

**The Black Panther Party: How Media Bolstered, Decimated, and Ensured the
Legacy of a Movement**

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A New Age of Revolution

Media is integral to the effectiveness, longevity, and legacy of an ideal and movement — most notably in regards to the Black Panther Party. The Black Panther Party was constructed as a response to centuries of racial oppression, idleness in government-endorsed social change, and a lack of protection of Black lives in the United States. The organization believed that the main solution to this lasting injustice was the independence of Black communities from the oppressive nature of the United States. The Black Panthers were masters at effectively framing their cause through the use of media, specifically their self-published newspaper, *The Black Panther*.

Even within its first issue in April of 1967, the invigorating spirit of the movement was given with clarity: “Black People want and need the power to stop the white racist power structure from grinding the life out of the Black Race through... this system made to exploit and oppress Black People.”¹ This was a striking call to action after delving into the many instances of racially motivated bloodshed conducted by whites within the months prior. Such visceral descriptions of a failed justice system — one which calls out the obvious murder of an innocent man — was a galvanizing force behind their membership. Though the organization began as a minuscule, unknown sect, as a byproduct of this periodical, the Black Panther Party was able to foster a transnational community and legacy. Within a year of its creation, the Black Panther Party gained international notoriety for its resolute stances. Although the feat of this widespread paper is impressive, they built this on top of the legacies of the global Garveyism and armed African liberation movements. These movements were integral in establishing the foundations of black nationalism of the twentieth century - fostering generations of future Black activists.

¹ Huey P. Newton and Bobby Seale, eds., “Armed Black Brothers in Richmond Community,” *The Black Panther*, April 25, 1967, 1 edition, pp. 1-4, 4.

But before delving into the intricacies of the Panthers and their contemporaries, one must define what "black nationalism" even is. In the confines of this thesis, Black nationalism specifically embodies the advocacy of "unity among black people" to achieve massive change. Black nationalism, by exact definition within the Oxford dictionary, is, "a movement advocating unity among black people, separatism from white people, and political self-determination, esp. in the form of a separate black nation."² This definition is a vague estimation devoid of much of its historical context, but for the sake of brevity, it is accurate. Whether this change consists of a total revolution that would create a separate Black nation, radical social advancement, or restructuring the system of government, Black nationalism requires a sense of resolve that strives for higher achievements, not just quiet acquiesces.

At its initial formation, the Black Panther Party held a key phrase within its full name: *For Self Defense*. This key phrase clearly and succinctly conveyed the purpose and nature of this organization; it was a unification of the Black community as a form of protection against the brutality inflicted and endorsed by the United States government. Though its shorter moniker became commonplace as the Party evolved, *self defense* continued to be a fundamental principle. In the years prior to 1966, the Civil Rights Movement was in full swing; boycotts, sit-ins, protests, marches, and speeches of peaceable unity and integration were commonplace. Massive legal victories like *Brown v Board of Education* in 1954 and the Civil Rights Act of 1964 made many activists believe that the country had moved in the right direction - explicit segregation was made illegal and voting rights of Blacks were enforced by the federal government. It seemed to be the age of a new era, one of opportunity and equality for African Americans. And yet, on a smaller scale, not much has changed within Black communities. After the passing of the Civil

² "Black, Adj. and N.," black, adj. and n. : Oxford English Dictionary (Oxford Unity Press, 2011), <https://www.oed.com/view/Entry/19670?redirectedFrom=black%2Bnationalism#eid19401125>.

Rights Act, the movement appeared to stagnate; there was constant press and public pressure over the Vietnam War and to some their obstacles in achieving equality had been substantially mitigated. The Civil Rights Act was often heralded as the true solution to racism within the United States, especially by the government and others with political and financial power. Integration itself was said to be the key to coexistence, ignoring centuries of maltreatment and systemic oppression. Those who endorsed integration and equal opportunity generally did not extend that support to Black nationalism or mass social change.

The new integrationist spokespersons for black civil society do not wish to transform what they view as a fundamentally progressive economic order; nor are they interested in structural reforms that might incur the wrath of their white political allies in the corporate world or in Washington, D.C. What the black elite does lobby for is the chance, the "equal opportunity," to compete within the existing system on a roughly equal basis with white elites of similar educational and cultural background.³

Despite these victories in the legality of racial tolerance, Black people still faced constant threat and torment from racist neighbors, town leaders, and police without aid from the government. Policing within Black communities was often vigorous and purposeful; since Reconstruction, organized policing within the United States regularly targeted African Americans in the form of vagrancy laws, Jim Crow, and Ku Klux Klan. Alongside that, Blacks were often deemed threatening and as inherently corrupt as a byproduct of 200+ years of slavery and racial biases, and as a result, were frequently targeted for being "suspicious." Crimes committed against Blacks, especially those conducted by police, were swept under the rug or "justified" under the law. Implicitly, police were given the power to be the judge, jury, and executioner; simply being Black was enough to be killed for any crime, whether one was committed or not.

³ Marable, Manning. 1980. "Black Nationalism in the 1970s: Through the Prism of Race and Class." *Socialist Review*, 1-35, 22

By the end of September of 1966, this rampant barbarity culminated into a turning point in the formation of the Black Panther Party. On September 26, Matthew Johnson Jr., a sixteen-year-old, was murdered by the police in Hunters Point — a predominantly Black town in San Francisco. It is said that he was fleeing the scene of a stolen car when he was shot in the back by a white officer, but truly, that is no valid excuse to kill a child. Johnson's death sparked outrage amongst the Black communities of San Francisco. Young protestors flocked to the streets and called for the cop to be charged for murder; those protests soon turned to riots as the officer was merely suspended until the investigation finished. The National Guard was called upon and curfews were put into place, from September 29 to October 1 the Black community was silenced by the threat of martial law. There were some instances of violence, the most notable being the police firing into the Bayview Community Center that they believed was filled with armed protestors when in reality it was filled with children. Even when turmoil came to a simmer, resentment against police and the justice system remained— even more so when the officer responsible for the murder kept his position on the force while the killing was ruled as a justifiable homicide.⁴ Such incidents galvanized Huey P. Newton into action, as he saw the potential capabilities of a unified Black response when given the chance to flourish.⁵

After the assassination of Malcolm X in February of 1965 and the ceaseless continuation of police brutality within Black communities, it seemed that integration was not enough to solve the issue. In October 1966, Huey P. Newton and Bobby Seale proposed a solution to the blatant injustice against the Black community in Oakland - the Black Panther Party For Self Defense. They surmised that Black people should be protected by those of their same skin color who were not part of a system of policing entrenched in the values of institutionalized racism. Newton and

⁴ Carlsson, Chris. 2016. "Hunters Point Uprising." FoundSF.

⁵ Houghton Library. 2017. "All power to the people! Black Panther Party." Harvard Blogs.

Seale were greatly influenced by Malcolm X, specifically his model of Black nationalism through self-empowerment — Black people should buy Black, defend Blacks, support Blacks, and vote in the best interest of the black community. If that self-empowerment led to revolution against an unmoving government, then let revolution commence. In the second issue of *The Black Panther*, Newton and Seale recall Malcolm X's 1964 *Ballot or the Bullet* speech as a reinforcement of the resolve of the Black nationalist and retaliation towards governmental failings. Instead of the “ballot or the bullet”, they declare that, “In spite of all the foregoing, the Negro has tried to deal with whites in a peaceful process. He has tried to deal with the white man through the ballot; that hasn't worked. He has tried reason and morality; that hasn't worked. He has tried integration; that hasn't worked... The time has come (all else having failed) to use some stronger stuff... the ballot of the bullet.”⁶

With this method as a focal point within the movement, it is only natural that the Black Panthers ensured the protection of their community. At the start, the Panthers patrolled within Black communities while visibly armed as a preemptive measure against the corrupt nature of the police. Men within the Oakland and Richmond communities volunteered for the patrol to create a steady force. When the police searched someone – the Panthers were there. When giving tickets – the Panthers were there. When policing through Black communities – the Panthers were there. This small group of men were often able to prevent added harassment and injustice enacted by cops in the area, though the Panthers' ownership of guns soon came to be under threat.

The Panthers only truly gained national recognition – and infamy – after attending a California Assembly meeting at the state capitol in 1967. The event occurred on May 2, seven months after the creation of the Panthers. After witnessing the results of the Black Panther

⁶ “Black Activists in America,” *The Black Panther*, May 15, 1967, 2 edition, pp. 1-8, 7.

Party's patrols - California legislators, particularly Don Mulford, grew wary of the Panthers and the possible danger they would be in relation to the white community, though their goals were merely for self-defense. Mulford was the representative of Oakland, the base of operations for the Panthers, and because of this he proposed the Mulford Act, which would prohibit carrying primed firearms in public. Though this law would be more constricting against all who wished to carry, the intention of the bill was to directly disarm the Panthers – or at least create a law which could be used to arrest them.⁷ As a response, the Panthers planned a gun-in⁸ at the California Assembly meeting. Though some were allowed to enter the building with their guns, they were immediately seen as a threat by those inside and subsequently asked to leave by policemen. Only after the Panthers had already left the building were they arrested. As stated by the Panthers themselves:

The police rallied, maneuvered them into one room and for a short time separated some of them from their guns. This last step was easy, as the Panthers didn't resist... The State Police didn't find a law to cover the situation, gave the Panthers back their guns and the group left. But then, a law was found... 23 Panthers...all charged with conspiracy to disturb the assembly.⁹

Unfortunately, a perspective that favored the Panthers in this situation was not commonplace. The entire event was recorded by journalists called upon by the Panthers so the general public could see the Panthers defending their rights and truly know their principles.¹⁰ Huey Newton gave two speeches that day: one outside the steps of the Capitol building and one after the arrests of 23 Panthers, denouncing the hypocritical actions of the legislature and

⁷ Nick Wing, "Here's How the Nation Responded When a Black Militia Group Occupied a Government Building," HuffPost (HuffPost, December 21, 2016), https://www.huffpost.com/entry/black-panthers-california-1967_n_568accfce4b014efe0db2f40.

⁸ Gun-in: Openly carrying arms while in protest; in this situation, entering the Capitol building and attending the procession while armed.

⁹ "Anonymous Article about Sacramento," *The Black Panther*, May 15, 1967, 2 edition, pp. 1-8, 8.

¹⁰ Nick Wing, "Here's How the Nation Responded When a Black Militia Group Occupied a Government Building," HuffPost (HuffPost, December 21, 2016), https://www.huffpost.com/entry/black-panthers-california-1967_n_568accfce4b014efe0db2f40.

police.¹¹ Despite their best efforts, the Mulford Act passed, possibly due to their presence within the Capitol being seen as threatening to the predominantly white legislature.

After their presence in Sacramento, the Panthers were demonized by the general press and government, disparaged as terrorists and it was later said that the Party “represents the greatest threat to internal security of the country.”¹² The Panthers were further condemned to infamy when current California governor and future president Ronald Reagan voiced his dissent on the Panthers’ methods, though they were constitutional. To the average white citizen, this display of power and “willingness” for violence created a massive backlash to the Black Panthers.¹³ Many whites were still up in arms over the Civil Rights Movement, which had been peaceful, and the subsequent measures taken to ensure the protection of these civil liberties, so the concepts behind the Panthers were not favored. They were seen as menaces to society, a foreboding message to the “Black revolution” that was to come if not nipped in the bud, which was dutifully carried out by the federal government.

¹¹ SacramentoHistory, “The Black Panthers Protest the California Assembly, 1967,” YouTube (Center for Sacramento History, May 11, 2020), <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6woXE-RPY7A>.

¹² J. Edgar Hoover, 1969

¹³ Nick Wing, “Here's How the Nation Responded When a Black Militia Group Occupied a Government Building,” HuffPost (HuffPost, December 21, 2016), https://www.huffpost.com/entry/black-panthers-california-1967_n_568accfce4b014efe0db2f40.



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Vilified by the government, their achievements and goals became muddled in the public narrative, forgotten in favor of electing a select few Blacks to idolize in history for their “agreeable” methods. In the case of Garvey, Booker T. Washington was highlighted for his willingness to play the game of the oppressors to gain economic equality. For the Black Panthers, like the armed liberation movements in the African continent, their leaders were jailed, killed, or exiled as a ploy to discredit the validity of their efforts. In history books, the Panthers are rarely mentioned and are villainized when present. This was purposefully done by the Federal Bureau of Investigation as a means to undermine the principles of the movement and indoctrinate generations of citizens. While the Panthers were persecuted, Martin Luther King Jr. was revered by white audiences for his peaceful methods. He was immortalized in history by the oppressors – pronounced a hero – only after he was assassinated for his dreams of equality. The legacy of a movement, of a people, is created through its portrayal. Its cultural and historical impact hinges on its ability to cultivate an image and ideal that can withstand opposition, mutilation, and time. Despite their criminalization by their adversaries, the Black Panthers were successful in sowing the seeds of this movement – of a revolutionary spirit – into the trees of future generations.

¹⁴ “Capitol is Invaded,” *Sacramento Bee*, May 2, 1967.



OCTOBER 1966 BLACK PANTHER PARTY PLATFORM AND PROGRAM



WHAT WE WANT

WHAT WE BELIEVE

The program is usually divided into one section of ten points entitled "What We Want" and then ten paragraphs explaining these points in a section entitled "What We Believe." For the sake of clarity, we have put each one of the ten points in "What We Want" immediately above its corresponding paragraph in "What We Believe."

1. We want freedom. We want power to determine the destiny of our Black Community.

We believe that black people will not be free until we are able to determine our destiny.

2. We want full employment for our people.

We believe that the federal government is responsible and obligated to give every man employment or a guaranteed income. We believe that if the white American businessmen will not give full employment, then the means of production should be taken from the businessmen and placed in the community so that the people of the community can organize and employ all of its people and give a high standard of living.

3. We want an end to the robbery by the white man of our Black Community.

We believe that this racist government has robbed us and now we are demanding the overdue debt of forty acres and two mules. Forty acres and two mules was promised 100 years ago as restitution for slave labor and mass murder of black people. We will accept the payment in currency which will be distributed to our many communities. The Germans are now aiding the Jews in Israel for the genocide of the Jewish people. The Germans murdered six million Jews. The American racist has taken part in the slaughter of over fifty million black people; therefore, we feel that this is a modest demand that we make.

4. We want decent housing, fit for shelter of human beings.

We believe that if the white landlords will not give decent housing to our black community, then the housing and the land should be made into cooperatives so that our community, with government aid, can build and make decent housing for its people.

5. We want education for our people that exposes the true nature of this decadent American society. We want education that teaches us our true history and our role in the present-day society.

We believe in an educational system that will give to our people a knowledge of self. If a man does not have knowledge of himself and his position in society and the world, then he has little chance to relate to anything else.

6. We want all black men to be exempt from military service.

We believe that Black people should not be forced to fight in the military service to defend a racist government that does not protect us. We will not fight and kill other people of color in the world who, like black people, are being victimized by the white racist government of America. We will protect ourselves from the force and violence of the racist police and the racist military, by whatever means necessary.

7. We want an immediate end to POLICE BRUTALITY and MURDER of black people.

We believe we can end police brutality in our black community by organizing black self-defense groups that are dedicated to defending our black community from racist police oppression and brutality. The Second Amendment to the Constitution of the United States gives a right to bear arms. We therefore believe that all black people should arm themselves for self defense.

8. We want freedom for all black men held in federal, state, county and city prisons and jails.

We believe that all black people should be released from the many jails and prisons because they have not received a fair and impartial trial.

9. We want all black people when brought to trial to be tried in court by a jury of their peer group or people from their black communities, as defined by the Constitution of the United States.

We believe that the courts should follow the United States Constitution so that black people will receive fair trials. The 14th Amendment of the U.S. Constitution gives a man a right to be tried by his peer group. A peer is a person from a similar economic, social, religious, geographical, environmental, historical and racial background. To do this the court will be forced to select a jury from the black community from which the black defendant came. We have been, and are being tried by all-white juries that have no understanding of the "average reasoning man" of the black community.

10. We want land, bread, housing, education, clothing, justice and peace. And as our major political objective, a United Nations supervised plebiscite to be held throughout the black colony in which only black colonial subjects will be allowed to participate, for the purpose of determining the will of black people as to their national destiny.

When, in the course of human events, it becomes necessary for one people to dissolve the political bands which have connected them with another, and to assume, among the powers of the earth, the separate and equal station to which the laws of nature and nature's God entitle them, a decent respect to the opinions of mankind requires that they should declare the causes which impel them to the separation.

We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal; that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable rights; that among these are life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness. That, to secure these rights, governments are instituted among men, deriving their just powers from the consent of the governed; that, whenever any form of government becomes destructive of these ends, it is the right of the people to alter or to abolish it, and to institute a new government, laying its foundation on such principles, and organizing its powers in such form, as to them shall seem most likely to effect their safety and happiness. Prudence, indeed, will dictate that governments long established should not be changed for light and transient causes; and, accordingly, all experience hath shown, that mankind are more disposed to suffer, while evils are sufferable, than to right themselves by abolishing the forms to which they are accustomed. But, when a long train of abuses and usurpations, pursuing invariably the same object, evinces a design to reduce them under absolute despotism, it is their right, it is their duty, to throw off such government, and to provide new guards for their future security.



FREE HUEY NOW GUNS BABY GUNS

¹⁵ The Ten-Point Program of the Black Panthers; it states their purpose and future goals.

¹⁵ Huey P Newton and Bobby Seale, "Black Panther Party Platform and Program," *The Black Panther*, 1966, 5.

Revolution of Media, Evolution of a Movement

Media as a Tool for Black Nationalism

Though the media was the tool that the Black Panther Party used to obtain international acclaim, the media itself evolved alongside the Panthers to make such a feat possible. Black movements, specifically those of the nationalistic kind, employed the media to propagate ideals and gain support across the globe. One of the most enduring and widespread forms of communications of the twentieth century was print media: the most well-known Black newspaper being *Negro World*, founded by Marcus Garvey in 1918¹⁶. The *Negro World* was one of Garvey's most well known accomplishment, but it was not Garvey's first creation that grew from a place of Black nationalism. After reading the writings of Booker T. Washington, a prominent African American scholar, in 1914, Garvey along with his wife, Amy, founded the Universal Negro Improvement Association (UNIA)¹⁷. Its purpose was to increase the amount of educational and occupational opportunities in the Black community working within the social constraints of the time, yet when Garvey initiated this organization in Jamaica, it failed tremendously. From this instance, Garvey could see the main flaw within Washington's ideology: it exalted self-sufficiency, but it did not take into account that working within a broken system – set up to bring failure to Blacks – would only delay and inhibit progress.

Garvey immigrated to the US in 1916 from Jamaica, and since he directly interacted within a black population that had only experienced official freedom from bondage for less than half a century, he was able to truly see the originator and keeper of such dilapidation. This population was leagues above its prior social standing because it was built with foundations in its

¹⁶ Fan'aye SunLight-Selassie, "UNIA History," UNIA, accessed January 24, 2022, <https://www.unia-aclgovernment.com/history/>.

¹⁷ "Universal Negro Improvement Association," PBS (Public Broadcasting Service), accessed January 24, 2022, <https://www.pbs.org/wgbh/americanexperience/features/garvey-unia/>.

community's strength and steadfastness. Yet, African Americans remained at the lower rungs of American society as a result of the system they lived within. Garvey could see this disparity between Blacks and their white oppressors, the lack of representation of Blackness across the globe – which stirred up a desire to create a united Black society, one which would uplift, govern, and guide them independent from white supremacy. With the new goal of both financial and political independence in mind, Garvey resurrected the UNIA in Harlem, New York in 1916. By 1920, the organization had divisions all across North and Central America, the Caribbean, and Africa – all of which aspired to advance the totality of the Black population, not just a select few.¹⁸

The *Negro World* was a culmination of UNIA's desire to unite against colonizing forces that embodied the ideals of Black suppression – often highlighting endeavors to foster a united Black society independent from the racist societies they lived in. It brought national attention to Black struggles, inventions, and news around the globe; its authors consisted of prominent Black leaders, activists, and writers in both the United States and abroad. Each issue began with a message written by Marcus Garvey himself as a statement of the ambitions of the organization. A times, it would request donations and on other occasions would call for the action of all of its readers. The periodical focused on Black empowerment in all senses of the word: appearance, wealth, politics, social programs, and education. Since white newspapers of the time would scarcely, if ever, advertise the products or stories of African Americans. In *Negro World*, Black businesses and inventions were continuously advertised alongside articles that denounced parasitic white colonialism and imperialistic society. Its unequivocal strong conveyance of Pan-African unity was its greatest communicator: that is, its evocation of the struggles and

¹⁸ “Universal Negro Improvement Association,” PBS (Public Broadcasting Service), accessed January 24, 2022, <https://www.pbs.org/wgbh/americanexperience/features/garvey-unia/>.

triumphs of the Black experience fostered a global audience. It is created by Black people, for Black people. This was a way in which Black people across the globe could communicate and truly feel a connected kinship with one another. Sparks of revolution and new schools of thought circulated throughout the Americas, Europe, and Africa – despite the official banning of the periodical in colonial provinces. This kinship and union of ideas was vital in the cultivation of the global Black consciousness.

Negro World ceased publishing in 1933, but its ideas of Pan-African unification and the desire for independence only increased as colonial societies were forced to bear the brunt of economic depression and a World War that followed. The longstanding conviction toward the cessation of imperialism within Africa was now a common sentiment among the people as a result of the constant European brutality they were subjected to. African nations continued to vie for their independence and used the media to spread this movement throughout the nation and globe. The Black Panthers predicated on these sentiments of collective struggle in the formation of their goals and policies.

Black Nationalism in Algeria

On the global sphere, Algeria and their revolution, which had suffered brutality by French rule since 1830, resided on gaining support through both the political and public stages. After its inception in 1954, the Front de Libération Nationale¹⁹ (FLN) swiftly garnered global attention through violence. In 1955, the targeting of Europeans in the eastern section of the country led the French government to retaliate by killing an exponential number of Algerians, which exacerbated the tensions between the two groups both within Algeria and France. Throughout the war, the FLN employed the media to both create propaganda and to expose the atrocities that were committed by France to the general public. For example, pamphlets aimed to vilify the

¹⁹ Translation: National Liberation Front

French, reaffirming those lost to the cause as martyrs. Both sides were the sources of death within the country, however France's sheer brutality, in conjunction with its inability to officially acknowledge the war, led to increasingly favorable press coverage of the FLN. Between news broadcasts abroad, pamphlets, word of mouth, and the conscription of French citizens – the French public increasingly believed that the war was pointless. In the 1956 elections, 12 million voted in favor for peace with Algeria by any means necessary.²⁰

In 1958, revolutionaries formed the Provisional Government of the Algerian Republic (Gouvernement Provisoire de la République Algérienne; GPRA) as a response to the French government's reluctance to relinquish complete and total control over Algeria. The French advocated for total integration - essentially complete absorption - into the French Republic instead of being a colony.²¹ This directly contradicted the movement's desire for complete independence, as integration would erase their efforts and allow France's misconduct to continue. This organization, though nationalistic in creation, relied on the Pan-African unity that existed amongst African states and colonies; it "participated in the founding of the 'Casablanca bloc' with the states that long constituted the core of 'radical' Africa: Ghana, Guinea, Mali, and the United Arab Republic. Each of the states that gathered at Morocco's invitation in January 1961 had its own specific concerns and objectives, which were momentarily subordinated to one or two common goals in a hopeful aura of [Pan-African] solidarity."²²

Though they were provided permanent offices to work out from Guinea, Ghana, Egypt, and Tunisia, not many other African nations outside of the Casablanca bloc recognized the

²⁰ Benjamin J Sparks, "The War Without a Name: The Use of Propaganda in the Decolonization War of Algeria," *The War Without a Name: The Use of Propaganda in the Decolonization War of Algeria* (BYU Scholarsarchive, 2011), <https://scholarsarchive.byu.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=3920&context=etd>, 68.

²¹ "Algerian War Of Independence," Encyclopedia.com (Encyclopedia.com, January 24, 2022), <https://www.encyclopedia.com/humanities/encyclopedias-almanacs-transcripts-and-maps/algerian-war-independence>.

²² "The Algerian Revolution in Search of the African Revolution," *The Journal of Modern African Studies* 8, no. 3. (1970). 369

GPRA. They were invited to participate in the Conferences of Independent African States as their own entity in 1959, but were not granted unconditional support from most of the parties present.²³ They were also unable to find allies in their fellow French colonies, who were given independence and a seat at the United Nations (UN) before them.²⁴ There was not much done within the Casablanca bloc at first either, as it devised a nebulous sense of solidarity while achieving little change, and by spring of 1963 it had dissolved.²⁵

Though this failed alignment with other African nations did not achieve much institutional change, it allowed Algerian revolutionaries to publicize their plight on a grander scale. Many Arab and Asian states did recognize the GPRA, but the most lucrative of acknowledgements came from the Soviet bloc. The GPRA often used the Cold War to their advantage, campaigning for support from the United Nations or the Eastern bloc (Soviet Union) through their speeches and conventions. Since France was one of the primary powers within the UN and their sister nations did not support their efforts for complete independence, the FLN colluded with the Soviet bloc – though the heads of organization did not support communism.²⁶ The Eastern bloc not only recognized the GPRA, but gave military equipment and offered training to revolutionary troops.²⁷

²³ “The Algerian Revolution in Search of the African Revolution,” *The Journal of Modern African Studies* 8, no. 3. (1970) pp. 367.

²⁴ *Ibid.*

²⁵ *Ibid.*

²⁶ “The Algerian Revolution and the Communist Bloc,” Wilson Center, February 10, 2015.

<https://www.wilsoncenter.org/publication/the-algerian-revolution-and-the-communist-bloc>.

²⁷ “Development of Relations with Socialist Countries since March 19, 1961,” March 19, 1961, History and Public Policy Program Digital Archive, Dossier 08/13/07, <https://digitalarchive.wilsoncenter.org/document/121586>.



When Algeria triumphed over France in 1962, the world was shown the power of such committed resistance: even though France held political and military control over Algeria for 132 years by torturing and executing any they believed were resisting, the independence movement prevailed. This war of attrition set an example to later revolutionary movements: the formation of a unified front against any oppressive force can win wars – an unyielding belief in their right to govern themselves and prosper, free from the systematic abuse that inhibits progress. The Black Panthers used this methodology and determination as an exemplar of perseverance, and a way to develop public empathy and international allies in the future.

²⁸ Benjamin J Sparks, “The War Without a Name: The Use of Propaganda in the Decolonization War of Algeria,” *The War Without a Name: The Use of Propaganda in the Decolonization War of Algeria* (BYU Scholarsarchive, 2011), <https://scholarsarchive.byu.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=3920&context=etd>, 65.

American Television and Black Power

As a result of the economic and technological boom of the 1950s in the West, post-World War II, possession of a television set exponentially increased by 1960²⁹ and compelled American viewership for decades – the only change being what was truly presented on air. Algeria's independence efforts were known on a global scale, but American television programs rarely highlighted their plight in areas other than newsreels. Throughout the 1950s and the majority of the 1960s, American television leaned towards escapist entertainment rather than any of its other contemporary mediums. The news was informational, but the majority of other programs had little to do with current events or social issues. Television favored shows that did not depict the present: the cowboys of the West, comedies, dramas, slice of life shows, and adventures.³⁰ The disassociating nature of television normalized the overlooking of current events. This style of escapism diminished with the Civil Rights Movement.

Though the Civil Rights Movement actively took advantage of the sensationalism of the media to truly depict the severity of segregation and prejudice within the country, Black voices were not ones that often kept the attention of whites: news crews would often record merely pieces of the objective. Furthermore, the Civil Rights Movement was merely shown with the increased 30 minute news time slot, but was not depicted in escapist programs of the time. A speech could be seen, but a call to action with legitimate steps would go unheard because it was not the prerogative of white viewers. To present recordings of what activists faced would be to directly confront whites in their complicity and prejudice, and to many news stations this injustice was not worth the loss in viewership.³¹ True change in the broadcasting of social

²⁹“The Late Golden Age,” Encyclopædia Britannica (Encyclopædia Britannica, inc.), accessed February 7, 2022, <https://www.britannica.com/art/television-in-the-United-States/The-late-Golden-Age>.

³⁰ Ibid.

³¹ Alexis C. Madrigal, “When the Revolution Was Televised,” The Atlantic (Atlantic Media Company, April 2, 2018), <https://www.theatlantic.com/technology/archive/2018/04/televisions-civil-rights-revolution/554639/>.

movements came in 1957 with the Little Rock Nine³², who were the first African American students³³ enrolled in Little Rock Central High School, which had previously been segregated. Their enrollment came with a massive local backlash; the governor of Arkansas misused his power to keep the student's out "for their protection," though it deliberately violated *Brown v Board of Education*.

Though the Civil Rights Movement had gained surges in awareness from *Brown v Board of Education*, the murder of Emmett Till, and the Montgomery Bus Boycott, this spotlight was temporary in the eyes of whites. The death of Till first gained infamy through its publishing in *Jet* magazine then its subsequent spread throughout the press, which brought more scrutiny to the injustices in the South, but Till's murderers were still left free by the time the case lost national attention. The Little Rock Nine's story, on the other hand, was crucial, not only as a symbol of real change within the United States, but also as a source so drama-filled that the news had no choice but to cover it. To see nine teenagers face such avid hatred and rage filled mobs with a cool demeanor and perseverance would bring any audience. Whereas Till's murder gained attention, the Little Rock Nine had federal support, and this made all the difference. The endorsement of President Eisenhower, a direct result of the Arkansas governor's use of the National Guard to keep the nine students out, brought even greater attention to the occasion and the subsequent legal battles that followed. From there, it was inevitable that Civil Rights Leaders used this newfound attention to their advantage, as Little Rock had presented them with a larger stage.³⁴

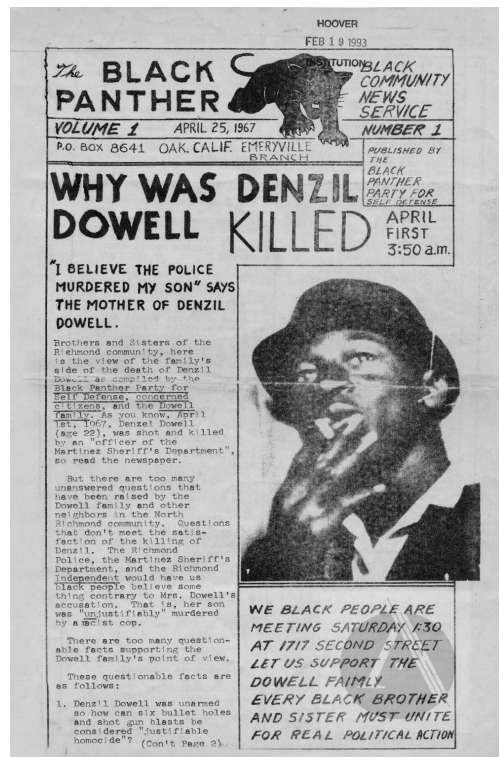
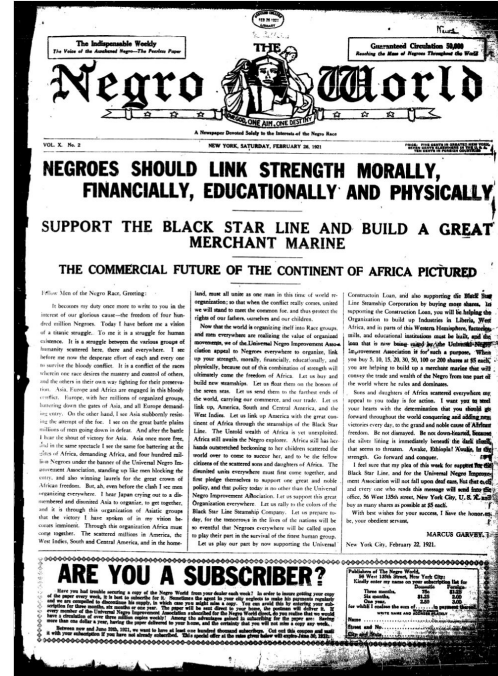
³² History.com Editors, "Little Rock Nine," History.com (A&E Television Networks, January 29, 2010), <https://www.history.com/topics/black-history/central-high-school-integration>.

³³ Their names are Minnijean Brown, Elizabeth Eckford, Ernest Green, Thelma Mothershed, Melba Patillo, Gloria Ray, Terrence Roberts, Jefferson Thomas and Carlotta Walls. All except Thomas are still alive today.

³⁴ History.com Editors, "Little Rock Nine," History.com (A&E Television Networks, January 29, 2010), <https://www.history.com/topics/black-history/central-high-school-integration>.

From there, the blueprint of Civil Rights activism was created – to face barbarity with a calm facade amidst the press would bring further sympathies and understanding to the movement through the sheer disparity in treatment presented. Alongside this development, African Americans began to be depicted within escapist programs of widespread America, like "I Spy" with Bill Cosby in 1965.³⁵ This inclination to hire more Black actors steadily grew, though was still hindered by racist practices, but eventually resulted in social issues being brought up within these productions that once held little-to-no correlation to everyday life. This willingness to address Black audiences while also presenting them in a generally positive light aided in the later dissemination of key ideals in Black Movements of the future.

³⁵ "Television in American Society" Reference Library. (Encyclopedia.com. 24 Jan. 2022)," Encyclopedia.com (Encyclopedia.com, February 11, 2022), <https://www.encyclopedia.com/arts/news-wires-white-papers-and-books/televisions-impact-american-society-and-culture>.



To Build Upon a Foundation

With the groundwork of previous movements as their base, the Black Panthers were able to adapt and cultivate their own image, following, and agenda. The *Black Panther Newspaper* took inspiration from the pages depicted above ^{see above, pp. 9} when the organization gained acclaim: each of the near-weekly issues began with grand statements of purpose on which the rest of the issue would focus on. These statements were written by Party members, and in many cases, by leaders like Huey Newton and Eldridge Cleaver. Unlike *Negro World*, the newspaper of the Black Panthers relied more heavily on images as a supplement to those articles, a difference that truly came with the improvement of technology and the ability to obtain and print these images. This statement, often paired with striking images that depicted variously different themes – ranging from the victims of police brutality to the actions of the Panthers – brought another level of believability and following to their cause.

Where the *Black Panther Newspaper* focused on political, social, and economic injustices while making demands for the alleviation of these issues, *Negro World* presented this contention as a cause to form a nation free from Western influence. Its frequent calls for immediate action often concerned the people within the African continent who dealt with the immediate ramifications of Western imperialism and were a focal point throughout the periodical. When concerning the British occupation and exploitation of West Africa, Garvey proclaimed, “Then why should Negroes tolerate other men and other races going into their country to rob and take away from them that which is their natural right? Men of Africa, men of the Negro race, I ask that you be up and doing.”⁴⁰ *Negro World*’s, and by proxy Garvey’s, ambition towards complete self-sufficiency and separation from the West was in some ways reproduced in the rhetoric and programs of the Panthers; the desire to live separately from whites in Black communities and to

⁴⁰ Marcus Garvey, “Will Negroes Allow Whites to Take Africa?,” *Negro World* 10.1, February 19, 1921

support themselves without the need of government interference was a main concept within the Party. The impetus to counteract and neutralize white oppression was emulated within the Panther's doctrine, though it primarily held more focus on Blacks within the United States. In their third edition as an official newspaper, the Black Panthers first attempted to apply this desire to gain control within Black communities and uplift them, specifically in North Richmond, California. This area, according to the Panthers, had "Bad roads, dilapidated housing, rampant unemployment, inferior education...[and] no say-so over the decisions that control [their] lives ...[because] the power structure taxes them while allowing them no representation."⁴¹ Due to this rampant neglect, maintained by an oppressive system created to disempower Blacks, the Panthers gave their support to the Black community in their endeavors to have North Richmond governed independently from the rest of Richmond, which was predominantly white. This notion, if carried out, would have perfectly encapsulated the ideal of complete self-sufficiency. The Panthers also sought for independence on a larger scale, holding positions of office within the United States, so that legislation that harmed Black communities could be done away with. Nonetheless, both periodicals strove to highlight the struggles and achievements of the Black community while striving for a better future.

While *The Black Panther* newspaper takes after *Negro World* in its format and goals, the Panthers' drive and use of the media to present themselves as protectors and martyrs of their communities reflected the successes of the Algerian Independence Movement. Algeria's independence, in large part, was a result of perseverance and media marketing that garnered them worldwide attention and support. Broadcasts directly displayed the horrors that Algerians faced, and pamphlets were used to depict the freedom fighters as martyrs within the movement.

⁴¹ Eldrige Cleaver, "Panthers Demand Independence for Richmond Area," *The Black Panther*; June 20, 1967, Vol 1, edition 3.

The Black Panthers harnessed this approach more directly, instead of waiting for news broadcasters to come to them, the press would be called for certain events and to disseminate information directly from the Panthers. Also, due to the freedom of press within the United States, the Black Panthers could circulate their own information and goals without the immediate consequences that rebelling Algerians faced. This encouraged the Panthers to speak emphatically of their endeavors and their fierce defense of their actions, so that they could become a household name throughout Black communities and the general United States.

Before the inception of *The Black Panther*, the Panthers harnessed the use of the general press to gain a following and a national name for themselves, beginning with the escorting of Betty Shabazz in February after the organization's initial inception. Shabazz was scheduled to give an interview within San Francisco on February 21, 1967, the second anniversary of her husband's assassination and the Panthers chose to accompany her on her journey as protection. Before this point, the Black Panthers were relatively small, but through this decision – to proactively protect Shabazz from attack with the presence of armed men – knowledge of their agenda and goals were brought to the greater Bay Area through San Francisco news broadcasts, like KRON TV, and other local newspapers. Eldridge Cleaver⁴², a leader within the Panthers and in the original formation of guards, answered that the presence of the Black Panthers was for "her protection."⁴³ When asked by a KRONTV anchor if he [Cleaver] believed Shabazz's life to be in danger, Cleaver defined the position of the Panthers, stating that:

We don't feel like her life is in danger, any more than any other Black person's life is in danger in America....The record shows that many Black people have been murdered outright here in America. And we see nothing to believe that this is going to stop.⁴⁴

⁴² Later became the Black Panther Party's Minister of Information

⁴³ *Eldridge Cleaver on Guarding Betty Shabazz* (Young Broadcasting of San Francisco, Inc , 1967), <https://diva.sfsu.edu/collections/sfbatv/bundles/209117>.

⁴⁴ Ibid.

This officially created a buzz around who the Panthers truly were and what their goals would be in the future, but it was the March on Sacramento that truly put them in minds across the nation. With this fame, or infamy, as some would say, the Panthers were able to fully establish themselves as an organization and foster a national following – mainly by publishing their self-titled periodical.

Two months later, *The Black Panther* began its circulation at a mere four pages, though it was profound in its convictions and severe in its criticisms of the treatment of African Americans. The first volume, depicted above, highlighted the killing of Denzil Dowell and other injustices enacted by the police within the area. It succinctly conveyed the gravity of the situation, and how, as an organization and staple of the community, the Black Panthers would proactively protect the Black populace on a grassroots level. The periodical consistently focused on immediate transgressions against the Black community in the Bay Area, California, and across the United States.

The Black Panthers aimed to gain numbers through the relatability one could have with its members: by presenting as a united and confident organization, members could be gained through comradery. Black Panthers were an up-and-coming organization, and by directly addressing their contemporaries as equals they were able to gain more members from the younger generation. From the start of the *Black Panther*, the Panthers depicted themselves as disciplined, intelligent, and courageous – as both a way to present a strong front against white opposition, legitimize their endeavors, and often to cater to the sensibilities of men. The first issue was a direct call to action for men to become members of the organization as a way to protect their own communities. With every issue, men were asked to join in arms with the Panthers, as a sign of their strength and steadfastness against the white oppression.

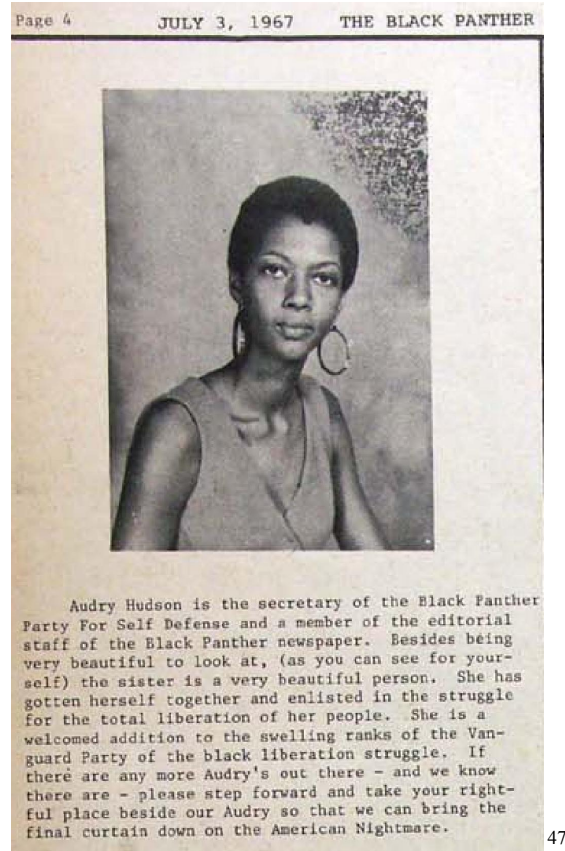
The Black Panthers took a similar, though less proactive, approach when persuading women to enlist in their ranks. The Panthers played into gender roles of the time, with men in the organization regularly advertised as defenders of the family and women in supporting roles, focusing on the upstanding morals of women. ^{see below pp.15} Inherent sexism in these gender roles at the time aside, the ideals and goals of the Party itself – Black protection and self-sufficiency – often persuaded women to join, and by 1970 more than half of the members were women. These women often ran the community programs, encouraged other women to join as progressive activists, and near the end of the Party’s prominence were the leaders of the Panthers.⁴⁵ Women within the Party advocated for female liberation alongside Black Liberation, occupying their own “Sisters’ Section” within the paper, and commenting on current events. After the March on Sacramento and subsequent arrests of the male Panther members, the Sisters’ Section commemorated this act, stating:

I know every black woman has to feel proud of black men who finally decided to announce to the world that they were putting an end to police brutality and black genocide...The Black Panther Party for Self-Defense are Black Men with pride, self-respect, and most of all love for their brother...[they] kindle in me, a Black Woman, the feeling of wanting to help plan, work, experience, and most of all share not only these feelings with him but the togetherness of wanting and now going about our freedom together. ⁴⁶

This was done to convince more female members to join, and based on the prevalence of women organizers on all levels of the movement, including the newspaper itself, it was effective. Though the “Sisters’ Section” presented the female opinions and goals within the organization while inspiring new membership, it is important to note that the six women who attended the March on Sacramento were not mentioned or shown explicitly within this issue.

⁴⁵ Elaine Brown was Chairwoman of the Black Panthers from 1974-1977. She aided in the initiation of the Free Breakfast Program in Los Angeles and its Free Legal Aid Program. She was also the Southern California editor of *The Black Panther* in 1968. She then became Minister of Information in 1971.

⁴⁶ Barbara Auther. Williams. “Sisters’ Section,” *The Black Panther*, May 15, 1967, Volume 1, edition 2, pp.6.



By 1968, the Black Panthers had 45 chapters across the country – especially in cosmopolitan centers like Chicago, Atlanta, Los Angeles, New York City, Washington D.C., Philadelphia, and Boston – with a total of 5,000 members⁴⁸. *The Black Panther* circulated around the country with an audience of 250,000,⁴⁹ effectively establishing themselves as a main center of Black organization in the later 1960s. Eventually, the Panthers began to partner with fellow activist organizations of the time, like the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee (SNCC) and the Malcolm X Foundation, for unified membership and social programs. The SNCC was a vital player within the Civil Rights Movement, as it was the base of operations for many sit-ins, freedom-rides, marches, and other protests conducted by the younger generation. When Stokely Carmichael, a prominent activist within the SNCC, became the chairman of the SNCC in 1966,

⁴⁷ “Audry Hudson,” *The Black Panther*, July 3, 1967, Volume 1, 4 edition, p. 4.

⁴⁸ Asante, Molefi K. (2005). *Encyclopedia of Black Studies*. Sage Publications. pp. 135–137

⁴⁹ Ibid.

he brought a more radical notion to the organization – what was once merely nonviolent protesting and civil disobedience now became a call for Black unification and advancement across the globe, more specifically known as “Black Power.”⁵⁰ Carmichael was an inspiration to the Panthers, and later became its Prime Minister in 1967.⁵¹ Due to this interconnectedness in leadership and values, it was logical that they would soon work together towards the goal of Black independence. On February 17, 1968, more than 5,000 came to see the announcement of this compact and it was also broadcasted via radio.⁵² This alliance temporarily gave the Panthers more publicity, as public conventions and college speeches were common, and Panther membership increased. Eventually this coalition fell through in 1968 and the SNCC dissolved.⁵³

This concept of Black Power was often highlighted by *The Black Panther* and the program, *Say Brother*, which was a weekly broadcast that was formed in 1968 by African Americans to address the issues that Black people faced in the world at the time. Since this production was created by their fellow Blacks, the ideals of the Black Panther Party and other Black activists were presented honestly and extensively. One particular example of this positive press came after the Black Panthers worked in conjunction with the Malcolm X Foundation, continued by Hakim Jamal after X’s death in 1965, to bolster Black communities. In a broadcast interview with Jamal in 1968 for *Say Brother*, Jamal explained the premise of the Foundation and their allegiances in conjunction with their core values. The Malcolm X Foundation was created with the idea of properly preparing the children for the future with a comprehensive education and preemptive protection.⁵⁴ This interview, aired to truly inform the public of the

⁵⁰History.com Editors, “Stokely Carmichael,” History.com (A&E Television Networks, December 18, 2009), <https://www.history.com/topics/black-history/stokely-carmichael>.

⁵¹ Ibid.

⁵²“The Pacifica Radio/UC Berkeley Social Activism Recording Project: The Black Panther Party,” Library Guides (Pacifica Radio), accessed March 2, 2022, <https://guides.lib.berkeley.edu/c.php?g=819842&p=5923284>.

⁵³ Ibid.

⁵⁴“Say Brother; Hakim Jamal Interview,” American Archive of Public Broadcasting, accessed March 2, 2022, https://americanarchive.org/catalog/cpb-aacip_15-9zc7rt7s, 1:20.

intentions of the Malcolm X Foundation and other Black movements, re-established the aspirations of the Panthers and the good that they bring to the community. A large part of this desired advancement came to fruition through schools of elevated thought that were first established in the Bay Area in 1969 alongside a free breakfast program for those children, then spread throughout the nation. This joint-effort was also supported by *The Black Panther*, as its January issue both advertised the program and requested volunteers to aid in its implementation.⁵⁵

In addition to serving as an announcement for these Montessori,⁵⁶ this interview served as a way to counteract the negative reputation the Panthers were given by the general press. This interview was in the midst of a publicity war between the Panthers and the federal government, who went to extreme measures to plant the Panthers as heartless terrorists who should rot in jail. Truly, the federal government began to take this stance against Black movements that advocated for self-defense — but this interview is a reminder of the undeniable influence the Panthers now had across the country and globe:

The Black Panther Party functions primarily under two ethos. One is self-defense and the other under the complete tutelage of Malcolm X so they are definitely a national movement if not international in scope. Because the world is screaming self-defense...And the only thing that stops aggressors are movements like Malcolm X Foundation and or the Black Panther for self-defense because Black people are the only people on the face of the universe who the law forbids to exercise self-defense.⁵⁷

⁵⁵ “Breakfast for School Children,” *The Black Panther*, January 4, 1969, Vol 2, 19 edition, pp.15.

⁵⁶ A type of school that has a unique curriculum that caters to a child’s natural interests while educating.

⁵⁷ “Say Brother; Hakim Jamal Interview,” American Archive of Public Broadcasting, accessed March 2, 2022, https://americanarchive.org/catalog/cpb-aacip_15-9zc7rt7s, 5:07.

Global Connections

As a result of centuries of colonialism and current imperialism conducted by the West against non-white peoples, reactionary conflicts against continued oppression were inevitable. This history of violent coercion became a unifying factor throughout the 1900s, specifically between Black peoples around the globe, then extending to those of other ethnicities. As was previously stated by Hakim Jamal, “the world is screaming in self-defense.”⁵⁸ With the majority of the African continent under the influence or direct rule of Western powers and a multitude of interferences in foreign domestic politics by the United States in Latin America, Asia, and Africa – rallying cries for complete freedom from Western intrusion were prevalent.

Stemming from Garvey’s Pan-African movement and the ever-evolving sentiment of Black liberation that lived within Africa, the Black Panthers were able to build a network between the two continents. *The Black Panther*, though originally centered around the issues of African Americans, quickly began to highlight and advocate for the total autonomy of African nations like Angola, Mozambique, Guinea-Bissau, Eritrea, South Africa, and Zimbabwe. They could clearly see the connections of Western savagery that continued to affect the Black populations in both continents. At the time of the Panthers’ inception, most African countries were still under the yokes of imperialism, whether it be through direct occupation or through economic stratification as a result of past colonial rule.⁵⁹ These nations supported one another against constant imperial persecution, and though the Panthers could not send military aid, they could inform the public of these struggles.

⁵⁸ “Say Brother; Hakim Jamal Interview,” American Archive of Public Broadcasting, accessed March 2, 2022, https://americanarchive.org/catalog/cpb-aacip_15-9zc7rt7s, 5:40.

⁵⁹ To learn more about the effects colonialism had on the development of independent African nations, read *How Europe Underdeveloped Africa* by Walter Rodney.

For Angola in particular, revolution against the Portuguese was a long and arduous process. On top of rebelling against a colonial power, there were many different factions of differing ideologies fighting for power: UNITA, MPLA, and the FNLA.⁶⁰ Like Algeria, these organizations in Angola vied for support from a world power so that they could obtain sufficient funding, training, and military supplies to maintain their uprising. One of the most successful in gaining international favor was the MPLA (People's Movement of Liberation of Angola, formed in 1956), they were able to gain international attention "through principled signaling, that is, carefully selected language calibrated to reflect the discourse of liberation that was so prevalent at the time."⁶¹ By catering to what each power would want to hear, support was given much more liberally. The Panthers did not adopt this method to gain support, as they were quite sure of themselves, but they frequently voiced their support for Angola in *The Black Panther*, informing the public of its successes, regardless of which Angolese organization prospered; in 1968 the Panthers highlighted the UNIA in the periodical⁶², but by 1972 they backed the MPLA.⁶³

Where the Black Panthers expressed their support to their fellow contemporary revolutionaries, nations that had already gained their independence were vital in aiding the Panthers. Algeria, after their successful revolution, became one of the main centers of Pan-African connection as a result of their now established freedom and history of radical revolution. Algeria became an oasis to the Black Panther Movement, opening its borders to political exiles and financial support to the cause. Most notable of these exiles were Kathleen and Eldridge Cleaver, who were leading figures in the Party.

⁶⁰ For more information, read *No One Can Stop the Rain* by Houser et al.

⁶¹ Candace Sobers, "Signal Cascades in Angola's Independence Struggle, 1955-1975," *African Studies Quarterly*. Vol 20, pp. 39.

⁶² "Angolan Patriotic Armed Forces Growing in Strength," *The Black Panther*, October 12, 1968. Vol 2, edition 24.

⁶³ "Angola: Victory is Certain," *The Black Panther*, December 16, 1972. Vol 9, edition 9.

In 1969, the Algerian government provided a space for their international headquarters and funds to conduct the Party within its borders.⁶⁴ Algiers, the capital of Algeria, was host to the African National Conference, a coalition meeting formed to unify the African nations in protecting their liberties. Over time, it came to unite against the abuses of imperial powers as whole, presenting a Black alliance in response to imperial actions. The November 1969 conference held responses to President Nixon's bombing of Vietnam and the formation of federal teams to eliminate Black Panther members in both Los Angeles and Chicago – which at that point was only reported by *The Black Panther*. This conference gave its complete approval of the Black Panthers and all they were working to achieve, stating:

The ANC and ZAPU, themselves engaged in a life and death struggle against fascists...that are also supported by the U.S., Britain, and world imperialism...The tactics of picking up one important leader after another assassinating, imprisoning them and forcing others into exile, that the U.S. government is employing against the Panthers are quite familiar to us in South Africa and Rhodesia.⁶⁵

This coalition welcomed the Black Panthers who fled from political persecution and state-sanctioned violence in the United States with open arms – permitting the Panthers to establish embassies that chapters of the Party within their own communities.

Tanzania became a key component in the Black Panther movement, both for its political asylum and for the information it could give the Panthers.⁶⁶ Tanzania, which obtained its independence in 1961 and declared itself a socialist country, became a hotbed of revolutionary movement. Tanzania's president, Julius Kambarage Nyerere, was a staunch advocate of African unity and African socialism; his goals were to decolonize Tanzania, while also achieving social equality. Nations in the process of revolution set up permanent offices in Dar es Salaam, one of

⁶⁴ "Algeria and the Black Panthers." n.d. africasacountry.com.
<https://africasacountry.com/2018/07/algeria-and-the-american-black-panther-party>.

⁶⁵ Ibid.

⁶⁶ Traveling Sista, "The Story of a Black Panther," February 4, 2020, [www.youtube.com](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kUCvfW6V9bE&t=1745s), 31:02.
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kUCvfW6V9bE&t=1745s>.

Tanzania's major port cities.⁶⁷ This allowed for information to pass quickly between the revolutionaries, and when going through the volumes of *The Black Panther*, one could clearly see that much of its information pertaining to Africa was sourced or sent by Tanzania.

Tanzania also served as a safe haven for the Panthers as persecutionary practices in the government became more severe. In 1970, Charlotte Hill-O'Neal and Peter O'Neal,⁶⁸ who were the leaders of the Kansas chapter of the Black Panther Party, left for Tanzania after he was accused and convicted of transporting a shotgun over state lines.⁶⁹ They originally went to Algeria because it was the location of the international section of the Black Panther Party, but later left once tensions formed between the Algerian government and the Panthers. Once in Tanzania, the O'Neals proceeded to guide the local community: they taught newer methods of building, technologies, English, and they built community centers with classrooms. In 2008, Pete later established the Leaders of Tomorrow Children's Home, to take care of them and to give them the opportunity to prosper in life.⁷⁰ Though the O'Neals are only one of the Black Panther families that relocated to Tanzania, their implementation of community programs, much akin to the Free Breakfast Program and montessori schools, brought prosperity to the people who welcomed them into their homes.

⁶⁷ George Roberts, "Introduction," Chapter in *Revolutionary State-Making in Dar Es Salaam: African Liberation and the Global Cold War, 1961–1974*, 1–25. 2021.

⁶⁸ For more information, read *Black Panther in Exile: The Pete O'Neal Story* by Paul Magnarella.

⁶⁹ University Press of Florida, "Police Brutality and the Exile of Black Panther Pete O'Neal," The Florida Bookshelf. June 18, 2020. <https://floridapress.blog/2020/06/18/26612/>.

⁷⁰ Traveling Sista, "The Story of a Black Panther," February 4, 2020, [www.youtube.com](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kUCvfW6V9bE&t=1745s), 31:02. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kUCvfW6V9bE&t=1745s>.

To Navigate Suppression - War of Publicity

After the complete establishment of the Black Panther Party as a political organization and its subsequent spread throughout Black communities in the United States, the federal government began to grow concerned about the influence the Panthers could have within the country. This is the same government that only in recent years banned “legal” segregation, though implicit rules that denoted skin color still stood – now done using socio-economic factors⁷¹ and tradition as guidelines. The federal government had a history of interfering with Black movements throughout the 1950s and 1960s, but more intense focus was brought onto groups that grew to believe that nonviolence was a hindrance to true progress, and the most "threatening" of these groups were the Black Panthers. Their ideal of self-defense and preemptive action brought more wariness than nonviolent groups, though those were continuously targeted as well.

Only 11 months after the inception of the Black Panther Party for Self Defense, the federal government deemed them as a threat to both national security and the peaceful order within the country. On August 25, 1967, the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) constructed a new aspect of their counterintelligence program (COINTELPRO) to actively diminish the Panther's capacities to unify and lead a cohesive Black community under the direction of J. Edgar Hoover.

The very first document from this sector of the program affirmed this goal, stating that:

The purpose of the new counterintelligence endeavor is to expose, disrupt, misdirect, discredit, or otherwise neutralize the activities of black nationalist, hate-type organizations and groupings, their leadership, spokesmen, membership, and supporters, and to counter their propensity for violence and civil disorder....The pernicious

⁷¹ See “The American Dream Denied: The Inland Empire and Southern California’s Legacy with Postwar, Anti-Black Racial Housing Discrimination” by Akunna Chilaka for more detailed information on implicitly segregationist policies and overt backlash to integration within Southern California.

background of such groups, their duplicity, and the devious maneuvers must be exposed to public scrutiny where such publicity will have a neutralizing effect.⁷²

COINTELPRO carried out these objectives with severe efficiency; the agency wasted no time in finding ways to infiltrate and subvert the Black Panther Party. These methods ranged from planting false letters and statements, trumping up false charges, raids, inciting violence, and having informants within the Panthers themselves – all to varying degrees of success.

COINTELPRO looked to discredit the Black Panthers by any means necessary; this often entailed fabricated articles published by periodicals that not only held a white audience, but a prominent Black one as well. The federal government had the press in the palm of their hand. Regardless of the periodical's previous negative background with the FBI, this cooperation was often cited with, "There is no question they the Bureau's interests will be safeguarded,"⁷³ in released COINTELPRO documents.

Oftentimes, COINTELPRO relied on informants within the Black Panther Party; they obtained stationary, kept tabs on leaders, and gave the FBI enough information to counteract any positive growth within the Party. The Panthers became hypervigilant about this issue, but it ultimately led to the further ostracization of the Party. In May of 1969, Party members in the New Haven chapter tortured and murdered, Alex Rackley, who they believed to be an informant without any concrete evidence. This baseless slaughter kickstarted an arduous trial that the press latched on; a cold-blooded extermination of a 19-year-old was not something an organization could just recover from. The federal government also used the testimony of Geroge Sams to indict both Bobby Seale – who had recently given a speech in New Haven – and Ericka Huggins – the leader of the New Haven chapter – for ordering the murder, specifically having them put to

⁷² "Cointelpro Black Extremist Part 01 of 23," FBI (FBI, May 5, 2011), <https://vault.fbi.gov/cointel-pro/cointel-pro-black-extremists/cointelpro-black-extremists-part-01-of/view>. pp 4.

⁷³ Ibid. pp. 42

death. This led to massive clamor throughout the Party; Huggins and Seale were not directly involved in the murder and many believed Sams to be a traitor.⁷⁴ This reduced the Panthers' popularity immensely, as it reinforced the belief that they were composed of violent, ruthless, killers – and though the FBI were unable to officially charge Huggins or Seale, the damage done to the Party's image temporarily sufficed.

To the media, the Black Panther Party was a point of wealth and contention: their iconic stances and goals made them an instant eye catcher, but this press was nearly always negative or skeptical. Unfortunately for the Panthers, this created a notoriety that infringed upon the movement itself. Across the country, major news sources constantly debased the actions of the Panthers, even when the Party was in fact helping the community. They were presented as vicious militant troops who would usurp the safety of America, specifically white America, with their values and their guns, when in reality the BPP merely wanted to support the community and safeguard its livelihood. Community programs made to elevate the education, happiness, and health of the people were seen as propaganda and indoctrination tactics. The Free Breakfast Program provided food to countless children who would otherwise go hungry throughout the day, and yet the federal government demonized it. At times, there were raids conducted during the running hours of the Free Breakfast Program, traumatizing the children that participated.⁷⁵ Planted articles were sent to grocery stores and community centers, like churches, that would

⁷⁴ “The Black Panthers Trial: Courtroom Sketches by Robert Templeton.” 2018. Beinecke Rare Book & Manuscript Library. (December 14, 2018).

<https://beinecke.library.yale.edu/collections/highlights/black-panthers-trial-courtroom-sketches-robert-templeton>.

⁷⁵ For more information on the Black Panther's influence on the American school lunch, see "Welfare Reform, It's What's for Lunch: How the Black Panther Party's Free Breakfast Program Changed School Lunch Across America" by Sabrina Hall.

participate in the program that disparaged the Panther's cause and spread lies to diminish community support.⁷⁶

The Panthers were well aware of this targeting; they were already suspicious of the intents of the police and the head of the FBI himself, J. Edgar Hoover, was vocally abhorrent of them. Many male members of the Party were repeatedly arrested or jailed for their involvement and the federal government often contrived ways to indict the Panthers. To counteract this, they frequently used *The Black Panther* to illustrate this pointed persecution and fundraise for legal defense. All these arrests forced the Panthers to continually be on the back foot; legal teams were created, campaigns for freedom were formed, their funds were drained by fighting cases that dragged on, and at times needed to raise funds for bail money. This, alongside the myriad of FBI ventures to scare away possible donors, created a major issue within the Party. The Panthers essentially had to go against a well-funded organization specialized in dismantling the Party.

After nearly nine months of operation, COINTELPRO's debilitating tactics began to have a serious effect on the Panthers; Huey Newton was convicted of voluntary manslaughter of a police officer after a shoot-out occurred,⁷⁷ the first member of the Panthers - Bobby Hutton- was killed after an ambush, and Cleaver later fled the country to avoid jail time.⁷⁸ They began to rely much more on donations for both the Party's social programs that they desired to maintain and for those who faced indictment. Cleaver stated in the next issue that:

Although we know that we will ultimately beat all of these cases in court, they constitute a serious drain on our time, energy, and financial resources, the last of which has been virtually nonexistent.⁷⁹

⁷⁶ "Cointelpro Black Extremist Part 19 of 23," FBI (FBI, May 5, 2011), <https://vault.fbi.gov/cointel-pro/cointel-pro-black-extremists/cointelpro-black-extremists-part-13-of19/view>. pp 250-265.

⁷⁷ Newton was pulled over by officer John Frey, who then called for backup after realizing who Newton was.

⁷⁸ *The Black Panther*, May 4, 1968. Vol 2, edition 2.

⁷⁹ "#1 Affidavit of Eldridge Cleaver," *The Black Panther*, May 18, 1968. Vol 2, edition 3.

In addition to the financial and legal strain the Panthers faced, fabricated stationary was also a commonly used method by the federal government which incited confusion and hysteria within the Party, while also cultivating a general public who believed the Panthers to be repugnant. In December of 1969, the San Francisco division of COINTELPRO was able to falsify termination papers to the Panther's Berkely chapter. These papers were sent to the homes of 59 Party members who were not in close contact with the national office, which would impede any attempts to question this "decision." This letter, printed on "official" Black Panther Stationary, stated:

The Central Committee has been advised of your continued racist activity and black nationalism. The Black Panther Party will continue its class struggle and is not engaged in a race struggle. Actions such as yours could only come from the pig establishment. You are nothing but a jiving m—— f—— agent provocateur. You no longer deserve to be a Black Panther and are not. The Central Committee has expelled you. Don't ever attempt to visit a Black Panther Party headquarters or you'll be dealt with as a provocateur.⁸⁰

This was not the first, nor last occasion in which counterfeit claims were utilized to stir resentment and turmoil within the Black Panther Party. By 1971, the organization was able to sow seeds of mistrust and doubt within the Party, most notably, the rift between Eldridge Cleaver and Huey Newton that led to Cleaver's expulsion from the Party. Their ideological disputes on how to conduct the Party, though differing, were not a main source of contention until there was outside interference.⁸¹

On December 4, 1969, COINTELPRO enacted an operation that brought the Black Panthers both mass publicity and sympathy throughout the nation. This publicity blunder on the part of the FBI was the killing of Fred Hampton, the Illinois' chapter Deputy Chairman, during a

⁸⁰ "Cointelpro Black Extremist Part 23 of 23," FBI (FBI, May 5, 2011), <https://vault.fbi.gov/cointel-pro/cointel-pro-black-extremists/cointelpro-black-extremists-part-17-of/view>. pp 7.

⁸¹ For documents of COINTELPRO interference in the relationship between Newton and Cleaver, see "COINTELPRO Black Extremist 100-448006 Section 19 Federal Bureau of Investigation." n.d. <http://blackfreedom.proquest.com/wp-content/uploads/2020/09/blackpanther13.pdf>.

raid on Hampton's apartment in the Black Panther Headquarters. He and Mark Clark were killed, but their deaths marked a shift in the public's long-lasting perception of the Panthers. Before this assassination, the Panthers were dragged through the mud by the media and federal government, made to be criminals so that the government could justify any plots against them. If the Panthers did not have the support of the public, the federal government could truly do anything it wanted without repercussions or protest from citizens within the nation.

Common news platforms, like NBC and the *Chicago Tribune*, were already in the control of the federal government, and the FBI tried its hardest to present their own narrative of the raid; it did not want the truth to be disseminated to a broader public. In a past issue, the *Chicago Tribune* berated the Panthers after a shootout with the police, stating that:

Not only should police be armed with shotguns...but they should be ordered to be ready to shoot when approaching Black Panther subjects...[they] should be kept under constant surveillance....[they] forfeited the right to considerations ordinary violators of the law might claim.⁸²

Edward Hanrahan, the state attorney of Cook County, originally ordered the raid, and afterwards held a press conference to rationalize the actions of the police force – stating that the Panthers within the apartment attacked the officers during a search warrant for illegal weapons.⁸³ This testimony did not hold up to images of the actual crime scene nor the common sense rationality all could approach the situation with. Unfortunately for the FBI, this common rationale could not be barred from broadcasts and periodicals. On December 6, the *Chicago Defender*, a historically Black newspaper, “reinforced” the story told by the police, but in with a clear tone of doubt within its pages – deftly questioning the legality of the events through word choices like, “evidently,” “slain,” “forced open the door,” or how police “volunteered to stop

⁸² “No Quarter for Wild Beasts,” *Chicago Tribune*, November 15, 1969.

⁸³ “Fred Hampton,” FBI - Fred Hampton (FBI, December 6, 2010), <https://vault.fbi.gov/Fred%20Hampton>.

shooting twice.”⁸⁴ This periodical, though reiterating the narrative of the police, is on the Panthers’ side.

The *Tribune* could not deny the effect Hampton had on the community, and thus published an article detailing his funeral and the five thousand people that came to honor his legacy, who came from all different backgrounds and ethnicities.⁸⁵ There were also news broadcasts that clearly exhibited the carnage left after the raid; the blood stains and bullet holes were seen by all, and broadcasters took time to interview specialists, policemen, and the Panthers to present a relatively well-rounded narrative.⁸⁶ Though information given was well-rounded, it was extremely polarized: the narratives of the police and the Black Panther’s contrasted so severely that it was difficult for the public to know which had truly occurred. On one hand, the Black Panthers had an extremely negative reputation built by a combination of exacerbation from the federal government and their own “radical” policies. On the other, raiding an apartment building before dawn when all are asleep and riddling an apartment with bullets, while still claiming the Panthers fired first, does not seem like a credible story. With these details in mind, and the support of the public as the prize, the Panthers and the federal government began to dispute each others’ claims.

The next issue of *The Black Panther*, on December 13, was dedicated to Hampton and all he achieved within the Party. His values and accomplishments were honored. Hampton was an active member of the community: he was a youth leader of the NAACP, lobbied for true desegregation, and advocated for a united racial front against injustice, a “Rainbow Coalition”, so to speak. He was also greatly involved in supporting his community; Hampton established and

⁸⁴ Vasilopoulos, John D. “Police Tell Their Version of the Fred Hampton Slaying,” *The Chicago Defender*, December 6, 1969.

⁸⁵ Phillip Caputo, “5,000 Mourners Walk Past Coffin of Hampton in Suburb,” *Chicago Tribune*, December 10, 1969

⁸⁶ Report on Raid on Fred Hampton’s Apartment, The Death of a Black Panther: The Fred Hampton Story, 1969-70, National Archives and Records Administration (National Archives and Records Administration), accessed March 13, 2022, <https://catalog.archives.gov/id/12156>.

was an integral member of the People's Law Office in Chicago, defending the rights of many who could not afford or access a legal defense. Alongside this, he founded a health clinic and chapter of the free breakfast program.⁸⁷ The entire issue took time to admonish the federal government, though at the time there were no direct ties known between COINTELPRO and the raid, and highlighted this blatant violation of human life.⁸⁸

Even amidst near constant disparagement from the federal government, the general public were on the side of the Panthers in this situation. It was clear that Clark and Hampton's deaths were an assassination of sorts, seeing as most bullets fired were from the side of the police and the raid was conducted in the early morning while everyone was sleeping. Hampton's heavily pregnant fiancée, Akua Njeri, being in the bed next to him didn't aid in making the raid seem reasonable to the public.⁸⁹ As the pioneer of a multi-ethnic coalition within the Chicago chapter of the Black Panther Party he was beloved by many, and this respect and adoration for such an inspiring leader would not go away – even after his death.

A little more than a year after the assassination, a documentary on Fred Hampton – created from a stockpile footage from various events before and after his death – was created to further convince the populace that Hampton's death was no accident. This documentary was carefully constructed so that one could clearly see the contrasts between Hampton's aspirations and the bloody aftermath of the state-sanctioned raid. In this documentary, it presents a speech Hampton made after being released from jail in August, one which promoted a multi-racial unity and power among the people:

⁸⁷ Dave Roos, "The 1969 Raid That Killed Black Panther Leader Fred Hampton," History.com (A&E Television Networks, January 29, 2021), <https://www.history.com/news/black-panther-fred-hampton-killing>.

⁸⁸ *The Black Panther*, December 13, 1969. Vol 4, edition 2.

⁸⁹ Dave Roos, "The 1969 Raid That Killed Black Panther Leader Fred Hampton," History.com (A&E Television Networks, January 29, 2021), <https://www.history.com/news/black-panther-fred-hampton-killing>.

Ain't no thing about going nowhere, getting killed... We all stay right here. With the people. Because we love the people. All power to all people. White power to white people. Brown power to brown people. Yellow power to yellow people. Black power to black people... I am a revolutionary.⁹⁰

The next shot in the film presents the remains of Hampton's apartment and police "investigating" the scene; his bloody deathbed shown as his body is carried out in a bag. After, Hanrahan's "testimony" of the "violent criminals" firing upon announced officers, which led to a shootout, is presented.⁹¹ The viewer can draw obvious conclusions between Hampton's uniting of the people and his subsequent murder.

This was further proven in April of 1971, when the federal government's involvement in destroying Black organizations became explicitly known to the public after antiwar activists in Philadelphia uncovered COINTELPRO documents in the FBI office.⁹² Later, in 1976, COINTELPRO documents were released under court order⁹³, one of which being a direct memo from Hoover that specifically thanked informant Roy Mitchell with a cash incentive dated six days after Hampton's death.⁹⁴ These findings were published in papers across the country, whether they were known to support the Black Panthers or not. *The Black Panther* and *The New York Times*, who one could say were on opposite sides of the spectrum when it came to positively reporting the Panthers, both gave tremendous coverage of this event and the injustices it represented. Printed on the front cover of the May 15 issue after these documents became public was the phrase, "Too Little Too Late."

⁹⁰ "Murder of Fred Hampton, Reel 1." n.d. Media Burn Archive. January 1, 1971. <https://mediaburn.org/video/murder-of-fred-hampton-reel-1/?t=48:45>.

⁹¹ "Murder of Fred Hampton, Reel 1." n.d. Media Burn Archive. January 1, 1971. <https://mediaburn.org/video/murder-of-fred-hampton-reel-1/?t=54:11>.

⁹² Dave Roos, "The 1969 Raid That Killed Black Panther Leader Fred Hampton," History.com (A&E Television Networks, January 29, 2021), <https://www.history.com/news/black-panther-fred-hampton-killing>.

⁹³ John Kifner. "F.B.I. Sought Doom of Panther Party." *The New York Times*, May 9, 1976, sec. Archives. <https://www.nytimes.com/1976/05/09/archives/fbi-sought-doom-of-panther-party-senate-study-says-plot-led-to.html>.

⁹⁴ "Hoover Memo to Roy Mitchell," History.com, December 10, 1969.

The entire issue shamed both the federal government for what it had done and the public for the constant disregard of the Panther's claims of government targeting. The Panthers demanded further investigation into these abuses, as it was clear that the federal government was still extremely secretive on what was released, and they wanted true justice for all the wrongs committed. This revelation caused a massive public outcry and shift in the general white perception of the federal government to one of further distrust, as the Watergate Scandal occurred only four years prior to this. To Blacks across the country, this information was not surprising or new, the extent to which their own governments would go to destroy any chance at social or political elevation of a common understanding amongst minority communities. Though it was no surprise, the intricacies of this long-lasting violation were explained and investigated by the Party in the next issues of *The Black Panther*. After years filled with persecution, death, and debasement, a simple acknowledgement of the FBI's "orders" by the general media and wider public is not enough to reclaim all the lives ruined and lost by the program.⁹⁵

Despite the public revelation of the FBI's aggressive tactics to extinguish the Panthers, COINTELPRO still continued, and the Party was still villainized. By 1980, the Black Panther Party and many of its programs had collapsed: its leadership was fractured, its programs underfunded or closed by local governments, and its legacy was left to those who still survived...and the federal government.

Over the course of the next four decades, the name of the Black Panthers had solely become associated with overt violence and separatism, despite the valuable social programs and protections they were able to implement within Black communities. The true goals of the Panthers have become muddled to the general public; their vilification paramount in general education and in governmental records - which leave a shadow of doubt upon the Party and their

⁹⁵ *The Black Panther*, May 15, 1976, Vol 15, edition 5.

intentions. Forced to become a throwaway line about Black militancy during the Civil Rights Movement – if mentioned at all – the Black Panthers have become a "Myth of Militancy" to unknowing generations. Only those who are educated otherwise – whether that be through home training, as it often is for Black children, through a particularly inclusive teacher, their own volition, or social media – tend to view the Panthers in an honest light. Yet, even then, the legacy of their movement remains; it lives on in every cry for justice.

The Revolution Will Not Be Televised...

The revolution will be live.⁹⁶ The Black Panther Movement, though eventually disbanded, did not truly succumb to the hatred of the federal government nor public perception. It lived on in the communities they helped and those they inspired; in the children they fed, the people they gave legal defense, those they educated, and the communities they built up with their programs. Despite the narrative that depicts them as enemies of the State, this revolution came forth in younger generations, continuing this legacy.

Unfortunately, calls for equality, opportunity, and the ability to exist without fear are near-constantly seen as a threat to society. Contemporary Black movements continue to deal with the prejudices and consternations of the prior decades, not entirely unrelated to the fact that the same people were taught that the Black Panthers were terrorists are still alive in this day and continue to propagate this myth with each generation.

The main difference is coverage. Where the Black Panthers often worked within the confines of the press, actively creating their own content to protect their reputation and present their ideologies, contemporary movements, specifically Black Lives Matter and Rhodes Must Fall, relied on something the government could not completely control: social media. Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, TikTok, YouTube, Discord, Twitch, Snapchat, Tumblr, and Reddit are all spaces where the public can speak their minds, have discussions, and shed light on anything they have faced without pause or much censor. Injustices could be publicized as they happened, eliminating the process of a story being “good enough” for the news. Where periodicals and broadcasts could be directly tampered with and controlled by outside forces, social media directly reflected the reality of the people. This democratization of accessibility allowed for

⁹⁶ Gil Scott-Heron, “The Revolution Will Not Be Televised,” track 1 on *Pieces of Man*, Flying Dutchman, 1971.

anyone with internet access to participate and collaborate to form stronger foundations of a movement.

The public once relied on the news to uncover new topics, which often cater to the sensibilities of whites, and would result in little-to-no coverage of Black grievances or successes. With the rise of social media, the app algorithm could affect what one sees, but the ability to see anything posted or shared is still available. An aggression, misgiving, attack or death recorded could lead to actual ramifications, as social media reflects the power of the public. Though a post's popularity may be a result of its dramatic or traumatizing nature, much akin to the sensationalism of the Civil Rights and Black Panther Movements, the fact that it can be seen untampered and unbiased is the crux of this new information diffusion. In addition to this, popular topics on social media are frequently presented in newspapers and news channels, as they represent what the viewers care about. By proxy, broadcast and journalistic materials can still cover the Black movements, but their own prejudices or backgrounds will not change the evidence that can be so clearly seen.

Where Black Lives Matter demanded a ceasefire of the physical and psychological violence fueled by an inherent racism within the legal institution and society, Rhodes Must Fall was created to battle white supremacy within the educational system - which is the foundation of indoctrination and forced assimilation. This movement is actually older than both Black Lives Matter and the Black Panthers, but it was not started by Black people. Cecil Rhodes, the main recipient of such massive consternation, was a British imperialist and bigot who actively participated in the genocide and removal of indigenous Africans to obtain land, which he later donated to build University of Cape Town (UCT). He was also a main orchestrator in the establishment of Apartheid, and this was emulated at UCT, which remained a whites-only school

until the end of Apartheid.⁹⁷ As a commemoration to his endowment, a statue of Rhodes was placed on campus. Genocide, surprisingly, is not the cause of the initial uproar: beginning in the 1950s, Afrikaner students called for the statues' removal because of Rhodes' British heritage and belief that the British were superior to the Dutch.⁹⁸ It was not until 2015 that this movement was reclaimed by the Black population at UCT. Though Cecil Rhodes was an abhorrent figure of imperialism, the intention of removing the statue was not just to remove him, specifically, but to remove what he represented. He was a product, benefactor, and conductor of white supremacy, oppression, and institutionalized racism.

In the education system, especially higher education, it is rare to see a professor who is among the "minority," but in South Africa, where Black Africans are 81% of the population⁹⁹, Black professors still are the minority of full-time faculty at UCT.¹⁰⁰ This utter lack of representation is reflected in the narratives taught internationally by Westernized schools: the curriculum, at base, was created to ensure the longevity of Western influence. This curriculum excluded and often rewrote indigenous histories to depict them as barbaric while also promoting a Western superiority that excluded their cruelties: one is actively taught to abandon the knowledge and pride of one's culture. This is a form of pedagogical violence that leaves lasting effects on the "educated": it attacks their identity, robs them of their history, and disregards their values – but this formal "education" has become necessary to achieve prosperity in a capitalistic society founded on forced labor. Though these curriculums evolve with time, to truly change

⁹⁷ Jeeva Rajgopaul, "Cecil John Rhodes," South African History Online. March 24, 2017.
<https://www.sahistory.org.za/people/cecil-john-rhodes>.

⁹⁸ Ibid.

⁹⁹ "South Africa's People | South African Government." n.d. Wwww.gov.za.
<https://www.gov.za/about-sa/south-africas-people#:~:text=South%20Africas%20people.&text=The%20black%20African%20population%20is>.

¹⁰⁰ Don Borroughs, "Why South African Students Say the Statue of Rhodes Must Fall," NPR (NPR, March 28, 2015),
<https://www.npr.org/sections/goatsandsoda/2015/03/28/395608605/why-south-african-students-say-the-statue-of-rhodes-must-fall>.

there must be teachers from this didactic “minority” in the faculty. There must be Black faculty who are paid fully who have the resources and time to reconstruct these harmful narratives.

It was not until 1994 that South Africa was free from official Apartheid rule, and the years between 1994 and 2015 were filled with massive institutional overhauls, but true equality was slow-moving. Where white communities continue to own the best lands and prosper, there are many Black communities that are overlooked by the government in the sectors of infrastructure, sanitation, and education. False opportunities were formed on the foundations of Apartheid; the official system being gone could not take the years of discrimination, maltreatment, and unfair advantages away. Afrikaners and Blacks were said to be equals after Apartheid, but this ideology did not account that Africans were standing on loose sand while their oppressor stood on stone.¹⁰¹ This campaign resurged in 2015, as Rhodes’ statue increasingly became a reminder of the white privilege and brutality that established UCT and South Africa as a whole. Rhodes was a memento to an accessibility that the Black students did not often have, to a future that the people had been originally robbed of.

This disenchantment eventually grew throughout the student body, but the movement truly began after the actions of 2011 alum Chumani Maxwele. His righteous fury toward the physical manifestation of a history that continues to debase him is one of the most iconic images from this first protest. On March 9, 2015, Maxwele went to Khayelitsha – a town with dilapidated shacks, extreme unemployment, and no governmental infrastructure – grabbed one of many random buckets of feces that littered the sidewalks, and brought it to UCT. Maxwele then proceeded to hurl the bucket's cargo at Rhodes.¹⁰²

¹⁰¹ Eve Fairbanks, “Why South African Students Have Turned on Their Parents’ Generation,” *The Guardian*. The Guardian. November 18, 2015. <https://www.theguardian.com/news/2015/nov/18/why-south-african-students-have-turned-on-their-parents-generation>.

¹⁰² Eve Fairbanks, “Why South African Students Have Turned on Their Parents’ Generation,” *The Guardian*. The Guardian. November 18, 2015.



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This resonated with the Black students of UCT, and on March 12, 2015, students amassed around the statue of Rhodes in a peaceful protest, led by student Kgotsi Chikane, demanding that the statue be removed. The students maintained this protest for five weeks; the statue was tagged and covered up, the students occupied university facilities – where they gave lectures on Apartheid history.¹⁰⁴ Rhodes Must Fall made use of Facebook and Twitter as their primary modes of communication and organization, creating set pages for UCT and coining #RhodesMustFall as an official campaign. By April 9, 2015, the statue was removed, but the movement had outgrown its initial goals: it now aspired to decolonize the education system.

The movement was difficult for the older generation to truly acknowledge; Rhodes Must Fall came from the younger generation, one that had lived without the explicit limitations of Apartheid. The older generations wanted to leave the past behind them, but Rhodes Must Fall was a resurgence of this painful history. Yet nothing had truly changed for the children they worked so hard for; many chose to ignore that this struggle against institutionalized racism was just as severe as the brutality they had faced. If anything, many considered the younger generation to be ungrateful of the efforts their parents went through and any financial support given by a nation that unjustly profited off their ancestors for generations. Despite the disdain of

<https://www.theguardian.com/news/2015/nov/18/why-south-african-students-have-turned-on-their-parents-generation>

¹⁰³ Kagure Mugo, “Memory and Moving Forward: #RhodesMustFall Is Not a Shit Argument,” This Is Africa. March 20, 2015. <https://thisisafrica.me/politics-and-society/memory-moving-forward-rhodesmustfall-not-shit-argument/>.

¹⁰⁴ Ibid.

older media outlets, the Movement only grew bigger with time, extending past South Africa's borders.

As images and stories of the student protests spread, this movement quickly gained traction throughout Africa and Europe. Imperialism is the benefactor of most institutions, a tradition that many schools still hold much “historical value” in, though it is truly just a clinging to old sentiments of white superiority. Alongside this, many institutions are quite Eurocentric in their courses and the faculty who teach them – yet their prestige also comes with the barrier of price. Seven months after Maxwele's initial protest, South African universities raised tuition by 20%, which made higher education inaccessible for many Black students.¹⁰⁵ As a response, students boycotted classes and marched by the thousands to the parliament building and the president's offices. At this point, they faced a troop of policemen in riot gear; some were arrested, some were injured, and yet they still continued on.¹⁰⁶

Rhodes Must Fall continues to inspire protests and discussions across the globe about the exclusionary nature of educational institutions. It galvanized the students to question the vitality of what they are taught, and the implications of what the curriculum excludes. As of 2022, this movement has kindled decolonization demonstrations in Pretoria, Oxford, Harvard, Edinburgh, Berkeley, Cambridge, and other universities.¹⁰⁷ Like the Black Panthers with their montessoris, Rhodes Must Fall aimed to eliminate the false narratives that only propagated the ideals of white supremacy. Both movements recognize lack of education of their own past and ideals only leads to the formation of self-hatred in a society that would rather erase who one is as a person.

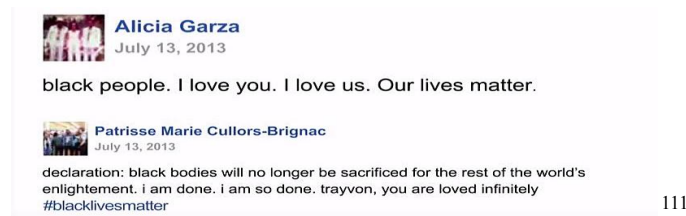
¹⁰⁵ Eve Fairbanks, “Why South African Students Have Turned on Their Parents’ Generation,” *The Guardian*. *The Guardian*. November 18, 2015. <https://www.theguardian.com/news/2015/nov/18/why-south-african-students-have-turned-on-their-parents-generation>

¹⁰⁶ Ibid.

¹⁰⁷

The Black Lives Matter Movement (BLM) is a direct resurgence of many of the Black Panthers' core goals and values: focused on uplifting and protecting the livelihoods of the Black population. Its inception in 2013 came from the wrongful murder of a 17-year-old Trayvon Martin, committed by a white neighborhood watch volunteer, who shot the teenager when he was only walking down the street with food a year prior.¹⁰⁸ Martin's death was not national news, not even front page, news – but there were posts on Facebook made by his family, friends, and an organization called the Dream Defenders that marched to remember his name and obtain justice.¹⁰⁹ This watchman was acquitted of second-degree murder, after not being arrested after the initial killing, as he claimed self-defense against a boy who only had Skittles and an iced tea.¹¹⁰ The lack of legal repercussions for Martin's death caused protests to sweep the nation – both after the initial shooting and the acquittal. This utter lack of justice unfortunately remained a persisting tradition; the execution of Blacks justified by an unjust power structure, sweeping bodies under the rug of history – disgraced, ignored, and ultimately forgotten. This is an endless cycle that steals our chances at life; a cycle that robs parents of their children; a cycle that robs children of their future; a cycle that robs the beauty of existence.

Black Lives Matter sprung from a desire to break this cycle of slaughter; the founders Alicia Garza and Patrisse Cullors launched their mission from a Facebook post.



¹⁰⁸ "Florida Teen Trayvon Martin is Shot and Killed" History.com Editors. 2019. (A&E Television Networks. March 7, 2019). <https://www.history.com/this-day-in-history/florida-teen-trayvon-martin-is-shot-and-killed>.

¹⁰⁹ Patrisse Cullors and Asha Bandele, *When They Call You a Terrorist: A Story of Black Lives Matter and the Power to Change the World* (Edinburgh: Canongate, 2021) pp. 130-131.

¹¹⁰ Ibid.

¹¹¹ J.H., "Unarmed, Underage, and Underground." Medium. September 11, 2017. <https://medium.com/@jexxarah/unarmed-underage-and-underground-99ec12a52cde>.

After this post, #blacklivesmatter became extremely popular, as many Black people across the country felt the same sense of devastation and righteous anger from the results of the trial. Opal Tometi was contacted by Garza and Cullors, who were activists themselves, to create an official organization. They became a platform of future activists, giving a foundation to learn and adapt from to augment the protections and livelihoods of Blacks. This would be the official start of a global network that has lasted nearly a decade, one that strives to stop white supremacy from taking anymore people. BLM organized protests after the many deaths that followed Martin: Eric Garner, Tamir Rice, Michael Brown, Philando Castile, Alton Sterling, Sandra Bland, Elijah McClain, Ahmaud Arbery, Breonna Taylor, George Floyd, and countless others all ranging in age and background. For all these lives lost, the one recurring theme was their Blackness: their Blackness and their nerve to just exist. It seemed as though when Black people were involved, anyone could be the judge, jury, and executioner; news broadcasters often found reasons to condone these murders, often putting the fault on the victims themselves.

This resonated throughout the globe, as anti-blackness was not just native to the institution of the United States of America, but in all the nations that imperialists ravished. In 2020, after the murders of Arbery, Taylor, and Floyd – two recorded and posted online, and two committed by police — tens of thousands of protestors marched the streets of major cities around the globe: there were protests spanning from the United States, England, Kenya, South Africa, Japan, Brazil, Spain, Senegal, Denmark, Scotland, South Korea, Sweden, Belgium, Hungary, Italy, Australia, Poland, Turkey, France, Switzerland, Portugal, Canada, and Germany.¹¹² These peaceful protests opened space for critical discussion about the double standards of their own nations: how could their governments condemn the death of Floyd when similar injustices occur

¹¹² Alan Taylor, “Images from a Worldwide Protest Movement - the Atlantic.” www.theatlantic.com. June 8, 2020. <https://www.theatlantic.com/photo/2020/06/images-worldwide-protest-movement/612811/>.

there?¹¹³ Nonetheless, they were labeled as terrorists – no good hoodlums who chose to stir up trouble, and were met with rubber bullets, batons, pepper spray, and arrests. As the pos-arrival carnage of police at the protests commenced, one could see that news anchors were often hidden behind a line of law enforcement. For Black Lives Matter and for the Black Panthers, saying that your people did not deserve to die like animals – that the institutions set up by the nation should provide protection to all its people, and if it does not meet this basic standard, it must be remade entirely – is a point of contention and ostracization.

The phrase "Black Lives Matter" is met with such condemnation and rage, critics often pointing to the Civil Rights Act of 1964 as proof of democratization of society, but this is only evidence that change has been slow and hard wrought. After nearly 60 years, many of the same communities that relied on the assistance of the Black Panthers still do not get sufficient aid to prosper by the government; there is still implicit discriminatory practices in the workforce, children are still not taught Black history – in fact, it has been deemed "critical race theory" and banned by "conservative" (in other words: racist) legislation; Black men and women are still murdered by police and whites alike with no care or repercussion. Black is to have a target on one's back, and yet, Black Lives Matter is said to be the terrorist group? A simple statement, one that demands the right to live: to be valued, loved, and to walk down the street without the fear of arrest or death because they "look suspicious."

¹¹³ Ibid.



114: Images 1-4; 115: Image 5; 116: Image 6

¹¹⁴ Alan Taylor, “Images from a Worldwide Protest Movement - the Atlantic.” [Www.theatlantic.com](https://www.theatlantic.com/photo/2020/06/images-worldwide-protest-movement/612811/). June 8, 2020. <https://www.theatlantic.com/photo/2020/06/images-worldwide-protest-movement/612811/>.

¹¹⁵ “‘It Was Intensely Painful’: The Story of Rhodes Must Fall in Oxford,” *New Statesman*, June 12, 2020. <https://www.newstatesman.com/world/uk/2020/06/rhodes-must-fall-oxford-slavery-statue-oxford-university-oriel-black-lives-matter>.

¹¹⁶ Lesley Lokko, “Outrage: Student Movement from the Margins to the Heart of Power,” *Architectural Review*. May 10, 2019. <https://www.architectural-review.com/essays/outrage/outrage-student-movement-from-the-margins-to-the-heart-of-power>.



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When you talk about a revolution, most people think violence, without realizing that the real content of any kind of revolutionary thrust lies in the principles and the goals that you're striving for, not in the way you reach them. On the other hand, because of the way this society's organized, because of the violence that exists on the surface everywhere, you have to expect that there are going to be such explosions. - Angela Davis

¹¹⁷ "PHOTOS: Black Lives Matter Protests Turn Chaotic in Reno, Las Vegas," The Nevada Independent. May 31, 2020. <https://thenevadaindependent.com/article/photos-black-lives-matter-protests-turns-violent-in-reno-las-vegas>.

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