

Jadalynn Johnson

Social Justice Issue

Black Lives Matter

Black Lives Matter is a movement that has been heard over the United States and globally for the past seven years, founded by Alicia Garza, Patrisse Cullors, and Opal Tometi. The organization was formed after the acquittal of George Zimmerman in the shooting death of African-American teen Trayvon Martin. The movement became nationally recognized for street demonstrations following the 2014 deaths of two African Americans, that of Michael Brown and Eric Garner in New York City. Black Lives Matter is a social movement advocating for non-violent protest against police brutality and racially motivated violence against Black people. To say Black lives matter is not to say all other lives do not matter. A 2018 study in the American Journal of Public Health found the mortality rate by police per 100,000 was 1.9 to 2.4 for Black men, 0.8 to 1.2 for Hispanic men and 0.6 to 0.7 for white men. This fact shows how the lives of Blacks in comparison to White people of color have been victims of police violence. Historically, people have acted as though Black lives haven't counted. This is a time to stand up and stand out politically against the systematic racism between Black people in America.

Racism is deeply rooted in the soil of American history and the history of the world. The saying "America the land of the free," and "all men are created equally," was not talking about Black men, women, or minorities; they were excluded when they said that. At that time, women and people of color were seen as outcasts and were not allowed rights and were seen as positions and profits. The Black Lives Matter movement ensures that Black lives will be included, that Black lives will be remembered, and that Black lives do matter.

The problem is that Black people are profiled and have been looked down upon, and have been classified and stereotyped as threatening and dangerous, which are excuses given by police when injustices occur, such as excessive force or the shooting of a minor/any unarmed Black men. Police brutality is a civil rights violation, where officers use excessive force against people. Police brutality results from institutional racism. Police brutality results from unethical decisions made by law enforcement officials such as shooting unarmed black minorities because they were scared by their skin color or shooting and arresting teens because they fit the profile. **The solution** is to change police culture. Training is often cited as a way to reduce racial biases among police officers and encourage de-escalation,- have communication and a newfound trust between the police communities and the Black communities. We can also defund the police department and use that money to invest in therapists or psych doctors who can help assess the situation and deal with any mental health crisis. In addition, we can take accountability and ownership for their actions by continuing to protest, fight and speak up for our wants and needs by bringing our communities together, as well as get rid of the blue wall that the police system has that stops the convictions of wrong cops because of their union or only their status as an officer. **The wanted outcome** of the Black Lives Matter Movement is an end to all forms of discrimination. The full recognition of Black people's human rights is what the movement includes in its vision for a "New America." The campaign calls upon the United States government to acknowledge structural violence and institutional discrimination and recognize the full spectrum of human rights and obligations under international law.

The young adult movie *The Hate You Give*, an adaptation of Angie Thomas's book of the same name George Tilman Jr, shows Police Brutality's horrid effects when a young black teen is shot to death by a white policeman. The movie conveys the fears black minorities feel

about speaking up when an act of injustice occurs, is demonstrated when the main actress deals with uneasy feelings as the incident's only witness and why she isn't "jumping to the seams" to speak up. The movie also portrays a real-life Black family, portrayed when the inevitable speech which entails steps to take when pulled over or confronted by the police and continues on how to navigate black youths' relationship with law enforcement and as well as other ethnic groups because of the racial discrimination Black people face. This speech is given in the movie, much like it is given in each African American, minority, and Black families' households. The movie deals with the thoughts people have to justify Shooting an unarmed Black man/ teen. An example is when a "non" racist cop sympathizing ex-friend of the main character says "that the cop had every right to kill Khalil because he was "a threatening Black man" and again when the main actress's uncle who is also a cop says " this was his first time doing anything like this". The movie identified racism when the main character asked her uncle, who is also a cop if you were in a white neighborhood and the same scenario occurred in which the driver who is out of the car reaches into the driver's seat to grab a hairbrush, and you think you see a gun would you shoot or search? In which the response was: I would search the White man, not shoot like I would if the man was Black. The movie tackled the injustice that continues to occur commonly which is the officers not getting the proper sentencing, if one is gotten at all. And the protesting and grief that follows unjust, unfair sentencing police get when incidents like this occur. In my opinion Black history is telling the story that was lost, stolen and strayed.. telling the truth about history is telling the stories that have been lost, stolen and strayed. Black History is a time of rejoicing, celebrating, and admiring. Black History Month isn't just about all the bad times We've been through. It's about integrity, leadership, and determination. It's about our perseverance and

powerful ancestral strength that enforces and gives us the strength to gratefully and gracefully keep going.

In conclusion, as long as systematic racism and police brutality continue to claim innocent black lives. The Black Lives Matter Organization will continue and strive for change to better our people. Police brutality is an illegal unjustified abuse of power to take which has caused hostility and distrust between the cops and minorities. How can we expect you to protect us when it's us who need protection from you.