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**George Floyd Shock and the Revival of Racial Injustice in  
Modern America: African Americans, the Black Lives  
Matter Movement and Horizons of Racial Equality**

*Dissertation submitted to the Department of English in the Partial  
Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Master Degree*

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## **Dedications**

*I would like to dedicate this work to my beloved parents Naima and Mebarek for their encouragement, support, and their love that enlighten my way to success.*

*I also dedicate this work to my precious brothers and sisters.*

*Special thanks go to my adorable friend Amira Boubaya for her support.*

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*I would love to dedicate the fruit of hard work, patience, and great support to my lovely family. To my beloved mother Fatiha, and to my dearest father Mohamed. There is no doubt in my mind that without you I would never go further in my life, and without your trust on the education you gave, I would never resumed studies and accomplished this simple work. You are the source of reassurance and strength. And I say to you:*

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## **Abstract**

This study investigates the racial injustice practiced on African Americans during the 20<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup> century. It highlights an important issue which is police brutality against African Americans and how the death of George Floyd influenced people all over the world. Effectively, the important role that social media coverage played in transferring social media activism into on-the-ground action. It contributed in shaping the renewed attention and activism that George Floyd's death inspired, and also raged protests around the world that responded to police violence and other forms of racial inequality during the COVID-19 pandemic. In fact, the current research is actually discussed through a descriptive method in order to portray the African American movements, and the effect of George Floyd's death on the American life.

**Key Words:** racism, African Americans, police brutality, George Floyd, Black Lives Matter, social media, modern America.

## List of Figures

**Figure 01:** number of twitter public posts mentioning the hashtag “#BlackLivesMatter”

## **List of Abbreviations**

US: United States

USA: United States of America

CRM: Civil Right Movement

CRS: Critical Legal Studies

CRT: Critical Race Theory

NAACP: National Association for the Advancement of Colored People

MIA: Montgomery Improvement Association

SCLC: Southern Christian Leadership Conference

SNCC: Student Non-violent Coordinating Committee

BLM: Black Live Matter

DOJ: Departement of Justice.

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## General Introduction

Experiences of racism and other oppressive events have afflicted the Black community for generations, from the introduction of American slavery in 1619 to the organized efforts to place Blacks in a lower social status during the Jim Crow era. In actuality, individuals who are considered "Black" are all too familiar with the phrases racism, prejudice, and discrimination. Blacks have long been treated as inferior by the more powerful group known as "Whites." Black people now exist as helpless contributors to American culture and society, at the mercy of White people. They were taken captive and utilized as slave labor to build the economic infrastructure of the newly founded colonies and states. Numerous people lost their lives during the hundreds of years that slavery persisted as a cultural practice in the US, damaging the Black race's survival there for all time.

Recent years have proved that the racial situation remains problematic and echoes the problems of the past. Although the problem of police brutality against African Americans is not new in America, the recent police shootings of unarmed young black men in many American cities have revived racial injustice. Michael Brown and George Floyd are among many others who were shot and killed by white police officers. Indeed, there have been numerous protests and riots against this racist practice, and with the emergence of these protests, a new social movement known as #BlackLivesMatter was born on Twitter. This movement is taking place at a time when America prides itself on being a "colorblind" nation. . As a matter of fact, BLM was intended to be a humanization of black lives. Moreover, its goal is to fully free black lives from inequality, it seeks to revive the Black liberation movement by encouraging Americans to abandon the "we versus them" mentality.

The relevance of this topic motivated us to investigate it since it is a problem that affects all people across the world, not just African Americans. Many researchers have expressed an

interest in studying police brutality. Philimon provided many evidences that proved that blacks were always targeted by the police, he provided details on the decisions which had huge impact on black people, and how police took advantage of them to terrorize and brutalize their community, he talked about George Floyd death, but he did not mention how this tragedy influenced America. Ammouche also tackled the topic of The Role of The Black Life Matter and The Civil Rights Movement in Ending Violence and Systematic Racism towards Black People in the United States. In addition, Bensaleh and Guerra also studied police brutality against African Americans, but they did not mention how social media coverage contributed effectively in shaping a universal outrage, support, and activism

When taking a look back at the outline of the American history, it can be noticed that it is filled with several prominent chapters that contributed in shaping the contemporary America. Civil Rights Movement represents a major historical event which is considered to be a turning point in the American life; its occurrence did not only led to officially abolishing slavery, but also bringing lawsuits in court and lobbying federal government to mass direct action, to black power. Although civil rights movement racked up many notable victories in the favor of African Americans, the goal of full social, economic and political equality still has not been reached. During the last few decades, as discrimination is highlighted, black men are the most frequent victims of police brutality and the criminal justice system. In fact, Black Lives Matter is an activist movement that came as a reaction to the shooting death of the African American Teenager, Trayvon Martin. There is a larger context of men and boys who were killed at the hands of police; many of whom, like George Floyd, were unarmed. George Floyd's death was covered on social media platforms. The latter contributed in the widespread empathy and indignation. It sparked a political discussion, cultural change, and action. As a matter of fact, this study is an effort to fill this gap by addressing social media coverage importance in George Floyd's case. It investigates the long living issue of racism that was

clearly seen in the American racial injustice system. Mainly to investigate to what extent the Black Lives Matter movement had an effective role in facing the racial violent actions practiced on African Americans. Furthermore, our research highlights the revival of racial injustice by illustrating the police brutality practiced on George Floyd, and social media coverage importance.

The study is an attempt to address notions like: the revival of racial injustice after George Floyd shock, police brutality, Black Lives Matter movement, horizons of racial equality in the United States of America etc. by reviewing important historic milestones that took place since 1619. This memoir addresses the position of the African-American people in the American society and how the civil rights movement and Black Lives Matter have helped those people. It explores the influence colorblindness has on the United States Criminal Justice System. One of the concerns of this study is to clarify the reason behind Black Lives Matter movement, and how police brutality led to the revival of racial injustice. This research also aims at explaining why the Black Lives Matter Movement is important. The conducted study addresses the issue of George Floyd Shock by a white policeman, and how social media helped largely in both reshaping The Black Lives Matter movement and gaining a global outrage and support over his death during a period of Covid-19.

This study attempts to answer the following questions:

- 1- Could black movements eliminate social injustice in America?
- 2- What is the Black Lives Matter Movement and what does it entail?
- 3- To what extent was social media effective in shaping a global outrage over George Floyd's murder?
- 4- What direct achievements could BLM brings to promote social justice in New America?

The dissertation is divided into two main chapters. The first chapter is dedicated to a review of the literature on slavery, followed by the civil rights movement. It discusses the history of slavery, as well as the causes and effects of the Civil Rights Movement. The second chapter mostly deals with the racial issues in modern America which disproportionately targets and subjects people of color to police brutality. This chapter sends the light on the Black Lives Matter activism and highlights the revival of racial injustice by the shooting of George Floyd. In fact, it explains the reason behind the creation of the BLM movement. This research sheds light on George Floyd's murder, and social media coverage. Furthermore, it addresses the Black Lives Matter Movement main goals, and achievements.

## **CHAPTER ONE: THE ORIGINS AND THE LEGACY OF RACISM**

## **Introduction**

The definition of racism in the United States is a combination of negative attitudes and ideas about race that are held by several people and groups. here and have, led to discriminatory legislation, practices, and actions (including violent crimes) against racial or ethnic groups at various stages in the country's history. Throughout American history, White Americans have traditionally benefited from benefits and rights that were granted to members of various ethnic or minority groups at different times. As a matter of fact, when looking at the origins of racism in America, it can clearly be traced back to slavery. Although slavery had been formally abolished as a result of the Civil War, racism still persisted and had a catastrophic impact on Black people. The American Civil Rights Movement was a political movement and campaign in the United States that ran from 1954 to 1968 with the goal of eradicating institutionalized racial discrimination, segregation, and disenfranchisement. Although the movement's origins may be traced to the Reconstruction era in the late eighteenth century, it wasn't until the middle of the 1960s—after years of direct actions and popular protests—that it had its greatest legislative successes. All Americans now enjoy additional federal protections for their civil rights as a result of the civil rights movement's most significant nonviolent resistance and civil disobedience strategies.

The chapter sheds light, firstly, on some details of the early beginnings of racism starting by the birth of slavery. It is devoted to a literature review of slavery, followed by a discussion of the Civil War as an anti-slavery activism. Additionally, it goes into racial injustice's history as well as the reasons and repercussions of the Civil Rights Movement. Finally, it describes the era

followed by the end of the Civil Rights Movement and sheds the light on the birth of new activism called Black Lives Matter Movement.

## **1.2. Race and Racism in America:**

“In order to get beyond racism, we must first take account of race.

There is no other way.”

Justice Harry Blackmun

The concept of race is a social construct that artificially classifies people into different groups based on traits including physical appearance (especially skin color), ancestry, cultural affinity, cultural history, and ethnicity...Ethnic groups fall under racial categories(Adams et al 88).

Race consciousness, as well as its expression in race theories, is essentially a recent phenomenon. Three Religious debates erupted over the attempt to reconcile the Bible with the existence of "racially distinct" people when European explorers in the New World "discovered" people who looked different than themselves. There were debates about creation itself, with polygenesis theories questioning whether God created only one species of humans ("monogenesis"). Europeans questioned if the indigenous peoples of the New World were indeed human beings with redeeming souls. Not only were their chances of conversion at stake, but also the care they would get. Property confiscation, denial of political rights, the introduction of slavery and other forms of coerced labor, as well as outright killing, all presupposed a worldview that differentiated Europeans—children of God, human beings, and so on—from "others." A worldview like this was required to explain why some people should be "free" while others should be enslaved, and why some people should have rights to land

and property while others did not. Race, and how racial distinctions were seen, was a major component in that worldview (Siscoe 8).

Race was neither a truth nor a tool for dividing people in society. Human biological characteristics formed the basis of the initial race ideas. When the first European explorers reached America and came into contact with people who didn't resemble them, they started to question whether they belonged to the same species. The impulse to categorize people in the same way that animals were sparked by this area of investigation. At the time, the idea of race as a biological concept was being developed. Because society thought that race was a biological trait, it felt forced to categorize people into groups. The classification of these many human civilizations led to the creation of the "Great Chain of Being." (Siscoe 8).

Racism is the notion that some racial groups are inherently superior or inferior. . The supposed innate attributes of superiority or inferiority are unchangeable, and membership in the group is a birthright. Racism creates social systems that favor one group over another, with society's most important resources—wealth, income, education, power, and so on—distributed unequally to members of the racial supremacy group. America was founded on the concept of race, and its history is littered with examples of racial differences arising as people fought to find their place in the growing nation (Reid-Merritt 17).

### **1.3. Critical Race Theory**

The movement of Critical Race Theory is comprised a group of scholars and activists seeking to understand and alter the relationship between racism, race, and power. The movement addresses a plenty of the same concerns that conventional discourses on civil rights and cultural studies address, but it does so in a broader context that takes into account economics, history, culture, group- and self-interest, as well as feelings and the unconscious. Contrary to traditional civil rights, which emphasizes gradual advancement and reform, critical race theory questions the fundamental tenets of the liberal system, such as equality theory,

justification in law, enlightenment-era reason, and impartial constitutional standards.

Although CRT started out as a legal campaign, it has since expanded. Today, many educators identify as critical race theorists and use the concepts of CRT to analyze issues like achievement testing, tracking, curriculum and history controversies, and school hierarchy and hierarchy. Political scientists are intrigued by the voting strategies used by critical race theorists. Ethnic studies course regularly cover critical race theory, and American studies departments often have readings on critical white studies written by CRT authors. Unlike many academic disciplines, critical racial theory includes an activist component. It aspires not only to understand but also to enhance our social position; it aims not only to ascertain but also to change how society is organized along racial lines and hierarchies. (Delgado and Stefancic 2-3).

### **1.2.1 Historical Context and Background of Critical Race Theory**

Though its philosophical foundations date back to the 1960s and 1970s, critical race theory (CRT) was formally structured at the first annual Workshop on Critical Race Theory. The critical legal studies (CLS) movement, which focused on how the law and legal institutions serve the interests of the wealthy and powerful at the expense of the poor and disenfranchised, was its immediate forerunner. Despite laws and court decisions trying to advance civil rights in the 1950s and 1960s, critical race theorists, including CLS scholars, thought that political liberalism was unable to adequately address fundamental issues of inequality in American society because its focus on equal opportunity under the law for all races ("color blindness") left it unable to recognize practices that were less overt and less obvious. The goal of the intellectual movement known as critical race theory (CRT) is to comprehend how white supremacy is maintained and reproduced, particularly in the US context. CRT stands out as an approach that emerged from the field of legal studies (partly based on and responding to critical legal studies); it aspires to serve as a catalyst for social and

political change; and has been adopted interdisciplinary across many fields. This is true even though CRT is a part of a much longer research tradition investigating race and racism, which includes key figures like W. E. B. Du Bois, Frantz Fanon, Angela Davis, Audre Lorde, Gloria Anzalda. Traditional measures, such as demonstrations, novel legal tactics, and amicus brief filings, did not produce the desired consequences of racial reform, in part because American courts, most notably the U.S. Supreme Court, gradually undid some of the movement's modest successes.

The tensions and disagreements that already existed between the African American community and the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) about how to best allocate resources in order to eradicate racial segregation can be linked to CRT's critical stance towards the civil rights movement and the underlying philosophy of anti-discrimination law (Möschel 38).

Similarly, early writers like Derrick Bell, Alan Freeman, and Richard Delgado (coauthor of this primer) acknowledged the necessity for fresh approaches and methods to combat the subtler various forms of bigotry that were spreading. They were quickly joined by others, and in the summer of 1989, the group convened its inaugural meeting at a convent outside of Madison, Wisconsin. There were further gatherings and conferences. Others were multi-day public events with panels, plenary sessions, keynote speakers, and a diverse gathering of students, activists, and professors from various fields. Some of these events were private working sessions in which the group worked through internal concerns and attempted to clarify important issues.

(Delgado and Stefancic 3-4).

Yet another novel idea Charles R. Lawrence III's analysis of anti-discrimination legislation for CRT especially covers the issue of discriminatory intent as it was raised by the

U.S. Supreme Court in *Washington v. Davis*. In that instance, the court required the plaintiffs, who were contesting the legality of a statute that appeared to be neutral on the surface, to demonstrate that the legislator or administration had acted with racial discrimination in mind. The applicability of disproportionate effect cases in constitutional law was severely constrained by this decision. It has been criticized from CRT experts and others because it places an unreasonable burden of proof on the plaintiff to establish both the existence of racial discrimination and the injury and loss it causes, regardless of the decision-maker's motivations. But unlike previous researchers, Charles Lawrence demonstrated that racial prejudice cannot be fully explained by deliberate intent. Indeed, he believes that racism permeates American society, its social customs, and the interaction between culture, psychology, and circumstance.

Neil Gotanda proposed that racial concerns be framed within the Free Exercise and Establishment Clause of the U.S. Constitution's First Amendment, and that its case law be applied, in order to avoid the dangers of colourblind adjudication in equal protection disputes. Neil Gotanda claims that the Supreme Court's case law on religion is more amenable to a race-conscious interpretation since the Court's rulings analyze social issues more historically. Furthermore, it would have the benefit of moving the discussion's emphasis from concerns about the appropriate standard of review to one that was more policy-driven, allowing the introduction of other factors like cultural allusions and the free exercise of positive characteristics of race.

For instance, Girardeau Spann contends that American courts' dismal and untrustworthy track record, as well as their covert majoritarianism and politics, have done minorities a disservice. He urges in his suggestion that legislative action be taken in the open political sphere. He contends that the Civil Rights and Voting Rights Acts, the Thirteenth and Fourteenth Amendments, and these areas have seen the most progressive movement.

The U.S. Supreme Court later upheld CRT experts' criticism of civil rights court rulings, particularly how they handled the concerns of equal protection and race.

The search by CRT researchers for an alternative to the Fourteenth Amendment to address racial discrimination was relevant and opportune in light of this judicial tendency. The use of race and race-conscious remedies by legislators and public authorities was slowly but surely dismantled by the U.S. Supreme Court using the ideological and dogmatic instrument of colorblindness. This gradual but ongoing degradation, which began with Bakke, is illustrated by a number of instances. In that case, the U.S. Supreme Court ruled that a quota system, which allotted a proportion of placements at the University of California, Davis medical school to minorities, including racial minorities, was unconstitutional. Because they viewed persons as members of a group rather than as unique individuals, racial classifications were ruled to be unconstitutional ( Möschel 46-47).

## **1.4. The History of Racial Formation in US**

### **1.4.1. Slavery in the United States of America**

Racial evolution started when slavery first appeared in the US. Indentured slaves, who were repaying debts due to the people for whom they worked, provided the majority of labor before slavery. Blacks and whites at the period shared the same social class, and the white ruling class made up the upper class. (Siscoe 10).

Since the early days of European exploration of West Africa and the founding of Atlantic colonies in the Caribbean, South, and North America around 1500, when sugar cane (and a few other crops) was found to be a lucrative business, the transatlantic slave trade from Africa to the Americas had existed for over a century. Slaves were frequently seized or purchased from other African tribes during raids or open battle. Many tribes were content to capture and sell their enemies in exchange for trade commodities such as whiskey, swords, firearms, and

gold (“Slavery and Justice: Report of the Brown University Steering Committee on Slavery and Justice” 8).

The arrival of 21 Africans in Jamestown, Virginia, in 1619 is frequently cited as the beginning of African enslavement in the United States. Historians eventually believed that the newly arriving immigrants were most likely indentured servants, because there were no slave laws in the colonies at the time. Enslavement was not the same as indentured service. Thousands of Europeans flocked to the American coasts in search of a better life in the New World during the colonial period. Because they were poor and without finances, many sold their labor to plantation owners, promising to work for four to seven years in exchange for accommodation and board and a portion of the cost of their European journey. The Africans may have known what it was like to be an indentured servant, but only for a short time. The Africans may have had a taste of indentured servitude, but only for a short time. Just over two decades after their arrival, Massachusetts became the first colony to establish slave laws, permanently changing Africans' position from servants to slaves for life (Reid-Merritt 19).

The New World's plantation system was the greatest destroyer of African culture and the largest exploiter of Africans. The African became what is known as a Negro. He was humiliated. This is one of the saddest aspects of the African slave system. The European slave system, which began in the fourteenth century, was the most dehumanizing of all the slave systems in the globe. They began to construct up stories that nearly invariably read the African out of human history, beginning with the designation of the African as an inferior being, using the church as a rationale. Slavery was justified by the Catholic Church since the African was being brought under the supervision of Christendom and would eventually reap its blessings. The argument was that slavery was a boon to Africans. It was not the case (Clarke 83).

Virginia was the first state to implement the headright system. The Virginia Company established Jamestown and gained a charter from the English Crown in 1609, providing it enormous swaths of land. The land was once held in common by the company's founders and stockholders. After a few years, the corporation began privately awarding land. The headright system was established to reward people who paid to bring in desperately needed laborers to the colony. The term "headright" refers to both the land grant and the person ("head") through whom the land is claimed. The individual who paid to transfer any person to the colony has the "title" to claim the land (“GENEALOGY: Headright System Used to Bring People Into the Colonies”).

However, starting in the second half of the 17th century, both the cost of slaves and the number of foreigners willing to work as indentured servants started to fall.

When slave work became less expensive than indentured labor, slavery increased and spread. Slaves were also present in the northern colonies, though their presence there was never greater than 5%. Slaves were also present in the northern colonies, but the slave population there never exceeded approximately 5%. By 1770, African Americans made up nearly 40% of the population in the southern provinces and the majority in South Carolina. . Slave women's children were declared to be slaves. Slaves were allowed to be killed by their masters as a form of punishment. Most crucially, white Virginia elites began to propagate anti-black racism as a means of separating blacks from white workers who were less well-off (Jay and Clark 4-5).

The system was harsh in its efforts to eradicate every aspect of the slaves' culture. No other system did more to degrade the slave's personality, deny his identity, and mercilessly separate family members. Slavery in America worked in a similar way to the American brokerage system. If a guy bought twenty slaves at the start of the week and ran out of money at the end of the week, he could sell 10 if the price was good. These males might be resold in

a matter of days. The family, the most important unit in African society, was purposefully and ruthlessly destroyed. However, in South America, the slave was able to stay with his tribe and thus maintain some cultural continuity (Clarke 84).

Slavery and the slave trade were the world's earliest capital investments. It was the first transatlantic large-scale investment. Many Europeans grew wealthy by investing in ships and the products and services acquired from these African countries (Clarke 85).

The mainland colonies, on the other hand, underwent a significant shift from indentured to slave labor beginning in the 1680s. Simple statistics help to make the argument. Between 1680 and 1750, the estimated proportion of blacks in the population in Virginia went from 7% to 44%, while in South Carolina it increased from 17% to 61%. This shift, which has been most meticulously documented for the Chesapeake colonies, was caused by a fundamental shift in the relative supply of indentured servants and slaves in the face of rising colonial labor demand. Because servants were only held for a short time before being released, a quickly rising colonial population necessitated an equally rapid increase in the number of indentured immigrants in order for servants to maintain a constant proportion of the population. Between 1650 and 1700, Virginia's population more than tripled; if indentured servants were to continue to provide the majority of the agricultural work force, indentured servant immigration would have to triple, if not nearly quadruple, as well ( Kolchin 10).

The last decade of the seventeenth century saw a significant change in Maryland society, as well as a shift in the nature of slavery. Following a mutiny against the Calvert family, Maryland planters seized control of the colony in 1689, consolidating their political authority, expanding their landholdings, and increasing their demand for labour. At the same time, economic and political events in Europe disrupted the supply of indentured servants, forcing planters to rely on African labor, the majority of which was brought directly from Africa (Berlin 4). According to historian Russell Menard, the ratio of slave prices to servant

prices (measured in constant British pounds) dropped consistently from 2.88 to 1.83 between 1674 and 1691. In these circumstances, colonists who could no longer find enough white indentured workers were more than prepared to substitute black slaves (kolchin 11). In 1698, the English Royal African Company's monopoly on the slave trade was broken, making it simpler for Maryland planters to procure Africans. Slavery in Africa increased swiftly after being legalized in a series of laws in the 1660s, and black slaves quickly supplanted European indentured servants as the principal source of plantation labor (Berlin 4).

Due to this sudden decrease in the supply of European workers, Chesapeake landowners were forced to hunt for alternatives elsewhere. Fortunately for them, the availability of African workers increased in the late seventeenth century, as well as a fall in the supply of European laborers. British naval superiority in the African slave trade was exemplified by the founding of the slave-trading Royal African Company and the acquisition of the royal Asiento (or authority to supply the Spanish colonies with slaves) in 1713. Although the majority of British-traded slaves continued to migrate to the Caribbean sugar islands, where demand was highest, mainland colonists found their supply of Africans dwindled (kolchin 11-12).

Landowners wanted to make more money by selling their products in England, such as rice and indigo, and they needed laborers to do so. Plantation owners used to maintain African indentured workers for a long period instead of native Americans who understood the land and could quickly flee; enslaved Africans, on the other hand, were unable to do anything because they were unfamiliar with the new environment. The masters had contracts with all of the indentured servants. These contracts were pieces of paper that stated when the servants would be released. The English government would see to it that masters released their English servants on the agreed-upon date. No one could prohibit the masters from keeping the

Africans as slaves because African servants were not part of the government (O'Callaghan, et al 14).

A modest decline in those rates by the late seventeenth century was followed by a sharp increase in fertility rates in the early eighteenth; whereas the slave population failed to reproduce itself in the seventeenth century and had to be replenished in the same way as the servant population, it became a self-perpetuating labor force in the eighteenth century. A one-time investment in slaves yielded a lifetime's worth of labor ( Kolchin 14) .

The early relationship between slavery and race has sparked a lot of controversy throughout history. Some researchers have suggested that racial prejudice existed among the English before they turned to African slavery, and that it was this prejudice that led to the enslavement of Africans in America. Others argue that racism arose largely as a result of slavery, and that those who were held as slaves came to be perceived as subservient by nature. Indeed, what we now know suggests that the most pertinent question is how slavery and prejudice interacted to create the specific set of social relationships that existed in the English mainland colonies, rather than whether slavery caused prejudice or prejudice caused slavery (a false choice because the evidence supports neither of these two conjectures). As we have shown, the first demand for labor that led to slavery was colorblind. The colonists came from a hierarchical society that lacked the clear distinction between free and unfree status that the modern world has. They saw nothing particularly remarkable about some people working even under duress for the benefit of others, and they experimented with Indian and European forced labor before turning to Africans (Kolchin 14-15).

## **1.4.2 The Anti-Slavery Movement's Emergence**

### **1.4.2.1 Anti-Slave Trade Movement**

For the majority of Rhode Island merchants in the 1760s, buying and selling Africans was just another form of business—albeit one with extraordinarily high risks and profits. However, around this time, a movement to end the slave trade began to take shape. A rising number of people began to condemn the transatlantic trade as not only cruel and immoral, but also illegal and a violation of both God's and man's basic laws. Rhode Island would be the location where this movement would have the most impact on the Atlantic World.

As was the case across much of the Anglo-American world, political opposition to slavery was first connected to the Society of Friends, or Quakers, in Rhode Island. A radical egalitarian Christian doctrine known as Quakerism held that anybody might encounter God's illuminating presence, regardless of their circumstances of birth. In the seventeenth century, it was established in England. Many members of the Society began arguing the morality of slavery and slave trading as a result of these convictions. One of the earliest anti-slave trade resolutions in American history was adopted by the Yearly Meeting in Newport in 1760. (“Slavery and Justice: Report of the Brown University Steering Committee on Slavery and Justice” 15).

Except for the ordinance prohibiting the capture of slaves and the Quaker petition opposing it, the slave trade received little attention in the Confederate Congress. However, during the discussion of the Articles of Confederation, it was suggested that in order to prevent further negroes from being imported, slaves and freemen should both be counted in the distribution of taxes. Wilson of Pennsylvania observed, "It is our duty to put every obstacle in the way of the importation of slaves; but, this modification [counting two slaves as one freeman] would offer the justrium liberorum to him who would import slaves. (Bois et al 35).

The fight for human rights has spread to many other sectors of society, as a basic Quaker concept is that all people are equal and deserving of respect. Early Quaker attitudes toward

women were extremely progressive, and by the nineteenth century, many Quakers were active in the women's rights movement. Lucretia Mott, a Quaker minister who refused to use cotton cloth, cane sugar, and other slave-produced items, was one of the first suffragettes. Mott set out to form women's abolitionist associations after becoming dissatisfied with anti-slavery organizations that refused to allow female members. After the Civil War, Mott helped organize the first American women's rights gathering in Seneca Falls, New York, in 1848, and was elected as the first president of the American Equal Rights Association. When slavery was abolished in 1865, she continued her political work and advocated for the right of black Americans to vote.

Susan B. Anthony, a Quaker who formed the American Equal Rights Association in 1866, dedicated her life to achieving equal voting rights for women in America. Susan B. Anthony, a Quaker who formed the American Equal Rights Association in 1866, dedicated her life to achieving equal voting rights for women in America. The Quaker dedication to improving the lives of women lasted until the twentieth century (Quaker Activism).

#### **1.4.2.2 Civil War: The End to Slavery**

The issue of slavery and the treatment of black Americans caused tension between the North and the South from the early years of American independence until Abraham Lincoln's election as president in 1860. Lincoln considered slavery to be a "monstrous injustice," but he was more focused on maintaining the Union. Therefore, he was opposed to slavery's extension into new western territories while being willing to permit it in states where it already existed. White southerners, on the other hand, saw Lincoln's election as a challenge to the social order. The Confederate States of America was formed when 11 southern states seceded from the Union, starting with South Carolina in December 1860 (Jay and Clack 15).

The South seceded from the United States of America in order to maintain slavery, which they saw as the basis of their wealth. Seven Southern states left the Union when Abraham Lincoln was elected, declaring that they no longer wanted to be a part of it. The number of separatist states grew throughout time. Eleven states seceded, becoming the Confederate States of America, which was governed by Jefferson Davis. They also enacted new legislation that legalized slavery. Slavery was, in fact, recognized as a key issue that divided the North and the South. Many Northerners wanted to eliminate slavery, and by the nineteenth century, various laws had been implemented to accomplish this goal inside their borders. Northerners persuaded Congress in 1808 to prohibit ships from transporting slaves to America (Rabhi and Bigua 3-4).

The sectional strife, on the other hand, was fueled by slavery. As the horrific conflict progressed, many northerners became increasingly resentful of slavery under any conditions. Northern troops who came into direct touch with southern blacks typically developed a greater empathy for their suffering. The Confederacy's economic base, and thus its ability to wage war, would be harmed if those slaves were freed. Former slaves might even "earn" their freedom by taking up arms for the Union cause after they were free. For all of these reasons, freeing the black slaves became a northern military goal alongside preserving the Union (Jay and Clack 15).

Despite significant opposition from abolitionists, the two sides reached an agreement on a compromise that allowed slavery in Missouri and Arkansas, but not in the west and north of the state. The Missouri Compromise, on the other hand, did not put an end to the conflict between the North and the South (Rabhi and Bigua 4).

The right of the federal government to outlaw slavery in regions that had not yet become states gave rise to irreconcilable disagreements between the free and slave states, which ultimately led to the start of the Civil War. After Abraham Lincoln was elected as the first

Republican president in 1860 on a platform pledging to keep slavery out of the territories, seven slave states in the deep South seceded and founded the Confederate States of America. The majority of Northerners and the new Lincoln administration both rejected the legitimacy of secession. They said it would damage democracy, set a bad precedent, and split the once-united United States into several smaller, quarreling nations. (McPherson).

By the 1850s, Americans were looking for common ground that no longer existed in their political culture 14 The American Civil War. Because of economic and social development, such a center had degraded. The 1850 Compromise exemplified the character of congressional replies, as it attempted to appease both Northerners and Southerners. Although it accepted California as a free state, which shifted the Senate's balance of power back to Northern states, it also enacted a harsher Fugitive Slave Act. In many ways, the 1850 Compromise was at best an armistice for an American political culture striving to free itself from permanent sectional divisions (Gallagher 14).

The war began on April 12, 1861, as a result of an incident at Fort Sumter in Charleston Bay. On that day, the Confederate soldiers started firing on the federal garrison, seizing control of the fort and compelling it to lower the American flag in surrender. Lincoln called out the militia to quell the "insurgency." Four additional slave states broke away and joined the Confederacy. Nearly a million armed men had engaged in battle along a front spanning 1200 miles from Virginia to Missouri by the end of 1861 . Several battles had already occurred: near Manassas Junction in Virginia, in the mountains of western Virginia where Union victories paved the way for the creation of the new state of West Virginia, at Wilson's Creek in Missouri, at Cape Hatteras in North Carolina, and at Port Royal in South Carolina, where the Union navy established a base for a blockade to cut off the Confederacy's access to the outside world (McPherson).

Southerners and Northerners were struggling to preserve the essential patterns and practices of their economic and social lives when the Civil War broke out in 1861. What the Americans had been unable to resolve in peacetime, they would now resolve through war (Gallagher 14).

The main war, however, began in 1862. Engagements like as Shiloh in Tennessee, Gaines' Mill, Second Manassas, and Fredericksburg in Virginia, and Antietam in Maryland foretold even grander campaigns and battles in the years to come, from Gettysburg in Pennsylvania to Vicksburg on the Mississippi to Chickamauga and Atlanta in Georgia. After bloody battles at places with names like The Wilderness, Spotsylvania, Cold Harbor, and Petersburg, Grant finally brought Lee to bay at Appomattox in April 1865. In the meantime Union armies and river fleets in the theater of war comprising the slave states west of the Appalachian Mountain chain won a long series of victories over Confederate armies commanded by hapless or unlucky Confederate generals. In 1864-1865 General William Tecumseh Sherman led his army deep into the Confederate heartland of Georgia and South Carolina, destroying their economic infrastructure while General George Thomas virtually destroyed the Confederacy's Army of Tennessee at the battle of Nashville. By the spring of 1865, all of the major Confederate forces had surrendered, and on May 10, 1865, Union troops captured fleeing Confederate President Jefferson Davis in Georgia, the war had come to an end. The long, arduous task of recreating a cohesive, slave-free nation started (McPherson)

Slavery in the United States was abolished by the American Civil War. Slavery was seen differently in the North and South. Slave labor benefited the Confederacy enormously since they relied heavily on agriculture and their economy was founded primarily on the production of cotton, so they were in desperate need of slave labor to work on their plantations. Furthermore, Southerners opposed the abolition of slavery because they believed that if

slavery was abolished, cotton production would decline, and their economy would suffer as a result (Rabhi and Bigua 4).

### **. 1.4.3 Jim Crow's Segregationist Laws**

State governments in the South established segregationist legislation demanding race separation in practically every area of daily life in the years that followed, particularly after 1890. Separate public schools, railroad coaches, and libraries were necessary, as were separate drinking fountains, restaurants, and motels. From the 1828 minstrel show song "Jump Jim Crow," which was often performed by white artists in blackface as a caricature of the unlettered, inferior black man, the system became known informally as "Jim Crow" (Jay and Clack 21).

For numerous decades, Jim Crow became a self-sustaining system. The black middle class was particularly degraded by the regime. Regardless of their socioeconomic situation or intellectual achievement, blacks were taught that defying their inferior status meant risking their lives. In comparison to whites, black land ownership and education levels remained low. As a result, blacks' relative poverty and lack of education were used to explain their continuing exclusion from politics (Brown and Stentiford xix).

If the federal courts had interpreted the applicable constitutional provisions liberally, Jim Crow would not have existed. The judiciary, on the other hand, relied on technicalities and loopholes to avoid overturning segregationist statutes. In 1875, Congress passed the last civil rights legislation in over a century. The Civil Rights Act of 1875 prohibited "any person" from discriminating against residents of any race or color in public facilities such as hotels, theaters, and places of public entertainment, as well as public transportation. The law was deemed unconstitutional by the Supreme Court in 1883, arguing that the Fourteenth Amendment banned discrimination by states but not by people. As a result, Congress was

unable to outlaw individual acts of prejudice. The most important judicial ruling occurred in 1896 (Jay and Clack 21)

The term "separate but equal" would ring in African Americans' ears for a long time, since they understood that while whites would zealously preserve the "separate" half, the "equal" part was a complete fabrication that no one, black or white, even pretended to accept. Rail cars for white passengers were almost always superior to the single-class car known as the "Jim Crow car," or "smoke car," which was exclusively for black passengers. Whites who could afford a first-class ticket would be even more comfortable, whereas no amount of money could get a black passenger out of a Jim Crow car. Similar disparities persisted in schools, with white pupils having lower student-to-teacher ratios, newer textbooks, and, in some cases, a longer school year. Restaurants refused to serve black customers in the dining room, instead requiring them to utilize the take-out counter. Jim Crow ruled nearly every area of black life in the South, from poor health care and education to the daily humiliations of being served last in stores and having to make way for whites on public sidewalks (Brown and Stentiford xix).

Louisiana had passed a statute six years before requiring separate rail cars for whites, blacks, and "coloreds" of mixed heritage. Homer Plessy, a public school supporter with a white complexion and a black great-grandmother, was convinced by an interracial group of residents who opposed the law to test the law. In addition, Plessy acquired a "whites-only" rail car ticket. Plessy acknowledged his ancestry to the train conductor after taking his seat. He was apprehended, and the legal proceedings commenced. The case was heard by the United States Supreme Court in 1896. The Louisiana legislation was maintained by the court in a seven-to-one ruling. "The enforced separation of the two races did not mark the colored race with a badge of inferiority," the majority concluded. If black Americans disagreed, it was because of their own understanding of the law, not the law itself. As a result, the high court

gave "separate but equal" segregation its legitimacy and stamp of approval. As following civil rights advocates would relentlessly prove, one difficulty with Plessy (officially, Plessy v. Ferguson) was that separate was never truly equal. Colored public schools and other amenities were almost invariably inferior. They were frequently shocking. But, more importantly, the question was whether a reasonable reading of the Constitution could justify dividing Americans along racial lines (Jay and Clack 21).

#### **1.4.4. The Racist Era Prior to the Civil Rights Movement**

Prior to the Civil Rights Movement, the racist worldview was focused on the inferior intelligence and cultural incapability of African Americans. Racism was also quite overt or apparent at this time. Those who hated black people expressed their hatred in public and pushed for segregation in housing and education. (Virtanen and Huddy 326).

The purpose of the civil rights movement, which mostly took place in the United States in the 1950s and 1960s, was to provide Black Americans equal legal rights. Despite the Civil War ending slavery, racism continued toward African Americans, who were still faced a life characterized by poverty, suffering, and racism. In 1963, black unemployment in the United States was more than twice as high as white unemployment. The average white family's yearly income was \$6,500 in the 1950s, but a black family could expect to earn \$3,500, a little more than half of what a white family made. Many black Americans might anticipate experiencing discrimination everywhere they went, including at work, school, on the road, in grocery store aisles, in theaters, in hospitals, and even in places of worship. (McNeese 9).

The system of segregation, which denied blacks personal freedoms that whites took for granted, exacerbated the economic and political subjugation. Segregation was a system that separated black people from the rest of humanity and branded them as a second-class citizen. Black people were compelled to use separate restrooms, drinking fountains, waiting rooms, parks, and schools. These segregated facilities, with their filthy conditions that contrasted

strikingly with the well-kept facilities reserved for whites only, forever reminded blacks of their low status. The reality of the system committed to the subordination of blacks and the denial of their human dignity and self-respect was conveyed by the "colored" and "whites" signage that studded the buildings and public areas of a typical Southern metropolis (Morris 2).

Combating forms of racism and convincing the government to provide black people fundamental citizenship rights were the two main objectives of the Civil Rights Movement when it first got underway (Virtanen and Huddy 313). Although the Civil Rights Movement battled to get some legislative restrictions on discrimination removed, it did not completely get rid of prejudice. During Reconstruction, Black individuals held positions of leadership in numbers never before seen. They held public office and advocated for legal changes that would advance equality and the right to vote. Black people were given equal legal protection once the 14th Amendment to the Constitution was enacted in 1868. Black American men were granted the right to vote through the passage of the 15th Amendment in 1870. But many white Americans, especially in the South, were unhappy that the people they had previously held as slaves were now essentially on an equal footing. (History.com Editors).

The effort to remove racism and prejudice in the military, like the fight for equal employment, began before the United States officially entered WWII. In four brief, war-torn years, the blacks made great progress. With the help of the federal government, African Americans were able to combat employment discrimination and achieve some success. Civil rights organizations like the NAACP were given a new lease of life. Furthermore, African American communities across the country improved their health and grew more socially and politically active. Perhaps the most significant advances were made in the military, which continued to break down barriers for African Americans, as well as women and minorities in general, following the war. Although V-J Day signaled the conclusion of the military combat,

it did not signify the end of the civil rights campaign at home. Indeed, these activities laid the groundwork for a postwar civil rights movement that has lasted more than half a century (Kersten 15-17).

President Harry Truman started a civil rights campaign as the Cold War got underway, issuing Executive Order 9981 in 1948 to stop military discrimination. These occasions helped lay the groundwork for grass-roots initiatives to pass racial equality laws and ignited the civil rights movement. President Franklin D. Roosevelt issued Executive Order 8802 on June 25, 1941, in response to the danger of a massive march by Black people demanding equal job opportunities in Washington. (History.com Editors).

#### **1.4.5. Civil Rights Movement Activism**

A bloody race riot that broke out in Springfield in 1908 shook the community. The Springfield riot was the breaking point that led to the founding of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People. At the time, anti-black violence, including lynching, was all too common (NAACP). The widespread violence incensed a group of white liberals, including Mary White Ovington and Oswald Garrison Villard (both of whom were related to renowned abolitionists), William English Walling, and Dr. Henry Moskowitz, who requested a conference to discuss racial fairness. Seven African Americans were among the 60 signers of the call, which was published on the anniversary of Lincoln's birth (including W. E. B. Du Bois, Ida B. Wells-Barnett, and Mary Church Terrell). Echoing Du Bois' Niagara Movement for Civil Rights, which got underway in 1905, the NAACP sought to secure for all people the rights promised in the 13th, 14th, and 15th Amendments to the United States Constitution, which promised an end to slavery, equal protection under the law, and the right to vote for all men, respectively.

As a result, The NAACP's mission is to end racial prejudice and provide political, educational, and social equality for citizens of minority groups. The NAACP works to eradicate all racial prejudice using democratic techniques. (Jay and Clark 23).

### **1.4.5.1 The Montgomery Bus Boycott**

The successful boycott of segregated buses in Montgomery, Alabama, which began on December 1, 1955, with the arrest of Rosa Parks, turned the civil rights movement into a popular political movement. It marked the rise of Martin Luther King Jr., the unstoppable leader who inspired millions, held them to a high moral standard of nonviolent resistance, and built bridges between Americans of all races, creeds, and colors. It also showed that African Americans could unite and take part in disciplined political action. (Jay and Clark 35).

Rosa Parks was a member of the NAACP in her community, a registered voter (another privilege enjoyed by few southern blacks), and a well-known figure in Montgomery, Alabama. She attended an interracial leadership conference at the Highlander Folk School in Tennessee, which trained labor organizers and integration activists, in the summer of 1955. Parks began working as a seamstress at a local department shop on December 1, 1955. She sat in the first row in the "colored section" of seats between the "white" and "black" rows on her way home from work that afternoon. When the white seats on the bus were full, the driver told Parks she had to give up her seat when another white passenger arrived. Parks flatly refused. She was arrested, imprisoned, and fined \$10 in addition to \$4 in court fees. Parks had crossed the line into direct political action at the age of 42 (McNeese 60-61).

The arrests of Rosa Parks in Montgomery and two college students in Tallahassee, as well as the outlawing of the NAACP in Alabama, established favorable social conditions for the organization's unification. Local leaders decided that any successful protest movement would need a guiding organizational structure, therefore the MIA, ICC, and ACMHR were

founded. The organizers of these movements saw the necessity to form structures that could deal with crises, direct mass insurgency, and bring the entire community together. In reality, many of the people who organized these major movements came from the top ranks of established organizations that had previously been at odds with one another (Morris 43).

The Montgomery Improvement Association (MIA) was created by an indignant black community to organize a boycott of the city bus system. The group quickly chose Reverend Martin Luther King Jr. as its president. Because King was a newcomer to Montgomery, Reverend Abernathy had been working hard to pique his interest in civil rights activities. King had always declined, explaining to Abernathy that he was "too preoccupied with getting his church in order." E. D. Nixon described King as "a very intelligent young man." Citizens turned to a recent arrival in Montgomery, the Reverend Martin Luther King Jr., in part to avoid disputes among local community leaders. King, the new pastor of the Dexter Avenue Baptist Church, was just 26 years old, but he had been born to lead: His father, the Reverend Martin Luther King Sr., was the pastor of Atlanta's Ebenezer Baptist Church, was prominent in the NAACP's Georgia chapter, and had refused to use Atlanta's segregated bus system since the 1920s (McNeese 62).

The city of Montgomery surrendered and the boycott was successful only when the courts prohibited the relegation of African Americans to the back of the bus. "Without constitutional legitimacy and the promise of legal protection, local black protestors would be crushed by state and municipal officials, and white segregationists would easily prevail," writes historian Kevin Mumford (Jay and Clack 26).

The nonviolent strategy to social change is introduced to the black masses via the Montgomery movement. Most blacks were inexperienced with nonviolent direct action strategies and ideals prior to the bus boycott. The Montgomery campaign served as a testing ground for nonviolent direct action, which was carefully introduced and developed among the

masses as well as the boycott's local leadership. The civil rights movement was introduced to "Nonviolent Workshop" in Montgomery. After a year of protests, the Montgomery movement achieved victory. The United States Supreme Court concluded on November 13, 1956, that Alabama's state and local statutes requiring bus segregation were unconstitutional. The triumph demonstrated to Montgomery blacks, as well as blacks around the country, protest organizations, opposition forces, and the entire American people, that mass action creates power (Morris 62-63). The city of Montgomery's black residents were thrilled, having achieved a huge legal win. Montgomery's buses began to run again in the weeks that followed, with black passengers seated wherever they pleased. In addition, the city and the bus operator decided to hire black bus drivers. The year was 1956, and the date was December 21st.

The boycott had been in effect for 381 days (McNeese 73).

The civil rights movement, led by Martin Luther King and others in the mid-twentieth century, is widely referred to by Americans. However, as we have seen, African Americans and their supporters had long fought for the rights guaranteed to them by the United States Constitution and its post-Civil War amendments. It's also crucial to recognize that the current civil rights movement was built on two pillars. One was created by courageous nonviolent protestors who forced their fellow Americans to face the scandalous treatment of black Americans for the first time. The second group included lawyers like Charles Hamilton Houston and his greatest student, Thurgood Marshall, who ensured that the protestors would have the most powerful force in the country on their side: the law of the land. Marshall, the lawyer who represented Montgomery's black residents in 1956, relied on legal precedents he had established in previous successful court cases. The most famous case was *Brown v. Board of Education*, but even before *Brown*, Houston and Marshall had undermined much of the

legal framework by which the American South had imposed its Jim Crow system of racial segregation (Jay and Clack 35-36).

Martin Luther King, Jr. founded the Southern Christian Leadership Conference (SCLC) in 1957. Martin Luther King Jr. and his supporters to provide a formal framework for neighborhood protest actions. By conducting a sit-in at a drugstore lunch counter on February 1, 1960, four Black college students in Greensboro, North Carolina, launched a new phase of the Southern civil rights struggle that was just for white people. at least 60 villages with thousands of pupils, mostly in the winter and spring of 1960, the upper, urbanized South joined the sit-in movement as a a result of the sit-in in Greensboro. Despite attempts by the NAACP, SCLC, and CORE to exert control over the sit-in campaign, student demonstrators organized their own organization, the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee (SNCC), to oversee the new movement. SNCC built a staff of full-time organizers over time, many of whom were former student demonstrators, and began a variety of local programs aimed at desegregation and voting rights. Although King impacted SNCC's nonviolent techniques, SNCC organizers often emphasized the importance of developing self-reliant local leaders in order to sustain grassroots movements. The 1961 Freedom Rides marked the start of a period in which civil rights protests expanded in size and intensity. CORE ( the Congress of Racial Equality) was one of the first organizations to support a group of bus users who wanted to desegregate Southern bus terminals. After the initial demonstrators were forced back by white mobs in Alabama, the rides proceeded into Jackson, Mississippi, when student activists from Nashville and other sit-in sites were imprisoned for breaking racial segregation laws. The Freedom Rides proved that militant but nonviolent young activists could face the worst forms of Southern segregation and put pressure on the federal government to act to defend the constitutional rights of African Americans, despite Attorney General Robert F. Kennedy's request for a "cooling-off" period. Similar protests against segregated transportation facilities

spread across the nation as a result of the Freedom Rides, as well as regional initiatives in many Southern locales that had been spared by the student sit-ins.

Northern support was sparked by televised encounters between nonviolent protestors and ruthless police officers wielding clubs and police dogs, resulting in government intervention to broker a settlement that included civil rights concessions. King's April 16, 1963 "Letter from Birmingham City Jail" defended civil disobedience and warned that disgruntled African Americans would turn to Black nationalism, which he predicted would inevitably lead to a terrifying racial nightmare. The Birmingham riots inspired President John F. Kennedy to draft legislation that would eventually become the Civil Rights Act of 1964 ("American Civil Rights Movement - Bus Boycott to Voting Rights Act").

#### **1.4.5.2 The March on Washington**

On June 11, 1963, President John F. Kennedy announced to the public that he would send legislation to Congress abolishing segregation in all privately held institutions, such as hotels, restaurants, theaters, and retail stores. "We are confronted primarily," the president said, "with a moral issue". It's as old as the Bible and as clear as the Constitution of the United States. "However, the barriers to enacting effective civil rights legislation remained formidable (Jay and Clack 43). White Southerners were not yet ready to abandon their resistance to the movement. The 16th Street Baptist Church in Birmingham, which had served as a gathering point for the civil rights movement for the previous five years, was bombed three weeks after the "March on Washington" on August 28 (McNeese 113).

In 1963, King and the NAACP collaborated with the Southern Christian Leadership Conference (SCLC) and other civil rights organizations to organize the March on Washington for Jobs and Freedom, which drew 250,000 people to the nation's capital to demonstrate for

Black Americans' civil and economic rights (NAACP, "Martin Luther King, Jr."). The "March on Washington for Jobs and Freedom" would be the country's largest political gathering ever. Participants came from all around the country in chartered buses and trains. A quarter-million Americans, or even more, assembled on that day, including at least 50,000 whites, according to some estimates. A spectacular lineup of civil rights warriors, Christian and Jewish religious leaders, labor leaders, and entertainers took the stage (Jay and Clack 43). King delivered his 17-minute "I Have a Dream" address there.

In 1965, King took part in the Selma-to-Montgomery march with other civil rights leaders. The police brutality against protestors during the march was televised into the homes of Americans all throughout the country (NAACP, "Martin Luther King, Jr.").

Congress enacted the Voting Rights Act of 1965, and President Johnson made it a law. Five months later, Lyndon B. Johnson On August 6, 1965, just before noon, Johnson was behind the wheel towards the US Capitol building. The civil rights movement's and Congress's leaders, He was met by a crowd that included John Lewis and Martin Luther King Jr. (Jay and Clark 61).

The civil rights movement had achieved one of its most major victories with the passing of the Voting Rights Act of 1965. It wouldn't abolish segregation in the United States, enhance the standard of life for many African-Americans, or solve unemployment, but it was a powerful symbol of the struggle. Blacks found yet another avenue to express their political desires and aspirations during the election. Other virtually immediate and good outcomes resulted from the deed. As black voters cast ballots around the country, numerous members of their own race were elected to positions ranging from mayor to lawmaker to congressional representative ( McNeese 130).

### **1.4.5.3. From Black Power to the Assassination of Martin Luther King**

1968 was a year marked by political turmoil across most of the Western world. Senator Robert F. Kennedy, who had served as Attorney General and had provided prompt support to civil rights campaigners, was assassinated in the United States that year. It would also mark the end of King's illustrious career.

King's dedication to the cause in his later years is evidence of the civil rights movement's achievement in securing legal equality. On April 3, 1968, he campaigned in Memphis, Tennessee, on behalf of striking sanitation workers, most of whom were black. King's final address drew heavily on his lengthy Bible study (Jay and Clack 65-66).

King was shot and killed while standing on the balcony of the Lorraine Motel on April 4, 1968, by a rifle-wielding white assassin named James Earl Ray. The assassination of Martin Luther King Jr. ignited a time of national grief and a wave of violence in America's black communities. During the week following his death, riots erupted in 125 U.S. cities, killing 46 people, injuring 35,000 people, and resulting in 20,000 arrests (McNeese 133). King died with the heart of a 60-year-old, according to the medical examiners, because he had carried the load of so many for so long. His funeral was attended by 300,000 people in the United States. Martin Luther King Jr.'s assassination sparked riots in Washington, D.C., and more than 100 other American cities. Short-sighted and faint-hearted people might have questioned King's life effort at that time. But, in many ways, the Promised Land that King described was closer than it appeared on those violent, fire-lit nights in April 1968 (Jay and Clack 65-66) .

#### **1.4.5.4. The Victory of Civil Rights Movement**

African Americans' historical experience will always be unique. However, effective federal voting rights enforcement provided black Americans with the same tools that immigrants and other minorities have always used to chase — and accomplish — the American Dream. People who vote in the United States have genuine political influence. With

the vote — and the passage of time — African Americans have gained legal and political equality in practically every aspect of their lives (Jay and Clack 66).

As it happened for formerly colonial people in nations that attained independence after World War II, the acquisition of citizenship rights by African Americans resulted in gains for those with intellectual and social advantages outweighing those who were less advantaged in poverty. Thanks to civil rights laws implemented in the United States in the 1960s, affirmative action programs increased opportunities for many Black students and workers, as well as for women, people with disabilities, and other victims of prejudice. Black Americans' reliance on unlawful methods was lessened by increased voting participation in the US. . Former civil rights campaigners including John Lewis, Andrew Young, and Jesse Jackson have entered the political arena. Black political officials, especially mayors, came to have more power than either proponents of Black power or advocates of nonviolent civil rights demonstrations.<sup>13</sup> African American members of the US House of Representatives formed the Congressional Black Caucus in 1969, believing that speaking with a single voice would give them more clout. Their goal was "to promote the public welfare through legislation designed to meet the needs of millions of neglected citizens."By the early twenty-first century, the caucus had grown to over 40 members, with legislative proposals concerning minority business development, educational expansion, and opposition to South Africa's old apartheid system among its accomplishments(“American Civil Rights Movement - Black Power Movement and MLK”)

The election of Barack Obama is one indicator of the country's growth. Another, and perhaps most important, indicator is the formation, not least among the nation's future leaders, of a broad and profound consensus that the nation's awful legacies of slavery, segregation, and disadvantage must be put to the past (Jay and Clack 67).

## **1.4.6. Racism during the Post-Civil Rights Movement Era**

### **1.4.6.1. The Concept of Colorblindness:**

Since the end of the Civil Rights Movement, there has been an increase in the prevalence of key racist ideologies. The most prevalent form of racism is no longer overt prejudice against groups of people based on biological factors; rather, covert racism or colorblind racism based on a group's cultural failure has replaced it (Bonilla-Silva). One of the prevailing myths at the time was that racism no longer exists and that people in America are colorblind and do not "see" a person's skin tone. There is also the presumption that acknowledging race is acknowledging that it matters and affects the lives of people of color. In many parts of the United States, societal norms have changed since the Civil Rights movement. During this time, it is more acceptable to criticize a group for its cultural and social flaws than it is to say certain things in public or to treat someone unfairly due to their skin color.

In a variety of ways, cultural expectations have shifted. This new form of racism has wide-ranging effects on American culture. It has influenced how black people view their culture, the criminal justice system, and those who interact with it the most. (Siscoe 12). Furthermore, During the March on Washington for Jobs and Freedom on August 28, 1963, American civil rights activist Martin Luther King Jr gave a public address titled "I Have a Dream" in which he called for an end to racism in the United States. Despite the fact that some Americans – particularly blacks – believed that Martin Luther King's "dream" remained unfulfilled in the 1970s, others believed that the African American community had received disproportionate government attention and that the government and white community had done everything possible to end racial inequality (Zashin 1939).

Ronald Reagan's presidency bolstered the notion that racism and discrimination had been eradicated (1981-1989). Reagan slashed funding for the Equal Employment Opportunity

Commission (a federal agency established in 1965 to enforce civil rights against employment discrimination) and the Justice Department's Civil Rights division during his presidency (created in 1957). Furthermore, he opposed affirmative action measures established during the civil rights movement. The phrase "affirmative action" is defined by Merriam-Webster as "an aggressive endeavor to improve the employment or educational possibilities of members of minority groups and women." Affirmative action is also known as "a succession of presidential executive orders, civil-rights laws, and government programs aimed at eradicating racism in the granting of federal contracts, fair employment practices, and licenses (Ammouche 4).

A colorblind society seems ideal on the surface because it shows that civilization has advanced beyond racial differences. According to popular perception, America's declaration of itself as a "colorblind society" has enabled it to resolve racial tensions that have existed since the beginning of slavery. That is not the case; rather, a new type of racism has emerged in America and replaced overt racism as the most pervasive form of racism. This new kind of racism is subtle and culture-based, as opposed to the biological racism of the past. One of the first things people notice about others is their race. It is utilized to ascertain their distinct identities. The American public's understanding of what creates inequality has changed. They now believe that a person's skin color, facial features, and other biological characteristics are indicative of who they are on the inside. The overt form of racism, represented by the belief that black people lack the same aptitude as white people, is dwindling, while the colorblind form, represented by the belief that injustice is brought about by black people's lack of drive or willpower, is expanding. This proves that Americans hold the view that culture and morals, not physical color, are the true causes of inequality... It "emphasizes basic US values such as individualism, morality, self-reliance, obedience, work ethic, and discipline while deemphasizing the importance of race or racial prejudice," according to the report. This

completely ignores the historical oppression of black people and focuses only on myths and stereotypes that served as justifications for that oppression. (Siscoe 12).

#### **1.4.6.2 Colorblindness and the Racial Justice System**

Colorblind racism has had a profound impact on the criminal justice system. It's a systemic issue with implications for the criminal justice system at all levels. Despite operating in a "colorblind" culture that does not take race into account when making decisions or developing regulations, the criminal justice system has a significant imbalance in the number of black people it affects

Race is a factor in the criminal justice system. Police officers and prosecutors have a lot of latitude in the criminal justice system. Police have total control over who is admitted into the system, and prosecutors have total discretion over which crimes are brought to court. Police utilize race as a criterion for who they interact with across the country. The criminal justice system "exacerbates racial disparity while producing an image of neutrality" (Van Cleve and Mayes). American society has an issue with colorblind racism, which is reflected throughout the criminal justice system (Siscoe 13).

#### **1.4.7. Racial Injustice in Modern America**

21<sup>st</sup> century US politics has not been excluded from severe racial conflicts. The fatal shooting of Timothy Thomas by a Cincinnati Police Department officer in 2001, which prompted widespread protests, is an example. Similar smaller-scale events occurred by the year 2013, when Black Lives Matter movement was formed as a result of the widespread use of the hashtag #BlackLivesMatter on social media following George Zimmerman's acquittal. BLM gained traction in 2014-2015 as a result of fatal police violence in Ferguson and Baltimore. A police officer fatally shot Michael Brown, an 18-year-old black teenager, in 2014, but the officer was not charged, leading to worldwide violent protests and a militaristic

police reaction. In response to these incidents, President Barack Obama acknowledged the United States' "history of racial discrimination," which had resulted in "a deep distrust between law enforcement and communities of color" (Obama).

Additionally, Attorney General Eric H. Holder Jr. mentioned the social context of these events in his report on the Ferguson probe, which is part of BLM's underlying political opportunity structures. According to the report, the Police Department has engaged in a pattern of constitutional infractions, including "First Amendment abuses, arbitrary searches and seizures, and excessive and dangerous use of force, worsened by the disproportionate deployment of these methods against African Americans" (Department of Justice).

Freddie Gray's murder in police custody in 2015 as a result of excessive police violence sparked a comparable public outcry to the Ferguson incidents. The acquittal of police officers involved in Gray's death rekindled public protests in Baltimore, despite the implementation of a city-wide state of emergency.

According to President Trump, who has a worse racial legacy than his predecessor, the number of Americans who believe race relations in the country are "usually terrible" has increased to 58 percent in 2019, up from 48 percent in 2016. Furthermore, 56% of Americans believe that the Trump administration has exacerbated racial tensions. As part of the political opportunity structures in place, police violence was undoubtedly a primary trigger of BLM-related activities. For example, African-American communities make up only 20% of the population of Minneapolis, where George Floyd was slain. In the year 2019-2020, however, African-Americans account for 64% of individuals who were subjected to police knee-to-neck restraint. 60 percent of deadly shootings are committed by the police (Gürcan and Donduran 154).

## 1.7 Conclusion

Since the inception of slavery, black Americans have been subjected to racism. Due to Reconstruction's failure and the emergence of legal segregation, African Americans were forced to make difficult decisions. Attempts to ensure government protection of these rights persisted for the following century, despite the fact that enslaved people were emancipated as a result of the American Civil War and granted fundamental civil rights by the Fourteenth and Fifteenth Amendments to the United States Constitution. The civil rights movement's great victories demonstrated that, in a nation of laws, the key to progress lay in establishing true legal equality for African Americans in public facilities, places of education, and most importantly, at the polls. Martin Luther King Jr, and others leadership of the civil rights movement was unquestionably the driving force behind the passing of two new statutes of immeasurable significance. African Americans would ultimately achieve legal equality thanks to the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and the Voting Rights Act of 1965... However, as it once was, racism is no longer overt or based on biological characteristics. A subtle form of racism known as "colorblind racism" has crept into many facets of American culture, including the criminal justice system. The colorblind society is responsible for the All Lives Matter response, including the criminal justice system. The All Lives Matter response is a result of the colorblind society. A recent civil rights movement is called "Black Lives Matter." a campaign that attempts to stop this new form of racism. It is a proclamation that race matters in a culture that marginalizes race.

In short, The Black Lives Matter movement is attempting to move away from colorblindness and toward color consciousness.. As a matter of fact, police brutality and BLM will be discussed profoundly in the following chapter. The latter focuses mostly on the racial injustice system, which disproportionately targets and subjects people of color to police brutality. It also sheds light on the Black Lives Matter movement and explains how the

shooting of George Floyd has reignited racial injustice. It explains why the BLM was established in the first place. In addition, it explains how the BLM has attempted to assist black people through its strategies. Most notably, social media played a significant part in this movement that ushered in new vistas of racial equality.

## **Chapter II**

# **The Black Lives Matter Movement and George Floyd's Case**

### **Introduction**

The police departments might be the worst enemies that black people have ever faced in modern America because of their use of power to brutalize black community. As a matter of fact, throughout history police showed no mercy in their treatment of blacks in in every region of the nation despite the fact that African Americans were free and had equal rights as white

people, they were targets of the police. Numerous protests and riots have taken place as a result of police officers who killed unarmed young black men without being charged with a crime. As a result of these demonstrations, the #BlackLivesMatter social movement was established, which had its beginnings as a twitter hashtag.

The Black Lives Matter movement is a contemporary movement that was established in regard to the killings of African Americans by white cops. This movement, which began on social media before growing into a well-known organization, represents a reinvigorated desire for equality and the abolition of prejudice. It came when the United States accounts itself to be a "colorblind" or "post-racial" society. Indeed, George Floyd's death led to a global conscience, an outrage over his death spread globally due to social media significant coverage. In other words, his brutality resulted in a year of global activism for black lives and against police violence especially after the spread of #BlackLivesMatter hashtag during a period of covid-19. In this respect, Alexander stated that BLM has the possibility to become the "broad-based social movement, one that rivals in size, scope, depth, and courage the movement that was begun in the 1960s and left unfinished." (Alexander, 2010).

The second chapter will highlight the circumstances, living conditions of African Americans, and police brutality against Black people that helped in shaping the Black Lives Matter Movement during the 21st century. Also, it will tackle George Floyd's death and the protests that raged all over the world during a period of Covid-19. In addition, it investigates the main goals of BLM. This chapter will also explain how social media coverage of George Floyd's incident led to a global activism against police brutality. Finally, the last point to deal with in this chapter is the main achievements of Black Lives Matter Movement.

## **2.2. The Twenty - First Century and the Creation of BLM**

Inequality between white and black Americans persists in a variety of ways during the 21st century. In fact, they were denied basic rights and privileges such as the right to vote, humanistic freedoms such as the use of public facilities, and educational opportunities. In this respect, Taylor asserts that “Racial discrimination, sanctioned by law in the South and custom and public policy in the North over much of the twentieth century, caused disparities between Blacks and whites in employment, poverty, housing quality, and access to education” ( Taylor 4).

First, the rate of unemployment among blacks was almost double that of white people. African Americans have been barred from possibilities for upward mobility in the United States due to labor market constraints, and have been locked in low-paying occupations that lack labor law protections, such as those centered on collective bargaining. Unsurprisingly, this history of institutional racism has resulted in disparities in labor market results between African-American and non-African-American workers (Olugbenga 1). Similarly, The Bureau of Labor Statistics has also issued statistics on black and white unemployment rates. This data shows that the disparity in unemployment rates between blacks and whites in the US is unchanged from fifty years ago. consequently, the rate of black unemployment is more than twice that of white unemployment. In general, African-Americans have a higher unemployment rate than whites. Whites are less likely than blacks to be aware of the wealth disparity than vice versa. The richest white families are 74 times wealthier than the typical white family, whereas the richest black families are 200 times wealthier than the typical black family. (Taylor 7).

Furthermore, more than twice as many black college grads than white college graduates are unemployed. Compared to 4.9 percent of white college graduates in 2014, 13% of Black college graduates were unemployed. According to President Bill Clinton, even African

American college graduates who went to college, followed the rules, and made no excuses performed far lower than their white peers. (Taylor)

The existence of institutional racism is also another pattern that persists in American society today .In fact, The disparities between whites and persons of color in the criminal justice system, housing, and employment are the result of institutional racism, a hierarchical and unfair structure that upholds white supremacy. . Taylor provided a more specific definition, stating that The policies, programs, and practices of public and private organizations that increase the rates of poverty, dispossession, criminality, sickness, and ultimately mortality among African Americans are known as institutional racism. (Taylor 8).

Another racial issue that activists are still arguing today is the right to vote. Various states have passed legislation requiring the presentation of government-issued identification at voting sites, which has harmed the voting rights of some black Americans; for example, reducing the number of polling stations in black communities or sending less voting equipment than required (Younge21). 5.8 million Americans, including 2 million African Americans, were ineligible to cast ballots because they had previously been convicted of a crime (Blauner 238)

Disparities in higher education are another aspect of racial inequality. Effectively, Black educational institutions lacked the same level of education, infrastructure, instructional programs, and academic rigor as their white counterpart. Even after the Civil Rights Act of 1964 was passed, it wasn't until the 1970s that primarily White universities began to experience a noteworthy rise in the enrolment of Black students. (QTD in Jamie 5). Moreover, according to The Bureau of Labor Statistics, Fewer Hispanic and black high school graduates enroll in four-year colleges than white and Asian high school graduates.

Another point to consider is the mass incarceration of Blacks. In this respect Taylor states in her book from #Black Lives Matter to Black Liberation “The imprisonment of Black men has led to social stigma and economic marginalization, leaving many with few options but to engage in criminal activity as a means of survival” (Taylor 3). Furthermore, as regards to Ashley point of view after analyzing statistics of imprisonment in the United States, he claimed that Black Americans are incarcerated in state prisons at nearly 5 times the rate of white Americans. Latin Americans are incarcerated at 1.3 times the rate of white Americans. (Ashley 6)

Briefly, African Americans have long suffered from persistent inequality in the United States due to centuries of racism, discrimination and the long-lasting effects of slavery. This has created conditions that made it difficult for Black Americans to get ahead. The inequality persists in many ways including; education, unemployment, mass incarceration, and the right to vote.

### **2.2.1. Police Brutality**

Police departments had a long history of racism and brutality against black Americans who lived in fear of law enforcement officers. In fact, they murdered and tortured a large number of black people without committing any crimes. According to Walker, police brutality is defined as "the use of excessive physical force or verbal assault and psychological intimidation" (p. 579). Furthermore, as reported by encyclopedia Britannica, Forms of police brutality have ranged from assault and battery (e.g. beatings) to mayhem, torture, and murder. Some broader definitions of police brutality also encompass harassment (including false arrest), intimidation, and verbal abuse, among other forms of mistreatment. (Encyclopedia Britannica)

According to a new research by The Lancet medical journal, Recent studies suggest that over the life course, about one in every 1000 Black men are killed by the police in the USA, making them 2.5 times more likely to be killed by police than White men. Black women are about 1.4 times more likely to be killed by police than are White women. Systemic and direct racism, manifested in laws and policies as well as personal implicit biases, result in Black, Indigenous, and Hispanic Americans being the targets of police violence. (Naghavi 1239)

Trayvon Martin was one of the victims of police brutality. A seventeen-year-old African American male living in a gated community in Sanford, Florida, was returning from a convenience store that evening on February 26, 2012, when he was shot and killed. George Zimmerman, who had established a neighborhood watch program and was carrying a 9 millimeter semiautomatic handgun, noticed Martin. Zimmerman described Martin as a man who "looks like he's up to no good or he's on drugs or something" when he dialed 911 for a non-emergency. He is simply strolling about and gazing around while it is raining. Zimmerman complained to the 911 operator about the black adolescent in the context of nearby burglaries and home invasions in the past. Later it was discovered that all three of Zimmerman's prior 911 calls regarding "suspicious persons" also contained the names of young black men. However, the prosecutors were unable to clearly explain to the trial jury this straightforward account of racial profiling and stalking by an unlicensed vigilante. Despite the dispatcher's specific orders not to follow Martin, Zimmerman pursued him. This led to a confrontation, during which Zimmerman fatally shot the unarmed teenager once in the heart. Zimmerman reported that the subject was running away on the 911 call. (Mark 771)

Another offensive killing of an unarmed 18 years old Black teenager had taken place on August 9, 2014, in Ferguson, Missouri. Michael Brown was fatally shot by police officer Darren Wilson. Moments after shots echoed through the streets of Ferguson, it became clear a public spectacle was imminent. The details of the situation leading to the shooting remain

unclear, even years later and after multiple investigations (QTD in Jebadiha 3). The Department of Justice provides multiple official, yet conflicting accounts, built largely upon police testimony. Briefly, according to the report, Officer Darren Wilson said he tried to stop two black men who were walking down the middle of Canfield Drive (DOJ). After telling them to move to the sidewalk, and their failure to comply, Wilson attempted to exit the vehicle. A struggle ensued, and one of the men, 18-year-old Michael Brown, reportedly assaulted the officer. According to investigators, Brown tried to grab the officer's gun at which point a shot was fired (DOJ). Brown ran on foot, and after a brief pursuit, began motioning toward the officer. After several warnings and reportedly seeing Brown reach toward his waist band the officer fired several shots. Brown kept coming toward him. During another series of shots, with Brown less than ten feet away, a shot hit Brown in the head. He was pronounced dead moments later (DOJ).

Black women are also arrested or subjected to police violence. Police use of force resulted in the murder of numerous black women, although African-American women are more frequently killed by the strongest form of force, sometimes referred to as fatal force. While several instances of black males being killed by police have received extensive media coverage across all platforms, black women's shootings are much less common, which allows for the minimization of their deaths. Malissa Williams, a 30-year-old woman who was a passenger in Timothy Russell's car, was brutally murdered by the police in 2012, and her death was one instance of the use of excessive lethal force by the police. Rekia Boyd, a lady who was killed in Chicago, Illinois, by a police officer who was not on duty, was another black female victim of police brutality. As a matter of fact, In February 2015, the hashtag #SayHerName was launched to raise awareness of anti-black violence against black women. It has developed into the new strategy for calling attention to the black women who are killed by police yet go unpunished, whether it be because the officers were only suspended while the

outrage of the community subsided or because they were found innocent after a trial.

(Lawson, Madison 6-7)

All in all, police officers have murdered a plenty of Black men and women without committing any crimes. Forms of police brutality take the form of torture, harassment, assault, and beating and mostly killing unarmed black people. Michael Brown, Trayvon Martin and many others have been murdered just because they are people of color.

### **2.2.2 George Floyd's death: Inspiring Solidarity and Widespread Activism**

George Floyd, a 46years old black man was arrested on a memorial day “Monday, May 25, 2020”for allegedly attempting to pass off a counterfeit twenty-dollar note in a convenience shop in Minneapolis, Minnesota. The arrest ended in Floyd's abominable death, a public and extrajudicial execution, at the hands of the police. The graphic video of Floyd's final moments, handcuffed and lifeless, as three police officers sat on his back and a fourth closed off his airway with a knee on his neck, Floyd asked the policeman to let him breathe by saying his expression "I can't breathe, I can't breathe ..." (BBC News) ,catapulted this rehearsed police killing of Black men into the volatile media sphere, vaporizing the distinction between old and new media faster than the state takes to kill a man.( Samayeen, Nubras, 2).

Indeed, a large number of black people immediately swept over the United States' streets to protest against police brutality and demand justice and equality. The protests began in almost every part of the country and appeared to be more racially diverse, but they became increasingly violent, with police officers engaging in numerous clashes with protesters, resulting in hundreds of injuries on both sides, and for President Trump and his administration, it was a challenge to put an end to the violence while also assuaging the anger of all black people. One of the key reasons for the difficulty was that America was still

recovering from a pandemic that had cost them enormous economic losses. (QTD in Bensaleh, Guerra 21). It is also noteworthy that streets throughout the world were filled with different and united voices calling for justice, police reform, and an end to institutional racism. The streets were inundated with tears as a worldwide alliance of human instability, riots, and societal conflict emerged.

Along the same lines, the jury considered the policeman Derek Chauvin guilty of all the charges against him, and his violent attack causes the death of George Floyd while trying to arrest him. This incident is seen as one of the racial division in America. Forty years imprisonment for his murdering that is considered from the second degree. In this respect, Biden claims "this ruling is a forward step towards achieving justice, and no one should be above the law, to confront systematic racism" . As Biden will work to immunize this country from racism and change all the negatives that marginalized people always suffer from, and he apparently congratulates Floyd's family on the verdict. (QTD in Belaiba, Djabballah 44).

After Floyd's killing, the Black Lives Matter movement resurfaced in the news and drew international attention. This social movement played a critical part in the George Floyd protests by defending the black community against racially motivated police violence and providing a robust drive for new social changes. Actually, His passing sparked nationwide outrage that eventually spread across national boundaries and beyond continents. Additionally, the footage of Floyd's murder and the protests that followed were widely disseminated in the media and on social media. Previous studies have revealed that widespread, readily available social media coverage of homicides results in cumulative trauma and has detrimental psychological repercussions for the larger Black community, especially when taken into account in the historical context of structural and cultural racism and discrimination in the United States. In fact, racism and discrimination experiences are a

fundamental part of Black identity in the United States, and police brutality against Black Americans can traumatize other Black Americans.

. (Eichstaedt, Johannes 1)

Floyd's murder, as well as the riots that followed, had a significant influence on American politics. Republicans and Democrats reacted differently to the tragedy and systemic police brutality that became the focus of American media, as well as to the violence that occurred during the protests. Additionally, President Trump's controversial actions were one of the top issues that drew the attention of both politicians and the media. This collection of comments spawned new societal perspectives on police brutality, which became a concern for all Americans, not just the black population.

According to a study conducted by 3 scholars, Anmol Panda, Divya Siddarth, and Joyojeet Palon on the issue of George Floyd's murder, it was mentioned that both sides "Democrats and Republicans" mention his name together with phrases like justice and police while discussing his murder. However, while Democrats have linked this murder to other Black people's deaths and have particularly mentioned police brutality, Republicans have focused on protests and violence. When we look at the Republican discussion of 'violence,' we find that Republicans wrote 272 tweets that used the phrase 'violence' in the two weeks following the murder. Seventy-three of them specifically mentioned Floyd. The majority of these tweets were condemnations of the murder, but they would then shift to decrying alleged riots, violence, and looting. There were 154 tweets concerning violence in the three weeks after that, but only six of them mentioned Floyd by name. This signals a change in the narrative away from Floyd's assassination and toward a broader debate of institutional racism and American heritage, including the defacing and removal of Confederate monuments and statues. (Anmol et al 1-2)

As a matter of fact, some Republican senators have taken the president's and his administration's cues to focus more on the looting and violence that happened after dark and less on the protestors' concerns. They concentrated on putting an end to the violence and damage that characterized many protests. Trump, D responded to the chaos in most of the states with a highly contentious tweet "when the looting starts, the shooting starts". Trump proceeded to criticize and humiliate demonstrators, referring to them as thugs, and he was ready to use whatever force he had to halt the violence. He also accused Democrats of using the BLM demonstrations for political gain.

Previous Republicans reacted with more restraint, making an effort to understand the black community's outrage over Floyd's death and other police killings. But the majority of the reactions came back to condemning the looting. It appears that as though their motivation for stepping out was to denounce parts of the demonstrations rather than Floyd's death.

. For instance, the republican senator Cotton tweeted "Anarchy, rioting, and looting needs to end tonight. If local law enforcement is overwhelmed and needs backup, let's see how tough these Antifa terrorists are when they're facing off with the 101st Airborne Division. We need to have zero tolerance for this destruction". Another senator also tweeted "America will not stand by as Antifa and other terrorists burn our cities. The law is coming" (Blackburn 2020).

Democrats, on the other hand, concentrated almost completely on the anger and unfairness that drove the protests, and attempted to portray the great majority of protestors in a favorable light, while portraying police in a negative one. Additionally, they concentrated on social injustice and the necessity for new law enforcement reforms that would end police violence against black people. Democrats also criticized Trump's administration for threatening demonstrators with using force to restore order and for ignoring the core issue of police brutality against black people, as Bill Bascrell tweeted "As our nation burned in anger,

pain, and frustration this weekend, trump agitated for violence against protestors and then hid in a bunker and literally turned out the White House lights....There may be no better symbol of the worst executive leadership in the world.Rep". Furthermore, Joe Biden who is also a famous democrat reacted to the demonstrations saying " Every person of conscience can understand the rawness of the trauma people of color experience in this country, from the daily indignities to the extreme violence, like the horrific killing of George Floyd "( Biden, 2020)

George Floyd's demonstrations reignited debates about racism and police brutality, and had a significant influence on American politics. Democrats took advantage of the opportunity to gain more political support, while Republicans were impacted by protests and lost support in many states, resulting in their election defeat. Now it is up to the Biden administration to find new legislation and reforms to end police brutality against black people or at the very least control law enforcement officers' practices.

In short, George Floyd's murder led to a universal outrage, solidarity, and activism over his death due to social media coverage. The video of his murder and the hashtag of BLM spread globally. Indeed, Different races from all over the world participated in several protests and tweeted the hashtag as well to denounce the incident. Additionally, the two political parties ' Republicans and Democrats' reacted differently to his brutality. It resulted in the election defeat of Republicans.

### **2.3. Black lives Matter Movement**

The slogan Black Lives Matter first appeared as a hashtag on Facebook after the death of Trayvon Martin. Effectively, Neighborhood watch member George Zimmerman was acquitted of killing Trayvon Martin, which sparked the idea and term "Black Lives Matter" (Graff 2015). Alicia Garza, Opal Tometi, and Patrisse Cullors are the three women who

founded the Black Lives Matter movement. Prior to this, they had belonged to the Black Organizing for Leadership and Dignity .The three women posted their new catchphrase as a hashtag on social media. Their idea gained support on social media, and it advanced to the "hope" stage of the growth of social movements. As the #BlackLivesMatter hashtag obtained popularity, some Americans thought it might be used to use social media to bring about social change. According to NBC News, in 2013, when George Zimmerman was acquitted of all charges in the shooting death of Trayvon Martin, 17, Alicia Garza posted on Facebook, "Our lives matter.". Garza and her companions Patrisse Cullors and Opal Tometi came up with the hashtag #BlackLivesMatter (NBC News, December29, 2020). What began as a meaningful hashtag has turned to represent a whole generation. Black Lives Matter has expanded into a multi-chapter organization in just seven years, changing how the nation views race. (Adams)

The BLM movement gained more attention after Michael Brown's killing and advanced to the point of taking action. In Ferguson, Missouri, on August 9, Darren Wilson, a White police officer, fatally shot and killed Mike Brown, an unarmed Black teenager. Peaceful protests started after police left Michael Brown's body in the road for four hours as it was exposed to the scorching July sun (Buchanan et al). The hashtag was used by citizen journalists to capture Brown's murder and the fury of the neighborhood (Lopez). Activists urged the police force to protect Brown out of respect for his humanity by using the hashtag #BlackLivesMatter. Use of the hashtag surged for the rest of the summer.

(Anderson et al). In this respect, Taylor asserts that Brown's killing was a watershed moment for many African Americans in Ferguson, as well as around the country. (Taylor 153)

Actually, what began as a local strivings of ordinary Black people in Ferguson who "slammed the door shut on deadening passivity" for more than a hundred days in the pursuit of justice for Brown has arisen into a nationwide movement against police brutality and daily police killings of African Americans. . It is not overstatement to mention that the police

officers who keep America's streets safe have been given a license to kill and have repeatedly demonstrated their willingness to do so. The majority of police violence against African Americans, including murder and attempted murder, is directed at them. (Taylor 2)

As far as this matter is concerned, Taylor states that the emergence of a new anti-racism and anti-policing movement is destroying the myth of a colorblind, post racial America. Throughout the country, cries of "Hands up, don't shoot," "I can't breathe," and "Black lives matter" have been heard as tens of thousands of ordinary people gather to demand an end to widespread police brutality and murder of African Americans. Although it is nearly difficult to foresee when and where a movement will develop, its final appearance is virtually always predictable. Every week, reports of police brutalizing regular individuals or killing the young, the Black, and almost always the defenseless flood social media. With the advent of social media, the time between when an incident occurs and when the public becomes aware of it has nearly vanished. The proliferation of smartphones equipped with voice and video recorders has given the general public the ability to record and share these incidents far and wide on a variety of social media platforms, where the mainstream media has typically down played or even ignored public claims of police corruption and abuse (Taylor)

The killing of George Floyd by four Minneapolis police officers on May 25, 2020, marked a significant resurgence of the Black Lives Matter (BLM) movement. His murder was widely reported, along with Breonna Taylor , ElijahMcClain, AhmaudArbery, and numerous more unarmed Black folks incited protests around the world and outraged people from all walks of life. Along with those more conventional demonstrations, there was also a significant social media movement that saw individuals "black out" their profile images (Ho), and tweet more frequently than ever using the hashtag "#BlackLivesMatter" (Ho). (Anderson)

Along the same lines, the long-term activism that followed George Floyd's killing, as well as the ongoing fight for racial justice demonstrated the effectiveness of social media as a

vehicle for social change. We saw how online and offline campaigning can complement one another and generate momentum in ways that neither can do alone. Beyond symbolic "slacktivism" and performative allyship, the Black Lives Matter movement and more specifically, the hashtag #BlackLivesMatter has shown how to use social media to mobilize people for social and cultural change. (Bowman Williams et al 2)

Additionally, BLM has been able to link its extensive internet activity and outreach to the type of base organization and practical action that has helped conventional social movements succeed. BLM has used long-term planning and utilized strong institutional involvement and links to community organizations, nonprofits, labor unions, and student groups formed through years of regional activity, much like historic movements. BLM has been able to develop an energetic model of online and offline action able of structural change thanks to its hybrid structure. (Bowman Williams et al 4)

Black Lives Matter has existed since 2013, but there has been a dramatic change in public opinion and a rise in support for recent marches. Black Lives Matter has received a bombardment of public support from organizations like the National Football League and NASCAR, which may have inspired supporters who would have otherwise remained passive to become involved. The Civics Analytics poll suggests that the movement has drawn demonstrators who are younger and wealthier. People under 35 made up the highest proportion of demonstrators, and those making more than \$150,000 made up the largest proportion of protesters.

According to Cheung, who wrote an article on BBC News, African Americans have died in police custody before, and George Floyd's death has sparked outcry. There were protests and calls for reform after the police killed Tamir Rice, Michael Brown, and Eric Garner. This time, though, things appear to be diverse, with a more prolonged and widespread response. protests have taken place across the United States, in all 50 states and the District of

Columbia, as well as in mostly white cities and rustic regions. Local authorities, sports organizations, and businesses seem more inclined to voice out, with the Minneapolis city council threatening to eliminate the police force. The Black Lives Matter marches this time around also seem to have a more diverse ethnic makeup, with more white and other ethnic protesters joining black activists. For instance, On Saturday, tens of thousands of people demonstrated in Washington, DC, and it looked that nearly half of them were non-black. Many demonstrators carried signs expressing their wish to support the movement as partners. (Reported by Cheung BBC News, June 8, 2020)

Indeed, half of those who protested said that this was their first time getting involved with a form of activism or demonstration. A majority said that they watched a video of police violence toward protesters or the Black community within the last year. And of those people, half said that it made them more supportive of the Black Lives Matter movement. (N.Y. Times). As what Daniel Q. Gillion, a professor at the University of Pennsylvania who has written several books on protests and politics said: “If you aren’t moved by the George Floyd video, you have nothing in you,” “And that catalyst can now be amplified by the fact that individuals probably have more time to engage in protest activity.”

One particularity of the BLM movement is the youth of its activists. Effectively, historian Sasha Costanza in her paper about youth in social activism highlighted the importance of youth and their direct contributions to the emergence of such powerful social movements. The BLM movement, in particular, has activists who are from the young class, who are members of a legal organization, and who are active and effective in their communities. They use social media to show their inspiration, which is the instrument that motivates them to lead such social initiatives. In this respect, SashaCostanza-Chock' said: "at best, apathetic, disengaged and removed from civic action. At worst, youth (in the U.S., particularly youth of color) are subject to growing repression: increased surveillance,

heightened policing, stop-and-frisk policies on the streets, overbroad gang injunctions, and spiraling rates of juvenile incarceration" (Costanza 1). Indeed, thanks to the usage of social media, young movements nowadays can easily be global since they can interact with social movements around the world directly and draw inspiration from movements they see on television or on social media. (Costanza 3).

The Black Lives Matter movement has come under backlash. One of the most successful countermovement campaigns has turned the movement's name into a counteroffensive named All Lives Matter. This is a way to address the BLM movement in a way that is socially acceptable. A countermovement that aims to crush social movements typically opposes them. All Lives Matter is the name of the anti-Black Lives Matter movement. It rejects the Black Lives Matter Movement as a whole and blames it for encouraging civil disobedience. The Black Lives Matter Movement has been criticized for not going beyond demonstrations in an effort to gain the public empathy and bring about social change. This is a justification for deflecting attention from the colorblind racism that the Black Lives Matter Movement is bringing to light in America. It implies there is an assumed "only" at the beginning of Black Lives Matter rather than the implied "too" that is there at the end. The All Lives Matter reaction ignores the statement, the movement, and the issue of colorblind racism in America by doing this. (Siscoe 16).

The All Lives Matter movement is a byproduct of colorblind racism, which is currently America's dominant kind of racism. It is partially a result of ignorance of the locations where racist ideology still exists. Because the Black Lives Matter Movement does not include all races and all lives, All Lives Matter has come to believe that the BLM is racist as a result of colorblind racism. (Siscoe 17).

To sum up, the BLM started as a hashtag on Facebook and has developed into an anti-police brutality campaign on a nationwide scale. Effectively, after Floyd's murder the

movement gained a worldwide popularity and support. In fact, young people really contributed largely in shaping this contemporary movement. However, a counter-movement appeared that is called All Lives Matter which strives to put them down.

## **2.4. Social Media Coverage Effect on BLM**

Social media has developed as a key instrument for connecting, expanding, and organizing social movements. In fact, social media has inherited itself into daily activities, fostering a state of constant connection that has intertwined political discourse and acts in the digital sphere (Lim). Due to this interconnection, social media frequently plays a significant role in advancing the networks and interests associated with the social movement, and the significance of digital media in protests and social movements is growing.

(Lim)

The BLM movement, which began as a Twitter response to George Zimmerman's acquittal in the shooting of Trayvon Martin in 2013, is the most significant and persistent social justice movement to come out of social media. Early consumers of social media sites like Twitter and Instagram, Black people made good use of the hashtag #BlackLivesMatter to draw attention to police and vigilante violence against them. The BLM movement demonstrated its ability to translate online activism into real-world action when it organized protests in Ferguson, Missouri against the shooting of Michael Brown and what it represented: the systemic targeting of Black people by militarized police. The Black Lives Matter movement started to build explicit the goal of institutional and policy measures is to end state violence against African-Americans. That was years before George Floyd became well-known or before the world saw him killed by Minneapolis police. (Bowman Williams et al 6-7)

Since 2014, the Black Lives Matter movement has mobilized people through social media, especially Twitter, to fight racial and ethnic injustices, and organize movement members on the ground. Graphic images, live footage, and commentary from individuals who were on the site of the killings were published on social media. Because of the advantages of these social networking platforms, news of these occurrences spread exponentially quicker. (Edrington and Lee 290)

The BLM movement has been very successful in the years leading up to the 2020 explosion. The "Third Reconstruction," the most recent popular movement for racial justice and a fresh understanding of structural inequity, was described as being led by its work. An informal hierarchy-free decentralized network of activists is the movement's main organizational structure. The movement consists of a formal organization, the Black Lives Matter Global Network Foundation, Inc., which has chapters throughout the world, and a larger network of racial justice advocates and activists who are not part of the official organization. In the seven years since its founding, BLM has only become stronger at using the internet to clarify, legitimize, and advance its cause. (Bowman Williams et al 7). Indeed, Social media is a crucial key factor in shaping new movements. Journalist Elizabeth Day of The Guardian stated, "The new movement is powerful yet diffuse, linked not by physical closeness or even necessarily by political consensus, but by the mobilizing force of social media" (Day)

On May 25, The shocking manner of George Floyd's murder and demise went viral on social media. A Pew Research Centre report claims that the activity of #BlackLivesMatter in the first month after George Floyd's murder dwarfs the noteworthy Twitter surges before to May 2020. The #BlackLivesMatter hashtag was tweeted about 390,000 times the day after George Floyd died, and more than 1.7 million times on May 27. The daily usage of the #BlackLivesMatter hashtag ranged between 1.3 and 2 million tweets and retweets per day in

the two weeks after Floyd's passing. The average volume for this month was over 500,000, with daily averages that were more than 300 times higher than those of the previous year. (Anderson, et al).

Actually, injuries and outrages that were well-known inside Black communities might be turned into injustices that the general public could no longer ignore due to the efficient use of video photos and social media that George Floyd's death inspired in 2020. Social media users changed the narrative and shared a story that was not being told in the mainstream media by using the hashtag #BlackLivesMatter. It was made easier for other Twitter users to search, link, interact with one another within the hashtagged world, as well as share stories and information about it, thanks to the utilization of a viral video and hashtag narratives.

(Bowman Williams et al ). According to McKesson, hashtags might act as a form of "paperclip" that connects occurrences and makes it possible for anyone to spot a pattern (Parker & Mcilwain). Additionally, it outraged people from all backgrounds and triggered protests all across the world. Along with those conventional demonstrations, a significant social media movement led to people "blacking out" their profile images (Ho, 2020). and tweeting "#BlackLivesMatter" more frequently than before. (Anderson). Lim also writes on her article how social media can "allow individuals and groups to converse over political debates and concerns" and possibly can "transform these conversations into collective resistance" and BLM continually demonstrates the truth to this statement (Lim).

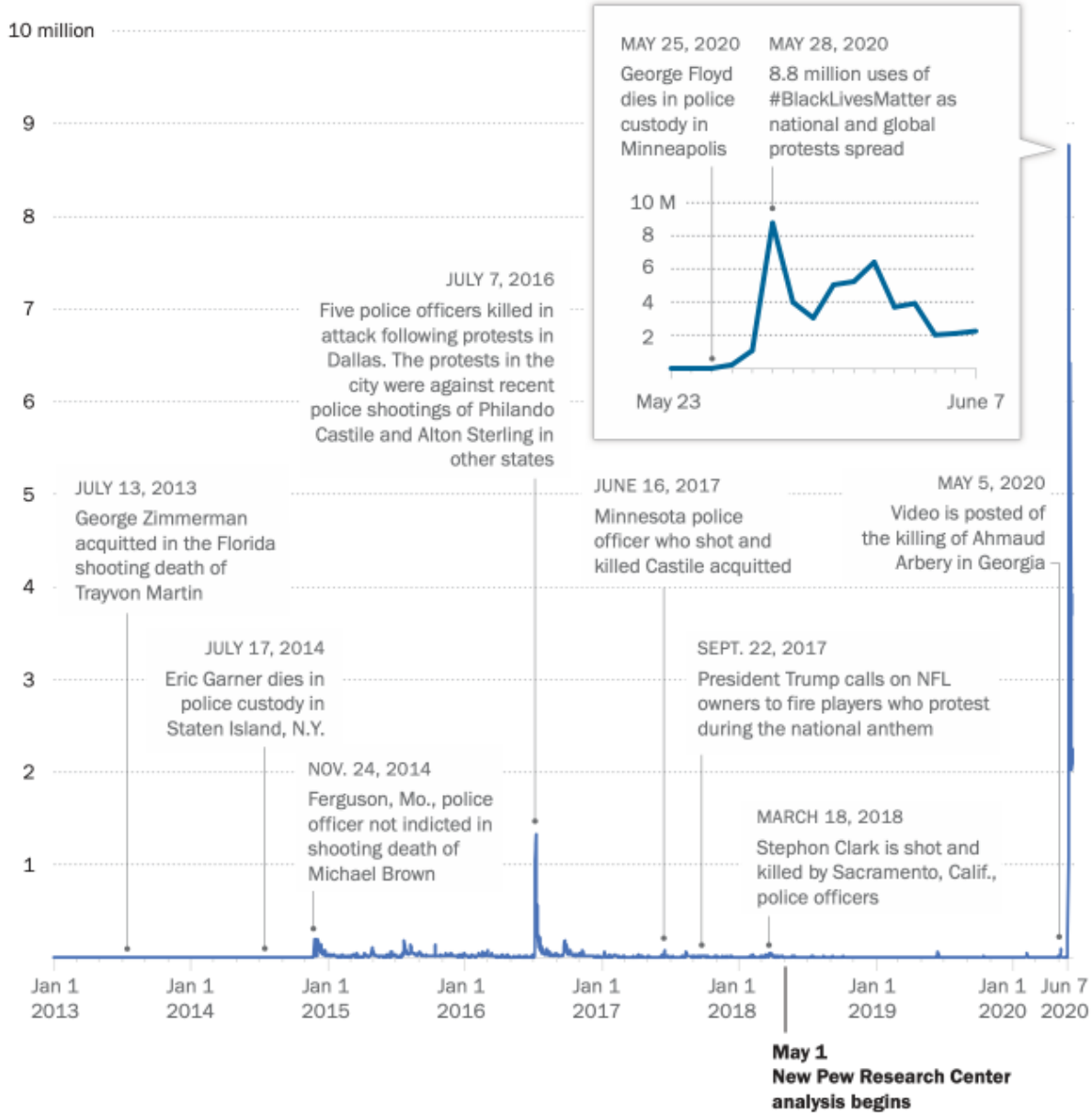
Online activism was particularly crucial in the year 2020 since not everyone could safely participate in in-person protests during the COVID-19 pandemic. Despite the fact that BLM may be the largest collective action movement in American history thanks to the over 15 million demonstrators who turned out after George Floyd's passing (Buchanan et al. 2020). Due to the fact that many people were able to profit from the BLM protests in person, chances for internet involvement were crucial. As a result, what previously appeared to be

"slacktivism" may actually be the activism that people felt comfortable engaging in during the pandemic, there will always be people who are unable to attend demonstrations because of accessibility issues. Hence, it is essential to comprehend how online initiatives might enable those who are unable to protest physically feel like they are part of a collective action and connect to others in order to prevent negative emotions. (Diaz et al 2)

Moreover, the larger social-political background and important events in 2020 inspired extensive engagement in support of the cause. The circumstances for huge protests were generated in this case by deep political divide, the epidemic, and the consequent economic instability. Individuals of various colors, ages, and socioeconomic backgrounds rushed to social media and the streets throughout the world to show their collective indignation at George Floyd's death and the several other victims of police abuse. Protests were placed in every state in the United States, as well as places throughout the world. (Bowman Williams et al 20).

**Use of the #BlackLivesMatter hashtag hits record levels amid global protests over George Floyd’s death while in police custody**

Number of public Twitter posts mentioning the #BlackLivesMatter hashtag, Jan. 1, 2013-June 7, 2020



Source: Pew Research Center analysis of publicly available tweets using Crimson Hexagon. Data for Jan. 1, 2013-May 1, 2018 collected in June 2018; data for May 1, 2018-June 7, 2020 collected in June 2020. The latter data collection phase was used for May 1, 2018.

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**Figure 01:** number of twitter public posts mentioning the hashtag “#BlackLivesMatter” (Pew Research Centre).

Figure 01 shows the baseline between January 1, 2013 and June 7, 2020 Public reactions to Floyd’s death. When Floyd died on May 25 when being held by Minneapolis police, public

reactions rapidly surfaced on Twitter. The first eyewitness video was uploaded online the day following his death, and there were almost 218,000 tweets with the hashtag #BlackLivesMatter. On May 27, daily usage of the hashtag passed 1 million when protests started in Minneapolis and expanded across the nation and the world. The #BlackLivesMatter hashtag was used in approximately 8.8 million tweets on May 28, which is the most in an one day since the Center began keeping track of its usage. As a matter of fact, these significant numbers illustrate the growing importance of social media and how these tools can give a voice to underrepresented and oppressed communities.

Following the killing of George Floyd, social media played important roles for BLM. First, it assisted in the distribution of links to the video, so increasing its visibility. It also used the popular video to encourage more activism. Second, it transmitted knowledge swiftly, which led to and enabled responsive group action. Organizers effectively recruited and organized newer activists and those that conventional movements may ignore through frequent messaging. Third, it assisted in capturing some of the mass mobilization as well as police mistreatment during demonstrations, allowing the movement to adjust and react accordingly. Activists were able to provide a narrative of events that would have taken major media sources far longer to collect and publish. Indeed, Offline activism's scope and durability were only conceivable because it was organized online. Individuals of different colors, ages, and financial level rushed to social media and the streets throughout the world to show their collective anger and solidarity.

Furthermore, this use of the #BlackLivesMatter hashtag shows how BLM has the power to use social media to impact the way people in the United States talk about race and racism as well as to influence how people around the world react to racial inequity generally.

In fact, when the discourse on social media "went to the streets," these highly visible protests received continuous media attention, fed the conversation on social media, and caused changes

in how many people felt and behaved. This indicates that a movement is moving beyond social awareness to cultural transformation, which in turn paves the door for more institutionalized legal and policy change. A widespread racial reckoning that has sparked activism and solidarity, as well as practical actions like economic mobilization, Black empowerment, and increased political participation, has grown out of what started as a hashtag to raise public awareness of racialized police abuse. These deep effects are indicators of cultural change. (Bowman Williams et al 11)

Briefly, social media played a crucial role on the solidarity and activism that spread globally. It assisted in the distribution of links to the video, so increasing its visibility. Also, It helped expounding how people react to racial inequality and other forms of police brutality around the world, and most importantly racial segregation in America.

## **2.5. BLM Goals**

The Black Lives Matter movement has been in existence for more than seven years. Although at first the movement's only stated objectives were to combat racial injustice and police brutality against black people.

As a matter of fact, The BLM's demands go beyond police violence; they also address concerns such as African-American unemployment. Activists argue that police brutality is merely one symptom of a vast array of "structural injustices" and "social problems." They want measures to provide access to high-quality education, restorative justice, employment opportunities, and health care. Furthermore, in August 2016, Black Lives Matter issued a policy platform with 50 black groups that contain demands and essential solutions that go beyond police reform. A Vision for Black Lives - Policy Demands for Black Power, Freedom, and Justice is the title of the platform, which includes six platform demands and 40 policy goals. The demands include demilitarizing law enforcement, putting an end to the war on

black life, compensating victims of crimes against them, investing in education and health, and giving black people complete and independent political power. (QTD in Ammouche 35-36)

BLM also insists on the recognition of black humanity. Opal Tometi stated on her article that the current struggle of BLM is much more than policing reform; it is a fight for complete civil, social, political, legal, economic, and cultural rights, as defined in the United Nations Universal Declaration of Human Rights.... The movement is a fight for black people's human rights and dignity in the United States, which is linked to black people's struggles for human rights across the world. (Tometi, Lenoir)

Actually, BLM nowadays demands physical security for black people with a focus on police brutality, by defunding the police, abolishing the incarceration, and stopping criminalization of black people. They also tend to ensure a socio-economic development for the Blacks. Most of the time, this has shown itself in the form of demands for economic justice or financial restitution. They believe that reparations are essential due to the lack of investment in black communities, and as a result of slavery and colonialism. For instance, the Movement for Black Lives demands "reparations for the continued divestment from, discrimination toward and exploitation of our communities in the form of a guaranteed minimum livable income for all Black people, with clearly articulated corporate regulations" (QTD in Bertilsson 28, 29, 30)

## **2.6. BLM Achievements**

George Floyd's death had a long lasting impact on the American society and the whole world as well. According to CBS News, Gianna, Floyd's young daughter, reportedly told President Biden, "Daddy changed the world," when they met. (Reported by Silverstein, CBS News, June 04, 2021) The widespread demonstrations today prove how accurate she was.

Floyd did neither initiate nor will he end the nation's racial reckoning. His name, however, became a vehicle for thinking about Black live and the injustices associated with Black mortality ; in 2020, it was the core name around which the Black Lives Matter movement brought attention, encouraged solidarity, and motivated activity. The video of George Floyd's murder is a significant component of his celebrity among victims. The video's closeness, duration, and savagery elicited widespread sympathy and indignation. It also aided the synergy between awareness and activism: Floyd's death was widely covered on social media and in the mainstream media, protests and online activity remained focused on him, and the media continued to chronicle his life and humanize him. (Bowman Williams et al 18). Indeed, The BLM protests triggered not just a shift in hearts and minds, but also a shift in activity, with more real financial and political backing that might be leveraged to begin to unroot fundamental systemic disparities. As cultural transformation becomes more broadly accepted, celebrities, companies, and organizations are under pressure to make public and financial pledges. It also sparks political discussion and action (Bowman Williams et al 22,23)

A nationwide database to track police officers with a history of misconduct was created by President Donald Trump's executive order, which was another success. The order mandates that it maintain records of criminal convictions, dismissals, and civil judgments against law enforcement officers who used excessive force. (BBC News, 17 June, 2020)

Fundamentally, the expansion of the protests, as well as the intense of active engagement in the movement, generated a number of real outcomes, which we call "next level activism": economic collective action, Black empowerment, and political participation. For starters, it increased pressure on consumers, businesses, and organizations to not just support but also financially commit to racial equality. This sparked fund raising efforts, economic sanctions, and corporate financial support for the Black community... Furthermore, the focus on Black empowerment and solidarity within the Black community has continued, and BLM has

continued to fight for it, and communicate with its core supporters. It is a part of the cultural shift we're seeing online. Finally, at the same time as the BLM inspired more engagement in the political process, political divisiveness of the 2020 election increased awareness to the movement (Bowman Williams et al 16,17)

Additionally, one of the reasons for BLM's success as a movement is that its core concerns of exposing police brutality, naming and humanizing victims, and highlighting racism and inequality have remained consistent and adaptable; they are used not only to raise individual awareness but also to deepen cultural understanding. People were trained to feel and perceive things differently as a result of the protests and internet discussion. The primary ways that strangers come to mean to us are through giving them names and identities, placing them in a family, knowing about their narrative, their goals, and their struggles. Since George Floyd's death, the online discussion of black lives has emphasized the significance of his name as well as the names of numerous other victims in fostering empathy, spreading awareness, and fostering a sense of solidarity with the objectives of the BLM movement. Identifying victims promotes empathy on a personal level while also promoting cultural change and history preservation. (Bowman Williams et al 17)

According to New York Times Newspaper, Buchanan affirmed that the amount of change that the protests have been able to bring about in such a short time is impressive. Minneapolis' City Council has promised to eliminate its police force. A statute in New York that kept police disciplinary record confidential was abolished. Chokeholds are now illegal in cities and states around the country. Since George Floyd's passing, 31 of the 100 largest communities in the nation have approved ordinances banning the usage of excessive force by law enforcement, bringing the total to 62 of the 100 largest cities in the nation with such ordinances. (Menijivar). Mississippi's state flag, which prominently displayed a Confederate battle symbol, has been retired. Professor McAdam said "It appears to the entire globe that

these protests are accomplishing what very few do: kicking off a period of profound, sustained, and broad social, political transformation" We appear to be experiencing a social change tipping point - that is as rare in society as it is potentially consequential." (Reported by Buchanan et al, New York Times, October 25, 2021)

Furthermore, BLM protests also won an education reform. School districts are implementing racial equality policies to desegregate schools, reduce racial disparities among students, and enhance the way they educate and discipline children, as well as employ and train staff. Milwaukee, Indianapolis, San Diego, and Philadelphia school districts are among them. Also, School administrators in cities are developing their curricula to incorporate more diverse authors, histories, and subjects, as well as specifically anti-racist teachings. (Menjivar)

## **Conclusion**

By the end of the second chapter, it can be summed up that the twenty first century racial issues, worth noting police brutality of young black unarmed citizens led to the evolvement of Black Lives Matter Movement. In fact, BLM began as a twitter hashtag after the killing of Trayvon Martin in the hands of Zimmerman, and has grown into a national movement. It gained more popularity after Michael Brown's murder. Effectively, George Floyd's death led to a global outrage over the racial segregation that is happening in America. Many protests over the world took place over his death. Indeed, many others tweeted the hashtag to denounce his murder and to show their support. Similarly, social media coverage was of a crucial importance during a period of Covid-19. It facilitated the spreading of Floyd's murder video on social media platforms and gain global support and activism.

Another point of a crucial significance tackled in this chapter was the goals set by BLM activists. It was created first to denounce police brutality, however it was created to deal with issues including discrimination in housing, employment, education, and health care.. Moreover,

the achievements that the BLM was able to accomplish are worth noting. In fact, one of the accomplishments was President Donald Trump's executive order that will maintain track of criminal convictions, terminations, and civil judgments against police officers who have used excessive force. Police and education reforms started to take place in the U.S, and most importantly the cultural change and the worldwide outrage over racial issues that are happening in America.

## **General Conclusion**

Racism against a variety of ethnic or minority groups has existed in the United States since the early colonial era. Since the majority of African Americans were held as slaves before 1865, their political, social, and economic liberties continue to be severely restricted. Since the advent of slavery, Black Americans have been the target of racism. African Americans were forced to make difficult decisions as a result of Reconstruction's failure and the advent of legal segregation. Despite the fact that the United States Constitution's Fourteenth and Fifteenth Amendments guaranteed basic civil rights to liberated slaves as a result of the American Civil War, attempts to assure federal protection of these rights persisted over the course of the following century. During the 19th and early 20th centuries, African Americans and their white allies employed a number of strategies in order to abolish slavery and finally secure legal equality for the "freedmen,". Progress toward racial equality was always going to be challenging because of the sectional political concessions that supported national unity. Slavery in the United States was abolished during the Civil War (1861–1865), but after the war, northern political resolve to overcome white southern opposition to racial equality weakened. Black political development was impeded by the "Jim Crow" legal segregation regime that was implemented throughout the South. The successful boycott of segregated buses in Montgomery, Alabama, which began on December 1, 1955, with the arrest of Rosa Parks, turned the civil rights movement into a popular political movement. It signaled the ascent of Martin Luther King Jr., a pivotal figure who inspired millions, held them to the moral high ground of nonviolent resistance, and built bridges between Americans of all racial, religious, and ethnic backgrounds. King, more than any other

hero in the 1960s civil rights movement, forced millions of white Americans to confront the horrors of Jim Crow and changed the political climate that allowed for the historic Civil Rights Act of 1964 to be passed. The great achievements of the civil rights struggle revealed that, in a nation of laws, full legal equality for African Americans in public facilities, places of education, and, most significantly, at the ballot was the key to progress. Indeed, the Civil Rights Movement led by Martin Luther King Jr and others was the indisputable catalyst for the passage of two new laws of unparalleled importance. The Civil Rights Act of 1964 and the Voting Rights Act of 1965 would eventually achieve legal equality for African Americans. On the other hand, racism is no longer overt or predicated on biological traits as it once was. A form of racism known as "colorblind racism" has permeated many facets of American society, including the criminal justice system.

A student of the American history can readily see how full of events, ups and downs it was. They have influenced the past, are having an impact on the present, and will undoubtedly inspire the future. The Impact of George Floyd's death on Modern American Political, and Psychological Thought was an inspirational and engaging topic to explore because history repeats itself and no nation in this world can move forward today without citing and returning to yesterday. The following are the key points that surfaced after performing study on the subject:

Inequality between white and black Americans persists in a variety of ways during the 21 including education, unemployment and more specifically police brutality. As a matter of fact, Michael Brown, Trayvon Martin and many others have been murdered just because they are people of color. These circumstances led to the creation The Black Lives Matter Movement. The slogan Black Lives Matter first appeared as a hashtag on Facebook after the death of Trayvon Martin. Indeed, it is a new civil rights movement that aims to combat this new type of

racism. The Black Lives Matter movement is attempting to move away from colorblindness and toward color awareness.

After the shocking kill of George Floyd, the Black Lives Matter movement resurfaced in the news and drew international attention. It eventually crossed borders, spanning multiple continents. It is also noteworthy that streets throughout the world were filled with different and united voices calling for justice, police reform, and an end to institutional racism. BLM was created against police brutality against unarmed black people. It aimed at ending institutional racism. It also insisted the notion of black humanity, high-quality education, restorative justice, employment opportunities, and health care. Furthermore, the All Lives Matter response is a product of the colorblind society to stop BLM activism.

This dissertation sheds light on the important roles of social media coverage of George Floyd's murder during the pandemic of Covid-19. Social media users utilized the hashtag #BlackLivesMatter to shift the narrative and tell a story that was not being covered in the mainstream media. The utilization of a viral video and hashtag narratives helped other Twitter users to search, link, and communicate with one another within the hash tagged world, as well as share stories and information about it. Similarly, George Floyd's death had a long lasting impact on the American society and the whole world as well. The BLM protests triggered not just a shift in hearts and minds, but also a shift in activity, with more real financial and political backing that might be leveraged to begin to unroot fundamental systemic disparities. As cultural transformation becomes more broadly accepted, celebrities, companies, and organizations are under pressure to make public and financial pledges.

The death of George Floyd was really different from other murdered cases of African Americans because of social media coverage during the pandemic of Covid-19. The video of his death spread globally. Indeed, Individuals of various colors, ages, and socioeconomic backgrounds rushed to social media and the streets throughout the world to show their collective

indignation at George Floyd's death and the many other victims of police abuse. Protests were placed in every state in the US as well as throughout the world. This significant protests and online activism illustrate the growing importance of social media and how these tools can give a voice to the underrepresented and oppressed people. Fundamentally, his case signals a shift from a movement's social awareness to cultural change, which in turn prepares the way for more institutionalized legal and policy change that took place in America after his death. It sparked a political discussion and action.

This research tends hopefully to help other researchers in the future who have an interest to tackle such topics. It provides information about the Black movements and police brutality. Future researchers can develop the subject depending on the future data and changes that may happen and depict the American society, and the world in general.

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