

# How Does It Feel to Be a Problem? The Missing Kerner Commission Report



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*Using an intersectional lens of race and gender, this article offers a critique of the Kerner Commission report and fills the gap of the missing analysis of white rage and of black women. A protracted history of white race riots resulted in the loss of black lives, black-owned property, and constitutional rights. However, only black riots, marked by the loss of white-owned property but few white lives, was the issue that prompted the formation of a national commission to investigate the events. Then and now, the privileging of white property rights over black life and liberty explains why black revolts result in presidential commissions, but white terror campaigns have never led to any comparable study,*

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In 1903, W. E. B. Du Bois wrote of the implicit awareness and curiosity of his white counterparts that he, as an African American man in America, was viewed as a problem. Even at that time, he remarked that it would be considered “indelicate” to state outright that black people are a problem, even if it was believed to be true.<sup>1</sup> Sixty-five years later, President Lyndon Johnson formed the National Advisory Commission on Civil Disorders (1968), better known as the Kerner Commission, to help understand and control the surge of black urban uprisings that

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1. In *The Souls of Black Folk*, Du Bois discusses how when his white counterparts ask him about other black men or about “Southern outrages” that their underlying question is in fact “How does it feel to be a problem?”

occurred in 1967. In other words, to understand the problem with black people.

According to the Kerner Commission report (authored by the U.S. Riot Commission), white racism is the impetus, but the so-called race problem in America is characterized as a black people problem. The onus for resolving these problems rested primarily on black people's ability to conform to white cultural norms, rather than to allow America to become two societies, one white and one black.

In this article, we examine how the Kerner report interprets black rage or social circumstances but provides little or no acknowledgment of or analysis on the white rage and its manifestations. Rather than seeing racial uprisings by black people as a normal response to incessant oppression and degradation, racial discontent and uprisings are seen through the lens of black deficiency. The police atrocities that triggered the black uprisings in 1967 were the result of state violence.<sup>2</sup> On the other hand, white riots were state sanctioned and occurred with police participation or complicity. In negating a balanced inquiry on black and white civil disorders in America, we find ourselves in a constant loop of rage, disenfranchisement, and destruction. This article provides the missing analyses on the causes and consequences of white rage and expands the original analysis by engaging an intersectional framework that acknowledges gender, race, and class as organizing constructs when discussing state-sanctioned violence.

Although the theoretical concept known as *intersectionality* was coined by Kimberlé Crenshaw in 1989, black women existed within an axis of race and sex-based discrimination at the time of and prior to the writing of the Kerner Commission report. Sojourner Truth asserted, "Ain't I a Woman?" in 1851. Somewhat later, in their speeches and writings, Anna Julia Cooper and Ida B. Wells-Barnett in the late nineteenth

and early twentieth centuries, acknowledged the unique experiences and multiplicative social burdens that black women in America face (Collins 2000). Specific considerations of black women in the context of racial and gender strife was thus not a new concept, and should have been included in the Kerner report, but was largely ignored. Therefore we discuss the perils of excluding the experience of black women from investigations of state-sanctioned violence.

Whether it is during the white race riots in 1917, the long, hot summer of 1967, or police brutality in 2017, the invisibility of black women in reports and initiatives does not guarantee their safety from racial violence. Black women as well as men were victims of lynching, and targeted in white riots and continue to be victimized by police brutality.<sup>3</sup> However, rape was often used as a weapon to control and harm black women and to demean black men in the post-reconstruction and civil rights era (Feimster 2009; McGuire 2010). These unprovoked actions against black women have not been characterized as emblematic of white pathology or rage. According to Danielle McGuire, sexual and racial violence against black people was used to "control, coerce and harass" throughout the early nineteenth and twentieth century (2010). Black women's experiences and harm remain an afterthought in how the Black Lives Matter movement is commonly perceived as a fight to save black men from police brutality.

In light of contemporary racial tensions, we examine the President's Task Force on 21st Century Policing (2015) juxtaposed against the Kerner report. These reports overlap in their focus on the causes, consequences, and solutions for *managing* black rage. Just as notes of the Moynihan report (1965) are interwoven throughout the Kerner report, the influence of the My Brother's Keeper Initiative (White

2. In this article, we use the terms *state sanctioned* and *state violence*. State violence (in America) is defined as violence authorized by the U.S. government, state, and local agencies that can include police violence, economic exploitation, and the destruction of property. State-sanctioned violence may or may not be committed with police or government agency participation, but includes a passive approach to preventing violence or holding perpetrators accountable (Clarke 1998).

3. According to a report by the NAACP, between 1889 and 1922, eighty-three women were known victims of lynching, sixty-six of whom were "colored" and seventeen were white (1922).

House 2014) is apparent in the report of the President's Task Force on 21st Century Policing.<sup>4</sup> Furthermore, the influence of the Moynihan report and the My Brother's Keeper Initiative, on the Kerner report and the President's Task Force report, respectively, can be seen through the enduring depiction of angry, problematic black men and emasculating or invisible black women (Crenshaw 2014)—an enduring narrative of black pathology. Although the triggers were white rage and police violence directed against blacks, black rage and riots prompted both the Kerner report and the 21st Century Policing Task Force report. This leaves open the question why no comparable report has been produced on white rage and riots.

#### PROBLEMATIZING BLACK RAGE AND NORMALIZING WHITE RAGE

Until the early 1960s, the concept of a race riot was equated, ubiquitously, with white terror campaigns against black people.<sup>5</sup> This dynamic changed in 1963, most notably in Birmingham, Alabama. The Children's Crusade, a peaceful march of schoolchildren, was met by police with sprays from firehoses, vicious attack dogs, and arrests. The culmination of these attacks, were bombings that occurred throughout the city, including the 16th Street Baptist Church and the home of A. D. King, the brother of Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.

Outraged by these assaults as well as by the oppressive conditions that provoked the march in the first place, community members protested and some began to destroy white-owned businesses in black neighborhoods (Eskew 1997). By the summer of 1967, black-initiated race riots erupted in more than one hundred cities across the country. President Lyndon Johnson ordered the formation of the Kerner Commission to investigate and report on civil disorders. The Kerner report purportedly is on civil disorders, not black riots or black civil disorders. Yet black-initiated riots are explored at length, and white-initiated riots receive little analysis. We provide a sociohistorical and mul-

titextured interrogation, not addressed in the Kerner report, of the precursors to black-initiated race riots for the Kerner report that includes the history of white terror campaigns, which typically have provided the underlying context for black-initiated riots and is missing from analysis. We posit that this analysis better contextualizes the oppressive conditions that stimulated community protests. In addition, this analysis expands the focus to examine the impact of oppressive conditions on black men and women.

#### THE MISSING ANALYSIS: WHITE CIVIL UNREST

It can be argued that slavery in and of itself was a white terror campaign, but we begin our analysis in 1877, the year that Reconstruction and thus the federal protections of black people (the formerly enslaved and free coloreds) officially ended. The Kerner report acknowledges that the post-reconstruction era was a vicious turning point in white racial violence and black disenfranchisement (1968, 218), but it fails to connect them directly to the uprising of the 1960s.

Part 2 of the Kerner report focused on "Why Did it Happen?" in reference to the causes of the 1967 urban civil disorders (that is, black riots). We focus your attention to chapter 5, interestingly titled "Rejection and Protest: An Historical Sketch," which introduces an historical framework of black subjugation in America by stating that

The events of the summer of 1967 are in large part the culmination of 300 years of racial prejudice. Most Americans know little of the origins of the racial schism separating our white and Negro citizens. Few appreciate how central the problem of the Negro has been to our social policy. Fewer still understand that today's problems can be solved only if white Americans comprehend the rigid social, economic and educational barriers that have prevented Negroes from participating in the

4. *The Negro Family: The Case for National Action* is commonly known as the Moynihan report.

5. The Harlem race riots of 1935 and 1943 were black-initiated riots, triggered by a mistaken report of police brutality directed against a black child and the accurate report of police brutality directed against a black soldier defending a black woman, respectively. No comparable riot occurred until 1963.

mainstream of American life. (Kerner Report 1968, 211)

This opening paragraph is followed by an accounting of social norms, policy, and legal barriers to freedom from the colonial period, the U.S. Constitution through to the Civil War. This chapter also provides a glimpse of the Reconstruction era white riots in Memphis, Tennessee, and in Colfax and Coushatta, Louisiana, to demonstrate white intolerance of black political, economic and social progress (Kerner Report 1968, 217). The analysis of the massacres that occurred during and after Reconstruction until the call for the Kerner report (from 1877 through 1967) are covered in two pages, and would lead you to believe that no large-scale white riots occurred after 1870, or were isolated to the South—neither are true. Conspicuously missing are major riots, including the Wilmington massacre of 1898, the Atlanta riot of 1906, the Tulsa riot of 1921, and the Detroit riot of 1943. Even though the Kerner report is about the causes and consequences of civil unrest, white-initiated civil unrest is missing. To be clear, there is no fundamental accounting and analysis of white riots and aggression—despite an acknowledgement that the oppressive conditions that prompted the long, hot summer of 1967 has roots in white terror campaigns; for example, “Negroes who voted or held office were refused jobs or punished by the Ku Klux Klan” (Kerner Report 1968, 217). To understand civil unrest in America, white riots and mobs should have been interrogated in the Kerner report, and we offer that missing analysis in this article.

Even acts of white terrorism that were contemporary to the writing of the report, such as the attacks on Freedom Riders in Alabama and Mississippi in 1961, are absent. White terror campaigns are not scrutinized for their causes, their triggers, or their costs in terms of life, liberties, and property (see table 1). Perhaps it is due to an assumption that white racial violence is well understood. White rage may have been

seen as an obvious and normal response to perceived black progress and increased proximity (hence, the chapter 5 title of “Rejection and Protest”). Perhaps that is why the violent period between 1917 and 1921, which included riots in more than thirty cities during the Red Summer of 1919, did not prompt a full federal investigation—although it should have. In response to the Chicago Riot of 1919, the governor of Illinois ordered the formation Chicago Commission on Race Relations (1922), which offered some insight on the context of white racial violence. However, a statewide commission on the Tulsa race riots in 1921 was not assembled until 1997.

A key point that makes the interpretation of white terror campaigns difficult is the ambiguity in making distinctions between the abundant occurrence of lynchings, terrorist acts, sexual assaults and post-reconstruction race riots and massacres.<sup>6</sup> Although both lynchings and race riots involve the enactment of white rage through mob violence, the former typically focuses on a specific person or people, whereas the latter is violence broadly and indiscriminately applied. Terrorist acts, such as the fifty bombings that occurred between 1947 and 1965 in black communities in Birmingham that resulted in death, injury, and property damage—the same types of destruction associated with race riots—further complicate precise characterization of the types of manifestations of white rage.

Lynchings and race riots often overlap with underlying contexts in being related to perceptions of increasing black prosperity or political power, greater competition for employment, and the potential loss of white power and privilege. The violent backlash often has involved the use of white women as both props and participants to justify and initiate white terror campaigns (Kirshenbaum 1998; Feimster 2009). For example, under the guise of protecting white women from black male sexual predators, the Wilmington race riot of 1898 was in fact about resentment of a blossoming black middle class and black gains in politics. As ta-

6. Between 1882 and 1968, 3,446 African Americans were lynched. For a comprehensive account of white riots, see Rucker and Upton's *Encyclopedia of American Race Riots* (2007); for an in-depth analysis of how sexual assault was used as weapon against black women and their communities during the civil rights movement, see Danielle Maguire's *At the Dark End of the Street* (2010).

(Text continues on p.29)

**Table 1.** Summary of the Context, Casualties, and Aftermath of U.S. Race Riots, 1883–1967

Year	Location	Context	Injuries	Deaths	Aftermath	Estimated Cost	
						At the Time	2017
1883	Danville, VA	Danville riots. TR: black men failed to give way to let a white man pass. UC: rise in black political power and prosperity	2 blacks 2 whites	4 blacks 1 white	black disenfranchisement	**	**
1898	Wilmington, DE	Wilmington race riot. TR: black newspaper anti-lynching article claiming that black men were no more predators than white men. UC: rise in black political power and prosperity; organized by NC Democratic Party	**	14 to 250	1,500 blacks left Wilmington; blacks no longer the majority; black city employees fired; black newspaper destroyed; prosperous blacks and politicians run out of town; black disenfranchisement	**	**
1900	New Orleans, LA	Robert Charles riots. TR: murder of a white policeman by Robert Charles	50 to 70	28	B city school destroyed	**	**
1906	Atlanta, GA	Atlanta race riot. TR: unsubstantiated newspaper reports of rapes of white women by black men.	**	10 to 100 blacks 2 whites	**	**	**
1908	Springfield, IL	Springfield riots. TR: white mob angered by the arrest and transport of 2 black men charged of raping a white woman. UC: black prosperity	**	2 blacks 5 whites	2,000 blacks left town; 35 black-owned businesses damaged; black neighborhoods destroyed by fire	\$200,000	\$5 million
1910	Sixteen cities across the United States	TR: blacks celebrate Jack Johnson's prize fight defeat of Jeff Jeffries; white attack	106	11 to 26	**	**	**

Year	Location	Event	Number of People	Notes	Estimated Cost	Other
1917	East St. Louis, IL	TR: labor dispute of black strikebreakers. UC: increase in black population	**	40 to 200 blacks 9 whites	6,000 Bs homeless; 244 to 312 business and homes destroyed	\$373,000–1 million \$7–19 million
1917	Houston, TX	Houston Mutiny of 1917. TR: police brutality of a black woman and black soldiers; black World War I vets demand respect	19	4 blacks 16 whites	118 soldiers court marshalled; 63 life sentences; 18 condemned to death	**
1919	Charleston, SC	Red Summer riots. TR: white sailors claim to be cheated by bootlegger, begin harassing other blacks	18 blacks 8 whites	4 blacks	49 arrested; 8 fined \$50; 1 fined \$100; 3 sailors court martialled; 2 sentenced to 1 year in prison	**
1919	Chicago, IL	Red Summer riots; Chicago riot of 1919. TR: breach of segregated beach. UC: Great Migration-related tensions	537	23 blacks 13 whites	1,000 homes destroyed; Chicago Commission on Race Relations	**
1919	Knoxville, TN	Red Summer riots; Knoxville riot of 1919. TR: black man accused of murdering a white woman.	14+	25 to 100+	white prisoners freed by mob	**
1919	Omaha, NE	Red Summer riots. TR: alleged assault of a white woman by a black man. UC: rising black political power	50	3	2,000 blacks left Omaha	**
1919	Washington, D.C.	Red Summer riots. TR: alleged sexual assault of white woman by a black man	150	39 blacks 5 whites	**	**

(continued)

**Table 1.** (continued)

Year	Location	Context	Injuries	Deaths	Aftermath	Estimated Cost	
						At the Time	2017
1921	Tulsa, OK	Tulsa riots of 1921; black Wall Street riots. TR: shooting of a police officer while freeing a black prisoner who was to be lynched. UC: black prosperity, pride and self-protection/arms	800	-300	35 blocks in the black community (Greenwood) was destroyed	**	**
1923	Rosewood, FL	Rosewood massacre. TR: white woman claims assault by a black man; rise of black working class; black independence	**	6 to 150	town destroyed; black residents displaced	**	**
1935	New York, NY	Harlem race riot. TR: mistaken report of police brutality of a teenager. UC: poverty/Great Depression	64	1 to 3	ending Harlem Renaissance; 600 windows smashed, businesses looted and vandalized; Mayor's Commission	\$147,000	\$2.6 million
1943	Mobile, AL	Mobile race riot. TR: black shipyard promotions. UC: jobs and black empowerment	50	0	segregated shipyards	**	**
1943	Beaumont, TX	Beaumont race riots. TR: alleged rape of a white woman by a black man. UC: population increase; resource shortages	50	3 blacks 1 white	black-owned structures looted and burned	**	**
1943	Detroit, MI	Detroit race riot. TR: unsubstantiated rumors of assaults on black and white women and babies. UC: conflict between immigrant eastern Europeans and black migrants from the South	760	34 includes 16 shot by police	**	\$2 million	\$28 million



1943	Los Angeles, CA	Zoot Suit riots. TR: attack and disrobing of Mexican American men wearing zoot suits during World War II rationing. UC: xenophobia	**	0	**	**	**
1943	New York, NY	Harlem riot of 1943; police brutality of black soldier defending a black woman; reaction to racism, police brutality, housing discrimination	40 police officers	6 blacks	500 to 1,000 arrested	**	**
1961	Anniston Montgomery Birming- ham, AL	Freedom Riders riot. TR: white anger over integrated public transportation. UC: black social gains; civil rights movement	300	0	Freedom Riders in Mississippi sentenced to 30 days in jail; federal protection required	**	**
1963	Jackson, MS Birmingham, AL	Birmingham riot. TR: police brutality at Children's Crusade March; bombings. UC: desegregation in schools, bombings in black neighborhoods; enduring poverty	6	2	white-owned buildings in black communities destroyed		
1964	Jersey City, NJ	Jersey City race riot. TR: arrest of a black woman. UC: housing segregation	46	0	52 arrested; 71 business damaged		
1964	New York, NY	Harlem race riot. TR: police brutality	118 to 500	1	465 arrested	\$500,000 to \$1 million	\$4 to \$8 million
1964	Philadelphia, PA	1964 North Philadelphia riot-Columbia Avenue riot. TR: police confrontation and arrest of a black woman (along with rumor of beating or killing of a pregnant woman); response to Civil Rights Act; rise of Black Power Movement	339	1	800 people arrested; 220 business damaged or destroyed; accelerated white flight; population drop; blighting of neighborhood	\$3 million	\$23 million

(continued)



**Table 1.** (continued)

Year	Location	Context	Injuries	Deaths	Aftermath	Estimated Cost	
						At the Time	2017
1964	Rochester, NY	Rochester race riot. TR: police brutality; segregated housing and education; employment discrimination	350	4	1,000 arrested; 204 stores looted or damaged; black social empowerment	\$1 million	\$8 million
1965	Watts, CA	Watts riot; Watts rebellion. TR: police confrontation during traffic stop	1,000+	34	4,000 arrested; 600 buildings burned or looted; Watts community blighted	\$44 million	\$322 million
1966	Chicago, IL	Division Street riots. TR: police brutality at Puerto Rican Week Parade	16 Puerto Ricans	**	49 arrested; 50 buildings damaged	**	**
1966	Cleveland, OH	Hough riots. TR: racism and poverty or black nationalist-communist	50	4	275 arrested	\$1 to \$2 million	\$7 to \$14 million
1967	Detroit, MI	Detroit riot. TR: police raid on an unlicensed bar; working class blacks fighting police, national guard, and U.S. army	1,189	43	7,000 arrested	\$42 million	\$307 million
1967	Newark, NJ	Newark riot. TR: police brutality, poverty, low political power	725	26	1,500 arrested; Central Ward blighted	\$115 million	\$110 million

Source: Authors' tabulations based on *Chicago Tribune* 2014; Perl 1999; Hamilton and Darity 2006; Kirshenbaum 1998; Rucker and Upton 2007; Chicago Commission on Race Relations 1922; Danville Committee of Forty 1883; Dailey 1997; Smith and Wynn 2009; Merritt 2008; Rehagen 2017; Haynes 1973; McWhirter 2011.

Note: TR = triggering incident; UC = underlying circumstances; \*\*not reported or unavailable.

ble 1 shows, this massacre resulted in the displacement of at least 1,500 African Americans. To gain an idea of the massacre's enduring impact, black people have not been a racial majority in Wilmington since the 1898 riot (Hamilton and Darity 2006).<sup>7</sup>

In his 1944 analysis of race in America, Gunnar Myrdal posited that white rage was expressed as lynchings in the South, and race riots in the North (1996). This is not the case. Lynchings were more frequent in the South, but they occurred throughout the country. Although not an exhaustive list of race riots, table 1 demonstrates that race (white) riots also were a national phenomenon. This article focuses on white rage manifested specifically through race riots because the civil unrest of urban riots is the focus of the Kerner Commission's report.

### Triggers and Underlying Circumstances

E. M. Beck and Stewart Tolnay posit that white racial violence is characterized by the interactive and multiplicative result of violence potential and a threshold event (1995). Violence potential includes the underlying circumstances that create racial tension in a community. Violence potential is the product of racist ideology, permissiveness of the state, and competition of resources. As these underlying circumstances build and interact with one another, the threshold event serves as a trigger to racial violence (Beck and Tolnay 1995). Depending on the sociohistorical context and underlying circumstances, the trigger can be a dramatic incident, such as the death of a white deputy, as in the 1919 riots in Elaine, Arkansas, or as seemingly innocuous an event as a black teenager floating to the white side of a segregated beach, such as in the Chicago riots of 1919 (Williams 1972).

In both the North and the South, the pattern of triggering incidents involved police confrontations, jobs, and most often, alleged assaults on white women (Rucker and Upton 2007; Kirshenbaum 1998; Merritt 2008; Feimster 2009). Common underlying circumstances across regions included the enforcement of black social inferiority, competition over housing and political power, and flare-ups in response to black prosperity, and, during times of war, returning black soldiers asserting equal status (Haynes 1973; Merritt 2008; Dailey 1997; Perl 1999).

The oppressive conditions of the South, as well as black displacement due to white riots, served as motivating factors for the Great Migration of African Americans (Reich 2014; Wilkerson 2010). However, black newcomers found that racism was pervasive in their new home as well, and led to unique underlying circumstances to race riots in the North. For instance, in places such as Chicago and East St. Louis, resistance to black population growth and integration, black migrant and Eastern European immigrant conflicts at the workplace and in housing were an undercurrent to race riots (Rucker and Upton 2007; McWhirter 2011; Williams 1972; Rehagen 2017).

### Casualties and Aftermath

The driving motivation for white race riots is the preservation of white supremacy, and the benefits and privileges that it affords. It also can be argued that preserving white supremacy is the source of complacency in investigating these riots and their consequences. For example, although President Woodrow Wilson publicly admonished the East St. Louis riots of 1917, he did not initiate a federal investigation.<sup>8</sup> The aftermath of white-initiated riots can be characterized by an enormous loss of black life, de-

7. According to the City of Wilmington, its 2014 racial-ethnic demographics are 75.3 percent white, 19.8 percent African American, and 5.6 percent Hispanic.

8. Congress launched an investigative committee on the East St. Louis riots of 1917 when President Wilson refused to do so (1917). From the investigation, Representative Leonidas C. Dyer (MO) reported on the savage nature of the riot, the complicity of law enforcement. Although the triggering incident of the East St. Louis riot is typically reported as conflicts with black strikebreakers, Dyer noted that immigrants working in the packing houses had been on strike for two years and that black workers (and not strikebreakers) had taken their place shortly thereafter. When pressed by the committee to take action, President Wilson wrote, "The Attorney General and I have been giving a great deal of thought to the situation in East St. Louis, and the United States district attorney there, as well as special agents of the Department of Justice, have been at work gathering information

struction of black-owned properties, mass displacement and the loss of constitutional rights—specifically, voting rights, due process, equal protection of the law, free speech, the right to assemble, freedom of the press, and the right to bear arms. Further, Lisa Cook argues that a direct relationship can be found between white terror campaigns and policies and the fall (or rise) of black patents—an indication of the quality of black economic growth and intellectual output (2014). In contrast to numerous accountings of the costs of black-initiated riots (*Chicago Tribune* 2014; Collins and Margo 2007; Iris 1983), very little is written or verifiable on the cost and casualties of white-initiated riots (Hamilton and Darity 2006). The violent and sexual assaults, as well of deaths of black women, during these riots are further unacknowledged.

As shown in table 1, the estimated loss of black lives are often wildly disparate, yet the recording of white deaths are exact, for example, Atlanta in 1906 and East St. Louis in 1917. Injuries are typically assumed to be massive, but typically have no estimates. In her book on the New Orleans riot of 1900, the anti-lynching activist Ida B. Wells-Barnett wrote, “How many colored men and women were abused and injured is not known, for those who escaped were glad to make a place of refuge and took no time to publish their troubles” (1900, 29).<sup>9</sup> Hospitals, churches, and schools that served black people were among the properties destroyed in race riots, which further exacerbates the ability to count the dead, injured, and displaced—particularly women and children.

The disparity in casualties typically depends on who is doing the reporting, such as the local government versus activists such as Wells-

Barnett or organizations such as the NAACP (National Association for the Advancement of Colored People) and the Red Cross (Danville Committee of Forty 1883; Wells-Barnett 1917; Gruening and Du Bois 1917). Government accounts from the police, coronors, and city officials invariably report smaller numbers of black casualties, whereas activists and relief organizations report larger numbers (Rucker and Upton 2007; Brophy 2003; McWhirter 2011; Merritt 2008; Wicentowski 2017). It is difficult to verify which estimates were more accurate, but given the disregard for black lives, as well as the complicity of local government in riot activities, data gathered from activists and relief organization are likely to be more precise.

A similar lack of records can be found in documenting the value of black-owned properties lost in race riots. In several instances, entire black communities or towns were decimated in race riots without a record of the financial burden. A complicating factor is that these accounts are typically done through claims fulfilled by insurance companies. Purchasing insurance on property was not always available to black people during the peak of white race riots. As was the case in the 1921 Tulsa riots, the insurance companies cited a “riot exclusion clause” to deny property claims (Brophy 2003). Estimating the loss of black-owned property would then be left to complicated local government officials.

### Black Rage

The Kerner report makes the argument that blacks have legitimate concerns that contributed to the 1967 uprisings and were prompted by white racism. The report also concluded that the riots were not coordinated nor a product of

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to enable us to determine whether any Federal statute has been violated. Up to this time I am bound in candor to say that no facts have been presented to us which would justify Federal action.” However, it should be brought into context that President Wilson expanded racial segregation to the federal government and enthusiastically endorsed the Ku Klux Klan propaganda film *Birth of a Nation*, describing it as “history written in lightning.” Thus, a presidential commission on this or the numerous other race riots that occurred during his presidency (1913–1921) was highly unlikely.

9. Families often hid in swamps, woods or cemeteries during the chaos of a race riot to escape ravenous mobs; some never returned. Ida B. Wells-Barnett was among a group of women called the Anti-Lynching Crusaders, a spin-off organization from the NAACP that investigated and reported the causes and aftermath of lynchings and race riots. She was known for her meticulous notes and interviews of community members and victims of white terror campaigns.

an anarchistic conspiracy, and that the typical uprising was triggered by the perception of police physical abuse and abuse of power. These can be viewed as positive aspects of the report.

However, the Kerner report has a pattern of explaining systemic barriers to positive social, health, economic, and education outcomes, quickly followed by assertions of black pathology. The report does not conclude that it is absolutely logical to find oppression intolerable and that some type of action should be expected, or an apathy toward political and educational systems would be a rational response to these barriers (Utsey, Bolden, and Brown 2001; Fanon 1961). The Kerner report's framework is thus shaped by a view of black violence as a product of a pernicious social deviance, influenced by "broken" family structures led by black women—a clear reference to the findings of the Moynihan report (Moynihan 1965, chapter 7).

For centuries, campaigns of white violence have been perceived as maintaining social order, whereas black-initiated riots have been perceived as disrupting the social order and as revolutionary behavior to overturn the status quo. If whites generally like the status quo, then they will be considerably less bothered by white terror campaigns or police killings of blacks. Indeed, white violence is not seen as dangerous for whites but black violence is perceived as untamed/illogical, something that may spill out of the ghetto and therefore must be understood and stopped.

The Kerner report briefly acknowledges violence by "white racists" in Birmingham and "white segregationists" in Saint Augustine Florida (1968, 37, 38). In its phrasing, the report evaluates these incidents as a problem with racists rather than racism.<sup>10</sup> Failing to acknowledge white supremacy leads to an attempt to problematize black behavior. This is captured most eloquently by Kwame Ture and Charles Hamilton.

When white terrorists bomb a black church and kill five black children, the act is deemed individual racism, widely deplored by most seg-

ments of the society. But when in that same city—Birmingham, Alabama—five hundred black babies die each year because of the lack of proper food, shelter, and medical facilities, and thousands more are destroyed and maimed physically, emotionally, and intellectually because of conditions of poverty and discrimination in the black community, it is deemed a function of institutional racism (Ture and Hamilton 1967, 4).

The triggering incident in black riots could be perceived as an individual racist encounter, like the police brutality that triggered almost every uprising (see table 1). If that were the case, black rage would be directed at individuals rather than the police force. The black riots that prompted the Kerner report were in fact initiated by the underlying circumstance of enduring institutional racism in policing and housing policies. From this perspective, targeting law enforcement and white-owned properties, including those with exploitive credit or lending and rental practices, were a cogent outlet of black rage (Baradaran 2017). Although white passersby and drivers may have had bricks or bottles thrown at them or their cars, they were not hunted down and attacked in their communities, something that occurred frequently in white riots directed against black people.

Whether due to ignorance of the incident or a sense of privileged-based safety, the white people endangered in these situations were driving through black communities at the time of a race riot and were targets of convenience. The chaos of the Bloody Summer of 1967 is therefore not analogous to the indiscriminate violence of the Red Summer of 1919.

#### **MISSING ANALYSIS: GENDER AND THE KERNER REPORT**

How does one begin to integrate a discussion of gender into the volumes of scholarly and activists' work attempting to explain the complex web of relationships between the police, courts, corrections and the African American community? The Kerner Commission's report certainly

10. In contemporary times, this is the "few bad eggs" notion used to defend the police. Thus, police brutality, poor teaching or even micro-aggressions, are problems with bad (or ignorant) whites, not all whites or whiteness itself (Berard 2012).

attempted to uncover the very complex nature of race relations in response to the riots of the 1960s. Its conclusions and recommendations were considered by some to be a radical departure from the status quo assessments of the race problem. One might assert that the commission shared what Carol Anderson refers to as “the unspoken truth about our racial divide” (2016, ##).

The conclusions of the Kerner Commission affirmed the prophetic words of W. E. B. Du Bois in 1903 when he observed that the presence of black skin on the body of a male in the United States was perceived as intrinsically problematic. Du Bois’s classic theoretical analysis was incomplete, however. He failed to acknowledge the vulnerable positionality of the black female. She too was considered a problem by those in power. The very nature of one’s skin tone on black male bodies has historically evoked and evinced emotional and structural responses fueled by malignant history and ideological dogma. The black male body has been rendered a serious safety threat, and the black female body has also experienced a precarious fate due to state-sanctioned social control.

The eloquence and insights of Du Bois and many other thought leaders must not be diminished within the canons of classic intellectual thought, but the historical invisibility of the plight of black women must be engaged as we reflect on the state-sanctioned violence that the African American community experiences. Gender and class must be included in any analysis that acknowledges the Otherness of blackness—especially when their inclusion can account for aggravating and mitigating factors in the context of criminal justice policies and procedures.

The face of civil unrest described in the Kerner report characterizes the 1967 riots in urban centers including Newark and Patterson, New Jersey, and Detroit, Michigan, as events

involving black males who were considered the most vulnerable to the legacy of racist governmental policies and practices (Kerner Report 1968, 7).

The report references findings from surveys designed to measure community attitudes toward the police that proved valuable to assessing the climate of communities and supported recommendations to improve police-community relations.<sup>11</sup> The researchers, however, solicited and reported on the responses of black adult males and black male youth only (Kerner Report 1968, 302–04). The analysis disregarded the reality that black women’s stories, along with those of black males, would have provided a more accurate assessment of the nature and scope of police-sanctioned violence in the black community. Then, as now, black males were considered the primary protagonists in narratives about civil disorder that position them as the most visible victims of state-sanctioned violence. This analysis asserts that the experiences of black females with the police were not a priority for the Kerner Commission. Black male attitudes controlled the deliberations of what to do about police-community relationships. These narratives ignored the reality of state-sanctioned violence against black women.

Black males are treated as most vulnerable to racist social and legal policies in historical and journalistic accounts of the impact of state-sanctioned racist practices, from the period of enslavement to the present. Much of the national response focused on what to do about the problem of black male violence. Inherent in even the most liberal responses were calls to rectify some of the attendant consequences of poverty to develop more “orderly” communities. A specific focus on the role of well-behaved black males as a stabilizing force in the African American community has been cen-

11. In the summary, the Kerner report provides results from “24 disorders in the 23 cities surveyed.” Among its key findings is a description of black rioters: “The typical rioter was a teenager or young adult, a life-long resident of the city in which he rioted, a high school dropout; he was, nevertheless, somewhat better educated than his nonrioting Negro neighbor, and was usually underemployed or employed in a menial job. He was proud of his race, extremely hostile to both whites and middle-class Negroes and, although informed about politics, highly distrustful of the political system” (1968, 7). Although most black rioters are noted as being male, how many and under what circumstances black women were engaged in the riots is not assessed. It appears that a social demographic profile of black women rioters was apparently not deemed necessary.



tral to the enduring narrative of what to do about urban civil unrest.

### TASK FORCE ON TWENTY-FIRST CENTURY POLICING

Like the Bloody Summer of 1967 that initiated the Kerner report, police brutality is at the core of contemporary urban riots: 1992 in Los Angeles, 2014 in Ferguson and Oakland, and in 2015 in Baltimore. The confluence of riots and high-profile police shootings of unarmed black people precipitated President Barack Obama's Task Force on 21st Century Policing (2015). The task force was charged with "identifying best practices and offering recommendations on how policing practices can promote effective crime reduction while building public trust" (1). Interestingly, neither the shootings nor the riots that initiated the assembling of the task force are discussed directly in the final report. It would seem that a painstaking effort was made to exclude the phrases "police brutality" and "unarmed shooting" from it.

Whereas the Kerner report talks explicitly about race, and to a lesser degree, racism, the task force report is inundated with discussions of implicit or unconscious bias versus explicit bias or racial discrimination. Although making the distinction between unintentional and intentional discrimination provides a frame of reference for police interactions with the community, the result of unarmed shootings of black people remains. The institutionalized racism that supports implicit and explicit bias continues to be unaddressed. Further, this process individualizes police brutality and white terror campaigns, rather than examining them as cultural or systemic. Police brutality, regardless of its pervasiveness, is thus seen as a problem of bad-apple police officers, not as endemic of police and American culture (Lersch and Mieczkowski 2005).

The similarities in recommendations of the 21st Century Policing and Kerner reports are startling. The most striking is the recommendation for police to find "alternatives to deadly force" in the Kerner report and the development of "less than lethal technology" in the task force report. The former recommended increasing the use of chemical weapons such as mace, and the latter the use of conductive energy devices (stun guns). Each report warned of current abuse of these alternative strategies and that appropriate use of force policies were needed for these nonlethal tools.

### THE INFLUENCE OF THE MOYNIHAN REPORT AND MY BROTHER'S KEEPER

Presidents Obama and Johnson created anti-poverty commissions that resulted in a focus or development of initiatives to better support black males, particularly in terms of employment. In the Johnson-initiated Moynihan report, "Negro family social disorganization" is identified as the source of a culture of poverty that impedes black social and economic progress.<sup>12</sup>

The influence of the Moynihan report can be seen directly in the Kerner report in chapter 7, "Unemployment, Family Structure, and Social Disorganization." This chapter is included in the section on causes of civil unrest. They point to the proportion of black women in the labor force as an indicator of black male absence or underemployment; in 1966, 55 percent for nonwhite women in comparison to 38 percent for white women. Taking a page from the Moynihan report, the Kerner report cites the prevalence of female headed households as a systemic problem in the black community that leads to "social disorganization" and the lack of "solid citizens" in the ghetto (1968, 261).

Besides pointing to the poor parenting skills of single or working mothers, black women are

12. Moynihan begins chapter 2 of the report with "At the heart of the deterioration of the fabric of Negro society is the deterioration of the Negro family" (1965, 5). He notes that this is evidenced by the trend of urban and lower class black families lacking a nuclear family structure. He points to illegitimate births (babies born to unwed mothers), female-headed households (due to father absence and unemployment and domineering black wives) as the source of social disorganization and reliance on public welfare. He also states that centuries of injustice, particularly slavery, contributed to the familial, and therefore structural pathologies found in black communities. The phrasing "Negro family social disorganization" was based on E. Franklin Frazier's *The Negro Family in the United States* (1951), which declares the harm of family disorganization for African Americans.

largely absent in the Kerner report. Even though mistreatment of black women by the police were often the trigger for race riots (see table 1), no deeper inquiry was undertaken into the root causes for this vigilance. Black women and girls were also subjected to the horrors of white terror campaigns and police brutality, with the added trauma of sexual assault (McGuire 2010; Feimster 2009).<sup>13</sup>

In 2014, President Obama kicked off the My Brother's Keeper Initiative in response to the plight of black men. Whereas the Moynihan report painted black women as emasculating single mothers, black women are remarkably absent from the My Brother's Keeper Initiative—as they largely are in the 21st Century Policing report. The need for initiatives that support black men and boys should not be minimized, but the absence of similar efforts designed to respond to the circumstances of black girls and women cannot be denied.

#### THE CONTINUING INVISIBILITY OF BLACK WOMEN AND GIRLS

Numerous scholars and activists bring attention to the invisibility of black girls and women's experiences as victims of state violence (Cohen and Jackson 2016; Collins 2000; Crenshaw 2014; Davis 2012; Jackson 2016; Richie 2012). Ashley Smith asserts that “when action is taken to bring awareness to structural injustices based on race, Black women, girls, and their experiences are left in the background” (2016, 261).

It is instructive to examine the work of Crenshaw, executive director of the African American Policy Forum and the #Say Her Name campaign launched in 2015, to bring attention to and honor the lives of women and girls who have been victimized by police violence. According to a position paper produced by the African American Policy Forum, “black women who are profiled, beaten, sexually assaulted,

and killed by law enforcement officials are conspicuously absent” from racial justice movements (2015, 3).

According to the position paper, black women experience racial profiling while driving, have been casualties of the war on drugs through association, have disproportionately suffered injuries and assaults while in the custody of law enforcement, and have been doubly victimized when seeking help from domestic violence situations where the intervention by law enforcement has ended in the use of deadly force against the victim. The #Say Her Name campaign brings attention to the circumstances of countless women, girls, and members of the LGBTQ community who have been wrongly arrested, prosecuted, punished, and victimized by police use of excessive and deadly force.

The absence of public narratives and outcry about legally sanctioned violence against diverse communities of women and men when protesting systemic racialized police violence is problematized by the #Say Her Name movement. Ironically, this absence is even evident in social justice advocacy groups, which have adopted the Black Lives Matter call for social justice, without emphasizing the disproportionate representation of women, girls and members of the LGBTQ community who have been victimized by state-sanctioned violence (Amnesty International USA 2005).

It is ironic that the Black Lives Matter movement was created and inspired by the social justice advocacy of queer females, Patrisse Cullors, Opal Tometi, and Alicia Garza. The Black Lives Matter movement has received more public support and media attention when the victims of police brutality and the unlawful use of deadly force have been black males. This was certainly not the intention of the founders of the movement.

As Peniel Joseph writes, “few grassroots uprisings have done as much, in such a short pe-

13. In the Kerner report is a discussion of the build-up to an uprising in Tampa, Florida, triggered by a police shooting of a nineteen-year-old black man. This accounting demonstrates a missed opportunity to further analyze the position of black women and girls in the context of urban civil unrest, “As they began to mill about and discuss the shooting, old grievances, both real and imagined, were resurrected: discriminatory practices of local stores, advantages taken by white men of Negro girls” (Kerner Report 1968, 44). To further complicate this documentation, it is not clear which grievances were real and which were “imagined”—including assertions that black girls were being victimized by white men.



riod of time, to focus attention on long-neglected issues of racial justice, gender and economic inequality” (2017, 18). The absence of social justice advocacy group and media attention to the experiences of black women and girls and members of the LGBTQ community being subjected to police brutality and deadly force has been at best minimized and at worst ignored. This is disturbing as one reflects on the faces of the movements often being black mothers.<sup>14</sup> Their presence as grieving subjects is not juxtaposed with their vulnerability as likely victims of the police use of violence and deadly force.

The Black Lives Matter movement creates a space for broadening the discussion of the impact of state-sanctioned violence to include the experiences of diverse marginalized communities. The intersectional analytical framework offered by the founders of the Black Lives Matter movement complicates Du Bois’s notion of what it means to be a problem by focusing on how multiple and intersecting identities compound and engender stereotypes that result in legalized repression and punishment of not only black males, but also other marginalized groups whose identities and presence are seen as threats, especially when they embody blackness. Patricia Hill Collins asserts that intersectional frameworks “add additional layers of complexity to understandings of social inequality, recognizing that social inequality is rarely caused by a single factor” (2000, 26). Racialized gender tropes yield particular responses from those in power.

For instance, the Georgetown Law report “Girlhood Interrupted” points to perceptions of black girls as being considered less innocent than white girls. In comparison with their white and Latina counterparts, black girls are the most likely to be disciplined in schools, receive in-school suspensions and most likely to be referred to juvenile authorities. According to the report,

black girls are 20 percent more likely to be charged with a crime than white girls,

black girls are 20 percent more likely than white girls to be detained, and

black girls are less likely to benefit from prosecutorial discretion.

The study finds that prosecutors dismissed only 30 percent of cases against black girls, but 70 percent of those against their white counterparts (Epstein, Blake, and González 2017).

The desire for greater social control of black males and females has historically been evident throughout the administration of criminal justice (Anderson 2016; Davis 2003; Du Bois 1935; Fonner 1988; Ransby 2015; Alexander 2010). This intentionality around close monitoring and surveillance of African American communities has created tense relationships between the police and the community, as the Kerner report notes.

Melissa Harris-Perry, in describing the vulnerability of black women, notes that “because of their history as chattel slaves, their labor market participation as domestic workers and their role as dependents in a punitive modern welfare state, black women in America live under heightened scrutiny by the state” (2011, 39). It is clear that this heightened scrutiny can be aggravated and mitigated by numerous factors, including socioeconomic class, gender performance that is nonconforming to heteropatriarchal norms and neighborhood, to name a few.

### Neo-Capitalist Punishment Ideology

Smith’s introduction of a neo-capitalist punishment ideological framework provides a helpful lens to examine the injustices black women and girls are subjected to by law enforcement (2016). According to Smith, “neo-capitalist punishment ideology highlights the ways in which governmentality validates the use of severe discipline and punishment tactics against targeted bodies though its method of control over marginalized people” (263).

It is important to note that neo-capitalist punishment ideology is an extension of Michel

14. A group of seven mothers has become known as the Mothers of the Movement. Each has lost a son or daughter to gun violence, mostly at the hands of the police. They have become activists fighting police brutality and gun violence.

Foucault's theorizing about how the state exercises control over marginalized populations (1975). His analysis is particularly useful because it situates the relationship between the state and the marginalized body and introduces us to a particular architecture of what he refers to as the very intentional coerciveness of the carceral state (293–308). Notably, Smith introduces components of this ideological framework that are applicable to recent instances of excessive force used against black girls and women.

Public punishment is one component intended to achieve the goal of general deterrence as a way to diffuse “bad girl behavior.” This public punishment component recently was enacted in an incident involving a disturbance at a June 2015 teen pool party in McKinney, Texas, where a “noncompliant” black girl was the victim of the use of excessive physical force by a police officer who chose to shove the fifteen-year-old face down to the ground and pressed his knee into her back, ostensibly to subdue her while other teens were held at gunpoint. His behavior was subsequently ruled “indefensible” by his police chief. When a suspect is seen as a threat, even when that suspect is a young black girl, it is assumed by law enforcement that public punishment is an acceptable response to perceived disruptive behavior.

Invisibility is the next component of the neo-capitalist punishment ideology that Smith cites, which speaks to the fact that “over the past three years, more than 70 Black women and girls have been murdered due to state violence (Khaleeli, 2016)” (Smith 2016, 264). The lack of media attention, as well as selected social justice movement attention, is problematic. The devaluation of the lives of women and girls is evidenced within both public and private spheres. This devaluation of the lives of women and girls privileges narrative accounts of males as the sole victims of state-sanctioned violence.

The intersectional realities of black women and girls' lives are not considered when examining their engagement with law enforcement. Smith asserts that the instances of state-sanctioned violence black women and girls and males experience are “directly linked to their

intersectional identities” (2016, 265). Although it is apparent that blackness, regardless of class, presages a potential threat, particularly in the form of a male body, perceived economic status does matter.

The Kerner Commission's focus on inner-city, economically insecure urban communities as hotbeds for civil unrest recognizes that the attendant consequences of structural inequality nurture a volatile community context that requires study and analysis. The confluence of race, class, and gender, though not specifically interrogated in the Kerner report, yields recommendations that definitely acknowledge socioeconomic class as an aggravating factor in structural inequality.

The neo-capitalist punishment ideology also advances the expectation that marginalized populations must be docile in the face of law enforcement. The Kerner Commission cites “deep hostility between police and ghetto communities as a primary cause of the disorders” (Kerner Report 1968, 299). This hostility is emblematic of a distrust between community members and law enforcement. In the 21st Century Policing report, law enforcement witnesses lament the lack of respect they receive from people they are charged with protecting.

In some cases, when law enforcement officers believed that the subjects of their authority were not respectful (that is, docile) enough, they perceived them as threats (Greene 2000). Docility and blackness are sometimes perceived as incongruent. Because of this, if a law enforcement officer's authority is challenged, it can result in the use of deadly force regardless of whether the perception is based on reality. Stereotypes about black women and girls often do not suggest docility (Collins 2000; Harris-Perry 2011).

The prevalence of technology further complicates the relationship between law enforcement and the community, because in spite of what Smith describes as the “hyper-visibility” of incidents against members of the black community, including women and girls, the justice system continues to often ignore this evidence as indictable against law enforcement officers (2000, 266). Ignoring photographic or video evidence of brutality against black people was

true in the height of white racial terror campaigns, and remains true contemporarily, as in the cases of Rodney King, Sandra Bland, Tamir Rice, and Philando Castille (see Wells-Barnett 1900; see also postcard depictions of lynchings).

### CONCLUSION

Four presidential commissions with an overall theme of addressing the race problem have been assembled without identifying the context of the problem. Therefore we must ask ourselves how far have we come, what worked, and how does this inform twenty-first-century realities?

### How Far Have We Come?

Black rage and riots in response to state violence prompted both the Kerner Commission and the 21st Century Policing Task Force. Because no comparable report has been produced on white rage and riots, one must question how far America can or has progressed in race relations. Essentially, without a dual reflection of race, how can the causes and consequences of civil unrest be fully understood?

Regardless of the race initiating riots, black people are the majority of deaths and injuries and bear the burden of decimated property in predominantly black communities. A distinction can be made in ownership of these properties. In white race riots, black people were hunted and the black-owned properties were targeted based on proprietorship and location in the black community. Law enforcement and white-owned properties in black communities were targeted in black riots. How these outcomes are valued sheds light on why black riots result in presidential commissions and white terror campaigns do not.

One must question whether the failure to fully examine white protest is that far too often they were de facto or de jure state sanctioned. James Garland, using Alabama as an example, documents state support of white terrorism: “Sorting out government influence on ‘private’ racially-motivated violence in Alabama is often a daunting task. Indeed, the fusion of public and private prejudice for much of Alabama history has been so complete that ‘law’ and lawlessness in the state have often been one and the same” (2001, 26).

### What Worked and What Did Not Work?

Identifying white racism as “essentially responsible” for the civil unrest of 1967 is the Kerner report’s greatest strength. At the same time, racism is identified as the profoundly influential, but politically inexpedient culprit of the uprisings. As a result, prevention efforts initiated to eliminate the population-level racial disparities in education, employment, wealth, and health that were the underlying cause of the urban riots focused on individual-level interventions rather than on dismantling institutional-level racism (that is, the underlying cause of the disparities). This strategy reinforces the narrative that racial problems in America are in fact problems of black people and their communities. As a result, whites are relegated to the roles of saviors of black people, and bystanders to addressing systemic racism’s repercussions.

Each of these executive actions suffers from a failure to address intersectionality. The Kerner report’s findings that the country is divided by race places a singular focus on race that fails to interrogate the many ways black women and girls are marginalized and disenfranchised in U.S. society. When reports and or public policies do not include the experiences and voices of women and girls in a nation divided, they forfeit the ability to provide comprehensive programmatic initiatives. Violence against black women, from enslavement to the contemporary moment, must be included in discussions focusing on civil unrest, the perils of police brutality, and the unauthorized use of deadly force on black bodies. The use of legalized violence to control the “black community” historically have been justified by racist and sexist ideologies that dehumanize black people—both male and female.

### What Are the Implications for the Twenty-First Century?

A study of the racial divide must examine both the strength and virulence of enduring racial stereotypes attributed to black people and their communities and how they are employed to legitimize racism. Just as the Kerner report acknowledges that many (white) Americans do

not know the historical and institutional structures that cause and support racial disparities, the same dynamics are illustrated today.<sup>15</sup> In 2018, just as in 1968, the United States is a nation divided by race.<sup>16</sup>

Urban uprisings continue to be triggered by excessive use of police force, even though the Kerner Commission and the 21st Century Policing Task Force both recommend the widespread use of nonlethal police methods. As the United States moves forward as a nation, presidential commissions such as the Kerner Commission must move from identifying problems and making recommendations that fail to address a comprehensive response to the impact of police-sanctioned violence against the entire black community. It is impossible to reform any systemic problems resulting from a history of racist and sexist practices until the truth about how systems informed by racism and sexism are revealed. The truth must be sought before any form of reformation and reconciliation can occur. This analysis has attempted to expand the analysis of police-community relationships to reveal the sometimes unspoken truths about state-sanctioned violence against the black community by members of the white community. Once these truths are unveiled, commissions can seek to organize citizen groups that represent a cross-section of members of the black community to share their experiences and recommendations about ways to improve police-community relationships. The impact of police-sanctioned violence on black females and members of the LGBTQ community must be included in discussions about how to improve police-community relationships. The commission's recommendations must reflect an intersectional lens as a way to focus on the most effective methods for engaging the diverse black voices.

15. In a 2018 poll conducted by The Economist/YouGov, 56 percent of whites either agreed or strongly agreed that "Irish, Italian, Jewish, and many other minorities overcame prejudice and worked their way up. Blacks should do the same without any special favors." (Table 26B, "Racial Resentment," April 1–3, [https://d25d2506sfb94s.cloudfront.net/cumulus\\_uploads/document/maf7idof71/econTabReport.pdf](https://d25d2506sfb94s.cloudfront.net/cumulus_uploads/document/maf7idof71/econTabReport.pdf), accessed May 21, 2018.)

16. In a 2016 Gallup Poll, only 49 percent of blacks and 55 percent of whites perceived black-white relations in the United States to be somewhat or very good. (Frank Newport, "Majority in U.S. Still Hopeful for Solution to Race Problems," <http://news.gallup.com/poll/193682/majority-hopeful-solution-race-problems.aspx>, accessed May 21, 2018.)

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