USF Tampa Graduate Theses and Dissertations

USF Graduate Theses and Dissertations

October 2021

The Media Reproduction of Racial Violence: A Content Analysis of News Coverage Following the Death of George Floyd Jr.

Keylon Lovett
University of South Florida

The Media Reproduction of Racial Violence:

A Content Analysis of News Coverage Following the Death of George Floyd Jr.

by

Keylon Lovett

A thesis submitted in partial fulfillment
of the requirements for the degree of
Master of Arts
Department of Journalism and Digital Communication
College of Arts and Sciences
University of South Florida

Major Professor: Casey Frechette, Ph.D.
Roxanne Watson, Ph.D.
David Ponton, Ph.D.

Date of Approval:
October 28, 2021

Keywords: Lynching, Social Death, Representation, Trauma, Countersurveillance

Dedication

       I would like to dedicate this thesis to all victims of lynching and racial violence. The precious names of the victims are too countless to recount here in full. It is my hope that this work serves as a solemn testimony to the lives of each victim and the long path ahead towards redressing the wrongs that lie at the foundation of this country.

Acknowledgments

I would like to thank all my committee members for their time, instruction, and guidance. Each one has contributed to the revolving wheel of themes and ideas that set this thesis into motion. Professor Ponton, thank you for the pivotal theories I learned from you, especially with understanding racial violence as a historical contagion impacting the present. Professor Watson, thank you for teaching me about the dynamics of the media and civil rights movement, and the instrumental role of the Black press ushering in long needed social changes. I would like to give a special thanks to Professor Frechette in helping to steer this thesis, from an unorganized collection of fledgling ideas to a more cohesive work that I can be proud of. It would be a disservice to attempt quantify your assistance, from the conception of my thesis to its conclusion, and the necessary tools you provided that put these thoughts onto paper. Thank you all so much! I would also like to thank my family for giving me the space to work on my thesis over the last few months, their unwavering support, and much needed love.

Table of Contents

List of Tables

Abstract

The media has played a critical role in reproducing anti-Black violence in the United States, which has often harmed African American communities. Historically, the white press has depicted graphic imagery and descriptions of Black people being brutalized, with little ethical regard to their harmful effects. The Black press has historically challenged negative portrayals in the white media and shown more nuance, to protect the Black audience it represents. This dynamic underpins media depictions of racial violence still seen today. Darnella Frazier's video capture of George Floyd's death by Minneapolis police, was widely shared in the weeks following the incident, across social media and news outlets. The display of this graphic content has had negative mental health impacts, particularly for Black audiences. This academic study endeavors to examine the historical framework of racial violence in the media and whether the traumatic footage of George Floyd's death was depicted differently in both the traditional and Black press, and to what extent. A descriptive quantitative analysis of five media publications and the reproduction of Darnella Frazier's video of George Floyd's fatal encounter with the police, was performed to interrogate these questions and provide a cogent understanding of whether these persistent issues still manifest today.

Chapter One: Introduction

Throughout the history of the United States, the open presentation of violence against Black bodies has rarely, if ever, been forbidden. During the period of chattel slavery in the United States, it was common for enslaved African Americans to be assaulted and maltreated in unabated displays of brutality within society. During the Jim Crow era, from the late 19th to middle 20th century, images of tortured and lynched Black bodies found their way onto American newspapers and postcards (Garland, 2005). During the civil rights movement, Black protesters being bludgeoned by blunt instruments and sprayed by high-pressure water hoses; became a frequent sight on American television screens. These historical flashpoints exemplify the societal permission for the Black body to be assailed in public and media spaces, in a myriad number of ways, within the mainstream framework.

In the present day, the recent proliferation of graphic killings of Black people on video; extends the historical continuum of open violence visited upon the Black body. However, unlike previous iterations of violence against Black people, where widespread display was somewhat contained by the limits of technology, today's digital media landscape has enabled the ubiquitous spread and access of these violent incidents on an unprecedented scale. According to a study by the Pew Research Center, 85 percent of American adults own internet-accessible smartphones as of February 2021, up from just 35 percent in 2011 (Pew Research Center, 2021). The prevalence of cellphones illustrates the unrestrained accessibility to information available to wide swaths of the population, as well as the expansion of the public sphere. Graphic incidents that once may

have taken days or weeks to reach non-local audiences, can now be captured on cellphone video and uploaded within minutes online, where spectators can view the footage, share it, and voice their opinion in real-time. This hypothetical sequence also underscores the cellphone's function in the "surveillance society," and its ability to permit us a view into the quotidian details and activities of other (Timan & Albrechtslund, 2018).

This technology has also rendered the reproduction of Black death in an unprecedented manner, enabling videos to reveal a systemic problem that has long been in the making, in the form of anti-Black violence and brutality at the hands of police. There is an established history of law enforcement perpetuating extrajudicial violence against African Americans, both as a direct actor and as complicit participants. According to research by the State Sanctioned Project, as much as 75 percent of historical lynchings were assisted by law enforcement (State Sanctioned, 2015). The perpetrators in many of the over 4,000 racial terror lynchings across the southern United States, were never charged with a crime, and the victims of these lynchings typically did not receive the due process of a trial (Equal Justice Initiative, 2017). There is a striking similarity between the characteristics of these violent events and current incidents of police violence against Black people, which have been referred to as "modern lynchings" (Williams & Romer, 2020). A litany of names forms a scroll of victims, whose deaths have been graphically depicted on video. Mike Brown, Walter Scott, Philando Castille, Samuel DuBose, Eric Garner, Alton Sterling, and Ma' Khia Bryant, are just some of the many Black casualties, whose bodies have been obliterated in graphic footage shared online. These violent images have resulted in traumatic viewing experiences, particularly for Black audiences (Bor et al., 2018).

The critical mass of racial violence, trauma, and technology reached a culmination on May 25th, 2020, when George Floyd Jr. was killed by Minneapolis police. In short order, the

eleven agonizing minutes of George Floyd's death that was captured by teenager Darnella

Frazier–including the critical eight minutes and forty-six seconds of officer Derek Chauvin

kneeling on the back of George Floyd's neck–were shared across social media, where they were

met with widespread outrage and calls for social justice. The footage was also shown and shared

by various news sources and media outlets. Some media outlets showed the entire video with

little to no edits; other media outlets showed a partial clip of the video; other outlets showed

heavily edited clips of the video, with little of the actual violence depicted. Some news sources

played embedded clips of the video that begin to play as soon as readers clicked on the story.

Historically, the media has had a complicated relationship in depicting images of racial

violence against Black people, and the death of George Floyd was a significant demonstration of

this dynamic. Although media effects such as framing and priming possess some explanatory

power in the different depictions of racial violence, the historical role of the Black press

juxtaposed to traditional media outlets, can also inform our understanding of the presentation of

graphic depictions of Black people being harmed. Traditional media outlets have not only

alienated Black audiences by pathologizing the struggles of their communities and implying that

aggressive policing was an effective response (Los Angeles Times Editorial Board, 2020), they

also have a record of being openly hostile to Black people, which includes episodes of the white

press instigating and excusing racial violence (Staples, 2021). Black media outlets have

traditionally resisted the racial depictions of the white press, by showing more ethical concern

with their Black audiences and limiting the exposure of graphic violence against Black people

(Ross, 2020).

The video of George Floyd's death also underscores issues concerning media

representation; the reproduction of racial trauma in the media and the effects on vulnerable

audiences; and multiple forms of oppression that vulnerable groups are still subject to. There are two commonly cited perspectives in understanding the reproduction of Black death within the media. The first perspective suggests that graphic images and videos can serve as a journalistic tool to influence the emotions of viewers and affect policy change. Proponents of this perspective argue that it is irresponsible for news media outlets to obscure hard truths from their audiences and that the primary role of the press is to report the truth impartially to the public (McBride, 2019). In addition, graphic imagery has valuable social currency as a catalyst for change, similar to the shocking image of Emmet Till's mutilated body being the impetus for the civil rights movement (McBride, 2019). This perspective places emphasis on the overwhelming value graphic content presents to the public (regardless of how graphic that content may be) and minimizing any potential harm that may emerge from the publication of that content, or sometimes ignoring the harm altogether. The other perspective posits that publishing violent imagery is invariably exploitative and graphic content should not be used to draw attention to a story or issue. Proponents of this perspective tend to argue that violent images and videos dehumanize the subjects depicted, while retraumatizing those directly affected by the badges of white supremacy. This perspective is also critical of the decision to publish violent content due to the desensitization of violence that is visited upon Black people (Williams & Clarke, 2019).

Although multiple studies have examined various areas of research within these domains, to date, several scholarly databases show that no research has performed a content analysis between traditional media sites, and Black media sites when showing the video of George Floyd's death. The most adjacent research analyzes whether videos of police violence reveal racial biases against Black people (Gutting, 2016) and assesses the maintenance of digital media racism by analyzing news coverage of the killing of Stephon Clark (Kilgo, 2021). Given our

nation's critical juncture of police violence against Black people, difficult relationship with race, proliferation of digital media, and renewed calls to reappraise long held precepts at the core of many of our institutions, the exigence to investigate these issues is of the utmost importance. The present study aims to explore two research questions: (1) Compared to traditional media sites, does the Black press depict Black trauma to a lesser extent? (2) Compared to traditional media sites, does the Black press depict Black trauma differently? A descriptive quantitative analysis of five different media publications, showing the death of George Floyd, was performed to interrogate these questions. The findings of this study are intended to provide a cogent understanding of the media reproduction of racial violence and whether the press has modified its presentation from within the historical framework. This research will also be valuable in highlighting the mental health effects and traumatic experiences that are inflicted on Black audiences exposed to anti-Black violence, and journalistic ethics in reporting graphic content.

Chapter Two: Literature Review

This chapter will detail a review of literature that is intended to elucidate some of the more salient social theories, themes, and issues underpinning the graphic death of George Floyd on video, as well as similar occurrences of Black death depicted and reproduced within media. A prerequisite to begin this task, is to first explore the theory of the "social death" of Black people within society, as it establishes the premise for many of the subsequent themes. Following the theoretical exploration of social death, a historical examination of lynching in the United States, the phenomenon of lynching as a public spectacle, and news coverage of lynching between the Black and White press will be visited, to contextualize how we as a nation have arrived at the critical juncture of depicting Black death in the media environment. For the next section, an inquiry into the Society of Professional Journalists (SPJ) code of ethics and John Stuart Mill's harm principle will be reviewed, to elaborate on journalistic reporting ethics and the potential harm that can be caused by news coverage. The focus will then shift to the role of the cellphone as a tool of countersurveillance in citizen's encounters with police. To conclude this chapter, several media effect theories and the mental health trauma associated with viewing graphic content, will be reviewed.

Social Death

It is first necessary to understand the systemic exclusion of Black people from the broader mainstream society, through the concept of social death, as it provides necessary context for how violence has been perpetuated against Black people throughout much of this country's history, to include current incidents of police violence. Sociologist Orlando Patterson first introduced the term in 1982, in his seminal work, *Slavery and Social Death*, as a way of explaining the disposal status of the slave (Patterson, 1982). According to Patterson, social death is the condition of people not being fully accepted as human within the wider society and a permanent fixture of the slave. In this realm of existence on the margins of the social order, there is a parasitic relationship between the master and slave, in which no act of violence is too extreme, as the subject to whom it is committed does not exist as a person (Patterson, 1982).

Writer and educator, Tyron P. Woods further extrapolates the concept of the social death, within a historical configuration of chattel slavery in the United States and how it reinforces the normalization of police violence against Black people in the present (Woods, 2019, p.7). The extent of the social death on the slave was so deeply entrenched within the social order (and further buttressed through policies) that future generations of Black people have been unable to escape it. Woods states that "Black people have no room with which to maneuver into humanity within the existing social order" (p.5). For African Americans, social death in the broader mainstream society has often preceded and predicted displays of their physical death.

The link between slavery and perpetual violence against Black people is also supported by Professor Frank B. Wilderson, who posits that Blackness cannot be separated from slavery: "The time of Blackness is no time at all, because one cannot know a plentitude of Blackness distinct from Slaveness. (Wilderson, 2020, p. 218). Wilderson also states that violence is a

constant for Black people that is able to be expanded onto other facilities within society: "To put it differently, for Black people there is no time and space of consent, no relative respite from force and coercion: violence spreads its tendrils across the body, chokes the community, and expands, intensifies, and mutates into new and ever more grotesque forms in the collective unconscious through literature and film" (p. 218). Wilderson further postulates that the violence experienced by Black people is exceptional due to their threat to the human body ideal and the psychic coherence of human life, which he suggests, is an affirmation of being a human being as opposed to being on the lowest rungs of society as Black people are. According to Wilderson, this necessitates not just the brutalization of the Black body, but the public display in doing so, "It is absolutely necessary for Blacks to be castrated, raped, genitally mutilated, and violated, beaten, shot, and maimed. And it is necessary for this to take place in the streets as well as in popular culture-as on TV and in the cinema" (p. 219).

The idea of the social death is threaded within academic scholar, writer, and Professor Marc Lamont Hill's claim, that the most vulnerable and marginalized members of society are rendered as, "nobodies" and relegated to "nowhere" (Hill, 2016). Hill argues that when you are "nobody" it is easy to become invisible and be subjected to violence perpetrated by the state when he says, "to be nobody is to be subject to state violence" (p. XIX). The configuration of "nobodies" outside the social order, invalidates their claim to the basic quality of life or safeguarded from the abuses of power dynamics: "These conditions reflect a prevailing belief that the vulnerable are unworthy of investment, protection, or even the most fundamental provisions of the social contract" (p. XXI).

The theory of social death has compelling power in elucidating why anti-Black violence is a predominant feature that saturates Black life, rather than episodic events that occur less

frequently. The social death of Black people has predictive power in forecasting the prevalence and manner of violence that is, often, openly displayed . It also helps to explicate the wide gulf between the value of white life compared to Black life, in a concept that Princeton University Professor Eddie Glaude has coined the "value gap" (Glaude, 2020). Glaude states that, "If what I have called the "'value gap'" is the idea that in America white lives have always mattered more than the lives of others, then the lie is a broad and powerful architecture of false assumptions by which the value gap is maintained" (Glaude, 2020, p.6-7). The depreciated value of Black life compared to white life, further reinforces the concept of the social death. This is a crucial element in understanding the perpetuation of violence against Black people and its frequent presentation in the public eye.

History of Lynching

Following the newfound political and economic gains made by Black people during the ten-year period of reconstruction (1867–1877), white Southern Democrats swiftly moved to nullify the progress of African Americans and restore the racial hierarchy of white supremacist rule across the region (Tolnay & Beck, 1992). In an ominous prediction to the increasingly belligerent advances of Southern Democrats, the Republican governor of Mississippi, Adelbert Ames, lamented that African Americans, "are to be returned to a serfdom- an era of second slavery" (Kelly, 2009). In the Jim Crow era that followed (1877–1965), de jure and defacto laws systematically disenfranchised African Americans, governed rules of racial conduct, and fortified a color barrier that kept Black and white people intensely segregated in most spaces of daily life. The racial power dynamics at the time actively prevented (and intimidated) Black people from interfering with the status quo (Tolnay & Beck, 1992).

One of the most effective ways this arrangement was enforced, was through employing violent incidents of state-sanctioned terrorism known as lynching. The Maryland Lynching Truth and Reconciliation Commission defines racial terror lynching as "the unlawful killing of an African American by white mob violence, often with apparent complicity of state and local officials, intended to incite racial terror and subservience to white supremacy (Maryland Lynching Truth and Reconciliation Commission, 2019). Over 4,000 Black people fell victim to ritualistic killings, that became the physical and psychological weapon of choice for southern Whites, who were intent on preserving the racial hierarchy in the South and fostering a climate of oppression for African Americans (Equal Justice Initiative, 2017).

During the lynching era, Black people could potentially face lethal mob violence for accusations of murder, rape, theft, or even for seemingly minor social infractions proscribed in the Jim Crow South, such as an ill-perceived glance or talking back (Tolnay & Beck, 1992). This is exemplified in a significant number of incidents among the thousands of recorded lynchings. In 1904, in Berkeley County, South Carolina, 21-year-old Kitt Bookard was lynched by a group of white men, following an argument in which he threatened to "spank" one of the men (Tolnay & Beck, 1992, p. 21). Bookard's body was mutilated, which included his eyes being gauged out and his genitalia removed (Miller, 2019). In 1918, in Lowndes County, Georgia, 21-year-old Mary Turner, who was eight months pregnant, was hung and set on fire by a white mob, after protesting the lynching death of her husband (Poling, 2021). In one of the most infamous lynching incidents that became the catalyst for the civil rights movement, 14-year-old Emmet Till was brutally tortured and lynched near Money, Mississippi in 1955, for allegedly whistling at a white woman (Tolnay & Beck, p.239).

The Commission on Interracial Cooperation, an organization formed in 1919, following a series of race riots in 1917 (Pilkington, 1985), conducted an extensive survey into the sharp increase of lynchings in the early 1930s (Solomon, 1998). The lead researcher of that study, Arthur Raper, noted the atmosphere of terror and oppression installed by lynching and concluded that, "lynching and the threat of it are now primarily a technique of enforcing racial exploitation-economic, political, and cultural" (p.185). Lynchings became one of the horrific hallmarks of the Jim Crow era, that left indelible impacts on race relations and the geo-political organization of the southern United States. This period profoundly altered the lives of African Americans, fueling the *Great Migration* movement, which resulted in millions of Black people migrating from the South to other areas across the United States (Equal Justice Initiative, 2017). The period of lynching violence also underscores the abrasive relationship between law enforcement and Black communities that is commonly observed to this day. Not only were lynchings tolerated by state and federal officials, they were also often assisted by local law enforcement. A study by the State Sanctioned Project found that as many as 75% of lynchings were perpetuated with the direct or indirect assistance by local authorities (State Sanctioned, 2014). The perpetrators of the lynchings were typically never held accountable and their victims rarely received justice, even for the falsely accused (Equal Justice Initiative, 2017).

Lynchings also reinforced the social death of Black people, through brutal displays of violence, where the Black body was often mutilated and debased publicly. According to Tolnay and Beck (1992), "It is important to understand that years of racist propaganda had, in the minds of many whites, lessened blacks to simplistic and often animalistic stereotypes. These debasing images further depersonalized and dehumanized the victim, reducing him or her to a hated object devoid of worth" (Tolnay & Beck, 1992, p.23). Lynchings events not only maintained a white

supremacist hierarchy and a climate of racial oppression in the South, but its legacy also ensured that Black people would remain on the fringes of society, where violence could be visited upon them unabetted and with no restraint to its presentation.

Lynching as Spectacle

Lynchings were commonly treated as carnival-like events, where Black death was showcased to the amusement of onlookers (Tolnay & Beck, 1992, p.23). Early Kodak photography captured the macabre images of Black corpses in front of crowds of white spectators, who were often seen with gleeful smiles. In a photo from the 1935 lynching of Rubin Stacy, in Fort Lauderdale, Florida, a young white girl is prominently shown smiling up at Stacy's corpse hanging from the tree (Black Youth Project, 2011). A photo from the lynching of Sam Hose, in April 1899, in Coweta County, Georgia, shows a large crowd of white attendees gazing at the camera, while the disfigured body of Holt hangs from a wooden post (Tolnay & Beck, p.23). Black death became a spectacle that was "attended by the entire white community and conducted as celebratory acts of racial control and domination" (Equal Justice Initiative, 2017). Body parts became souvenirs, photos of the lynching were depicted on postcards, and items collected from the events became relics to mark the occasion. "To put this another way: white men, and women, demanded a keepsake, a memento mori: toes, fingers, or-most highly prized-a black penis, a black scrotum" (Marriott, 2000, p.9).

For white people, the brutal display and image of the Black body at a lynching, was marked by celebration for the execution of vigilante justice. According to Marriott, lynchings were; "there to frighten, to show black men their future, such images document the truth of lynching as both trauma and gala: a show for the white men, women, and children before whom it was staged" (Marriott, 2000, p.5). This also highlights the psychological toll on the Black

12

psyche, of seeing mutilated Black bodies on display, amidst revelry and celebration from white people. Black people experienced a double consciousness of not only being Black in an oppressive white society but viewing themselves through the lens of a society that did not acknowledge their humanity (Bruce, 1992). African Americans did not have to be physically present at lynchings, or even personally know the victims to endure a pronounced psychic effect on the Black conscious. Lynchings also had the intended psychological effect of conditionalizing the behavior and conduct of Black people. In his 1945 memoir, *Black Boy*, African American writer Richard Wright, remarked that, "the things that influenced my conduct as a Negro did not have to happen to me directly; I needed but to hear of them to feel their full effects in the deepest layers of my consciousness. Indeed, the white brutality I had not seen was a more effective control on my behavior than that which I knew" (Wright, 1945, p.172). In a later passage, Wright also said that, "I had never in my life been abused by whites, but I had already become as conditioned to their existence as though I had been the victim of a thousand lynchings" (Wright, 1945, p.74). In her work, *The Imagery of Lynching*, Art Historian Dora Apel states, "For Blacks, it was not necessary to look to be terrorized by the spectacle of lynching; it was enough to know that thousands of others looked and were amused" (Apel, 2004, p.15).

The spectacle of Black death at lynchings, was a reflection of their social death and contributed to their further dehumanization in the collective subconscious. It left African Americans inaccessible to a human narrative, triggering a pervasive problem for future generations of Black people to navigate. The public spectacle of lynching also reminded African Americans that laws could not diminish their prevalence or protect them. British writer Aatish Taseer states, "A lynching is much more than just a murder. A murder may occur in private. A

13

lynching is a public spectacle; it demands an audience…A lynching is a majority's way of telling a minority population that the law cannot protect it" (Williams & Romer, 2020, paras. 1-2).

The White & Black Press Coverage of Lynchings

There was a dramatic difference in the coverage of lyncings in the United States, between the white and Black press. The rhetoric used in the reporting by historically white newspapers in both the North and South, was often antagonistic, inciteful, and negative toward lynching victims. For white communities, lynchings were seen as a form of justice to enhance the wellbeing of the community. Professor Richard Perloff notes that lynchings were "motivated by a desire to vindicate the moral sense of the community" (Perloff, 2000, p.317). Because lynchings were equated with an execution of justice in white communities during this time, there was little ethical regard or consideration shown to Black communities by the white press.

In the South, reporting by the white press reflected the racial attitudes in the region, and was itself, an enforcement of the color line and championed white supremacy (Pinsky, 2019). Southern media attitudes were typically favorable and sympathetic towards vigilante groups and mob violence weaponized against African Americans during the nineteenth and twentieth century (Wasserman, 1998). Inflammatory language and dehumanizing depictions were used towards lynching victims and African American communities on the receiving end of racial violence (Staples, 2021). Under editor Henry Grady's guidance, one headline from the Atlanta Constitution read, '*The Triple Trapeze: Three Negroes Hung to a Limb of Tree.*' While another read, *'Lynching Too Good for the Black Miscreant Who Assaulted Mrs. Bush: He Will Be Lynched'* (Ford, 2019). Southern newspapers used headlines and rhetoric that justified lynching violence, leaving little room to question the guilt of its victims. After examining media coverage of lynchings during that time period, historian Rayford Logan concluded that most of the

southern newspapers, "assumed the guilt of a Negro who had been lynched or almost lynched" (Logan, 1965, p.288).

Although marginally less hostile, northern newspapers were also complicit in justifying lynching violence against African Americans by depicting Black people as synonymous with crime. Journalist Brent Staples of the New York Times writes, "By portraying Black people as less than human, the white popular press justified the reign of terror that the South deployed while stripping African Americans of the rights they had briefly enjoyed during the period just after the Civil War known as Reconstruction" (Staples, 2021, paras. 5-6). Between 1880 and 1891, the New York Times ran the headline, *Brutal Negro Lynched,* eleven times (Seguin, 2018). A headline from the Brooklyn Daily World in 1891 read, *This Brute Lynched. Tennessee Negro Pays the Penalty for a Fiendish Crime*, while an 1893 headline from The Saint Paul Daily Globe read, *Deserved it All: A Brutal Negro Lynched by Indignant Farmers* (Seguin, 2018). Both northern and southern newspapers frequently used dehumanizing language to depict Black Americans and justify the violence that occurred to them. In addition, white newspapers would often describe the grisly details of the lynching with graphic language. According to Professor Richard Perloff, "newspapers in every region of the country provided graphic coverage of lynchings, especially those that occurred in their area" (Perloff, 2000, p.319).

Despite the brutality of lynchings, they were frequent enough, both within society and in news coverage, to be considered mundane occurrences. In 1930, when questioned about a recent lynching, a white man in Emelle, Alabama remarked to local reporters "we're just killing a few negroes that we've waited too damn long about leaving for the buzzards. That's not news" (Perloff, 2000, p. 315). According to Professor Perloff, "lynchings were no longer shocking events that deviated from the norm" (Perloff, 2000, p. 315). Newspapers also focused their

coverage on lynchings, with sensationalist style articles and stories on lynchings were common enough, that reporting on them was "akin to reporting on unpleasant acts of nature such as earthquakes or floods; the events were unfortunate but necessary aspects of the order of things and therefore grist for the newspaper's mill" (Perloff, 2000, p 318). Essentially, during the lynching era, society was desensitized from the brutality of racial violence and there was little ethical accountability in the white press to redress this presentation.

In response to the media narratives of the white press when covering lynching violence, Black publications rose to challenge the thinly veiled racist propaganda that was being camouflaged as news in the mainstream publications (Staples, 2021). Professor Felecia Jones Ross defines the Black Press as, "black-owned and operated newspapers that focused on interests and concerns of African Americans" (Ross, 2020, para. 2). Publications such as Freedom's Journal (1827–1829), The North Star, (1847–1851), and The New Orleans Tribune (1864–1870) were the earliest Black newspapers in the country that furnished counternarratives to the representation of African Americans in the mainstream press (Terrell, 2020). During the Jim Crow era, several Black newspapers emerged that utilized the sensational reporting tactics of the mainstream press, to speak to the horrors of lynching and racialized violence that plagued Black communities throughout the country (Teresa, 2019). Many of these publications were based in cities that attracted large populations of African Americans, fleeing the racial terror and oppression of the South. Among the most prominent of these publications was The Chicago Defender, which itself played a pivotal role in influencing the mass movement of African Americans from the rural South during the Great Migration (Grossman, 1985). The racial terror of lynching violence brought an increasing urgency for Black newspapers to broadcast attention beyond a local level, to a national reading audience (Teresa, 2019,). Former Chicago Defender

Editor in Chief Metz Lochard said, "The Negro Press continually focuses nation-wide attention

on the discriminations and injustices of the American caste system…and these discriminations

are factual, specific, and horrible. They happen every day. It is sensational news; and the Negro

press treats it as such" (Lochard, 1963).

Journalist and anti-lynching activist Ida B. Wells of the Memphis publication *Free

Speech* is perhaps the most well-known Black journalist during the lynching era, who resisted

traditional media portrayals of African Americans (Staples, 2021). Ida B. Wells' investigation

revealed that many of the lynching victims were innocent and brought worldwide attention to the

atrocities being committed in the South (Equal Justice Initative, 2017). White mobs often

threatened or attacked Black journalists who attempted to bring attention to lynchings in the

South (Perloff, 2000). Wells herself was run out of Memphis after publishing an editorial of a

triple lynching and threatened with a lynching herself if she were to return (Little, 2018).

Although her revelations did little to change the coverage of lynchings in the South, they did lead

to northern newspapers gradually recasting their media narratives and being more critical of

lynching violence in the region (Seguin, 2018).

However, despite spearheading anti-lynching campaigns in opposition to white press

depictions of lynching violence, the Black press did not necessarily depict less graphic content.

In order to document lynching violence and amplify calls for social change, Black newspapers

published images of lynching victims as a broader strategy "to challenge racial discrimination,

inequality, and violence" (Frisken, 2012, p. 240). Although ideologically in opposition to the

media narratives of the white press, Black newspapers utilized much of the same graphic

imagery to accomplish a different set of goals. According to Professor Amanda Frisken, "in the

early 1900s, the Black press published lynching photographs and postcards, redeploying the

propaganda of the lynch mob to prove that lynching occurred, and gradually to present a visual critique of lynching" (Frisken, 2012, p. 240). The Black press used lynching illustrations to "document atrocities, evoke emotion to fuel activism, and advocate a strong response from the federal government" (Frisken, 2012, p.241). In 1955, after her son Emmett Till had been brutally tortured and murdered by a group of white men in Mississippi, Mamie Till made the decision to publish photos of his disfigured body in *Jet Magazine*, in what has come to be viewed as one of the most powerful moments during the lynching era (Nodjimbadem, 2015). This decision became a major catalyst for the civil rights movement and a realization of the very goals that Black newspapers had intended for publishing graphic images and illustrations. The Emmett Till photo was the culmination of a tradition for the Black press to use graphic images of anti-Black violence, to remediate racial injustices.

According to Professor Michael Huspek, there is also an oppositional relationship between the Black and white press, in which the white press "collaborates with the dominant institutions", while the Black press tends to "aligns itself with the community" (Huspek, 2004, p. 234). This oppositional relationship even extends to coverage of the same incident, in which the Black press may offer more "comprehensive coverage, more critically relevant facts, refrained from sugarcoating officials' actions, and refused to criminalize the victim" (Huspek, 2004, p. 234). However, the Black press is not monolithic and there are also instances where the Black press may engage in practices of reproducing harmful racial stereotypes. Professor Ponton notes that the Houston Informer (a Black publication) "published the most and the most often about Negro crime" (Ponton, 2017, p. 301).

A synthesis of the ideas from this section, could set the stage for how the modern Black press and traditional media organizations, might go about covering the George Floyd incident.

These perspectives may lead us to conclude that the Black press may not depict trauma to a lesser extent.

Society of Professional Journalists Code of Ethics

The Society of Professional Journalists (SPJ) is the oldest organization representing journalists in the United States. Their preamble states:

"Members of the Society of Professional Journalists believe that public enlightenment is the forerunner of justice and the foundation of democracy. Ethical journalism strives to ensure the free exchange of information that is accurate, fair and thorough. An ethical journalist acts with integrity" (Society of Professional Journalists, 2014).

Based on this stated mission, the organization has defined principles that form the foundation of ethical journalism. These four tenets serve as a guide, and the organization "encourages all who engage in journalism to take responsibility for the information they provide, regardless of medium" (Society of Professional Journalists, 2014). They are as follows:

Seek Truth and Report It: "Ethical journalism should be accurate and fair. Journalists should be honest and courageous in gathering, reporting and interpreting information" (Society of Professional Journalists, 2014). Under this principle, an ethical journalist is "expected to investigate the truth by using ethical means. This includes taking responsibility for the accuracy of their work; verifying information before releasing it; providing context; taking special care not to misrepresent or oversimplify in promoting, previewing or summarizing a story, being vigilant and courageous about holding those with power accountable; giving voice to the voiceless; seeking sources whose voices we seldom hear, avoiding stereotyping, never deliberately

distorting facts or context, including visual information; and examining ways their values and experiences may shape their reporting" (Society of Professional Journalists, 2014).

Minimize Harm: "Ethical journalism treats sources, subjects, colleagues and members of the public as human beings deserving of respect" (Society of Professional Journalists, 2014). This principle dictates that a journalist "should balance the public's need for information against potential harm or discomfort; showing compassion for those who may be affected by news coverage; recognizing that legal access to information differs from an ethical justification to publish or broadcast; weighing the consequences of publishing or broadcasting personal information; avoiding pandering to lurid curiosity, even if others do; balancing a suspect's right to a fair trial with the public's right to know; considering the implications of identifying criminal suspects before they face legal charges; considering the long-term implications of the extended reach and permanence of publication; and providing updated and more complete information as appropriate" (Society of Professional Journalists, 2014).

Act Independently: "The highest and primary obligation of ethical journalism is to serve the public" (SPJ). This principle states that journalists should avoid conflicts of interest, real or perceived; disclose unavoidable conflicts; refuse gifts, favors, fees, free travel and special treatment, and avoid political and other outside activities that may compromise integrity or impartiality, or may damage credibility; identify content provided by outside sources, whether paid or not; deny favored treatment to advertisers, donors or any other special interests, and resist internal and external pressure to influence coverage; and distinguish news from advertising and shun hybrids that blur the lines between the two (SPJ).

Be Accountable and Transparent: "Ethical journalism means taking responsibility for one's work and explaining one's decisions to the public" (SPJ). Using this principle as a guide,

journalists should explain ethical choices and processes to audiences; encourage a civil dialogue with the public about journalistic practices, coverage and news content; respond quickly to questions about accuracy, clarity and fairness; acknowledge mistakes and correct them promptly and prominently; explain corrections and clarifications carefully and clearly; expose unethical conduct in journalism, including within their organizations; abide by the same high standards they expect of others (SPJ).

Harm Principle

John Stuart Mill was one of the most influential political philosophers in the history of classical liberalism. Mill's ideas of liberty are founded on the individual being sovereign over themselves. According to Mill, a free society of people able to think for themselves and express their ideas, is an ideal society, that will eventually produce better ideas and a better society (Bell, 2021). The only time there should be intervention is when there is harm that can come to other people. Mill's influential essay, *On Liberty*, articulate the harm principle, which he states, "is, that the sole end for which mankind are warranted, individually or collectively, in interfering with the liberty of action of any of their number, is self-protection. That the only purpose for which power can be rightfully exercised over any member of a civilized community, against his will, is to prevent harm to others. His own good, either physical or moral, is not a sufficient warrant" (Bell, 2021, paras. 7-8).

Mill's harm principle is the only liberty limiting principle in his calculus of liberty. Strands of Mills harm principle are embodied within the Society of Professional Journalists code of ethics, specifically in relation to the tenet of "minimize harm." These principles are often invoked when questioning the editorial decisions of news organizations to publish graphic images (Jones, 2019). Some critics argue that there is little journalistic value to be derived from

publishing graphic content and that the public does not need to see these images to fully grasp the gravity of the event (Jones, 2019). However, some proponents counter that there can be more harm caused by not publishing graphic content, especially when concerning sensitive issues with little media attention. In reference to graphic images of the dead bodies of Syrian children displayed in newspapers, Washington Post Journalist Liz Sly said "perhaps we're violating their dignity by not publicizing them and having them die in silence in the dark" (Lewis, 2016, para. 3). Journalist Julian Reichelt remarked that "we must force ourselves to look; without pictures the world would be even more ignorant, the needy even more invisible, more lost" (Lewis, 2016, para. 2).

Many digital media sites are owned by larger corporate entities, which undoubtedly, wields influence on the news coverage. As Professor Matt Guardino notes, "However, the digital news outlets that command the greatest audience attention tend to follow the narrow sourcing practices of most corporate media. This means that online news outlets draw information and perspectives for their coverage from a small pool of people" (Guardino, 2019, paras. 2-3). The influence of larger corporations on news coverage is also suggested by Sociologist Jurgen Habermas, who says "the potential for critical discourse was drastically curtailed by the triumph of corporate capitalism, the manipulation of public opinion by the advertising industry, and the rise of a passive consumption mentality amongst the masses" (Khan et al., 2012, paras. 4-5). The profit motivations and business aspect of journalism, presents an additional dimension of challenges for ethical reporting standards and minimizing harm to vulnerable communities.

News coverage that causes unique harm to specific members of a community, may violate the harm principle that is inherent in the code of ethics for journalists. Profit motivations that influence news coverage present another complication to this issue. These ideas show that

the media reproduction of racial violence, may trigger a potential ethical dilemma that is entwined with depicting graphic content.

Technology as Countersurveillance

On April 4th, 2015, 50-year-old Walter Scott, a Black male, was fatally shot by police officer, Michael Slager (a white male) in North Charleston, South Carolina (Schmidt & Apuzzo, 2015). Initially, Slager claimed that after stopping Scott for a broken brake light, Scott fled the scene and Slager gave pursuit, which resulted in a brief physical struggle. During that struggle, Scott reached for Slager's taser and was subsequently shot in self-defense (Bauerlein, 2016). Slager's account of the incident stood unchallenged, until cell phone footage of the confrontation emerged online a few days later. Feidin Santana, a barber who happened to be nearby as the incident took place, recorded the video unnoticed. The video shows Scott running away from Slager as the officer fired multiple rounds into his back. The footage also shows Slager place a taser-like object near Scott's body, presumably as evidence to corroborate his account (Schmidt & Apuzzo, 2015). Due to fear of police retribution and his belief that Scott survived the encounter, Santana did not release the footage, and even thought about deleting the video. He decided to come forward with the video after hearing the narrative that officer Slager had put out to the public. A few days following the release of the footage, Slager was arrested and charged with homicide. He was ultimately sentenced to 20 years in prison on second degree murder charges (Bauerlein, 2016).

In a world where digital media has increasingly become entwined with our lives, the smartphone has enabled every citizen the potential of being a journalist, at any time (Drake, 2020). The smartphone has dramatically transformed the public sphere in terms of engagement, identity, mobility, experiences, among many other facets of daily life (Timan & Albrechtslund,

2016). It also has the potential of placing everyday citizens in the role of watchful arbiters, in surveillance situations involving police use of force. Feidin Santana's footage illustrates the power of citizen journalism in the age of digital media technology and the cellphone as a tool for countersurveillance. Without Santana's video, Slager's account of the incident would have likely been taken at face value, reverberated in the media, and he would not have faced any consequences for his actions. In fact, that is exactly how the scenario typically plays out in similar situations. According to research from Philip Stinson, a professor of criminal justice, in over 8,000 officer-involved shootings, only 42 police officers were convicted for murder or homicide during an on-duty shooting, between 2005 and 2014 (Thomson-DeVeaux, et al., 2020). Questions regarding police use of lethal force are often difficult to prove. The smartphone represents the potential for ordinary bystanders to hold police officers accountable during use of force encounters and to challenge dominant perspectives regarding police confrontations with citizens. As journalist Todd Brewster notes, "It is, instead, that the cell phone has become social science's microscope, permitting us to see daily life in atomistic detail, and as we do, old assumptions and standing narratives fall by the wayside" (Hill, 2016, p.xiii).

The idea of recording police abuses as countersurveillance, did not originate with the smartphone. Professor Lyndsey Beutin cites the 1991 videotape of Rodney King being beaten by four Los Angeles police officers, as an earlier example of countersurveillance (Beutin, 2017). Professor Allissa Richardson believes that recording police abuses are not a new form of activism and are derived from previous traditions of "Black witnessing," which she explains as "how African Americans have historically tried to record injustices, dating back to the era of slavery in pre-Civil War America (Kansara, 2020)." Richardson claims that "Black witnessing provides proof of the many eras of anti-Black racism, in all of its perverse mutations"

(Richardson, 2020, p.xiii). Richardson also suggests that Black witnessing is a way for Black people, who are skeptical of official police or media accounts, to have "video evidence that came directly from the community itself" (Richardson, 2020, p. 7). This is reflective of a history of anti-Black violence that has gone unaccounted for and media narratives that have disappeared competing accounts. Smartphones have made it possible to amplify the power of Black witnessing. In essence, the smartphone transformed Black witnessing; however, it did not invent it.

The smartphone poses a new interrogation of present and past police abuses. Countersurveillance serves as a way to document excessive force violations by police. However, the footage of Walter Scott creates a dangerous subtext: Just how many "Walter Scotts" have gone unnoticed, outside the view of countersurveillance and before the advent of the smartphone.

Modern Lynching

The legacy of lynching left indelible imprints in media portrayals of African Americans that are still present with us today (Schwarz, 2020). On May 25th, 2020, the killing of George Floyd Jr. by a police officer in Minneapolis, Minnesota epitomized the horrific legacy of lynching, as not a violent relic of a less evolved country, but a living reminder that our institutions are still contaminated by this history. As Will Schwartz, president of The Maryland Lynching Memorial Project, notes, "the Floyd murder was not LIKE a lynching, it IS a lynching. Only in this case the "white mob" happened to be police officers. The very people entrusted with the responsibility of protecting his life, took his life — in broad daylight and in public. This is terror, and it screams to be recognized as such" (Schwartz, 2021, paras. 4-5).

There are remarkable similarities between the death of George Floyd and racial terror incidents during the lynching period: The perpetration by law enforcement officers; the spectacle of it taking place publicly; the minor offense (allegedly due to a counterfeit twenty-dollar bill); the dehumanized Black body being subjected to the violence; and the assumption by the executioners that they would face no consequences. As professor David Garland notes of perpetrators of lynchings in the twentieth century, "It is suggested by the righteous, self-confident poses struck by lynchers and onlookers, by the fact that they allowed themselves to be photographed without any apparent effort to hide their identities" (Garland, 2005, p. 795). These details are also consistent with other recent occurrences of police violence, and for this reason, these incidents are often referred to as "modern day lynchings" (Brown, 2020). There is also a time element involved in the death of George Floyd, that bears resemblance to historical lynchings. While many victims of police violence captured on video were fatally wounded by gunshots in a relatively short span of time, George Floyd's death was shown in its entirety, for approximately eight minutes and forty-six seconds. This is similar to the public torture and slow agonizing death that characterized numerous public torture lynchings during the Jim Crow era, which Garland characterized as "lynchings that were highly publicized, took place before a large crowd, were staged with a degree of ritual, and involved elements of torture, mutilation, or unusual cruelty" (Garland, 2005, p. 797). Although the visual capture of George Floyd's death also shares some resemblance to lynchings being photographed, it is important to note that in this case, the visualization served as an important tool of countersurveillance (Kansara, 2020).

Other links between the present and the past have been identified. Using county-level data on historical lynchings and present-day officer-involved shootings, researchers found a positive link between historical lynchings and Black death at the hands of law enforcement

(Williams & Romer, 2020). The study found that counties that experienced a higher number of historical lynchings, have larger shares of police violence against Black people in the last five years (Williams & Romer, 2020). For many years, a large number of lynchings went undocumented, and only recently, has a faithful tally began to be recorded in the historical archive (Equal Justice Initiative). This is also not an exceptional vestige of the past. A study in The Lancet revealed that between 1980 and 2018, more than half of police killings went unreported and African Americans were 3.5 times more likely to die from police violence than white Americans (Alfonseca, 2021).

Media Effects

The disproportionate numbers of Black people being killed by police violence also underscores deeply embedded racial biases within the media. There are several media effect theories that can help to explicate the socio-cognitive interaction between media and audiences.

Media priming theory Broadly defined, *priming* refers to the effect of some preceding stimulus or event on how we react to some subsequent stimulus (Roskos-Ewoldsen et al., 2007). In the domain of media, priming is the effects of the content of the media on people's later behavior or judgments related to the content that was processed (Roskos-Ewoldsen et al., 2007). Early priming researchers Shanto Iyengar, Donald R. Kinder, and Mark D. Peters theorized that the "priming effect" is when the media helps shape the political judgments and conclusions reached by audiences, by diverting attention to certain political angles or stories (Iyengar et al., 1982, p. 852).

Racially biased media images create a context in which implicit racism emerges. However, images alone do not produce implicit racial biases; they have to be paired with a narrative,

which can "subtly reinforce racial stereotypes" (Sonett et al., 2015, p. 331). As an example, perpetrators of crime are often misrepresented with images that are predominately people of color, which are frequently paired with overtly race-neutral discourse (Sonett et al., 2015). Media priming theory is a bridge towards understanding the media reinforcement of implicit racial biases and ideology, such as ones that are activated when Black people are killed during encounters with police. These typically manifest as an assumption of criminality that is placed upon the victim.

While similar to *media priming* theory, *media framing* can be defined as the manner in which issues are characterized and the influence this has on the perception of audiences (Scheufele & Tewksbury, 2007). Researchers have found that media framing can affect how people perceive members of a certain group, particularly when it concerns crime. "For example, media messages concerning crime have the ability to shape public opinion of both the crime itself and the suspect" (Foreman et al., 2016, p. 9). Professor Robert Entman's groundbreaking research into the racial stereotypes activated by media framing shows that news stories that focused on African Americans were more likely to be about crime than news stories focused on whites (Entman, 1990). A study by Professor Travis Dixon found that "the media over-represents the association between Black families and criminality, while significantly under-representing White families' association with criminality" (Dixon, 2017, p. 3). The framing of news coverage has a significant impact on the representation of African Americans in the media and how they are perceived by audiences.

Mental Trauma

Multiple studies have found that African Americans are powerful leaders in media consumption. A 2019 Nielsen report found that African Americans spend over 11 hours more each week watching television than the total population (Grace & Scott-Aime, 2019). The same study found that Instagram, one of the most popular social media platforms, reaches 45 percent of Black Americans, compared to 25 percent of the general population and Facebook reaches 66 percent of Black social media users (2019). Additionally, African Americans lead the general population in "internet on the go" usage, with more time spent on video, audio, and social networking, on both smartphones and tablets (2019). African Americans spend three hours or more on websites and apps than the general population and are thirty seven percent more likely than the total population, to be the first among their peers to to try new technology products (Umstead, 2019). According to a 2021 Pew Research study, African Americans occupy a high percentage of smartphone ownership, with 83 percent reporting to have owned a smartphone (Pew Research Center, 2021). These metrics have had significant implications for Black social activism and using social media as a political outlet. A 2020 Pew Research study found that Black Americans are more likely to use social media for some form of political activism (such as sharing a picture to show their support for a cause), with 48 percent of Black Americans reporting to have done this activity (Auxier, 2020). African American social media users are more likely than White and Hispanic users to encourage others to take action on issues that are important to them (Auxier, 2020). Seven out of ten Black social media users say that social media platforms are effective for changing people's minds about political and social issues (Auxier, 2020).

These studies demonstrate that a large number of African Americans are voracious media consumers, actively engage with social media platforms, and have eagerly adopted digital media technology. However, although the broader media has become valuable social currency for amplifying Black activism in recent years, it also highlights the mental health toll that anti-Black violence in the media has when exposed to African American audiences. For this reason, negative mental health outcomes are among the most consequential results from depicting graphic content within news coverage.

Several studies indicate that there are multiple dimensions to the impacts that the media reproduction of racial violence has on the mental health of African American audiences (Bor et al., 2019). Unique mental health effects can be observed on an individual level, a community level, and the level of the person documenting or recording the encounter. Researchers have found that each episode of police violence has emotional and psychological effects on individuals and communities, "Experiencing or witnessing police brutality, hearing stories of friends who have experienced brutality, and having to worry about becoming a victim are all stressors. When faced with a threat, the body produces hormones and other signals that turn on the systems that are necessary for survival in the short term" (Alang et al., 2017).

Some African Americans have reported visceral feelings of anguish when viewing depictions of violence against Black people. A 2018 study showed that unarmed killings of Black people by police, had adverse effects on mental health among Black Americans who were not directly affected by the incident (Bor et al., 2018). This is known as secondary trauma; the emotional stress resulting from witnessing the trauma of others (Sibrava et al., 2019). A similar idea of secondary mental health harm is shared by Psychologist Stephanie Moulton Sarkis, who describes "vicarious traumatization" as the trauma that occurs from seeing images of violence

that did not personally happen to an individual (Seitz, 2020, paras. 4-7). Sarkis also notes that the prevalence of digital media has increased the chances of seeing graphic imagery and suffering from debilitating mental health effects (Seitz, 2020). Post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) is also a mental health condition that has been observed in Black audience members who have viewed videos of police brutality. Researchers found that a majority of college students of color exhibited symptoms of post-traumatic stress disorder after viewing videos of police killing unarmed African American men (Campbell & Valera, 2019). One study also identified a significant association between witnessing traumatic events of police brutality and post-traumatic stress disorder within African American adolescents (Tynes et al., 2019). According to another study, viewing videos of police brutality against Black people, can produce long lasting mental health effects in some individuals (Ramsden, 2017).

Negative mental health outcomes from police brutality footage, can also be seen on the community level with African American audiences. When African Americans view footage of other Black people being killed by police, they are likely to see themselves or a close loved one in that person's place, in an idea that social scientists refer to as "linked fate" (Gregory, 2019). Often in Black communities, the idea is expressed that when one life is lost, the entire community suffers (Charles, 2021). A 2019 Pew Research study found that Black adults have the most pronounced effect of being personally affected by what happens within their racial group (Cox, 2019). According to some researchers, media coverage of traumatic events could also transport negative health effects to other communities beyond the local event, "this spillover effect might extend beyond the local regions where traumatic events occur, as people in other regions are indirectly exposed to the events through media coverage" (Tynes et al., 2019, paras. 5-6).

There are also mental health effects that can occur to the individual recording the footage of police violence. Darnella Frazier, who recorded the death of George Floyd, says "I still hold the weight and trauma of what I witnessed a year ago. A part of my childhood was taken from me" (Cox, 2021, paras. 6-7). Feidin Santana, who recorded the police killing of Walter Scott, marked the day of filming the incident as splitting his life into a "distinct before and after" (Byrd, 2021). These anecdotes of the firsthand bystanders who bore witness to the violence at hand, illustrate the direct trauma that is imparted to the ones documenting the abuses.

Visual footage of racial violence has often been used as evidence in criminal trials. However, when this footage continues to be shown as evidence, there is a risk that it can retraumatize African American audiences. In addition, a legacy of injustice and elusive accountability for perpetrators of racial violence, can exacerbate the traumatic effects of graphic footage in Black audiences. A 2021 research study that examined the mental health of African Americans during the coverage of the Derek Chauvin trial and incidents of police violence, found that African Americans had frequent days of "poor mental health" and anxiety (Charles, 2021). Many cited the uncertainty of justice and accountability in incidents of police violence as reasons for mental stress. Despite many cases of seemingly clear abuses of police power captured on video, many of the perpetrators avoid consequence, which raises questions concerning the purpose of sharing graphic content. Victor Dempsey, brother to a victim of police violence named Delrawn Small, says, "So these videos don't mean anything, so now, what the hell matters?" (Gregory, 2019, paras. 11-12). This counters the view that the widespread showing of videos of police violence, serves as an important tool to document excessive force violations and raise more national awareness to secure justice. According to Professor Allissa Richardson, "when police in these clips go unpunished–and when news media fail to humanize

Black victims adequately–this footage reaffirms the continued, centuries-long annihilation of a people. The imagery, then, feels sacrilegious to watch" (Richardson, 2020).

Some argue that the incessant displaying of violence against Black people, exploits their trauma for the sake of entertainment. A recent term known as "trauma porn" has emerged, which describes showing any type of media in excessive amounts, which "exploit traumatic moments of adversity to generate buzz, notoriety, or social media attention" (Telusma, 2019, paras. 8-9). Trauma porn has particularly been harmful toward African Americans. Political analyst Ashlee Preston argues that "re-sharing, liking, or posting videos of Black people being murdered" is misguided activism and inadvertently deters Black Americans from challenging the institution of white supremacy (Preston, 2020). Preston says that "videos or images of death we see in the media or on social media are typically of Black and Brown people," while white victims (such as victims of mass shootings) are afforded more dignity in death (Preston, 2020). Some psychologists also suggest that continually showing violence against Black people on various media platforms, creates a habituated effect on audiences, effectively desensitizing them to repeated viewings and normalizing Black death (Williams & Clarke, 2019).

The community harm caused by police violence videos, may impact the local news coverage of incidents. In particular, local publications may have more responsibility in mitigating harm to members of their community and their news coverage may reflect this. A 2019 Gallup study found that six in ten Americans believe local news organizations are accomplishing most of the key tasks of informing communities and are seen as most caring, trustworthy, and neutral, or unbiased than national news organizations (Gallup, 2019). This perspective may lead us to conclude that local news publications may show restraint in depicting graphic content.

Chapter Three: Methodology

This academic study was predicated on answering two research questions:

Compared to traditional media outlets, does the Black press depict Black trauma to a lesser extent?

Compared to traditional media outlets, does the Black press depict Black trauma differently?

To answer the stated research questions, descriptive quantitative methods were utilized to perform a content analysis of five different media publications, centered around the presentation of the Darnella Frazier video of George Floyd's fatal encounter with Minneapolis police. The video itself is a nine minute and twenty-nine second clip, taken on a cell phone. Although there have been previous high-profile incidences of videos of police killing Black people, the video of George Floyd was chosen due to its current occupation in the national conscious, widespread news coverage, and to demonstrate the confluence of how violence against Black people is operationalized within the media, both historically and at present. Darnella Frazier's footage is also the only such video to be awarded a Pulitzer Prize Special Citation, signaling the exceptional journalistic value that establishment media has seen in the footage (Hauck, 2021).

The Publications

The five media sources that were examined were *The Grio*, *The Root, The Minneapolis Star Tribune*, *CNN*, and *Fox News*. These five media publications were included for several

reasons. First, these publications are the top-trafficked general news sites in their respective

categories. Two of the five media sources constitute among the largest Black publications online;

two other sources are among the largest traditional media outlets, each with different political

values; and the last media source is the largest local newspaper where the incident took place.

This allows the analysis to be performed through the scope of the Black press, traditional media

across the political spectrum, and local newspaper coverage. Limiting the study to five media

sources, also allows a robust number of articles to be extracted for the content analysis, without

an overwhelming number of entries. The study was also contained to online news articles of the

respective publications, due to the preponderance of broadcast, print, and digital coverage of the

incident and to facilitate the collection of news content pertaining to the event.

The Grio is one of the two Black publications chosen for this analysis. *The Grio* is a

digital media outlet that focuses on African American centered news content. The editorial

mandate of *The Grio* states its purpose is to, "focus on news and events that have a unique

interest and/or pronounced impact within the national African Americans audience." *The Grio*

was founded by David A. Wilson, Daniel Woolsey, and Barion L. Grant in 2009, originally as a

division of NBC News (Nelson, 2012). In 2016, the site was acquired by Byron Allen's

Entertainment Studios, making it a Black-owned media organization. *The Grio* operates across

digital television and an online platform, covering a balance of news, opinion, entertainment, and

video content.

The Root is the other Black publication that was chosen for this analysis. *The Root* is an

online magazine that provides news and commentary from an African American perspective.

The site was founded in 2008 by Henry Louis Gates Jr. and Donald E. Graham. In 2019, the site

was acquired by G/O Media Inc., meaning that it is not Black-owned, however, the editor in

chief, Vanessa de Luca, is a Black woman and most of the writing staff is Black as well (G/O Media, 2021). *The Root* covers Black news, politics, culture, and opinion on its online platform.

CNN is a multinational media organization based out of Atlanta, Georgia. It is currently owned by Warner media. *CNN* was founded in 1980 by Ted Turner and Reese Schonfield, as a 24-hour cable news channel. *CNN* brands itself as a nonpartisan media organization that focuses on breaking news content and panels of opinion-based commentary covering politics. *CNN* also covers culture and entertainment across its online, cable news, and mobile app platforms. The vision statement of CNN outlines that their mission "is to create the finest possible news product and to present hard-breaking, national, and international news, as it unfolds. We deliver unparalleled perspectives across multiple categories, including political medical, financial, technology, entertainment, and more."

Fox News is a multinational news television channel based out of New York City, New York. It was created by media mogul Rupert Murdoch in 1996, to appeal to conservative audiences. It is currently owned by the Fox Corporation. *Fox News* heavily relies on opinion-based commentary covering politics and daily events from a conservative leaning perspective. *Fox News* also provides content on entertainment, and culture across cable television and online platforms. The mission statement of Fox News declares that their intent is to "give people the simple pleasure of being transported by a story on screen." Fox News is currently the top-rated cable news station in the country.

The Star Tribune is the largest newspaper in Minnesota, serving the Minneapolis-St. Paul metropolitan area. Its genesis can be traced to the founding of two competing newspapers: the Minneapolis Tribune in 1867 and the Minneapolis Daily Star in 1920 (Star Tribune, 2017). Following a merger in 1982, the newspaper was renamed the Star Tribune. Local businessman,

Glen Taylor, purchased the newspaper in 2014. The Star Tribune offers local and national news coverage in both print and digital media editions. The mission of the Star Tribune states "Star Tribune covers more of what matters to Minnesota, all day, every day – helping us stay informed, and navigate and take part in our world" while their core values are described as "We have high standards — all day, every day. We demonstrate the highest degree of integrity to each other, to our customers and to our community. Our products and services are trusted and deeply relevant to our community. We honor that trust." In 2021, the board of the paper was awarded a Pulitzer Prize for its breaking news coverage of the murder of George Floyd.

Phase One: Collecting the Articles

The content analysis consisted of a process of collecting news articles, coding them, and then performing an analysis of the data. Phase one consisted of collecting any stories pertaining to the killing of George Floyd. Potential news articles for analysis were first identified using built-in search options on each publication's website. The phrase "George Floyd" was queried in quotes to perform an exact search and exclude references only to "George" or "Floyd." This method worked with all sites except The Grio, which treat the search as inexact and resulted in stories about, for example, George Michael and Floyd Mayweather. To further limit the dataset for analysis, results were only considered if they were published between the initial incident on May 25, 2020, and the subsequent weeks that followed, ending on June 17, 2020. While stories about the killing continue to appear in news coverage more than a year later, the three-week period following Floyd's death represented a time of acute national attention worthy of particular scrutiny. To prepare them for automated review.

Search were added to separate Google Documents and the content of those documents was then scraped using PHP Simple Dom, a toolset for extracting data from webpages. This

allowed for the automated identification and retrieval of each article's URL, headline, publisher, and publication date. Once extracted, the fields were added to a MySQL database and, using the Python library HTML Soup, each article URL was scraped to capture the full contents of each news story. These data were stored in a dedicated field for each record, allowing for separate analysis of headlines and articles bodies.

Once assembled, the dataset was examined to determine which stories focused on George Floyd and the events surrounding his death and which merely mentioned George Floyd in passing. Although only the three weeks following Floyd's death were analyzed, many stories in the result set did not pertain to his killing specifically and were thus excluded from the analysis. Specifically, upon review of the articles from the five sources studied, it was determined that articles and accompanying markup (including metatags, terms in links and other references hidden to the website viewer) should contain at least 40 references to "Floyd" to be considered specifically about the killing on May 25th and its immediate aftermath. Search results with fewer than 40 references were excluded from the analysis. The database was queried to explore the dataset, calculate tallies of keywords in the headlines and full body of the articles, and count the number of results from each publication.

The specific fields captured for each record included: url; headline; full_**content**; publisher; and **publication**-date. In addition, the number of references to "Floyd" per article were captured in a field called "**tally_1**" to identify across the data set which articles were about the incident on May 25. It is important to note that a comprehensive inclusion of all articles with the mention of George Floyd's name would have returned an extensive list of articles to code. Additionally, at a certain point, a question regarding the pertinence of an article becomes subjective. Therefore, a singular view and numeric criteria was set, that resulted in a robust data

set. Initially, articles with 50 or more mentions of George Floyd's name were selected to code. Using this criteria and after the web scraping tool was applied, 333 articles were retrieved. Among this initial set, it was determined that most of the articles pertained to the George Floyd incident and a high likelihood of containing the Darnella Frazier cell phone video. Because of the large of ratio of positive artifacts, a further threshold of 40 or more mentions was introduced, which resulted in another set of 75 articles that were selected for coding.

Phase Two: Coding Process

Phase two consisted of coding the selected articles, via a custom web-based interface that connected to the database. The coding involved assigning various integers to a series of responses. This step of the coding process was separated into several sections. The initial coding entry was done to determine whether the article was in fact about the George Floyd incident, regardless of whether his name was mentioned. An integer of "0" signified that no selection was made; an integer of "1" signified a "No" response; and an integer of "2" signified a "Yes" response. This step was necessary because a small number of articles met the automated criteria of being within the date range and making 40 or more references to George Floyd, however, they were nonetheless, not specifically about the incident and thus needed to be filtered out. Another section of coding determined whether the Darnella Frazier video of George Floyd was included in the article, either embedded, linked, or simply referenced in the coverage. Again, an integer of "0" signified that no selection was made; an integer of "1" signified a "No" response; and an integer of "2" signified a "Yes" response.

Following this basic coding, more sophisticated rounds of coding were performed to determine how the video (if present) was included, based on five factors. These factors were

captured into fields for the coding, organized according to: Context (Relevance); Context (Setup); Centrality; Completeness; and Censorship.

For "Context (Relevance)," the relevance of the headline and story framing (for example, whether the video embedded in the story was focused on riots or protest) was coded according to four categories: (1) Story is about the video; (2) Story is about the killing; (3) Story is about reactions to the killing, including protests or memorials; (4) Story is about police brutality more broadly.

For "Context (Setup)," the setup for the video was coded, based on what text immediately preceded the video to potentially prime viewers to what they were going to see. Warning text typically serve to alert the viewer of forthcoming graphic content.

For "Centrality," a coding entry was made based on how central to the story the video is. This was coded according to the following categories: (1) Prominence (the video is the dominant element in the story; (2) Present (the video is embedded in the story); (3) Linked (the video is linked to at least once in the story); (4) Referenced (the video is mentioned or described, but not embedded or linked; (5) Absent (the video is neither included, linked, nor referenced or described).

For "Completeness," coding was based on whether the video was shown in its entirety. This was coded according to the following four categories: (1) The entire video is embedded; (2) The video was partially embedded; (3) A screen grab of the video is embedded; (4) Not applicable or nothing is embedded.

For "Censorship," coding was focused on whether any of the video was blurred to obscure the image or cropped so that the graphic content was not visible. This was coded with a

simple two response entry, where an integer of "1" signified a "Yes" response and an integer of "0" signified a "No" response.

Chapter Four: Results

The first research question that this study attempted to investigate, was:

Compared to traditional media outlets, does the Black press depict Black trauma to a lesser extent?

This question can be answered, by observing the results of the Centrality and Completeness portions of the coding process.

To summarize, the Centrality segment was predicated on how central to the story the George Floyd video was positioned. This was coded on a scale from "1" to "5," with higher values denoting less presentation of trauma and lower values denoting a higher presentation of trauma. The following represents the numeric integers of the scale and the corresponding values:

1 = Prominent–The video is the dominant element in the story

2 = Present–The video is embedded in the story

3 = Linked–The video is linked to at least once in the video

4 = Referenced–The video is referenced or described but not embedded or linked.

5 = Absent–The video is neither included or linked, nor embedded or described.

The following table (Table 1) shows the number of recorded responses for Centrality for each publication (represented by "n") and the corresponding percentage value that response comprised within all the responses for that publication:

Table 1: Recorded response for Centrality (with percentage).

	Prominent (The video is the dominant element in the story.)	Present (The video is embedded in the story.)	Linked (The video is linked to at least once from the video.)	Referenced (The video is mentioned/described but not embedded or linked.)	Absent (The video is neither included, linked nor referenced/described.)
CNN	2.88% (n = 7)	9.05% (n =22)	15.64% (n=38)	32.10% (n=78)	40.33% (n=98)
Fox News	0% (n=0)	16.98% (n=9)	15.09% (n=8)	47.17% (n=25)	20.75% (n=11)
The Grio	0% (n=0)	23.05% (n=12)	17.31% (n=9)	46.15% (n=24)	13.46% (n=7)
The Root	0% (n=0)	7.69% (n=1)	30.77% (n=4)	30.77% (n=4)	30.77% (n=4)
Star Tribune	0% (n=0)	4.26% (n=2)	2.13% (n=1)	68.09% (n=32)	25.53% (n=12)

For each publication, the total number of articles, total Centrality score (the sum total of all the Centrality responses), and average Centrality score appear in table Table 2.

To determine the average Centrality score for each publication, the total Centrality score of the publication was divided by the number of coded articles.

Table 2: Centrality score of publications

	Number of Articles Coded	Total Centrality Score	Average Centrality Score
CNN	243	967	3.98
Fox News	53	197	3.72
The Grio	52	182	3.50
The Root	13	50	3.85
Star Tribune	47	195	4.14

Scores can range from 1 to 5. Lower scores indicate a greater focus on depictions of trauma.

To compare the Centrality of the video between the Black press and traditional media outlets, the Centrality scores for the Black publications (*The Root* and *The Grio*) were added together. This resulted in a total centrality score of 232. This number was then divided by the total number of coded articles between the two publications, which was 65 articles. This resulted in an average centrality score of 3.57 for the Black press (higher scores mean depiction of trauma to a lesser extent).

The same operation was performed for the traditional publications (*CNN*, *Fox News*, and the *Star Tribune*). A total centrality score of 1359 was recorded for the traditional media outlets. This number was then divided by the total number of coded articles between all three publications, which was 343 articles. This resulted in an average centrality score of 3.96 for the traditional press (higher scores mean depiction of trauma to a lesser extent).

The average centrality score for the Black press (3.5) was directly measured against the average centrality score of the traditional outlets (3.96) to make a direct comparison to what extent that trauma was being presented between the Black press and traditional media outlets. To

reiterate a previous note in the chapter, higher values denote less presentation of trauma and lower values denote a higher presentation of trauma.

The second variable that served to answer the first research question, was Completeness. To summarize, Completeness was based on how much of the George Floyd video was depicted, with possible values of "entire video," "partial video," "screencap," and "nothing shown." The following table illustrates the Completeness scores for each publication, and the corresponding percentage value.

Table 3: Recorded responses for Completeness

	Entire Video	Partial Video	Screencap	Nothing Shown
CNN	0% (n=0)	11.52% (n=28)	16.05% (n=39)	72.42% (n=176)
Fox News	3.77% (n=2)	3.77% (n=2)	24.53% (n=13)	67.92% (n=36)
The Grio	0% (n=0)	0% (n=0)	42.30% (n=22)	57.70% (n=30)
The Root	7.70% (n=1)	7.70% (n=1)	23.07% (n=3)	61.54% (n=8)
Star Tribune	2.13% (n=1)	2.13% (n=1)	2.13% (n=1)	93.61% (n=44)

The second research question this academic study attempted to investigate, was:

Compared to traditional media outlets, does the Black press depict Black trauma differently?

This question can be answered, by observing the results of the Censorship, Context, and Context (Setup), portion of the coding process.

To summarize, the Censorship segment was based on whether any of the video or captured image was blurred to obscure the content or cropped so that the graphic content was not

visible. The following table (Table 4) illustrates the coding results for censorship, according to "yes" or "no" responses.

Table 4: When the George Floyd video was present, how often each publication censored or cropped the content.

	Yes	No
CNN	64 (98.46%)	1 (1.53%)
Fox News	13 (76.47%)	4 (23.53%)
The Grio	5 (22.72%)	17 (77.27%)
The Root	2 (40%)	3 (60%)
Star Tribune	2 (66.66%)	1 (33.33%)

For Context, the relevance to the story's headline and story framing was measured according to whether the story was about the video, about the killing, about the aftermath (such as riots or memorials), or about police brutality more broadly. The recorded results of those responses are listed in Table 5:

Table 5: Context of stories by publication.

	About the video	About the killing	About the aftermath	Police Brutality More Broadly
CNN	2.88% (n=7)	16.46% (n=40)	64.20% (n=156)	16.46% (n=40)
Fox News	0% (n=0)	22.64% (n=12)	66.03% (n=35)	11.32% (n=6)
The Grio	7.69% (n=4)	46.15% (n=24)	42.30% (n=22)	3.84% (n=2)
The Root	7.69% (n=1)	38.46% (5)	53.84% (n=7)	0% (n=0)
Star Tribune	0% (n=0)	25.53% (n=12)	70.21% (n=33)	4.25% (n=2)

For the Context (Setup) variable, the text that preceded the video or image was recorded. It is important to note, that in many instances where the video or image was included, there was no disclaimer text. The following responses were recorded for each publication when disclaimer text was present:

Table 6: A list of prompts that appeared before each video.

The Root	The video follows:
The Root	Warning: Graphic Video
The Root	Video of Floyd's arrest went viral Tuesday.
Fox News	Derek Chauvin, the police officer seen kneeling on George Floyd's neck.
Fox News	Video taken of Floyd's arrest over a suspected counterfeit $20 bill shows former Minneapolis police officer Derek Chauvin, 44, kneeling on Floyd's neck.

Table 6 (Continued)

Fox News	In this Monday, May 25, 2020, frame from video provided by Darnella Frazier, a Minneapolis officer kneels on the neck of George Floyd who was pleading that he could not breathe in Minneapolis.
Star Tribune	Warning: Contains Graphic Images. Some Viewers May Find Video Disturbing.
The Grio	George Floyd and Minneapolis Police officer assaulting him (Family photo from Ben Crump and Screenshot from incident)
The Grio	George Floyd and Minneapolis Police officer assaulting him (Family photo from Ben Crump and Screenshot from incident)
The Grio	Bystander video showing Minneapolis police officer Derek Chauvin pressing his knee on Floyd's neck, ignoring Floyd's "I can't breathe" cries until he eventually stopped moving, has sparked nationwide protests, some violent.
The Grio	Cellphone video of Floyd's May 25 arrest showed Chauvin placing his left knee on Floyd's neck with Lane holding Floyd's legs and Kueng holding his back, while Thao stood between the officers and onlookers, according to charging documents.
The Grio	George Floyd and Minneapolis Police officer assaulting him (Family photo from Ben Crump and Screenshot from incident)
The Grio	Former MPD officer Derek Chauvin (left) and George Floyd (right), the man he and three fellow policemen face trials for killing. (Twitter/Ben Crump Law)
CNN	The following video contains disturbing imagery. Viewer discretion is advised.
CNN	Cell phone video shows an officer with a knee on George Floyd's neck on Monday evening.

Table 6 (Continued)

CNN	I want to warn you, this image is disturbing.
CNN	I want to warn you, this image is disturbing.
CNN	I must warn you, the video is graphic.
CNN	The following video contains graphic content
CNN	I must warn you, the video is graphic and difficult to watch.
CNN	The following video contains graphic content. Viewer discretion is advised.
CNN	Warning, video contains disturbing images and language
CNN	Warning, this video contains disturbing images and language.
CNN	Warning, this video contains disturbing images and language.
CNN	Warning, this video contains disturbing images and language.
CNN	I must warn you, the video is graphic and difficult to watch.
CNN	The following video contains disturbing imagery. Viewer discretion is advised.

Chapter 5: Discussion

This academic study was aimed to interrogate two questions regarding the depiction of George Floyd's death within the media: (1) Compared to traditional media sites, does the Black press depict Black trauma to a lesser extent and (2) does the Black press depict Black trauma differently? Several factors suggested that the hypothesis that the Black press depicted trauma differently and to a lesser extent than traditional media outlets would be proved true. These factors include the historical depiction of racial violence by the traditional press; the contagion of the social death of Black people in the mainstream framework; powerful media effects that influence stereotypical portrayals and negative associations of Black people within the media; and the negative mental health effects that can be observed in Black people, who are continually exposed to anti-Black violence reproduced in the media. However, on various measures, this hypothesis failed, and the results demonstrated the complexities of the digital media environment. There were also several perspectives and themes within the literature review, that had predictive power in forecasting the results.

The results from the content analysis revealed that Black press sites do not necessarily depict Black trauma to a lesser extent than traditional media outlets. In fact, Centrality responses indicate that Black press sites generally placed a greater focus on depictions of trauma. Lower centrality scores are indicative of higher presentations of trauma, and *The Grio* recorded the lowest average centrality score (3.50), while *The Root* recorded the third-lowest score (3.85). The *Star Tribune* recorded the highest average Centrality score (4.14), which indicates that they

had the lowest presentation of trauma, of any publication, in this academic study. The larger

media outlet, CNN, had the second highest average Centrality score (3.98) while the

conservative leaning media outlet, Fox News, had the second lowest centrality score (3.72).

Similar results in the responses for Completeness of the video also support the finding that a

greater extent of trauma was depicted by the Black publications. For the response of "Nothing

Shown" both *The Grio* and *The Root* recorded the lowest percentages, of 57.70 percent and 61.54

percent respectively. The *Grio* recorded the highest percentage of captured screencaps of the

video, at 42.30 percent, while *The Root* recorded the third highest, at 23.07 percent. Among the

traditional outlets, Fox News recorded the lowest percentage for "Nothing Shown" (67.92

percent) and the highest percentage for captured screencaps of the video (24.53 percent). Star

Tribune recorded the highest percentage for "Nothing Shown," (93.61 percent) and the lowest

percentage for captured screencaps (2.13 percent). CNN was the only media site that did not

show the entire video in the collected articles. These results indicate that *The Root* and *The Grio*

depicted a greater degree of graphic content, while *CNN* and *Star Tribune* local news outlet

showed the most moderation in displaying the violent footage.

The results of the content analysis also revealed that Black publications may present

trauma differently than traditional publications. For "Censorship," *The Root* and *The Grio*

recorded the lowest percentages for censoring the graphic content of the video, at 40 percent and

22.72 percent respectively. *The Grio* had the highest percentage of not censoring the video, at

77.27 percent, while The Root had the second highest, at 60 percent. *CNN* censored the graphic

content almost 99 percent of the time (98.46 percent). CNN also had the greatest number of

warning language in the setup for the graphic video. While this may indicate that media outlets

such as CNN, are being more responsible with sensitive content than the Black publications in

this study, some clinical studies have found that these so called "trigger warnings" do little to reduce distress in audiences and may have minimal impact in how people respond to content (Sanson et al., 2019). This would support the editorial decisions of placing less emphasis on censoring graphic content. Such warnings can also be used in a way that glamorizes graphic content and makes it more enticing to audiences by playing to lurid or wonton interests. Forensic Psychiatrist Doctor John Bradford believes that there is a morbid curiosity that attracts some viewers to violent videos, since few people ever experience real life violence (Glowacki, 2017, paras. 15-18). There are also historical precedents for Black publications not to censor graphic content, as shown by the Emmett Till photos and lynching era imagery. These dynamics reveal more layers to the censorship of graphic videos and the editorial decision-making that may be involved.

The results for the context that the video was shown also reveal marked differences in how the video was presented between the Black press and traditional press. Of note is that the traditional press placed much more focus on the aftermath of the death of George Floyd, which included coverage of protests and memorials. The *Star Tribune* recorded the highest percentage for "aftermath" response, at 70.21 percent. *Fox News* had the second-highest percentage, at 66.03 percent, followed by *CNN* at 64.20 percent. *The Grio* placed the least amount of focus on the aftermath, for the context of the video, at 42.30 percent, followed by *The Root* at 53.84 percent. The Black publications placed more emphasis on the death of George Floyd for the context of the video. *The Grio* had the highest percentage for "About the Killing" as context, at 46.15 percent, followed by *The Root* at 38.46 percent. CNN, Fox News, and Star Tribune recorded 16.46 percent, 22.64 percent, and 25.53 percent respectively.

The results for the context of the video are consistent with the pervasive media framing of the protests in the weeks following the initial incident. Fox News is the leading conservative cable news outlet and would likely engender the political attitudes and behavior of its audience by focusing more on the protests, which they typically characterized as violent (Beer, 2021). For the *Star Tribune* (which had the highest percentage of "aftermath" responses) focusing on the protests would be an expected ethical approach, given that it impacts the community of their news coverage. There is proximity to the turmoil affecting the local area, as opposed to the distant gaze that outside media publications may place on the events. In recognition of their nuanced news coverage of the death of George Floyd, the Star Tribune was awarded a Pulitzer Prize (Walsh, 2021). For the Black publications, placing greater focus on the actual death of George Floyd as the context, rather than the aftermath, fits within the tradition of the Black press addressing the actual injustice of the racial violence.

There are a few possible explanations for the null hypothesis (that Black press sites would not depict trauma to a lesser extent than traditional media outlets) being proven, as well as accounting for some of the other findings. The most likely explanations lie within the concepts and themes introduced in the Literature Review. The lynching era Black press utilized the same graphic imagery in the hopes of evoking a broad emotional response and ushering in social change. The continuum of history of the Black press demonstrates, that there is a rich tradition of delineating unflinching coverage of racial violence for a larger social purpose. Professor Huspek's view of the Black press operating as an oppositional challenge, even when covering the same event, also can help to explicate these findings. These perspectives would lend support to the null hypothesis that the Black press sites would not depict trauma to a lesser extent.

The size of the publications may have also played a role in these results. For the collection of articles, CNN's 243 artifacts, were more than all the other articles combined. The sheer size of CNN's numbers may indicate how diverse their coverage of the incident was and how varied their publication is. Fox News had the second highest number of collected articles, at 53 artifacts. *The Root* had the smallest number of collected articles, at 13 artifacts, indicating a narrow range of coverage.

There is a possibility that the coverage of George Floyd by the traditional media outlets is a response to previous criticisms of coverage and an improvement in the editorial process and resulting news coverage. For decades, there has been a growing call to increase the lacking diversity in newsrooms across the country and offer more nuanced news coverage for marginalized communities (Stewart, 2015). A 2019 diversity survey of newsrooms (the most recent year available) found that 30.8 percent of salaried workers at online-only publications were people of color, which was a five-percentage point gain over the previous year's figures, when people of color comprised 25.6 percent of journalists in the newsroom (News Leaders Association, 2019). In addition, more awareness has been raised regarding the ethical treatment of traumatized people and vulnerable groups (McMahon et al., 2014). The increasing diversity in newsroom and gradual cognizance of harmful news coverage toward Black communities, may partially explain why less trauma was depicted within the selected media publications. However, despite the good intentions of increasing diversity in the newsroom, research has shown that there are limitations to racial diversity and having minority journalists alone "is not enough to end biased representations" (Sonnet et al., 2015, p. 331). A more comprehensive reckoning in the newsroom would be necessary to ameliorate longstanding biases in news coverage.

Black media publications on the other hand, are largely unaffected by calls to offer more inclusive news coverage or moderate depictions of violence, because, on some level, there is the presumption that they are attuned to the needs of their audiences. So, while traditional media outlets may have made attempts to improve their ethical accountability due to critical challenges, Black publications have not faced a similar reckoning. Both Black publications and traditional media outlets have also been dramatically affected by the shifting media landscape. The crusading Black press of the twentieth century, defined by legacy publications such as *Chicago Defender*, have struggled in the digital environment (Ford et al., 2019). Online publications such as *The Grio* and *The Root* are among the most popular, Black-focused new sites and have supplanted many of the legacy publications in terms of readership. However, these sites are owned by larger corporations, such as G/O Media, the parent company of *The Root* (Ford et al., 2019). Black media sites are still media publications at the end of the day, with profit motives. As highlighted in the literature review, profit motivations can influence the news coverage, in both the Black and traditional press. The very ethics of depicting graphic videos of racial violence, is made even more obscure when the profit motive is introduced into the equation. This leads to a question surrounding the nuances and purpose behind news coverage. We may never understand the coverage being employed. As consumers, we are looking at the end product, not the editorial decisions and the process used to create it.

There were limitations to this research and possibilities that did not fit within scope of this academic study. One of the more conspicuous limitations, was that the social media reproduction of the video was excluded in this analysis. Because of the proliferation of the graphic footage of George Floyd's death on social media, this is a noticeable omission from this study. Due to the nature of the article collection and the tendency for graphic social media videos

to be taken down by their host platforms, it would have exceedingly difficult to capture the necessary artifacts for collection. Also, the synthesis of examining the historical role of news coverage featuring graphic depictions of violence against Black people, in both the traditional and Black press, was a key theme in this study and central to its premise for understanding the current mediascape's treatment of depicting anti-black violence.

Another limitation was the relatively small number of selected publications. Although the inclusion rationale for this study cited the large audiences of the respective Black press sites and traditional outlets (and in the case of the *Star Tribune*, its local proximity), this was in no way an exhaustive list and it leaves a rather large lacuna of additional publications that could also be investigated within this framework. One approach that was considered, was to collect a sample of 25-50 articles to examine, from multiple media outlets. However, this approach would not be conducive to the more detailed snapshot that was possible from limiting the selection to five publications, such as how prominent the video was in the coverage, and instead, only a cursory appraisal would be possible with this method. Future research should also be directed in the expanding the scope of publications.

One of the more significant findings that can be extrapolated from the results, is that overall, graphic depictions of the George Floyd video were not very prevalent within the news media. This would indicate that both the Black and traditional press exhibited restraint in showing the graphic footage, as opposed to the less filtered domain of social media, where many of the most graphic depictions of George Floyd's death were frequently encountered. This suggests that the current news media environment has been responsive to ethical considerations in news coverage of graphic content, however, it is unlikely this is the case on social media

platforms. Future research should be directed to investigate this issue in the domain of social media.

References

Alang, S., McAlpine, D., McCreedy, E., & Hardeman, R. (2017). Police Brutality and Black Health: Setting the Agenda for Public Health Scholars. *American journal of public health*, *107*(5), 662–665. Retrieved from, https://doi.org/10.2105/AJPH.2017.303691

Alfonseca, K. (2021, September 30). More Than Half of US Killings by Police Go Unreported: Study. *Abc News*. Retrieved from, https://abcnews.go.com/US/half-us-killings-police-unreported-study/story?id=80303407

Apel, D. (2004). Imagery of Lynching: Black Men, White Women, and the Mob. *Rutgers University Press*, pp. 15

Auxier, B. (2020, December 11). Social Media Continue to be Important Political Outlets for Black Americans. *Pew Research Center*. Retrieved from, https://www.pewresearch.org/fact-tank/2020/12/11/social-media-continue-to-be-important-political-outlets-for-black-americans/

Bauerlein, V. (2016, November 4). Man Who Recorded Walter Scott's Death on Cellphone Video Testifies in Murder Trial. *The Wall Street Journal*. Retrieved from, https://www.wsj.com/articles/man-who-recorded-walter-scotts-death-on-cellphone-video-testifies-in-murder-trial-1478296246

Beer, T. (2021, January 7). Fox News Host Who Called BLM 'Poison' Says Pro-Trump Mob Made up of 'Solid Americans'. *Forbes*. Retrieved from, https://www.forbes.com/sites/tommybeer/2021/01/07/fox-news-host-who-called-blm-poison-says-pro-trump-mob-made-up-of-solid-americans/?sh=7fb2ac2f6829

Bell, M. (2021). John Stuart Mill's Harm Principle and Free Speech: Expanding the Notion of Harm. Utilitas, 33(2), 162-179. doi:10.1017/S0953820820000229

Beutin, L. P. (2017). Racialization as a Way of Seeing: The Limits of Counter-Surveillance and Police Reform. *Surveillance & Society*, *15*(1), 5–20. Retrieved from, https://doi.org/10.24908/ss.v15i1.5669

Black Youth Project. (2011, February 3). The Rubin Stacy Story: A Meditation on Lynching in a Post-Racial America. *Black Youth Project*. Retrieved from, http://blackyouthproject.com/the-rubin-stacy-story-a-meditation-on-lynching-in-a-post-racial-america/

Bor, J., Venkataramani, A.S., Williams, D. R., & Tsai, A. C. (2018). Spillover Effects of Police
　　　Killings on the Mental Health of Black Americans in the General US Population. The
　　　Lancet , 392 (10144), 302-310. Retrieved from,
　　　https://www.thelancet.com/journals/lancet/article/PIIS0140-6736(18)31130-9/fulltext

Brown, D. (2020, June 5). 'It Was a Modern Day Lynching': Violent Deaths Reflect a Brutal
　　　American Legacy. National Geographic. Retrieved from,
　　　https://www.nationalgeographic.co.uk/history-and-civilisation/2020/06/it-was-a-modern-
　　　day-lynching-violent-deaths-reflect-a-brutal

Bruce, D. D. (1992). W. E. B. Du Bois and the Idea of Double Consciousness. *American
　　　Literature*, *64*(2), 299–309. Retrieved from, https://doi.org/10.2307/2927837

Byrd, C. (2021, May 13). The Quiet Struggle of Feidin Santana, the Man Who Filmed the Shooting of
　　　Walter Scott. *The State*. Retrieved from,
　　　https://www.thestate.com/news/charleston/article251236739.html

Campbell, F., & Valera, P. (2020). "The Only Thing New is the Cameras": A Study of U.S.
　　　College Students' Perceptions of Police Violence on Social Media. *Journal of Black
　　　Studies*, *51*(7), 654–670. https://doi.org/10.1177/0021934720935600

Charles, S. (2021, April 27). The Insidious Impact of Police Violence on Black Mental Health.
　　　The Grio. Retrieved from, https://thegrio.com/2021/04/27/police-violence-black-mental-
　　　health/

Cox, C. (2021, May 25). Darnella Frazier, Teen Who Recorded George Floyd's Murder, Reflects
　　　on His Death a Year Later. *USA Today*. Retrieved from,
　　　https://www.usatoday.com/story/news/politics/2021/05/25/george-floyd-darnella-frazier-
　　　teen-who-recorded-his-murder-today/7438392002/

Cox, K. (2019, July 11). Most U.S. Adults Feel What Happens to Their Own Racial or Ethnic
　　　Group Affects Them Personally. *Pew Research Center*. Retrieved from,
　　　https://www.pewresearch.org/fact-tank/2019/07/11/linked-fate-connectedness-americans/

Crenshaw, K. (1991). Mapping the Margins: Intersectionality, Identity Politics, and Violence against
　　　Women of Color. *Stanford Law Review*, *43*(6), 1241–1299. Retrieved from,
　　　https://doi.org/10.2307/1229039

Dixon, T (2017). A Dangerous Distortion of Our Families. *Color of Change*. Retrieved from,
　　　https://colorofchange.org/dangerousdistortion/

Drake, K. (2020, July 24). 'People Like Me': Black Citizen Journalists Fill Trust Gap In St. Louis
　　　Media Landscape. *St. Louis Public Radio*. Retrieved from,
　　　https://news.stlpublicradio.org/2020-07-25/people-like-me-black-citizen-journalists-fill-
　　　trust-gap-in-st-louis-media-landscape

Entman, R. M. (1990). Modern Racism and the Images of Blacks in Local Television News.
　　　Critical Studies in Mass Communication, 7, 332-345.
　　　https://doi.org/10.1080/15295039009360183

Equal Justice Initiative (2017). Lynching in America: Confronting the Legacy of Racial Terror. *EJI Report, 3d Ed*. Retrieved from, https://lynchinginamerica.eji.org/report/

Ford, A., McFall, K., Dabney, B. (2019, February). African American Media Today: Building the Future From the Past. *The Obsidian Collection*. Retrieved from, https://cdn.givingcompass.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/03/28115008/2019_DF_AfricanAmericanMediaToday.pdf

Ford, K. (2019, February 15). An Editor and His Newspaper Helped Build White Supremacy in Georgia. The Conversation. Retrieved from, https://theconversation.com/an-editor-and-his-newspaper-helped-build-white-supremacy-in-georgia-111030

Foreman, K., Arteaga, C., & Collins, A. (2016) "The Role of Media Framing in Crime Reports: How Different Types of News Frames and Racial Identity Affect Viewers' Perceptions of Race," Pepperdine Journal of Communication Research: Vol. 4 , Article 12 Retrieved from, https://digitalcommons.pepperdine.edu/pjcr/vol4/iss1/12/

Frisken, A. K. (2012). "A Song Without Words": Anti-Lynching Imagery in the African American Press, 1889–1898. *The Journal of African American History*, *97*(3), 240–269. https://doi.org/10.5323/jafriamerhist.97.3.0240

Gallup & Knight Foundation (2019). State of Public Trust in Local News. *Gallup*. Retrieved from, https://knightfoundation.org/reports/state-of-public-trust-in-local-news/

Garland, D. (2005). Penal Excess and Surplus Meaning: Public Torture Lynchings in Twentieth-Century America. *Law & Society Review*, *39*(4), 793–833. Retrieved from, http://www.jstor.org/stable/3557638

Glowacki, L. (2017, April 29). Killer Curiosity: PTSD Risks Associated With Watching Graphic Videos. *CBC News*. Retrieved from, https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/manitoba/ptsd-online-videos-graphic-1.4091667

G/O Media. (2021, April 14). Vanessa De Luca Joins The Root as Editor-in-Chief. *PR Newswire*. Retrieved from, https://www.prnewswire.com/news-releases/vanessa-de-luca-joins-the-root-as-editor-in-chief-301268998.html

Grace, C., & Scott-Aime, M. (2019). It's in the Bag: Black Consumers' Path to Purchase. Nielsen: Diverse Intelligence Series, 2019. Retrieved from, https://www.nielsen.com/wp-content/uploads/sites/3/2019/09/2019-african-american-DIS-report.pdf

Gregory, K. (2019, February 13). Killing Us Softly: How Videos of Police Brutality Traumatize African Americans and Undermine the Search For Justice. *New Republic*. Retrieved from, https://newrepublic.com/article/153103/videos-police-brutality-traumatize-african-americans-undermine-search-justice

Grossman, J. R. (1985). Blowing the Trumpet: The "Chicago Defender" and Black Migration during World War I. *Illinois Historical Journal*, *78*(2), 82–96. Retrieved from, http://www.jstor.org/stable/40191833

Guardino, M. (2019, October 22). How Corporate Media Mergers Weaken News Coverage. *Scholars Strategy Network*. Retrieved from, https://scholars.org/contribution/how-corporate-media-mergers-weaken-news-coverage

Gutting, G. (2016). What Videos Can't Show: Black Lives & Police Violence. *Commonweal*, 143 (18), 12.

Hauck, G. (2021, June 11). Darnella Frazier, Teen Who Recorded George Floyd's Murder, Awarded Pulitzer Prize Special Citation. *USA Today*. Retrieved from, https://www.usatoday.com/story/news/nation/2021/06/11/darnella-frazier-pulitzer-prize-citation-george-floyd-video/7656851002/

Hermida, A., & Hernandez-Santaolalla, V. (2018). Twitter and Video Activism as Tools for Counter-surveillance: The Case of Social Protests in Spain. *Information, Communication & Society*, 21(3), 416-433

Hill, M.L. (2016). Nobody: Casualties of America's War on the Vulnerable, From Ferguson to Flint and Beyond. *Simon & Schuster,* pp.xiii-xxi.

Huspek, M. (2004). Black Press, White Press, and Their Opposition: The Case of the Police Killing of Tyisha Miller. *Social Justice, 31*(1/2 (95-96)), 217–241. http://www.jstor.org/stable/29768250

Iyengar, S., Peters, M., & Kinder, D. (1982). Experimental Demonstrations of the "Not-So-Minimal" Consequences of Television News Programs. The American Political Science Review, 76(4), 848-858. https://doi.org/10.2307/1962976

Jones, T. (2019, January 16). NYT Faced Hard Choice Over Graphic Photo Selection. Poynter. Retrieved from, https://www.poynter.org/ethics-trust/2019/nyt-faced-hard-choice-over-graphic-photo-selection/

Kansara, R. (2020, July 6). Black Lives Matter: Can Viral Videos Stop Police Brutality? *BBC*. Retrieved from, https://www.bbc.com/news/blogs-trending-53239123

Kelly, J. (2009, April). Newton Knight and the Legend of the Free State of Jones. *Mississippi History Now*. Retrieved from, https://mshistorynow.mdah.ms.gov/issue/newton-knight-and-the-legend-of-the-free-state-of-jones

Khan, M. Z., Shafi, I., Gilani, I. S., Nawaz, A. M. (2012). From Habermas Model to New Public Sphere: A Paradigm Shift. *Global Journal Of Human-Social Science Research, 12*(5). Retrieved from, https://globaljournals.org/GJHSS_Volume12/6-From-Habermas-Model-to-New.pdf

Kilgo, D.K. (2021). Police Violence and Protests: Digital Media Maintenance of Racism, Protest Repression, and the Status Quo. *Journal of Broadcasting & Electronic Media*, 65(1), 157-176. Retrieved from, https://www-tandfonline-com.ezproxy.lib.usf.edu/doi/full/10.1080/08838151.2021.1897821

Lei, C. (2018, August 5). Majority of Black Americans Value Social Media for Lesser Known Issues. *National Public Radio*. Retrieved from, https://www.npr.org/2018/08/05/635127389/majority-of-black-americans-value-social-media-for-amplifying-lesser-known-issue

Lewis, H. (2016, January). How Newsrooms Handle Graphic Images of Violence. *Niemen*. Retrieved from, https://niemanreports.org/articles/how-newsrooms-handle-graphic-images-of-violence/

Little, B. (2018, August 2). When Ida B. Wells Took on Lynching, Threats Forced Her to Leave Memphis. *History*. Retrieved from, https://www.history.com/news/ida-b-wells-lynching-memphis-chicago

Lochard, M. T. P. (1963). The Negro Press in Illinois. *Journal of the Illinois State Historical Society (1908-1984)*, *56*(3), 570–591. Retrieved from, http://www.jstor.org/stable/40190627

Logan, R. W. (1965). The betrayal of the Negro, from Rutherford B. Hayes to Woodrow Wilson. *New York: Collier Books, pp.288.*

Marriott, D. (2000). On Black Men. *Columbia University Press*, pp.5-9

Maryland Lynching Truth Reconciliation Committee. (2019). Retrieved from, https://msa.maryland.gov/lynching-truth-reconciliation/committees.html

McBride, K. (2019, June 26). Good Editors Must be Thoughtful When Showing Readers Hard Truths Like Photos of Dead Bodies. *Poynter*. Retrieved from, https://www.poynter.org/ethics-trust/2019/good-editors-must-be-thoughtful-when-showing-readers-hard-truths-like-photos-of-dead-bodies/

McMahon, C., Ricketson, M., & Tippet, G. (2014, March 25). Ethical Reporting on Traumatised People. Dart Center for Journalism & Trauma. Retrieved from, https://dartcenter.org/content/dvd-launched-ethical-reporting-people-affected-by-trauma

Miller, K. (2019, August 25). Shalll We Talk About Lynchings? *Medium*. Retrieved from, https://medium.com/@authorkeqm/shall-we-talk-lynchings-34ffb5869dcb

Morrison, S., & Estes, A.C. (2020, June 12). How Protesters Are Turning the Tables on Police Surveillance. *Vox Media*. Retrieved from, https://www.vox.com/recode/2020/6/12/21284113/police-protests-surveillance-instagram-washington-dc

Nasheed, J. (2021, May 11). How Graphic Videos Showing Police Violence Against Black Americans Can Traumatize the Very People They are Trying to Help. Yahoo Life. Retrieved from, https://www.yahoo.com/lifestyle/allyship-pledge-viral-videos-black-mental-health-143028830.html

Nelson, S. (2012, August 20). The Grio Website. *Washington Journal*. Retrieved from, https://www.c-span.org/video/?307624-5/grio-web-site

News Leaders Association. (2019). 2019 Diversity Survey. Retrieved from, https://www.newsleaders.org/2019-diversity-survey-results

Nodjimbadem, K. (2015, September 2). Emmett Till's Open Casket Funeral Reignited the Civil Rights Movement. The Smithsonian Magazine. Retrieved from, https://www.smithsonianmag.com/smithsonian-institution/emmett-tills-open-casket-funeral-reignited-the-civil-rights-movement-180956483/

Patterson, Orlando. *Slavery and Social Death: A Comparative Study,* Harvard University Press, 1982.

Perloff, R. M. (2000). The Press and Lynchings of African Americans. *Journal of Black Studies*, *30*(3), 315–330. Retrieved from, http://www.jstor.org/stable/2645940

Pew Research. (2021, April 7). Mobile Phone Ownership Over Time. *Pew Research Center*. Retrieved from, https://www.pewresearch.org/internet/fact-sheet/mobile/#mobile-phone-ownership-over-time

Pilkington, C. K. (1985). The Trials of Brotherhood: The Founding of the Commission on Interracial Cooperation. *The Georgia Historical Quarterly*, *69*(1), 55–80. Retrieved from, http://www.jstor.org/stable/40581322

Pinsky, M. (2019, May). Maligned in White. *Poynter*. Retrieved from, https://www.poynter.org/maligned-in-black-white/

Poling, D. (2021, April 25). Vandalized Mary Turner Maker to be Displayed in Atlanta. *Valdosta Daily Times*. Retrieved from, https://www.valdostadailytimes.com/news/vandalized-mary-turner-marker-to-be-displayed-in-atlanta/article_669ed62c-a5ec-11eb-9d49-4b2361c97b52.html

Ponton, D. (2017). Criminalizing Space: Ideological and Institutional Productions of Race, Gender, and State-Sanctioned Violence in Houston, 1948-1967. *Rice University, p.286-362*. Retrieved from, https://scholarship.rice.edu/bitstream/handle/1911/96061/PONTON-DOCUMENT-2017.pdf?sequence=1&isAllowed=y

Preston, A. (2020 June 9). Sorry, Consuming Trauma Porn is Not Allyship. *Marie Claire*. Retrieved from, https://www.marieclaire.com/politics/a32802688/stop-sharing-trauma-porn-black-dea

Ramsden, P. (2017). Vicarious Trauma, PTSD, and Social Media: Does Watching Graphic Videos Cause Trauma? *Journal of Depression and Anxiety*. Retrieved from, https://www.longdom.org/proceedings/vicarious-trauma-ptsd-and-social-media-does-watching-graphic-videos-cause-trauma-37421.html

Richardson, A. (2020). Bearing Witness While Black. *Oxford University Press*, pp.xiii.

Richardson, A. (2020, August 20). The Problem With Police Shooting Videos. *The Atlantic*. Retrieved from, https://www.theatlantic.com/culture/archive/2020/08/the-problem-with-police-shooting-videos-jacob-blake/615880/

Ritchin, F. (2014 September 2). Why Violent News Images Matter. *Time*. Retrieved from, https://time.com/3705884/why-violent-news-images-matter/

Roskos-Ewoldsen, D.R., Roskos-Ewoldsen, B., & Carpentier, F.D. (2007). Mass Media Theories and Processes: Advances Through Meta Analysis. *Routledge*. 53-80.

Ross, F.J. (2020). Black Press Scholarship: Where We Have Been, Where We Are, and Where We Need to Go. *American Journalism.* 37:3, 301-320. Retrieved from, https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.1080/08821127.2020.1790846

Sanson, M., Strange, D., & Garry, M. (2019). Trigger Warnings Are Trivially Helpful at Reducing Negative Affect, Intrusive Thoughts, and Avoidance. *Clinical Psychological Science*, *7*(4), 778–793. https://doi.org/10.1177/2167702619827018

Scheufele, D.A., Tewksbury, D. (2007). Framing, Agenda Setting, and Priming: The Evolution of Three Media Effects Models. *Journal of Communication*. doi:10.1111/j.1460-2466.2006.00326.x

Schwartz, W. (2021, May 31). Police Killings of Black People: The Legacy of Lynching Writ Large. *Baltimore Sun*. Retrieved from, https://www.baltimoresun.com/opinion/op-ed/bs-ed-op-0603-police-killings-lynching-legacy-20200531-pady24plgredhnwt3xdlyh6rdi-story.html

Schmidt, M.S., & Apuzzo, M. (2015, April 7). South Carolina Officer is Charged With Murder of Walter Scott. *New York Times*. Retrieved from, https://www.nytimes.com/2015/04/08/us/south-carolina-officer-is-charged-with-murder-in-black-mans-death.html

Seguin, C. (2018, June 11). How Northern Newspapers Covered Lynchings. *New York Times*. Retrieved from, https://www.nytimes.com/2018/06/11/opinion/northern-newspapers-lynchings.html

Seitz, M.Z. (2020, June 9). The Quiet Trauma of Watching Police Brutality on Our Screens. *Vulture*. Retrieved from, https://www.vulture.com/2020/06/police-brutality-footage-vicarious-trauma.html

Sibrava, N. J., Bjornsson, A. S., Pérez Benítez, A., Moitra, E., Weisberg, R. B., & Keller, M. B. (2019). Posttraumatic stress disorder in African American and Latinx adults: Clinical course and the role of racial and ethnic discrimination. *The American psychologist*, *74*(1), 101–116. Retrieved from, https://doi.org/10.1037/amp0000339

Society of Professional Journalists: Code of Ethics. (2014). Retrieved from, https://www.spj.org/ethicscode.asp

Solomon, M. (1998). The Cry Was Unity: Communists and African Americans, 1917-1936. *University Press of Mississippi*, pp.185.

Sonnett, J., Johnson, K. A., & Dolan, M. K. (2015). Priming Implicit Racism in Television News: Visual and Verbal Limitations on Diversity. *Sociological Forum*, *30*(2), 328–347. Retrieved from, http://www.jstor.org/stable/43654118

Staples, B. (2021, July 10). How the White Press Wrote off Black America. New York Times. Retrieved from, https://www.nytimes.com/2021/07/10/opinion/sunday/white-newspapers-african-americans.html

Star Tribune. (2017, May 21). Timeline: A Look at History of Star Tribune. *Star Tribune*. Retrieved from, https://www.startribune.com/timeline-a-look-at-history-of-star-tribune/264439631/#1

State Sanctioned. (2015). History of Police Involvement With Lynching. State Sanctioned Project. Retrieved from, https://statesanctioned.com/history-of-police-involvement-with-lynching/

Stewart, A. (2015, June 10). Why Newsroom Diversity Works. *Nieman*. Retrieved from, https://niemanreports.org/articles/why-newsroom-diversity-works/

Telusma, B. (2019, April 4). Before You Share 'Trauma Porn' Videos on Social Media, Consider These Critical Things. *The Grio*. Retrieved from, https://thegrio.com/2019/04/04/nipsey-hussle-trauma-porn-social-media-blue-telusma/

Teresa, C. (2019). Looking at the Stars: Black Celebrity Journalism in Jim Crow America. *University of Nebraska Press*, pp.70-71.

Terell, E. (2020, July 22). Honoring African American Contributions: The Newspapers. *Library of Congress*. Retrieved from, https://blogs.loc.gov/inside_adams/2020/07/african-american-newspapers/

Thomson-DeVeaux, A., Rakich, N., Butchireddygari, L. (2020, June 4). Why It's So Rare for Police Officers to Face Legal Consequences For Murder. FiveThirtyEight. Retrieved from, https://fivethirtyeight.com/features/why-its-still-so-rare-for-police-officers-to-face-legal-consequences-for-misconduct/

Timan, T., & Albrechtslund, A. (2015). Surveillance, Self and Smartphones: Tracking Practices in the Nightlife. *Science and engineering ethics*, *24*(3), 853–870. Retrieved from, https://doi.org/10.1007/s11948-015-9691-8

Tolnay, S.E., & Beck, E.M. (1995). A Festival of Violence: An Analysis of Southern Lynchings, 1882-1930. *University of Illinois Press,* pp. 14-23, 239.

Tynes, B.M., Willis, H.A., Steward A.M., & Hamilton, M.W. (2019). Race-Related Traumatic Events Online and Mental Health Among Adolescents of Color. *Journal of Adolescent Health*. Volume 65, Issue 3, pp.371-377. Retrieved from, https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jadohealth.2019.03.006

Umstead, R.T. (2019, September 15). African Americans are Leaders in Media Consumption. *NextTV*. Retrieved from, African-Americans are Leaders in Media Consumption | Multichannel News (nexttv.com)

University of Michigan (2009, February 20). Violent Media Numb Viewers To the Pain of Others. ScienceDaily. Retrieved from, www.sciencedaily.com/releases/2009/02/090219202831.ht

Walsh, J. (2021, June 11). Star Tribune Wins Pulitzer for George Floyd Reporting; Darnella Frazier Also Cited. Star Tribune. Retrieved from, https://www.startribune.com/star-tribune-wins-pulitzer-prize-for-george-floyd-reporting/600067256/

Wasserman, I. M. (1998). Media Rhetoric and Images of Lynching in the Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries. *Michigan Sociological Review*, *12*, 68–94. Retrieved from, http://www.jstor.org/stable/40969023

Wilderson, F.B. (2020). Afropessimism. *Liveright Publishing Corporation*, pp.218-219.

Williams-Fayne, M. (2020). The Great Digital Migration: Exploring What Constitutes the Black Press Online. *Journalism & Mass Communication Quarterly*, *97*(3), 704–720. Retrieved from, https://doi.org/10.1177/1077699020906492

Williams, J., & Romer, C. (2020, June 5). Black Deaths at the Hands of Law Enforcement are Linked to Historical Lynchings. Economic Policy Institute. Retrieved from, https://www.epi.org/blog/black-deaths-at-the-hands-of-law-enforcement-are-linked-to-historical-lynchings-u-s-counties-where-lynchings-were-more-prevalent-from-1877-to-1950-have-more-officer-involved-killings/

Williams, S.N., & Clarke, A.V. (2019, December 5). How the desensitization of police violence, stereotyped language, and racial bias impact black communities. *Psychology & Cognitive Sciences Open Journal*. 2019; 5(2): 62-67. doi: 10.17140/PCSOJ-5-151

Wood, A. (2019). "Somebody do Something!": Lynching Photographs, Historical Memory, and the Possibility of Sympathetic Spectatorship. *European journal of American studies* [Online],14-4 | Retrieved from, DOI: https://doi.org/10.4000/ejas.15512

Woods, T. (2019). Blackhood Against the Police Power: Punishment and Disavowal in the "Post-Racial Era". *Michigan State University Press*, 5-7.

Wright, R. (1945). Black Boy. *Harper Collins Publishers*. New York, NY*, pp. 74, 172.

Yakovlev, M. (2020, September 16). Words Hurt: The Ethics of Reporting on Race. Media Diversity Institute. Retrieved from, **https://www.media-diversity.org/words-hurt-the-ethics-of-reporting-on-race/**

Young, H. (2005). The Black Body as Souvenir in American Lynching. *Theatre Journal*, *John Hopkins University Press*. *57*(4), 639–657. Retrieved from, http://www.jstor.org/stable/25069734

Zuckerman, M. (2015, May 4). "Telling the Truth About American Terror. Harvard Law Today. Retrieved from, https://today.law.harvard.edu/feature/telling-the-truth-about-american-terror/