citizenship status, income is so low as to leave little economic reserve for risk-taking."[70] What could not be overlooked is that the primary reason for these citizens entering this country was opportunity and jeopardizing this chance would only resort deportation, which would put them back at their starting point. The NFLU failed to appeal to other groups, but as the 60's approached the United Farm Workers (UFW) gained traction because of their broad approach to the inherent issues with immigration. UFW gained traction because their "boycotts became national 'causes,' receiving widespread support from organized labor and liberal organizations... The success of a 'powerless challenge depended upon sustained and widespread outside support coupled with the neutrality and/or tolerance from the national political elite."[71] The resource pool of the elite is incomparable to any other pool that is available. Within this pool comes everything that an SM needs to mobilize their agenda and gain state recognition (connections, money, facilities, and media attention). The CRM gained widespread support of elites after the media

[69] Craig J. Jenkins and Charles Perrow, "Insurgency of the powerless: Farm worker movements (1946-1972)," *American Sociological Review (*1977): 249-268.
[70] Ibid, 252.
[71] Ibid, 253.

(television and newspaper photographs) showed the brutal tactics of the Birmingham police. The CRM used existing Black organizations like the church and built new SMOs like the Southern Leadership Christian Organization. Slowly, during the 1960s, it gained support of the president (Kennedy was reluctant but agreed to support a Civil Rights Act by 1963), Congress, and the U.S. Supreme Court. In all these ways, the CRM mobilized various resources successfully.[72]

The main resource that BLM seems to be able to mobilize is the media. One of the vital resources that SMs, SMOs, and SMIs rely on is the media, which is because it has the ability to reach millions of individuals. What is deemed worthy of media attention is often considered relevant, which means that the message attempting to be relayed has gained a certain level of importance to where it could not be overlooked within the public sphere. Validation from the media would potentially influence the bystander public and the elite to align themselves with the agenda of a SMO. Media activism for SMOs come in two forms, offensive and defensive. The offensive mode seeks productive communication between those who are in authority and civil society to reform institutional laws in a way that addresses the grievances of affected parties. The defensive mode involves opponents of reform who try to utilize the media to sustain the existing structures of society, or to make only small adjustments to include aggrieved groups.[73] As of today, when it comes to BLM, it seems that a chief resource that it has been able to mobilize is the media. We will discuss this further in the next chapter.

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[72] Raymond D'Angelou, *The American Civil Rights Movement: Readings & Interpretations*, (London: Dushkin Pub Group, 2001) 205.
[73] William A. Gamson and Gadi Wolfsfield, "Movements and Media as Interacting Systems," *The Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science* (1993): 114-125.

Political Process Theory

How do available resources get put to use to attain the goals of SM activists? What are the actual steps involved? This is was Political Process Theory tries to explain. Social insurgency becomes necessary when the political structure in place excludes particular groups through established laws and policies. The power difference between those who are policy enforcers and those who challenge the system in place is evident, and it is safe to conclude that one voice is not sufficient enough to cause reform. What it takes to make a change is collective action and several combined factors to create a social movement that could contend against the political structure. Doug McAdams highlights some of these components which include "Indigenous organizational strength, broad socioeconomic processes, expanding political opportunities, and cognitive liberation" to start a social movement.[74]

The Political Process of Insurgency relies on strong local assemblies because these issues directly affect the masses within civil society. The collection of voices starts with the local communities. Clayborne Carson wrote "Martin Luther King Jr., emerged as a spokesman and as a nationally known proponent of nonviolent resistance only after Montgomery blacks had launched their movement and formed their own local organization- the Montgomery Improvement Association. King's organization, the Southern Christian Leadership Conference, was formed only after the boycott ended."[75] Similarly, Charles Payne strenuously argues that local activists rather than national

[74] Doug McAdam, *Political Process and the Development of Black Insurgency, 1930-1970*, (University of Chicago: Chicago Press, 2010): 51.
[75] Clayborne Carson, Civil rights Reform and the Black Freedom Struggle, *The Civil Rights Movement in America* (1986): 25.

organization were the real engine of the Civil Rights Movement. An example of this is the sit-in movement. This began with an action planned by a group of black college students at Greensboro State University on February 1, 1960 who decided to challenge the rule that African Americans could not be served at lunch counters. The students came to the decision to launch the sit-in on their own without the prompting of any national organization. Emulation of the sit-ins began to occur and black people of all ages began to demand service in white-only departments. According to Townsend Davis "by July Greensboro and 27 other border state cities had adopted integration in some form. By spring 1961, 140 had come around."[76]

Broad socioeconomic developments can contribute to a social movement. Doug McAdam stated "it remains only to identify the ways in which favorable shifts in the structure of political opportunities increase the likelihood of successful insurgent action... Most fundamentally, such shifts improve the chances for successful social protest by reducing the power discrepancy between insurgent groups and their opponents."[77] Economic expansions like better jobs that provide stable incomes allow for aggrieved citizens to gain more autonomy. Once this is achieved, the amount of resources available expands, and what was inaccessible before becomes tangible. As the power increases of the marginalized groups "the increased political leverage exercised by the insurgent group renders it a more formidable opponent."[78] An example of this would be the movement of more black workers into industrial jobs in the North after World War II. Even though they still made less than white workers, in cities like Detroit, they had more

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[76] Townsend Davis, *Weary Feet, Rested Souls: A Guided History of the Civil Rights Movement*, (New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 1998): 312.
[77] McAdam, Political Process and the Development of Black Insurgency, 1930-1970, 43.
[78] Ibid.

and steadier income available to them and with this security, they could involve themselves more in various local and national Black advocacy organizations.[79]

What is more uncontrollable is the political opportunities present during the period of the potential social movement. For example, Mamie Till, the mother of young Emmett Till, turned her 14-year-old son's lynching into a political opportunity in 1955. Prior to this event, lynching and murders of blacks who had violated or were suspected of violating the South's racial codes went unnoticed, or else when pictures appeared they were taken by whites who wanted to celebrate their power and intimidate blacks. But Mrs. Till was outraged and wanted the world to see what white racists had done to her son, so she insisted on an open-casket funeral that publicly displayed her son's grossly disfigured face (from beating and drowning) to the national media. This was a first and it caused many African Americans to want to do something to address the South's injustices. John Lewis and Anne Moody who were teenagers in Alabama and Mississippi at the time recalled the incident vividly as part of their political awakening as future black workers in Civil Rights Movement.[80] Bloody Sunday in Selma, Alabama in 1965 provided black power advocates with a political opportunity to criticize the non-violent strategy of the CRM's key leaders as television cameras captured footage of mounted policeman and policeman on foot trampling and beating back orderly protestors, including women, with clubs and tear gas.[81] By 1966, Black Power became a catch phrase indicating the more aggressive goals of students and young people associated with

[79] Thomas Sugrue, *The Origins of the Urban Crisis: Race and Inequality in Postwar Detroit* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1996).
[80] Anne Moody, *Coming of Age in Mississippi*.
[81] John Lewis *Walking with the Wind: A Memoir of the Movement*.

the Black Freedom Struggle.[82]

One key thing that should not be overlooked about the political process is the government's role in the establishment of laws. The government has the last call in deciding what laws would be modified and which will be negated. According to Clayborne Carson "abolitionist activists, historians have suggested, did not free blacks from bondage through moral suasion or through other distinctive forms of antislavery militancy instead, the Republican Party transformed abolitionist sentiments into a viable political program."[83] This example serves as a reminder that reformation goes beyond dislike and requires mobilization on a large scale, which then proceeds to be passed on to government for them to decide how to interpret the challenge to their order. It was up for the people to unite to express their common discontent and wish for transformation, but it was up to the government to decide if the aggrieved groups' concern was legitimate enough to change their established laws, and if so, how they would accomplish this without interfering with their own personal interests. Steven Lawson also argues that the CRM would not have experienced forward movement without support from all three branches of the federal government. Supreme Court decisions like Brown v. Board of Education (1954) and Gayle v. Browder (1956) struck down segregation in public education and public transportation.[84] Executive decisions by the president like Eisenhower's move to send the National Guard to protect the Little Rock Nine in 1957 promoted school integration. Congress passed civil rights legislation in 1964 1965, and

[82] Ibid.
[83] Clayborne Carson, Civil rights Reform and the Black Freedom Struggle, 23.
[84] Lawson and Payne, Debating the Civil Rights Movement, 3-42.

1966.[85]

Cognitive liberation is a final component of the political process. Oppressed people who have previously accepted domination by more powerful forces must begin to question their condition to the point of being moved to action. Their thinking has to be changed. They become persuaded that their powerlessness is not "natural." An example of this would be what transpired during the Montgomery Bus Boycott. Up to that time, the CRM had taken place mostly in the courts through the efforts of the NAACP. But the Montgomery Bus Boycott transformed the movement into a mass movement as ordinary black people who identified with Rosa Parks got involved by the hundreds and thousands. Their cognitive liberation was facilitated by nightly rallies at the city's churches. These meetings were like cheerleading rallies, featuring speeches by King and other preachers who prodded the congregation who responded enthusiastically:

> And you know, my friends, there comes a time when people get tired of being trampled over by the iron feet of oppression. [Sustained applause] There comes a time, my friends, when people get tired of being plunged across the abyss of humiliation, where they experience the bleakness of nagging despair. (Keep talking) There comes a time when people get tired of being pushed out of the glittering sunlight of life's July and left standing amid the piercing chill of an alpine November. (That's right) [Applause] There comes a time. (Yes sir teach) [Applause continues][86]

The audience's positive response is an indication of their growing "cognitive liberation." We will need to ask in the next chapter whether BLM is sufficiently engaged in political processes.

<u>New Social Movement Theory</u>

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[85] Ibid.

[86] Martin Luther King, Jr., "Address to the First Montgomery Improvement Association Mass Meeting, December 5, 1955. Accessed at http://kingencyclopedia.stanford.edu/encyclopedia/documentsentry/the_addres_to_the_first_montgomery_improvement_association_mia_mass_meeting.1.html, December 2, 2015.

Social strain theory, resource mobilization theory, and political process theory all have this in common. Individuals who were a part of the movements that theorists in these fields observed united to achieve economic, social, and material benefits mainly. The advocacy for material gains included improved housing conditions, increased job opportunity, an emphasis on higher quality education, and integration in social accommodations and political offices. During the Civil Rights Movement (CRM) era of the Black Freedom Struggle, boycotts, sit-ins, and marches were mobilized to reform the policies in place in pursuit of the goals above. Because of the CRM achieved undeniable global recognition, many of their demands were considered. As a result, the American public sphere was reshaped through legislation by the US Congress and by US Supreme Court decisions. However, these past theories failed to include movements outside of the scope of integration and economic and material gains (such as the Black Arts Movement and black cultural nationalism) where the personal became the political. New Social Movement Theory (NSM) deviates from past explanations of social movements because it focuses on cultural rather than material politics. When unpacking the ideology behind Social Movements, one can see the paradigmatic shift in the years that follow the 1960's. The evolution of the political sphere altered the internal structure of society and how the government corresponded with the citizens of civil society. Attaining economic equality became less valued and the quality of human life became the emphasis within civil society and emergent Social Movements. Jean Cohen explained that "resource-mobilization, which resolutely pursues the objectifying logic of empirical-analytical social science, is interested primarily in aggregate data and not in questions of identity."[87]

[87] Jean Cohen, Strategy or Identity: New Theoretical Paradigms and Contemporary Social Movements, (*Social Research*, 1985): 665.

Modernization gave individuals more independence and those marginalized groups realized the norms ascribed within their culture did not leave room for reinterpretation. Exclusion of non-heteronormative groups created a clear divide between accepted identities and those who would have no choice, but to be marginalized because their lives were not compatible with the political structure in place. Institutional policies affected the way individuals lived and that was greater than monetary acquisition or material gains if they were going to continue to be oppressed in different ways. Nelson Pichardo drew a parallel abroad of New Social Movement Theory (NSMT) and wrote "in Europe, where Marxist theories of social movements dominated, Marxist theorists were unable to provide a convincing explanation for why students had become the vanguard of protest and why movement demands centered around quality of life rather than redistributive issues."[88] The scope of activism expanded as well as the groups of people who advocated for change.

A challenge was presented that had not been faced by the government nor political actors. The common narrative was broken by the emergence of the NSM paradigm. Contemporary Social Movements differ from the CRM and other movements of the 1960s, and previous SM theories because they focus on identity. According to Pichardo "the focus on identity is considered unique in modern movements because 'identity politics also express the belief that identity itself -its elaboration, expression, or affirmation-is and should be a fundamental focus of political work. In this way, the politics of identity have led to an unprecedented politicization of previously nonpolitical

[88] Nelson Pichardo, New social movements: A critical Review, (*Annual review of sociology*, 1997): 412.

terrains."[89] For example, CRM protesters marching for voting rights made sure to dress in their Sunday Best. In photographs, men are often wearing suits and women are wearing fashionable dresses with heels (see photographs 3-8).

Photo 3: 1965 March from Selma to Montgomery.[90]

[89] Pichardo, 414.
[90] Josh Whitener, *An unsung hero of the Civil Rights Movement*, (http://thecharlotteweekly.com/news/2015/01/an-unsung-hero-of-the-civil-rights-movement/) accessed May 2, 2016.

Photo 4: March for equal employment, and housing opportunities within the 1950's.[91]

[91] *The Civil Rights Movement*, (http://aliandcivilrights.weebly.com/the-civil-rights-movement.html) accessed May 2, 2016.

Photo 5: Fire hoses used against Black non-violent demonstrators in Birmingham in 1963.[92]

[92] *The Sixties*, (http://www.americanyawp.com/text/27-the-sixties/) accessed May 2, 2016.

Photo 6: Integration of bus transportation system in 1961.[93]

[93] John Fuller, *How the Civil Rights Movement Worked*, (http://history.howstuffworks.com/historical-events/civil-rights-movement5.htm) accessed May 2, 2016.

Photo 7: Police harassment during 1963 Birmingham boycott.[94]

Photo 8: Dr. King and Robert F. Kennedy in the early 1960s.[95]

In addition, even though figures like Bayard Rustin, a known homosexual, were critical strategists within the CRM, leaders did their best to keep his sexuality and the sexual behavior of leaders under cover and out of any discussions.[96] They were not interested in a cultural revolution. They were interested in access to the existing American culture. CRM leaders knew that for FBI Director J. Edgar Hoover, "interracial sex, extramarital sex, premarital sex, homosexuality, bisexuality, and sexual deviancy was all something that could be used to discredit political adversaries. And it something to which Martin

[94] *Reflecting on Progress and Frustrations: 50 Years Since the Civil Rights Act*, (http://theislamicmonthly.com/reflecting-on-progress-and-frustrations-50-years-since-the-civil-rights-act/) accessed May 2, 2016.
[95] *Federal Intervention*, (https://www.boundless.com/u-s-history/textbooks/boundless-u-s-history-textbook/the-sixties-29/furthering-the-civil-rights-movement-220/federal-intervention-1222-8796/) accessed May 2, 2016.
[96] Kenneth O'Reilly, "Racial Matters': The FBI's Secret File on Black America, 1960-1972," in *Martin Luther King, Jr. and the Civil Rights Movement: Controversies and Debates*, edited by John A. Kirk (New York: Palgrave, 2007), 207-216.

Luther King –and in a broader sense the civil rights movement as a whole in the 1960s—appeared to be particularly vulnerable."[97] So CRM leaders did their best to stay away from these issues. Besides, they were not their main concern. The new plateau of gains in civil rights they accomplished created the conditions to give entrance to identity and lifestyle politics within the political sphere. This was unexpected for policy enforcers. The denial of institutionalized norms was a challenge to the state that it did not prepare for. Old and new groups protested that democratic guarantees that were promised by the U.S. Declaration of Independence and Constitution were empty. Being silent would only allow for this to continue, and this explains a lot of the BLM agenda.

Social Movements, Public Policy, and Democratic Institutions

Changes that are made to established policies involve multiple political stakes. Reformation to policies, are in the hands of political actors who carry authority and ultimately have the duty of meeting the needs of the citizens that inhabit their city or state. Sociologist Paul Burstein created the theory democratic representation to explain the three primary goals of elected officials while in office which state "first is reelection, which for most legislators takes precedence over all other goals. Legislators also want to win influence for themselves among their colleagues and to promote what they believe to be good public policy."[98] Preserving their political livelihood is a top priority for these officials, therefore we can conclude what makes officials support particular policies is "the number of votes they think their actions will win or lose them at election time."[99]

[97] O. Reilly, 213
[98] Marco Giugni, Doug McAdam, and Charles Tilly, *How Social Movements Matter*. (*Vol. 10. U of Minnesota Press*, 1999): 5.
[99] Ibid.

These officials rely on public opinion to frame their campaigns to ensure they present themselves as the best candidates to fulfill what citizens are requesting from their government to secure their positions. SM's or as Burstein refers to them, interest organizations, are of importance because they express changes that citizens desire that particularly affect their well-being, but if the majority of the public wants something other than what the interest organizations are demanding, then the official will reject their complaints.[100] Because democracies place high values on the majority, public opinion of the general masses outweighs the dissent of SM's or interest organizations.

[100] Ibid, 9.

Chapter 3: Pluralistic Self-Determination: Black Radical Politics the Continuing Fight For Emancipation, and Final Conclusions

Black Lives Matter can be seen as a new phase of the Black Freedom Struggle. By the mid-1960s, the Black agenda was expanding in very visible ways. After the Civil Rights Movement peaked with the passage of the Voting Rights Act of 1965, it became clear that desegregation and nondiscriminatory election laws were not enough for many Blacks. More issues became apparent. Urban riots in Newark, New York, Detroit, and Los Angeles called attention to the problems within America's Black ghettoes. The Oceanville-Brownsville Crisis of 1968 put the spotlight on Blacks' insistence on community control of schools. A Black Arts Movement centered in Newark and Los Angeles emphasized Black cultural pride in dress, hair, and poetry. Political nationalists called for a separate Black American state. The Nation of Islam attacked the Black Christianity and non-violence of the CRM. In the late 1960s, Black radical politics took center stage, and pushed the CRM aside. Emancipation became mostly predicated on the self-defense of identity.[101] In many ways, BLM represents a return to the Black radical politics of the late 1960s and early 1970s. Using Social Movement Theory, we can compare this period to today's BLM to assess the likelihood of BLM's success. At the same time social movement theory drawn from the CRM has limited applicability for

[101] Hank Johnston, Enrique Larana and Joseph R. Gusfield "Identities, Greivances, and New Social Movements" In New Social Movements: From Ideology to Identity," *Temple University Press* (1994): 3-35.

understanding BLM the CRM's main focus was symbolic inclusion. The Radical Black Politics of the BPP was Marxist and directly confronted structural economic inequalities. Since part of BLM's agenda also focuses on systemic economic injustice, the BPP's successes and failures perhaps provide a sharper lens for evaluating the validity of BLM as a political project.

The Black Panther Party was organized in 1966 as a new SMO and perhaps is the clearest example of twentieth century Black radical politics. Like BLM, the BPP had a multiple agenda that included economic, criminal justice politics, and cultural politics. Its economic program dealt with Black body security by addressing food insecurity within local Black communities. The BPP used a Marxist frame to analyze the politicization of hunger or in other words exercising one's labor extensively to ensure the economic security needed to purchase food, when eating was a "socionatural process".[102] The conditions that determined who had accessibility to enough food to be fully functional was based off of power relations, and that precisely was what the BPP wanted to combat through their "survival programs".[103] The free breakfast program according to author of *Bending the Bars of Empire from Every Ghetto for Survival: The Black Panther Party's Radical Antihunger Politics of Social Reproduction and Scale*, Nik Heynen, liberated Black children from that particular aspect of poverty.[104] Economically, many Black families were not able to routinely provide their children with the guarantee of three sufficient meals per day. The opportunity deprivation that plagued several Black

[102] Nik Heynen "Bending the Bars of Empire from Every Ghetto for Survival: The Black Panther Party's Radical Antihunger Politics of Social Reproduction and Scale," *Annals of the Association of American Geographers*, Vol. 99 no. 2, (2009): 409.
[103] Ibid.
[104] Ibid, 407.

neighborhoods prevented them from earning the necessary income to afford that sort of lifestyle. Working strenuous hours did not compensate economically for this to occur for Blacks within the conditions of their neighborhoods.

The radicalization of this movement went beyond carrying visible firearms to patrol the police who harassed Black residents. The cultural politics the BPP engaged in promoted Black empowerment.

Photo 9: Black Panthers at Anti-Vietnam Demonstration (1969).[105]

[105] "A Look Back: Afronistas of the 60's," http://frolab.com/2009/06/23/a-look-back-afronistas-of-the-60s/), accessed April 27, 2016.

Photo 10: Black Panthers Lineup at rally in DeFremery Park in Oakland, California.[106]

The purpose of their insurgence was to instill a positive sense of selfhood that left behind all traces of inferiority. Panthers were all known for their Afro hairdos rather than the shorter, clean-shaven, or straightened hair look of CRM leaders that mirrored White establishment. Panthers provided a revisionist version of Black history intended to instill Black pride and correct what they felt were misrepresentations of the past. For example, the Panther newsletter carried a story called "Huey and History" that provided a lesson in Black history and placed the BPP's Minister of Defense in a long line of Black leaders: "Gabriel Prosser, Denmark Vesey, Nat Turner, and company all fought to end the monstrous system of de jure slavery that existed in the United States. After slavery was declared illegal, black men continued to resist the injustices of de facto slavery." [107] The implication was that Newton was one of those black men. In a similar way, BLM leaders like Alicia Garza, Patrisse Cullors, and Opal Tometi all wear Black "ethnic" hairstyles

[106] "Policing the Police: How the Black Panthers Got Started," http://wglt.org/post/director-chronicles-black-panthers-rise-new-tactics-were-needed#stream/0), accessed April 27, 2016

[107] Frank P. Jones, "Huey and History," *Inter-community Newsletter*, Vl !!, No. 5, (September 7, 1968), 2

(see Photo 8), and the BLM principle, Unapologetically Black, asserts Black self-love and pride.

Photo 11: Co-founders of Black Lives Matter Movement.[108]

The dominant masculine narrative was challenged internally by the women who were members of the BPP. Polemically, Eldridge Cleaver stated in a speech at Stanford University in 1968 "we say that political power, revolutionary power grows out of the lips of the pussy."[109] On the surface this comment reduces the value of the women simply to a body part, but the logic behind Cleaver's assessment has to do with the nurturing yet vigorous nature of women. Those who organized, prepared food for the

[108] *MLK Speakers Biography Opal Tometi, Alicia Garza, Patrisse Cullors* (http://www.luc.edu/diversity/signatureevents/mlk-celebration/mlkspeakersbiography/) accessed April 27, 2016.
[109] Heynen "*Bending the Bars of Empire from Every Ghetto for Survival: The Black Panther Party's Radical Antihunger Politics of Social Reproduction and Scale*," 412.

Breakfast programs, while participating in all of the militaristic aspects of the movement were women, and this broke down the party ranks of the roles between the two counterparts.[110] Members such as Elaine Brown created distinct legacies because of their personal commitment, contributions, and activism within the group that could not be overshadowed by the other male figures. Hidden beneath the dominant narrative of male spotlighted power was the long waited acknowledgement of the duties women were required to perform on an everyday basis. These qualities were essential for carrying out the BPP's agenda, and a lot of their success would not have been possible without their helping hands.

Co-founder of the BPP Huey Newton also addressed women subordination and homophobia in a speech he delivered in New York titled "A Letter to the Revolutionary Brothers and Sisters About The Women's Liberation and Gay Liberation Movements."[111] Providing support for these movements was rarely promoted by Black Freedom Struggle activists, therefore, Newton's address appeared as a drastic shift in Black empowerment political and cultural values. Huey's remarks during the speech highlighted:

> I do not remember our ever constituting any value that said that a revolutionary must say offensive things towards homosexuals, or that a revolutionary should make sure that women do not speak out about their own particular kind of oppression. As a matter of fact, it is just the opposite: we say that we recognize the women's right to be free… I can understand this fear. Because of the long conditioning process which builds insecurity in the American male, homosexuality might produce certain hang-ups in us. I have hang-ups myself about male homosexuality. But on the other hand, I have no hang-up about female homosexuality. And that is a phenomenon in itself… We should be careful about using those terms that might turn our friends off. The terms "faggot" and "punk" should be deleted from our vocabulary, and especially we should not attach names normally designed for homosexuals to men who are enemies of the people, such as Richard Nixon or John Mitchell.[112]

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[110] Ibid, 413.
[111] *Huey Supported Gay Rights Back in 1970*, (http://www.newnownext.com/huey-newton-black-panthers-gay/07/2015/) accessed April 27, 2016.
[112] Ibid.

Revolutionary thought was rooted in the idea of freedom, which meant the elimination of struggle. Demonizing homosexuals undermined the agenda of Black liberation because the LGBT community posed no direct threat to heterosexuals of the Black community. Infringing upon their right to equality was the same logic Whites used against Blacks as a whole. The focal point of Black insecurity was the enfranchised policy makers who purposely excluded Blacks from enjoying the benefits of living a life with first class citizenship. Appropriating the same practices that Whites used to dominate victimized Blacks would make the BPP as entire movement illegitimate. Although these thoughts came from a seemingly budding revolutionary elite with the interests of victimized groups, these ideas were not embraced with open arms by the masses.

But the BPP is best known for its rejection of nonviolence. Like BLM, the BPP directly confronted the problem of police brutality against Blacks. In fact, it was the Panthers who were the first activists in the Black Freedom Struggle to regularly call attention to police violence against the Black community. In the BPP newsletter the notorious term “pig” for the police was coined and the newsletter regularly featured negative cartoons of cops.

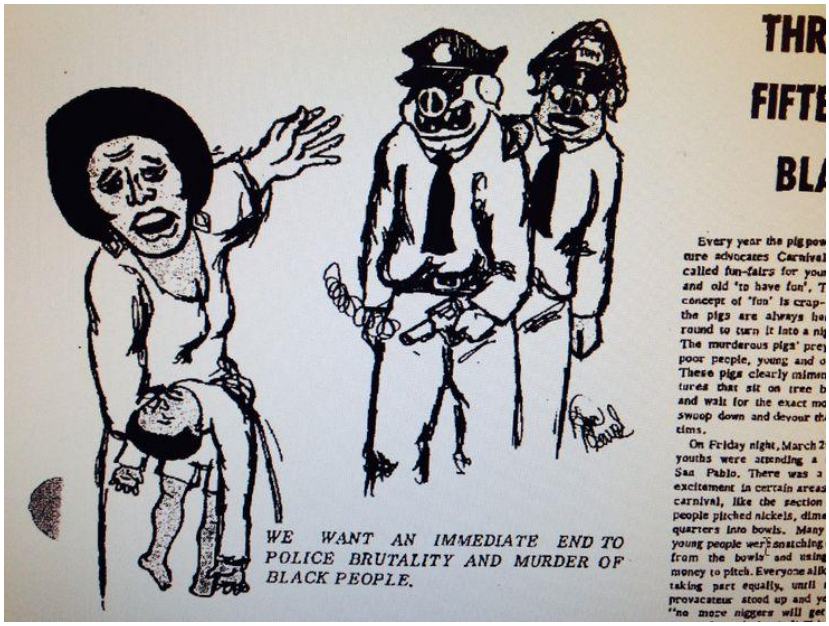

Photo 12: Image depicting a frightened Black mother who loss her child to police officers that resemble pigs because of their shameless bias against Black bodies.[113]

In a 1968 issue, for example, the BPP proclaimed, "By killing our leaders and using Nazi gestapo tactics on the streets of black communities from coast to coast, and harassing black people in their homes, on their jobs, in the schools, on the streets, on the television, on the news, in books, and in church, the [white] man is trying to instill a super fear of him, his technology, and his inhumanity to paralyze our growing struggle for our God-given rights."[114] In the same issue, the newsletter featured a photograph of a white woman with a rifle above a caption that warned Black people that "WHITE CITIZENS ARE ARMING THEMSELVES all over the country and organizing their communities not for self-defense but for the outright slaughter of innocent black citizens."[115]

Ironically, the mobilization of the BPP (fighting for Black liberation) heightened fear

[113] *Emmett, Trayvon & Too Many More*, (https://www.pinterest.com/rexi44/emmett-trayvon-too-many-more/) accessed April 28, 2016.
[114] *Inter-Community Newsletter,* Vol. II, No. 1 (May 4, 1968), 4.
[115] [115] *Inter-Community Newsletter,* Vol. II, No. 1 (May 4, 1968), 2

amongst the White community. Their new non-tolerant attitude towards the state's failure to extend their egalitarianism principles to the Black community redefined civil disobedience, and thus heightened White fear of Black individuals. This uneasiness combined with the accepted notion that Black bodies were disposable, would mean extreme measures would be taken to disassemble the movement that jeopardized their security.

Director of the Federal Bureau of Investigation J. Edgar Hoover labeled the BPP as "the greatest threat to the internal security of the country" and thus gave birth to operation COINTELPRO (Counter Intelligence Program).[116] This was meant to destabilize the BPP and freeze all of their activity from continuing to influence the public. A female Panther in the Chicago chapter reported "the night before it [the first breakfast program in Chicago] it was supposed to open, the Chicago police broke into the church where we had the food and mashed up all the food and urinated on it."[117] It didn't matter that for children in developmental stages "skipping breakfast leads to increased cognitive error, causes slower memory recall, and reduces children's ability to distinguish among similar images."[118] What was at stake in the minds of Hoover and those who thought like him, was the idea that they were losing control over the Black population. COINTELPRO reached new heights when the killing of respected panther Fred Hampton was executed. His death was described as "the spray of automatic gunfire that followed from the police penetrated the walls of the apartment and a bullet pierced Hampton's shoulders while he was passed out in bed with his pregnant girlfriend, after having been

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[116] Heynen *Bending the Bars of Empire from Every Ghetto for Survival: The Black Panther Party's Radical Antihunger Politics of Social Reproduction and Scale*, 414.
[117] Ibid.
[118] Ibid, 409.

slipped some secobarbital by an informant within the BPP. Next, two police officers entered Hampton's room and shot him at point blank range in the head."[119] The grounds for executing Hampton was more than questionable, seeing that he never physically threatened to harm any individuals, but what Hampton (and other panthers) did was pose a threat to the establishment of White supremacy. In 1966 the U.S. Department of Agriculture started the School Breakfast Program (SBP) in 1966 which was designed to provide breakfast for children in need, but it was not until 1975 that the SBP was officially established permanent congressional authorization.[120] This was a representation of the longstanding resistance the BPP agenda faced from authoritative figures given political power.

Similarly, police and civilian (Martin, Zimmerman) aggression against Blacks is the catalyst that sparked BLM in the first place. Like the BPP, BLM puts Black males on center stage because of their vulnerability to arrest, injury, and death at the hands of the police. Because they were seen as the source of threats to society, police officers saw it fit to instill discipline in Blacks through measures that would strike fear into their hearts. This preemptive strike launched by the police has always been labeled as restoring civil order and escalation that have led to deaths rarely result in punitive consequences for officers. The visibility of BLM has somewhat tarnished the reputation of police officers by forcing them to stare at the reflection of their actions through vigorous advocacy for those who have lost their lives, been unjustly incarcerated, or have been mistreated by officers. Regarding Resource Mobilization Theory and Social Strain Theory, the BPP considered ordinary Black, working-class people—especially untapped, poor, young,

[119] Ibid, 415.
[120] Ibid, 411.

Black males—and the pent-up anger of this group as its primary resource to combat police brutality. These are the people the BPP wanted to organize. The infamous Ten Point Platform drafted by panther members explained the purpose of their mobilization:

> 1. We want freedom. We want power to determine the destiny of our Black community. 2. We want full employment for our people. 3. We want an end to the robbery by the white man of our Black community. 4. We want decent housing, fit for shelter for human beings. 5. We want education for our people that exposes the true nature of this decadent American society. We want education that teaches us our true history and our role in present-day society. 6. We want all black men exempt from the military service. 7. We want an immediate end to POLICE BRUTALITY and MURDER of black people. 8. We want freedom for all black men held in federal, state, county and city prisons and jails. 9. We want all black people when brought to trial to be tried in court by a jury of their peer group or people from their black communities, as defined by the constitution of the United States. 10. We want land, bread, housing, education, clothing, justice, peace and people's community control of modern technology.[121]

All of these requests were significant to the emancipation of Black individuals because these were the factors that violated BBHS. Subjection to insecurity of the Black body exemplified "the historic unwillingness of the U.S. government to provide viable welfare services…"[122] In contrast, BLM seems to want to organize a wide demographic of people, just as the CRM did. This is transparent in BLM's guiding principles: diversity, collective value, globalism, transgender affirming, queer affirming, and intergenerational.[123] Before Dr. King was assassinated, his goal was to unite working-class individuals from multiple ethnic backgrounds to connect their experiences of inequality as one entire fight for freedom.[124]

But how will BLM mobilize its supporters? And will its mobilizations efforts have any positive systemic impact? As Political Process Theory sees local organizing as

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[121] Van Goose, *Rethinking the New Left* (London: Macmillan, 2005) 117.
[122] Heynen *Bending the Bars of Empire from Every Ghetto for Survival: The Black Panther Party's Radical Antihunger Politics of Social Reproduction and Scale*, 410.
[123] *We affirm that all Black Lives Matter: Guiding Principles* (http://blacklivesmatter.com/guiding-principles/) accessed April 29, 2016.
[124] William P. Jones "The Unknown Origins of the March on Washington: Civil Rights Politics and the Black Working Class," (*Labor 7* no. 3: 2010) 33-52.

a first step, the BPP worked through local chapters to organize at the grassroots level.[125] Similarly, BLM has seen several demonstrations organized in various cities. BLM protesters organized a demonstration in Chicago after the shooting of 16-year-old Pierre Loury April 2016.[126] Another protest took place in Minnesota following the death of 24-year-old Black male James Clark in November 2015, where local coalition Twin Cities joined the movement as well as local labor unions, which ultimately led to an 18-day encampment outside of the police precinct of the officers who murdered the victim.[127] BLM has also spread their influence through disruptive tactics such as showing up to Presidential hopeful campaigns and disrupting their speeches. This does not occur every time BLM activists attend rallies. There are instances where they attend rallies to peacefully stand in solidarity in defiance against the campaigner's mission, and as of recent that has led to violence from Donald Trump supporters. A rally in Chicago was cancelled in March 2016 by Trump's team out of fear of for his security, led to the injury of two officers and at least two other citizens who were anticipating the rally to occur.[128]

Strategic use of the media has been an element in Resource Mobilization that facilitates the Political Process of social change for SMs in the Black Freedom Struggle. For the CRM, it was the use of television. For the BPP, it was the use of print media. Its *Inter-Community Newsletter* allowed the BPP to address the factors that perpetually

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[125] Clayborne Carson "Civil rights reform and the black freedom struggle," (*The civil rights movement in America*: (1986) 19-32.
[126] *Family says boy, 16, fatally shot by cop had scrapes with law but no major trouble* (http://www.chicagotribune.com/news/local/breaking/ct-home-square-police-shooting-20160411-story.html) accessed April 29, 2016.
[127] *In Minneapolis, protesters rally before Jamar Clark case decision* (http://www.twincities.com/2016/03/26/in-minneapolis-protesters-rally-before-jamar-clark-case-decision/) accessed April 29, 2016.
[128] *Donald Trump Rally In Chicago Canceled After Protesters Turn Out In Droves* (http://www.huffingtonpost.com/entry/trump-rally-chicago_us_56e366ece4b0b25c9182176f) accessed April 29, 2016.

disenfranchised the black community. The language used in their weekly newspaper was intended to inspire blacks to ponder self-actualization through critically observing their environment and the structures that infringed upon their survival. The BPP's emphasis on local communities focused on discussing issues that specifically plagued their communities. The multiple deaths caused by overdose led to panther Michel Tabor to write:

> Since the reality of our objective existence seemed to confirm the racist doctrines of White superiority and its antithesis, Black inferiority, and since we lacked an understanding of our condition, we internalized the racist propaganda of our oppressors. We began to believe that we were inherently inferior to whites. These feelings of inferiority gave birth to a sense of self-hatred which finds expression in in self-destructive behavior patterns. The wretchedness of our plight, our sense of powerless and despair, created within our minds a predisposition towards the use of any substance that produces euphoric illusions. We are inclined to use anything that enables us to suffer peacefully. We have developed an escapist complex. This escapist complex is self-destructive.[129]

This rhetoric would not appear within every day printed media that circulated around White consumers. Sub-conscious internalized self-hatred entailed sabotage of the self through irrational behavior in response to the dimensions of insecurity Blacks faced in every aspect of their lives, but this was often not paid attention to because they were focused on achieving goals to meet every day needs. Neighborhoods populated of mostly black individuals were heavily supplied with drugs during the late 1950's, which was seen as a way to alleviate suffering. Drugs were extremely accessible, and with the intent to be sold in bulk because where there was supply there was demand. Users would feel temporary moments of elation, but the true benefiters of this system are the distributors, who during that time tended to be individuals of higher social class positions. The distribution of the BPP weekly newspaper were created to capture the attention of blacks

[129] Michael Tabor, "Capitalism plus dope equals genocide," (*Inter-Community Newsletter*, 1970) 4.

from local communities who could not fathom life outside of the perimeters they were confined to. BLM takes advantage of social media to push their platform.

Virtual Coalitions: Is Social Media an Engine for Mobilization?

The media beyond a doubt, is influential in the success of SMs because they establish legitimacy. According to Dieter Rucht, one of the several editors of *Cyberprotest: New Media, Citizens and Social Movements* "most, but not all social movements and protest groups strive to get media attention and, if possible, positive media coverage, which in turn may be crucial to influencing people's hearts and minds and, eventually, policy decisions."[130] Changing the hearts of bystanders to become aware of the injustice protest groups advocate against is what leads to the recruitment of new members and ultimately a shift in public opinion. Through this lens, it is obvious why protest groups are reliant upon the media, but what must not be forgotten in this equation is the tradeoff in relation to the media and SMs. Sustaining legitimacy as a respectable news source relies on "daily struggle to attract an audience, the media have relatively clear measures of success (e.g. circulation of newspapers, number of people listening to a radio station or watching a television channel). This leads to a direct and tough competition, which, in many instances, follows the logic of a zero-sum game."[131] So in the midst of a SM attempting to gain legitimacy through the media, what we see is the media searching for legitimacy through finding news that would attract attention and extend their brand into the public sphere. BLM's use of social media is advantageous in

[130] Van De Donk et al. *Cyberprotest: New media, Citizens and Social Movements* (New York: Routledge, 2004) 25.
[131] Van De Donk et al. *Cyberprotest: New media, Citizens and Social Movements*, 29.

some respects in regards to examining their agenda as an NSM carrying on the fight for BBHS.

There are strengths to utilizing this modern media source. One difference that is highlighted by Summer Harlow author of *Social Media and Social Movements: Facebook and an Online Guatemalan Justice Movement that Moved Offline* was "when it comes to supporting traditional techniques of social movements, whether protests or signature drives, the internet, unlike any other medium, allows for fast, easy and cheap transnational action not limited by time, space or distance."[132] Social network sites (SNS) such as Facebook and Twitter have users varying from several global regions, which generates a system that it is easy to connect with others through mutual friends, name searches, options to send friend request, sharing of other's online comments, etc… Other online sites provide the same new sources that you would have to pay for if one was to purchase a newspaper, or tune into radio stations, but in a matter of clicks. This instant gratification serves as a more convenient option for most media consumers. This also allows for viewers to leave comments on the material they come across while simultaneously engaging in discourses with other citizens from different cities and countries who have also viewed the same source. Social media also sets itself apart "when it comes to awareness and advocacy, the Web allows a social movement to bypass traditional media gatekeepers."[133] In other words, SMs have the opportunity to articulate their own claims through the creation of their own online publications to serve as alternatives to dominant media narratives. Official websites of organizations or advocacy

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[132] Summer Harlow *Social Media and Social Movements: Facebook and an Online Guatemalan Justice Movement that Moved Offline*, (New Media & Society: 14, no. 2, 2012) 5.
[133] Summer Harlow *Social Media and Social Movements: Facebook and an Online Guatemalan Justice Movement that Moved Offline*, 6.

groups can clarify exactly what they stand for and lessens the possibility for their agenda to become distorted. A moment where online activity evolved into offline collective mobilization was BLM's rendition of the Freedom Rides after the death of Michael Brown.[134] The Black Lives Matter Ride to Ferguson, Missouri was filled with heavy-hearted sympathizers who witnessed the injustice that was all too familiar within the Black community.

This spur of the moment motivation to unite underneath one common issue seems inspiring on the surface, but when comparing these tactics to those of the CRM and BPP, one must assess the execution if the BLM movement's goal is to achieve what their ancestors could not entirely gain. What we have just discussed are the strengths of using the internet to express dissent and unite in solidarity. To continue to have a productive discussion, we must shift the attention of social media/the internet to explore its weaknesses. Within the same article written by Harlow, he critiques social media along the lines that "it seems online social media like Facebook have the potential to spur moments of collective action, but SNS may not yet be enough to provoke long-term social change…"[135] Malcolm Gladwell believes the missing link to be:

> The platforms of social media are built around weak ties. Twitter is a way of following (or being followed by) people you may never have met. Facebook is a tool for efficiently managing your acquaintances, for keeping up with the people you would not otherwise be able to stay in touch with. That's why you can have a thousand friends on 'Facebook', as you could never could in real life… But weak ties seldom lead to high-risk activism.[136]

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[134] *5 ways to never forget Ferguson – and deliver real justice for Michael Brown* (http://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2014/sep/04/never-forget-ferguson-justice-for-michael-brown) accessed April 29, 2016.

[135] Summer Harlow *Social Media and Social Movements: Facebook and an Online Guatemalan Justice Movement that Moved Offline*, 16.

[136] Malcolm Gladwell *Small Change: Why the Revolution will not be tweeted (*http://www.newyorker.com/magazine/2010/10/04/small-change-malcolm-gladwell*)* accessed April 29, 2016, 3.

Throughout his article *Small Change: Why the Revolution will not be tweeted* there is an emphasis on high-risk activism. Because the internet is spatially non-physical, sacrifice is limited. A virtual reality allows individuals to comment or "like" things to demonstrate support without having to physically participate within a movement. So by completing one of the above online actions, one's job of showing solidarity is complete. The CRM and BPP members knew their lives were at risk when they participated in demonstrations, but they believed the principle at stake transcended fear. This type of commitment allowed for people to establish deep bonds with another. Gladwell believes "Facebook activism succeeds not by motivating people to make a real sacrifice but by motivating them to do the things that people do when they are not motivated enough to make a real sacrifice. We are a long way from the lunch counters of Greensboro."[137] Referring to the peril SNCC and CORE had to face, virtual activist pale in comparison to the legacy left behind by their predecessor leaders of past social movements. Policies are not changed because of online conversations; they are reformed when individuals express their dissent within public spaces.

Gladwell continues to assert that successful movements place a high value on structure and hierarchies, and poses the question "how do you make difficult choices about tactics or strategy or philosophical direction when everyone has an equal say."[138] From Gladwell's perspective the two go hand in hand. Having a centralized leadership allows particular members to have authority over what decisions are made, as opposed to experiencing potential moments of stagnation where people with different beliefs would debate endlessly to make one clear decision. According to Gladwell:

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[137] Malcolm Gladwell *Small Change: Why the Revolution will not be tweeted*, 4.
[138] Ibid, 5.

> The drawbacks of networks scarcely matter if the network isn't interested in systemic change- if it just wants to frighten or humiliate or make a splash- or if it doesn't need to think strategically. But if you're taking on a powerful and organized establishment you have to be a hierarchy. The Montgomery bus boycott required the participation of tens of thousands of people who depended on public transportation to get to and from work each day… In order to persuade those people to stay true to the cause, the boycott's organizers tasked each local black church with maintaining morale, and put together a free alternative private carpool service, with forty-eight dispatchers and forty-two pickup stations… By the time King came to Birmingham, for the climatic showdown with Police Commissioner Eugene (Bull) Connor, he had a budget of a million dollars, and a hundred full-time staff members on the ground, divided into operational units… Support was maintained through consecutive mass meetings rotating from church to church around the city.[139]

Not only did the bus boycott remain organized, they were exceedingly prepared for any unforeseen obstacles. The rules that were set by the few in charge kept the agenda focused on a narrow path. Decentralization runs the risk of individual preference becoming more prevalent than the original central idea that united the individuals in the first place. In comparison to BLM, a visible disconnection we see is:

> Members of a coalition of organizations, including the Bay Area chapter of Black Lives Matter, had driven onto the bridge, laced chains through their car windows, and locked them to the girders, shutting down entry to the city from Oakland. Garza had known that there were plans to mark the holiday with a protest—marches and other events were called across the nation—but she was not informed of this specific activity planned in her own city. "It's not like there's a red button I push to make people turn up," she said. It would have been inconceivable for, say, the S.C.L.C. to have carried out such an ambitious action without the leadership's being aware of every detail.[140]

This disruptive radical approach would be embraced by some, but not agreed upon by others. In the minds of the Bay Area chapter participants, this action would ignite some sort of political acknowledgment, but in actuality this action could have backfired and hurt BLM's reputation.

The Groundwork of NSM Theory Applied to BLM

NSMs borrow some of the traditions from their ancestor liberation fighters (tactics, principles, rhetoric) but vary structurally and within the way they execute their

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[139] Ibid.

[140] Jealani Cobb *The Matter of Black Lives (*http://www.newyorker.com/magazine/2016/03/14/where-is-black-lives-matter-headed*)* accessed April 29, 2016.

mission. As we have discovered "NSMS do not bear a clear relation to structural roles of the participants. There is a tendency for the social base of new social movements to transcend class structure. The background of participants find their most structural roots in rather diffuse social statuses such as youth, gender, sexual orientation, or professions that do not correspond with structural explanations."[141] Movements such as the CRM and BPP were integrated with people from a variety of backgrounds, but the dominant portrayal of the movement was homogenous. This inclusive invitation to participate in a movement allows one to reflect on their personal privilege or disadvantages within society, and ultimately unites with those from both sides of the spectrum. Dr. King (and Malcolm X in the later years of his activist stance) philosophy has always indicated that unity. They believed in the idea that the minority was the true majority, and this new stage of solidarity would truly exhibit what a democracy was intended to be.

Along the same lines, New Social Movements "exhibited a pluralism of ideas and values, and they tend to have pragmatic orientations and search for institutional reforms that enlarge the systems of members' participation in decision making… The grievances and mobilizing factors tend to focus on cultural and symbolic issues that are linked with issues of identity rather than on economic grievances that characterized the working-class movement." NSM's wanted to incorporate the dimensions of people's unique everyday experiences into politics. Those who did not live hetero-normative lifestyles were often vilified for their identities, and were treated as immoral cultural delinquents. Being demonized and excluded from the security that was supposed to be guaranteed from the state and extended to citizens was paradoxical. Economic inequality was a significant

[141] Hank Johnston Enrique Larana Joseph R. Gusfield Identities, Grievances, and New Social Movements in New Social Movements (*Temple University Press*, 1994) 6.

issue, but beyond having money the right to be human is solidified through the principle of liberty and individuals is supposed to define these terms in ways that are most suitable for themselves. NSMs focused on "personal and intimate aspects of life. Movements focusing on gay rights or abortion, health movements such as alternative medicine or antismoking, New Age and self-transformation movements, and the women's movement all include efforts to change sexual and bodily behavior. They extend into arenas of daily life: what we eat, wear, enjoy; how we make love, cope with personal problems, or plan or shun careers."[142] This shift introduced the varying way individuals felt insecure and their livelihood was threatened because of the state. Having money did not necessarily exclude people from suffering these consequences. The enfranchised and victimized had to come face to face with the fact that they would be subjected to unequal treatment for who they were. This is why the ideas of NSM were pluralistic and people from all different backgrounds decided to join these forces.

As mentioned earlier NSMs were "in contrast to cadre-led and centralized bureaucracies of traditional mass parties, new social movement organizations tend to be segmented, diffuse, and decentralized. While there is considerable variation according to movement type, the tendency, is toward considerable autonomy of local sections, where collective forms of debate and decision making often limit linkages with regional and national organizations."[143] SMs in the past usually were dominated by male images, and to avoid appropriating the same tactics the enfranchised (or local elites) used, NSMs allowed hierarchy to cease to exist. Unitary leadership, in the cases of Dr. King, Fred Hampton, and Malcolm X revealed the increased chance of being murdered for

[142] Ibid, 8.
[143] Ibid, 8-9.

attempting to overturn the standards established legally and politically. Democratization was one of the core principles of NSMs; therefore, the establishment of a hierarchy would seem contradictory. Equal autonomy was an emphasis, but the establishment of hierarchy did instill order within SMs. Regulation cannot be seen as something that is entirely wrong in every instance that it is presented.

What made decentralization so essential for NSMs was that "they grow around relationships that are voluntarily conceived to empower members to 'name themselves'. What individuals are claiming collectively is the right to realize their own identity: the possibility of disposing of their personal creativity, their affective life, and their biological and interpersonal existence."[144] The state has typically played a significant role in determining what is rational and irrational behavior for citizens and that has led to the out-casting of individuals. Much of the citizen's livelihood is dependent upon the state, but does that necessarily give them the power to decide who those individuals should be. Although the state was not physically harming these victimized groups asking for change, the violence embedded in the law evolved into the dominant culture and mobilized by the people who were not affected by the issues protesters were fighting for. BLM has unique leaders from very unique backgrounds, and that you would not typically see as the forefront of a growing movement. Their queer and unapologetically Black identities have made them vulnerable to demonization. What we understand about the discourse on collective identity is that "an individual's identity becomes consistent when it is built in a common ideological orientation that renders it meaningful and gives it coherence."[145] As of now, some people accept difference in identity and others respond with actions that are

[144] Ibid, 11.
[145] Ibid, 14.

rooted in deep-seeded hate generated from negative stereotypes. If these groups are not accepted within the dominant frames of society, those who are influenced by the general culture will not understand difference, therefore, intolerant attitudes would continue to persist and oppress.

BLM's collective identity is distorted. When people make references to past SMs there is usually a general understanding of what the movements represents, but this has not occurred in BLM's case. Collective identity is defined as "an interactive and shared definition produced by several individuals (or groups at a more complex level) and concerned with the orientations of action and the field of opportunities and constraints in which the actions take place."[146] Individuals seem to move on their own accord, and that is most likely because there is somewhat of an absence of how BLM wants to integrate itself in the public sphere. Media identity has been hard to grasp thus far being that "there are different courses and different channels by which public definitions can influence movement identities, and it makes sense that, depending on the source, there can be different effects."[147] BLM in this case needs to ground their identity along the lines that makes the most sense to them, instead of allowing the media to make interpretations of what they think the movement represents.

Conclusion: Cultural Revolution, Empires, and Oligarchies

Huey Newton believed "the United States was no longer a nation-state but had transformed into a boundless empire controlling all the world's lands and people through mobilization of disciplining technologies and everyday mechanisms of the state. Because people and economies had become so integrated within the American Empire, Newton

[146] Ibid, 15.
[147] Ibid, 19.

suggested it was impossible for them to decolonize."[148] Capitalism has been targeted as the indicator for these inequalities and justification for exploitation. Bruce Kapferer explains:

> The emergence of what I have described as the oligarchic corporate state is a relatively new form, as too are corporate orders powerful enough to work independently of state regulation and controls… Security and surveillance have become a major concern for the corporate state, in many ways a means for protecting ruling interest against the public. If the nation-state frequently abused the rights of citizens, this is now a strong potential of the corporate state, which both privatizes the means for violence and turns the greater violent power of economically dominant groups against general citizenry. State violence takes a new oligarchic and corporate form… If the nation-state gave rise to the impossible paradox of society against the state, the corporate state escapes such a paradox by sealing off spaces where persons must submit to control as a condition of access and participation in them from other spaces in which control is more open.[149]

In a seemingly losing fight against the state, how can BLM effectively make a change to ensure BBHS? From a Marxist perspective "there has never been a strong party representing the working class."[150] Politically, no movement has been able to solidify a permanent position that directly states the needs of those who involuntarily face resource deprivation. The principles that BLM enforces are representative not just to Blacks, but rather to groups that suffer from oppression in general. For a movement to transcend beyond protest and have effects on legislation it must garner national support. Grievances, whether focused on identity or economic issues like Occupy Wall Street require immense traction to achieve the wide spread goals they have set out to complete. The former leaderless movement emphasized "the people no longer trust their leaders and are even starting to indict the system itself. They think we can do better. We are all

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[148] Heynen "*Bending the Bars of Empire from Every Ghetto for Survival: The Black Panther Party's Radical Antihunger Politics of Social Reproduction and Scale*", 416.
[149] Bruce Kapferer New Formations of Power, the Oligarchic-Corporate State, and Anthropological Ideological Discourse, (*Anthropological Theory* 5, no. 3, 2005) 293-294.
[150] Johnston Identities, Grievances, and New Social Movements in New Social Movements, 26.

leaders."[151] Although BLM focuses heavily more on race, the thread that connects both movements are question legitimacy of leaders. BLM has gained a significant amount of popularity since its creation, but needs to continue to advocate for structural changes and to start the Cultural Revolution that instills Black pride. How does BLM go further than the symbolic inclusion of the CRM and establish the self-determination BPP could not? The heading Black Lives Matter itself encompasses the multiple issues that disenfranchise the Black community, can BLM become an SMI and break into sub-unit SMO's to fight against specific structural issues? Or is the attempt to create a working class party similar to Europes a valid stance to take for BLM as the torchbearers of the Black Freedom Struggle?

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[151] Heather Gutney, *What is Occupy Wall Street? The history of leaderless movements*, (https://www.washingtonpost.com/national/on-leadership/what-is-occupy-wall-street-the-history-of-leaderless-movements/2011/10/10/gIQAwkFjaL_story.html) accessed May 2, 2016.

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