**#BlackLivesMatter Between Two Peaks of Activity**
An Analysis of Black Lives Matter Social Media Activism from 2014 - 2020

Dirk Goosen
203539, 1271860
Master Thesis
Communication and Information Sciences
New Media Design
Tilburg School of Humanities and Digital Sciences
Tilburg University, Tilburg
Supervisor: Dr. Simone R. Ashby
Second reader: Dr. Siebe V. Bluijs
August 2021

## Table of Contents

**Abstract**

Black Lives Matter (BLM) is a social and political movement that strives for emancipation of black people and seeks to end police brutality. The use of social media has been important in the development of the movement. In 2014 a peak of activity occurred in the movement, following the police brutality related deaths of Trayvon Martin, Eric Garner, and Michael Brown. Later, in 2020, another peak of activity happened after George Floyd was murdered by a police officer. Social media have evolved in the time between these peaks and the usage of social media for BLM purposes has changed. An extensive literature review was conducted over 22 studies to find out in what ways social media usage by BLM actors has changed between 2014 and 2020.

Social media platforms have introduced new functionalities to lower the threshold to share content, which made them popular for activistic purposes. This has changed the ways activism was conducted on social media, and more users seemed to engage with the movement. New platforms have emerged which accommodated video activism. Celebrities have also utilised social media to support the BLM movement. However, privacy scandals and troll accounts have formed a threat to the movement. Polarised framing, manipulation, and the spread of misinformation have contributed to a reluctancy to use social media in 2016. BLM actors were discouraged in their social media use because of a fear of harassment.

Still, the growth of online activity which has happened between 2014 and 2020 looks promising for the BLM movement. By monitoring threats and opportunities which arise and acting accordingly, BLM actors may ensure that social media remain advantageous tools for the movement.

# 1 Introduction

On the 25th of May 2020, George Floyd, a black man, was detained by police officer Derek Chauvin following the suspected usage of a counterfeit $20 bill at a store (Cappelli, 2020). The officer pressed his knee on Floyd's neck for over eight minutes, which resulted in the death of Floyd. Following this event, footage of the murder emerged on Internet on which Floyd pleaded "I can't breathe" while he was struggling to stay alive. This phrase has since been spread by the Black Lives Matter (BLM) community on social media (Cappelli, 2020).

BLM is a global movement that started after the 2013 acquittal of Derek Zimmerman, a community watch volunteer, who fatally shot Trayvon Martin, another black man (Maqbool, 2020). Since then several incidents of law enforcement brutality ignited outrage. Especially the cases leading to the deaths of Eric Garner and Michael Brown in 2014 and the abovementioned case of Floyd in 2020 became prominent in the media. BLM received worldwide recognition following these events and a series of mass protests all over the world were organised (Drakulich et al., 2020).

A global foundation named #BlackLivesMatter was created, which is described on its website[1] as "*a global organization in the US, UK, and Canada, whose mission is to eradicate white supremacy and build local power to intervene in violence inflicted on Black communities by the state and vigilantes*". The BLM movement consists of multiple groups of people who each contribute to the movement in their own way (Carney, 2016). It is possible to officially join the foundation on its website to become a member and receive updates of the movement[1]. However, more actors than the official members are at play in BLM because the movement is strongly tied to social media (Rickford, 2016). Apart from activists who undertake actions such as organising events, people who merely share information about those events are also part of the movement. The BLM actors are everyone who partake in the movement, for instance by protesting on the streets, tweeting a hashtag, or discussing about the values of the movement on social media (Mundt et al., 2018).

Social media have played a central role in the development of BLM (Carney, 2016; Mundt et al., 2018). The movement was initiated based on a Facebook post titled "Black Lives Matter" which was written on July 13th, 2013, following the acquittal of Zimmerman (LeBron, 2017). Three activists, Patrice Cullors, Alicia Garza, and Opal Tometi subsequently turned the title into a hashtag, and #BlackLivesMatter was born (Rickford, 2016). Since then,

---

[1] https://www.blacklivesmatter.com

social media have continued to be a main source for the foundation to build awareness and growth (Carney, 2016; Mundt et al., 2018). Carney (2016) explained why BLM was built on social media by describing a theory that a new public sphere has come into existence.

This theory on the new public sphere was based on earlier work of Habermas (1992). Habermas (1992) suggested the existence of a public sphere, that can be described as a place in social life in which people can freely discuss issues in society. These discussions can lead to political action. The theory of Habermas (1992) was developed pre-social media. It was suggested that public opinion was created by the informed and privileged people. Lower classes did not participate since they did not have the opportunity nor the leisure to do so. Carney (2016) suggested that with the introduction of social media a whole new public sphere was created, which was accessible to almost anyone. Because of technological inventions and increased accessibility to mobile phones, most of the youths of the United States were no longer excluded from public opinion (Carney, 2016). Through the use of social media, the public sphere opened up to a new audience. According to Carney (2016), this explains the growing prevalence of BLM on social media since the acquittal of Zimmerman.

The rise of #BlackLivesMatter on social media came hand in hand with the rise of protests, which happened for instance in 2014 in Ferguson, Missouri, following the deaths of Eric Garner and Michael Brown in which police officers were involved (Rickford, 2016). These events gained global attention and the BLM protests led to even more protests (Williamson et al., 2018). Spread across the United States, at least 780 BLM protests occurred over 44 states between August 2014 and August 2015 (Williamson et al., 2018). Protests were not only held in the physical world but also on social media. On Twitter, for instance, #BlackLivesMatter received prominent national attention in 2014, after the acquittal of the police officer who fatally shot Michael Brown (Langford & Speight, 2015). On November 24, 2014, #BlackLivesMatter was used in almost 200 thousand tweets in just one day (Anderson et al., 2020). This phase in the history of BLM is regarded as the initial peak of BLM activity.

During this first peak of online activity of BLM, Facebook and Twitter provided several opportunities for activists that could be used to strengthen the movement, by facilitating the process of collective meaning making and creating support networks (Mundt et al., 2018; Wilkins et al., 2019). Collective meaning making is a social activity that entails a form of learning by dialoguing, contextualising of thoughts, and negotiating to create meaning (Powell et al., 2018). Furthermore, Facebook and Twitter have enabled the movement to expand by fostering coalitions between different local BLM groups and by spreading non-mainstreamed discourse concerning police brutality (Mundt et al., 2018). Adding to this,

Wilkins et al. (2019), stressed Twitter's potential for mobilising activism. In the early stages of BLM, Twitter was used to manage potential relationships between minority activist groups and for the regulation of social movements and social identities, which helped the BLM movement to develop and grow (Wilkins et al., 2019). Twitter and Facebook were thus the most influential social media platforms during the first peak of BLM, and were used for several reasons, such as mobilising activists and creating support networks.

Another peak of activity of BLM happened in 2020. Following the death of George Floyd, a new wave of BLM protests was initiated. Footage of the murder went viral on the Internet, and the words "I can't breathe" were spread among Twitter and Instagram users (Cappelli, 2020). The BLM protests that followed Floyd's death were among the largest protests in the history of the United States, with an estimated participation of more than 15 million people (Buchanan et al., 2020). Awareness of the BLM movement had grown over the years, and users ensured massive BLM social media presence during this peak (Michaels, 2020). On May 28th, three days after Floyd's death, #BlackLivesMatter was used in 8.8 million different tweets (Anderson et al., 2020). Furthermore, a "Black-Out" movement was initiated on Instagram (Ho, 2020), with people posting black squares with the intention to raise awareness for BLM (Michaels, 2020). Over 28 million Instagram users had posted black squares on the 2nd of June 2020 (Ho, 2020). On TikTok[2], #BlackLivesMatter posts reached more than 25.7 billion views and Instagram[3] had over 26.8 million posts containing #BlackLivesMatter.

In this 2020 peak, Facebook (Dixon & Dundes, 2020) and Twitter (Anderson et al., 2020) were still relevant social media platforms, but other social media, such as Instagram, were used for political issues as well (Michaels, 2020). New social media platforms, TikTok among others, had also been introduced at this point (Michaels, 2020). The usage of the social media platforms had also diversified; whereas Twitter was used to spark political debate (Michaels, 2020), other media such as Instagram (Razak et al., 2020; Stanley, 2020) and TikTok (Herrick et al., 2021; Simpson & Semaan, 2021) were primarily used for generating awareness. Opinions about the movement seem to also have swayed before this peak. According to PEW Research Center polls, the American public was largely in support of the BLM movement after the killing of Floyd (Parker et al., 2020), whereas in 2016 American opinions on the BLM movement were more divided (Dutton et al., 2016).

---

[2] https://www.tiktok.com/tag/blacklivesmatter?lang=en
[3] https://www.instagram.com/explore/tags/blacklivesmatter/

Comparing the abovementioned two different peaks of online activity with regards to social media usage among BLM activists, it appears that not only the use of social media has greatly increased in the second peak, but social media users appeared to also have different aims and purposes than before. In 2014, Facebook and Twitter were used to mobilise activists, bring people together, and start debates (Mundt et al., 2018). In 2020, Instagram and TikTok also became instrumental in spreading awareness about BLM and police brutality, and generating support for the protesters on the streets (Karduni & Sauda, 2020; Michaels, 2020). Also, existing social media platforms had been further developed and contained more functionalities in 2020 (Triệu & Baym, 2020).

The change of purposes and used media between the two peaks could contain important information for developments of political movements. To be able to make projections on how the BLM movement will develop further, research on social media usage in the period of 2014 to 2020 is necessary (Carney, 2016; Byrd et al., 2017; Ince et al., 2017). Furthermore, the 2020 BLM peak is very recent and not much is known yet about what happened leading up to this peak. Other, similar, police violence incidents against black Americans did not lead to comparable reactions related to BLM (Bolsover, 2020; Hong, 2020). The fact that the popular opinion on BLM also swayed between 2016 and 2020 and the movement came to be seen in a more positive light in the United States (Dutton et al., 2016; Cohn & Quealy, 2020; Parker et al., 2020) is not yet explained from a social media point of view. An analysis of developments in BLM and social media usage could provide more information about the reasons for the opinion shift and what role social media played in this, which could in turn provide valuable information for future activists and research on activism.

Several studies have described certain changes in social media regarding the BLM movement between 2014 and 2020. As the BLM movement is tied to social media to large extents (Rickford, 2016), it seems possible that BLM changes are triggered by changes in social media and vice versa. It therefore seems worthwhile to compare the developments of both social media and the BLM movement in the period between 2014 and 2020 and to detect certain moments in which developments in social media usage and the movement co-occurred. Although co-occurring does not automatically mean that there is a causal relationship between changes in social media usage and development of the movement, looking for coinciding timepoints may result in leads that could be further investigated in terms of causality in the future. Therefore, the current study will tackle the following research question:

*RQ: In what ways has social media usage by Black Lives Matter actors changed during the development of Black Lives Matter in the period between 2014 and 2020?*

## 2 Theoretical Framework

This section presents research related to the current study. Online activism is first explained. Afterwards, an overview of social media is provided, and different social media platforms are described. Then, it is explained how social media may contribute to online activism. This is followed by a section about threats and opportunities for social media activism. The information that is reported in this theoretical framework has led to the formulation of three sub-research questions to help address the main research question in current study.

### 2.1 Online Activism

Activism means performing actions to strive towards, particularly social or political, goals (Norris, 2004). The Internet has been recognised to have potential to be used for activism, by providing opportunities to create venues, allocate resources, and enable networks (Ghobadi & Clegg, 2015). The Internet has provided tools for activists around the world to realise socio-political visions in an unprecedented way in the 21$^{st}$ century. This form of activism performed through the Internet is called online activism (Ghobadi & Clegg, 2015). Online activism has a broad reach, from the use of online tools to organise large demonstrations to simple actions such as slacktivism (Freelon et al., 2020).

Slacktivism entails merely symbolic activistic actions which are typically low-cost, such as sharing posts, for instance about how buying cheap fish is bad for the planet, or changing one's profile picture, for instance to have a French flag on the background to support victims of a terrorist attack (Freelon et al., 2020). Social media are important tools for online activism, because they provide several opportunities for online activism to thrive, mainly through their accessibility, connectivity, and applications (Lewis et al., 2014).

### 2.2 Social Media

Social media are a range of group-based Internet services, which allow users to join communities, to engage in online communications, and to contribute user-generated content. They can exist in various formats, such as blogs, wikis, and social networking sites (Dewing, 2010). Social media make it possible to connect with other users within a social network (Coiera, 2013). Differing from traditional media, social media provide the ability to directly create or support social networks using communication and information systems (Kaplan & Haenlein, 2010). With social media the generation and distribution of content has become much simpler and more accessible. When people have ideas, they can easily put them on a platform of choice and share them with other users (Miller, 2017). This means that

marginalised groups now have the possibility to reach a world-wide audience, which was often difficult in an offline setting (Miller, 2017).

The many-to-many model of social media, all users can post their own content which can be seen by a great number of other users, has created a framework for a politically engaging platform (Miller, 2017). This form of online activism performed using social media is called social media activism (Murthy, 2018). Social media have facilitated the development of movements online, which in turn have moved offline in multiple occasions. Comments on Facebook pages have, for instance, helped to organise massive protests for justice in Guatemala in 2009 (Harlow, 2012).

There are many social media platforms, of which Facebook and YouTube are currently the most popular in the United States among adults of all ages, whereas Instagram, Snapchat, and TikTok are most commonly used by American adults under the age of thirty (Auxier & Anderson, 2021). Not all social media have the same functionalities and uses. Facebook has dominated the social media market over the past decade by providing means to build social networks and connecting with friends, as well as exposing users to information and news (Mosquera et al., 2020), while YouTube is an online platform on which users can watch and share videos (Khan, 2017). Furthermore, Instagram is a social networking app which is created for users to share photos and videos from smartphones (Hu et al., 2014). Vaterlaus et al. (2016) described Snapchat as a social media platform which allows users to send photos and videos to specified receivers, who then have a specified amount of time to view the content. TikTok is currently the fastest growing social media platform, and is used to upload, watch, and browse short videos (Weimann & Masri, 2020). Twitter has also been a prominent social media platform (Ott, 2017). Twitter is a micro-blogging site, allowing users to follow other users and send and read tweets, containing short amounts of text (Ott, 2017). Tumblr is another platform which has been popular for micro-blogging, but unlike Twitter, Tumblr does not have a limitation for the number of characters in posts, and has always allowed multimedia such as videos, pictures, and audio (Chang et al., 2014).

Certain qualities of these platforms can be compared (Ishii et al., 2019). The Media Richness Theory is a theory developed by Daft and Lengel (1986) that describes how different media can be compared on their levels of richness, i.e. how clear and in what quantity information can be presented. These levels can also be used for social media which inherently differ in richness (Ishii et al., 2019). Twitter, for instance, has a limited number of characters that can be used in a tweet which means that the quantity of information is limited (Boyinbode et al., 2017). Additionally, Twitter used to not support images and videos,

whereas other media such as Tumblr did. Twitter could therefore be regarded as having a lower richness level than Tumblr, because on Twitter information could only be presented in a textual way (Coursaris et al., 2014). Not only richness, but also other qualities of media, e.g. how civilised or combative social media inherently are, are important when it comes to usage of a platform (Ishii et al., 2019). The way Twitter operates, for instance, may cause people to express more diverging opinions in political debates than other forms of communication. Tweets are supposed to be short messages in which a point has to concisely be made and therefore do not allow much nuance. This setup can lead to more intensified debates compared to messages on other media which may allow more nuance to opinions and messages (Lai et al., 2019).

Another aspect that can be compared between social media platforms is perceived distance between users. A larger perceived distance may cause disinhibition in communication, because it may give a sense of anonymity to the user (Agustina, 2015). Facebook users are connected as "friends", which may cause the users to feel relatively closer to their connections than Twitter users, which do not have to be interconnected because of non-reciprocity between Twitter users. This means that Twitter users may communicate more aggressively than Facebook users, since the perceived distance between connections is greater (Davenport et al., 2014). Therefore, Facebook could be regarded as a more civilised platform than Twitter in this context (Davenport et al., 2014; Miller & Melton, 2015).

Furthermore, user-generated content is an important factor of social media (Dewing, 2010). All social media platforms have their own functionalities and affordances, which determine how that content can be shared. Affordances, in this context, are objects that allow possible actions for which a platform can be used. Perceived affordances are objects of the platform which show the users what actions they can perform using that platform (Norman, 1999). On YouTube extensive videos can be posted and shared with all other users to be watched at any time (Khan, 2017), whereas on Snapchat pictures and short videos are shared with a select number of users who only have a limited amount of time to view the content (Vaterlaus et al., 2016). These different functionalities may cause users to choose a specific platform for their specific purposes. If users created an informational video on BLM, they may prefer to post it on YouTube in order to spread it to other users who can take their time to consume it. When users want to impulsively share a private message about BLM in a short video, they might prefer to share it using Snapchat, because only the people they wish to see the content can consume it and it will be deleted after a limited time (Nguyen & Allen, 2018).

Over time, social media platforms have developed in terms of functionalities.

Instagram has added a stories function in 2016 for instance (Vázquez-Herrero et al., 2019). This function allows users to share content for a limited amount of time. Whereas the content posted in an Instagram feed is permanently visible, the content posted in a story is only visible for 24 hours. This means that the threshold to post content in a story is lower than the threshold to post content in the feed, since the content will be automatically removed from the profile (Vázquez-Herrero et al., 2019). This development may have had an impact on how and for what purposes the platform was used. Stories may have caused Instagram content to become more political, since users tend to feel more comfortable to share their political views on social media when they know the message will not remain visible permanently (Trevisan et al., 2019). Not only Instagram, but almost all social media have increased functionalities on their platforms over time, all of which may have had a, smaller or larger, impact on the way social media activism has taken place.

In order to focus on the potential role that these changes in functionalities of social media platforms may have played in events that are relevant to BLM, the first sub-research question is formulated:

*SQ1: How have functional changes in social media platforms coincided with events relevant to BLM between 2014 and 2020?*

**2.3 Social Media Utilisations for Activism**

Social media platforms thus each have their own qualities and functionalities, which have been utilised by participants of social movements to engage in activistic behaviour. This section will describe several ways in which social media have been utilised for activistic purposes.

*2.3.1 Online Identity Construction*

A collective identity is one of the most relevant aspects of social movements. The perception of "we" and "us" is crucial. Because of a collective identity, participants are more engaged and committed to a social movement, and the cohesion of a movement is sustained over time (Flesher Fominaya, 2010). Polletta and Jasper (2001) further noted that the collective identity is the reason why people participate in protests, since a sense of obligation is perceived because of the collective identity.

Social media provide opportunities to stimulate the creation of a collective identity, because of their possibilities to highlight narratives and symbols which are culturally important in communications around protests (Gerbaudo & Treré, 2015). Valenzuela (2013)

explained that personal and group identity construction are facilitated by social media, and that this process is a key antecedent of political behaviour. Social media can be used to promote identity constructions by reinforcing group norms, facilitating multiple interpersonal feedback channels, and stimulating peer acceptance (Valenzuela, 2013).

### 2.3.2 Organising and Coordinating Political Action

The Internet can stimulate activists by providing opportunities to organise and coordinate protest events more effectively (Theocharis et al., 2015). Bennett (2003) explained that the main reason Internet can accommodate political actions, is because it provides opportunities to communicate messages from desktops to television screens and it facilitates transformations and growth in networks. These networks can be transformed to account for the needs of new participants due to the dynamic nature of social media platforms (Murthy, 2018). Twitter, in particular, has been regarded as a platform which is dominant in organising political actions (Murthy, 2018), because of its ability to fundamentally shape a movement's organisational structure. Structural aspects of a movement, such as vertical communication and hierarchy, are undermined by the platform (Segerberg & Bennett, 2011).

The Arab Spring movement and the Occupy Wall Street movement show prime examples of social media being used to organise and coordinate political actions. In the case of the Arab Spring, political regimes of Egypt, Libya, and Tunisia were overturned after immense protests occurred which were organised and coordinated using social media and Facebook in particular (Al-Hasan et al., 2018). Occupy Wallstreet was preceded by communication on social media which were fundamental for organising locations and spreading information, resulting in large protests organised all over the world (Al-Hasan et al., 2018).

### 2.3.3 Debating Online

As noted in the Introduction, Carney (2016) explained that social media made the public sphere accessible to a larger group of people. Social media and mobile phones have made it easier for youths and marginalised groups to participate in or start debates because of the accessibility and reachability of an audience. Anyone can post content on social media platforms (Carney, 2016). Social media give the youth a chance to participate in campaigns, e.g. by sharing content and petitions, to reflect on politics, for instance by sharing articles and providing their opinions and stances, and to shape the public debate by providing arguments for their cause (Carney, 2016). Consequently, Bosch (2017) concluded that youth activism is thriving because of social media.

Hunt (2019) explained that social movements adapt offline strategies of political debates to online tactics performed using social media. Public figures, for instance, are claimed as allies in online debates on social media, which could strengthen an activist's position in a debate. On top of this, social media have provided a space to debate around sub-subjects which are not prominent in mainstream media (Vicari, 2013). Vicari (2013) further found that social media debates are picked up by mainstream media, which raises further awareness, and the debates are continued on the streets during protests and lead to more engagement of participants with the movement.

*2.3.4 Awareness and Information Sharing*

Awareness of certain issues, such as gender or environmental issues, is raised through increasing visibility on social media by posting about these subjects. These posts are then spread further to new networks as they are shared by multiple users (Rotman et al., 2011). Non-reciprocity facilitates this because information can flow in on-going streams to new networks (Miller, 2017). This way the information about the issues becomes ultimately known by multiple people which have consumed the content, and who in turn may create their own content about the issues (Rotman et al., 2011). Glenn (2015) explained that social media have changed the ways organisations call for social change and raise awareness. These ways have become much more accessible for everyone (Miller, 2017). Individuals can generate content about issues and share the content with their online following (Sandoval-Almazan & Gil-Garcia, 2014). Users can also merely share content generated by others (Glen, 2015). All consumers of the content are, in the end, aware of the subject (Miller, 2017).

The ways in which social media have been utilised for online activism have changed over time, partly due to changes in the earlier mentioned functionalities of social media, but also due to new insights on how to communicate on social media with new audiences and participants (Murthy, 2018). To understand in what ways changes in utilisation of social media platforms have co-occurred with developments in the BLM movement, this study will aim to provide an answer to the second sub-research question:

*SQ2: How have social media utilisations for activism developments coincided with events relevant to BLM between 2014 and 2020?*

**2.4 Opportunities and Threats**

The current study focuses on the period between 2014 and 2020, the two moments described as peaks of the BLM movement. During this period several opportunities and threats to social media activism have come forward (Gónzalez et al., 2019). For instance,

people became more aware of the risks of using social media as privacy scandals have emerged in this timeframe (Ayaburi & Treku, 2020). Furthermore, slacktivism has been regarded as both a threat and an opportunity for social media activism (Halupka, 2018).

*2.4.1 Slacktivism*

Slacktivism is a form of online activism that is performed with very simple actions using social media, such as sharing posts or changing a profile picture temporarily for a certain cause (Halupka, 2018). Crucial for slacktivism is perceived convenience, the slacktivists should be able to conduct activism with the least amount of cognitive and physical effort (McCafferty, 2011). The efficacy of slacktivism is a controversial subject in research (Rotman et al., 2011; Halupka 2018).

Rotman et al. (2011) recognised that visibility of international priorities has risen because of social media but questioned the actual benefits of this phenomenon and the effectiveness of slacktivism. If information is forwarded, it might lose its essence since the sender is not the person who created the content (Rotman et al., 2011). Furthermore, activistic content is often "liked" or shared without any actual emotional or cognitive thought behind it by slacktivists, making slacktivism an almost automatic process without any meaning (McCafferty, 2011). Slacktivism may also form a threat for social movements. Important information about subjects on social media might get lost between slacktivistic content that does not add any value (Glenn, 2015). Another threat tied to slacktivism is oversimplification of issues. By indulging in slacktivism deeper issues often get overlooked and the slacktivists feel good about their engagement without fully understanding what they are sharing. By sharing a post about a sexist situation accompanying "#sexist", for instance, the user merely points out that there is a sexist situation, but information may be lacking about why and on what levels the situation is sexist, and what that means in a larger context (Chen et al., 2018).

Other studies, such as Brown et al. (2017), have recognised the importance of awareness and find that amplifying a message can help socio-political causes, because more people know about the subject and can therefore contribute to the movement. Halupka (2018) confirmed the efficacy of slacktivism as a way of promoting political participation. By participating in slacktivism, the activist is non-committal, and the action relies on the context and the projected identity of the activist. If the values of the activist are in line with the message, the message will be consumed more seriously by the followers of the activist (Halupka, 2018). Slacktivism has been the most prominent form of political engagement since social media, and by engaging in slacktivism the political cause and personal identity merge

in a message, causing the interpretation of the receiver to be crucial for its efficacy (Halupka, 2018). If the message is interpreted well, slacktivism can contribute to social movements by spreading awareness which may lead to more people feeling engaged with the movement (George & Leidner, 2019; Smith et al., 2019).

*2.4.2 Privacy*

Social media have brought new issues regarding privacy to the public (Smith et al., 2012). By utilising social media platforms, users open themselves up to different potential breaches of their privacy. Mismanagement, for instance, might lead to third parties obtaining and misusing personal data (Senthil Kumar et al., 2016). Furthermore, privacy controversies have come to light such as the extent of surveillance by the National Security Agency (NSA) and the Cambridge Analytica data scandal, which have had impacts on the ways people use social media (Preibusch, 2015; Gónzalez et al., 2019).

The NSA is an American intelligence agency formed in 1952, belonging to the Department of Defense of the United States. The original goal of the NSA was to decipher coded information which may form threats to the country (Verble, 2014). In 2013, Edward Snowden revealed the extents to which the NSA has spied on people all over the world collecting personal data using computer programmes (Lucas, 2014). These extents caused the public to reconsider how their data is used and what place privacy should have in the digital era (Lucas, 2014; Preibusch, 2015).

British company Cambridge Analytica obtained personal data of millions of Facebook users, and used these data to perform microtargeted political campaigns (Isaak & Hanna, 2018). Their practices were especially evident during the 2016 presidential elections of the United States (Ward, 2018). In this context, microtargeting is a technique used by political parties to address individual voters (Papakyriakopoulos et al., 2018), but Cambridge Analytica misused personal data recovered from Facebook which led to dubious practices (Ward, 2018).

Since the details of these events were made public, perspectives on social media have changed (González et al., 2019). Marín et al. (2021) found that users changed the way they treat social media because of privacy scandals. Users tend to be more cautious in their social media usage and think more actively before committing to any platform (Marín et al., 2021). Overall attitudes on social media swayed after the Cambridge Analytica scandal, with many users believing social media to be dangerous (Gónzalez et al., 2019).

Especially marginalised groups of people hold their privacy in high regards (Lerner et

al, 2020). A fear of harassment or discrimination which could follow privacy breaches on social media refrains these marginalised groups from using social media. Social media activism performed for those marginalised groups is therefore held back, because of privacy and security fears (Lerner et al., 2020). Social movements have had to endure consequences of privacy scandals such as the NSA surveillance and Cambridge Analytica, mainly because they have caused users to be reluctant in their social media usage, and thus social media activism (Krutka, 2020). Therefore, privacy scandals may be regarded as a threat for social media activism (Krutka, 2020).

*2.4.3 Other Opportunities and Threats*

Apart from the described utilisations, more opportunities exist to contribute to activism using social media. For instance, social media sites have made it possible to relieve spatial and temporal boundaries involved in information sharing, creating possibilities to refer to content from any place and at any time (Murthy, 2018). Furthermore, certain audiences who have not been reachable for political topics in the past are now more likely to be reached because of social media (Lim & Golan, 2011). Velasquez and LaRose (2015) also showed that because of social media, more people who feel engaged to social movements identify as an activist. Cyberbullying, however, has refrained users from using social media for purposes such as activism (Kshetri & Voas, 2019).

Thus, several opportunities and threats have had impacts on social media activism. To find out what opportunities and threats have been presented between the two peaks of online activity of the BLM movement and how these have coincided with relevant BLM events, the third sub-research question of this study is introduced:

*SQ3: What opportunities and threats concerning the use of social media for BLM have coincided with events relevant to BLM between 2014 and 2020?*

**2.5 BLM and Social Media**

The BLM movement, as described in the Introduction, is a political movement that is dedicated to fighting for equality between races and against police brutality (Drakulich et al., 2020). It has incorporated social media activism as one of its main forms of activism in order to be able to reach potential activists throughout the world. Wilkins et al. (2019) showed the importance of social media in mobilisation of activists in the early stages of BLM. Social media have also been proven to be a way for BLM to be debated about online (Brünker et al., 2020). Tweets and posts on social media were used to start debates on BLM values with the world (Bonilla & Rosa, 2015). Awareness for BLM was also generated and spread using

social media platforms (Lane et al., 2020).

Actors of the BLM movement have constructed a collective identity using Black Twitter for instance. Black Twitter has facilitated the creation of collective identities on Twitter, because of collective meaning making which occurred on the platform (Harlow & Benbrook, 2019). Black Twitter is described as a place on Twitter where, especially black people, can find and help each other with issues of grief and anger, and work together to mobilise offline activism (Harlow & Benbrook, 2019). This, thus, also entails organising and coordinating political action. Furthermore, the "Black-Out" movement described in the Introduction could be regarded as a form of slacktivism (Madison & Klang, 2020). Naik (2021) also described the drawback of this "Black-Out" movement, with crucial BLM information getting drowned because of over-usage of the hashtag, tagged to mere black squares. This shows a way in which slacktivism has had negative consequences for the movement. Social media activism has thus been present in different forms in the case of BLM. The current study aims to investigate the developments of BLM social media usage during the period between the two peaks of online activity, in 2014 and 2020.

## 3 Methods

This section presents the methods that were used to find out in what ways BLM social media usage developed during the period between 2014 and 2020. An extensive literature review was performed to assess how social media platforms have changed during the period between the peaks of activity, what developments in utilisations of social media have taken place, and what threats and opportunities have arisen in this period with regards to the BLM movement. Klerks et al. (2020) performed a thematic analysis to provide a qualitative review on design and deployment of technologies for civic community management. The methods they used are also employed in the current study. To perform this study, first a selection of literature was assembled. Afterwards, data was extracted and a thematic analysis was conducted.

### 3.1 Selection of Literature

To perform the literature review, search terms were compiled and entered into ACM Digital Library, which was chosen for its large quantity on ICT & Media literature, in order to find potentially relevant studies. The search terms were designed to include different combinations of alternative keywords for the two main aspects in the study, namely social media and BLM:

1. Social media keywords: "social media", "social network", "Twitter", "Instagram", "TikTok", "Facebook", "Tumblr", "YouTube", and "Snapchat".
2. BLM keywords: "Black Lives Matter", "BLM", and "blacklivesmatter".

These search terms were entered into ACM Digital Database, a database that is focused on computing research, which resulted in 243 found articles. These results were then scanned based on their titles to assess whether they were about the main topics of the study, which led to a selection of 109 articles. After these scans, an examination of abstracts followed. The examinations were conducted to find out whether the papers were relevant for the current study. In case of doubt, the full paper was read to examine its relevance. Finally, after the scan for inclusion, 22 papers remained. The inclusion process is visualised in Figure 1. The inclusion criteria were:

1. The paper must be about BLM.
2. The paper must be about social media usage.
3. The paper must cover developments or changes in social media platforms or utilisations, or threats and/or opportunities with regards to BLM social media usage.
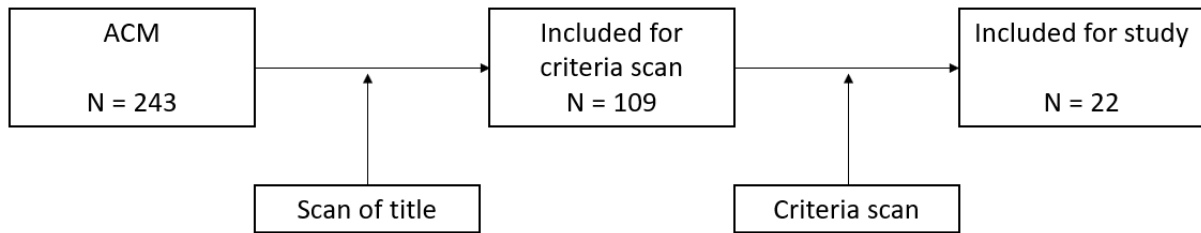4. The paper must be written in English.

*Figure 1.* Visualisation of the inclusion process for the papers used in this study

## 3.2 Data Extraction and Analysis

In order to extract the data, the selection of literature was fully read. Much like the analysis in Klerks et al. (2020), key findings (excerpts) were extracted during the reading. An excerpt was included when it represented the usage of social media, a certain social media platform, the development of social media, reasons for social media usage, or developments of BLM. An example of an excerpt is "*Individuals use the conversation space these hashtags provide, as well as the hashtags themselves, to share stories of their experiences, to express solidarity, and give personal voice to the issues raised within the emergent discourse.*" (Simpson, 2018). In this example certain ways in which hashtags have been used are provided.

The literature was analysed according to thematic analysis principles. Thematic analyses follow or lead to certain themes. In the current study, themes were inductively created, i.e. the themes were identified during the analysis and drawn from occurring patterns (Braun & Clarke, 2006). To find out more about the development of social media usage, the themes were identified at a latent level within a constructionist framework. This means that the analysis starts identifying underlying concepts and ideas, and that sociocultural contexts and structural conditions are theorised (Braun & Clarke, 2006).

To start the analysis, the excerpts were sorted into initial clusters. These clusters were then compared and combined, if possible, several times. Every time the clusters were critically analysed and reformed, the clusters became more definitive and explicit. After the clustering phase was finalised, the clusters were reformed into themes, with careful consideration to the excerpts and patterns. Eight themes were recognised which are important to understand the development of social media usage during BLM. One of these themes was used to provide answers to the first sub-research question, and another one was used to provide answers to the second sub-research question. The other six themes were used to find out more about the threats and opportunities of BLM social media usage, and thus to answer the third sub-research question. Additional literature was added to complement the findings

where needed. The final themes and main findings are described in the Results section. Timetables have been created which include events that have been relevant to BLM and findings from the themes, to show how these findings and events relevant to BLM have co-occurred. The included events that are relevant to BLM are events that were selected by Anderson et al. (2020), which were found to have caused BLM to be a topic of interest at that time.

# 4 Results

This section shows the results of the current study. Three subsections are provided which account for the three sub-research questions. The first section covers changes in functionalities of social media and describes the theme "Social Media Platforms" according to its sub-themes. The second section covers the theme "User Behaviour" with sub-themes that regard utilisations of social media platforms. Finally, in the third section themes about opportunities and threats regarding BLM social media behaviour are described, these themes are "Framing", "Information Operations", "Harassment", "Public Sphere", "Slacktivism", and "Privacy & Security". At the end of the three subsections, a timeline is provided that shows events which have been relevant for the BLM movement and events that have come forward from the themes of that section.

## 4.1 Functionalities

The ways in which social media activism was performed in 2014 differed from the ways it was performed in 2020. Along with the development of the movement, social media have developed over time as well (Cornet et al., 2017; Stewart et al., 2017). Not only the availability of platforms evolved, but functionalities have changed according to the developments of social media platforms (Haimson & Tang, 2017).

### 4.1.1 Social Media Platforms

Social media are designed to reach a greater audience than traditional media would be capable to. Their functionalities provide more accessibility; information can be consumed and posted at any convenient time or place (Kitzie & Ghosh, 2015). Social movements take advantage of these functionalities. BLM protests were almost always preceded by communication on social media, and during these events, the communications on online media continued for several purposes, such as coordinating and supporting fellow protesters (Peng et al., 2019). The functionalities of platforms which were used for BLM activism have made it possible to conduct those actions. However, these functionalities have changed over time, new platforms have emerged, and shifts in popularity of certain platforms for activism have occurred (Haimson & Tang, 2017).

#### 4.1.1.1 New Platforms

As described in the Introduction, Facebook and Twitter were the most popular social media platforms for BLM purposes during the first peak (Arif et al., 2018). Between 2014 and 2020 several new social media platforms have emerged. Periscope (Haimson & Tang, 2017)

and TikTok (Medina Serrano et al., 2020) were introduced and became instrumental in engaging in online BLM activism.

Periscope is a social media livestreaming app that launched in 2015 and has been used to livestream BLM protests (Haimson & Tang, 2017). Direct feedback functionalities, such as comments which were answered by the streamers, have added to the engagement of viewers (Haimson & Tang, 2017). In the 2016 riots following deaths of Alton Sterling and Philando Castile, law enforcements were aware of these livestreams and cooperated with protesters to coordinate around common concerns and addressed the audience through livestreams of protesters (Tang et al., 2017). The use of these livestreaming applications has, though their functionalities, changed the behaviour of protesters on the streets and provided a way to experience the events for viewers not able to physically participate (Tang et al., 2017).

Furthermore, TikTok launched in 2016 (Medina Serrano et al., 2020). This platform offers functionalities which has increased awareness of political issues such as BLM (Medina Serrano et al., 2020). TikTok uses an algorithm that decides what content might be interesting for a particular user. If a user might be interested in BLM affairs, TikTok may show them content about this (Medina Serrano et al., 2020). By automatically bringing BLM content to interested users, awareness is spread to a large and relevant audience (Medina Serrano et al., 2020). The introduction of these types of algorithms may have therefore enlarged the audience of the BLM movement.

*4.1.1.2 Popular Platforms*

Improved functionalities of a social media platform are more effective if the platform is also popular when it comes to engaging users in activistic behaviour. Between 2014 and 2020, Instagram (Cornet et al., 2017) and Snapchat (Haimson & Tang, 2017) increased in popularity. Tumblr, however, lost many of its users between the two peaks (Haimson et al., 2019).

Instagram became more relevant for social movements after its introduction of stories in 2016, which can efficiently be used to spread awareness (Cornet et al., 2017). Using visual communication as the main information vector, the content is often easier to be consumed and understood, regardless of factors such as race, education, and age (Cornet et al., 2017). Instagram stories provide the opportunity to easily share a message for a limited time with followers, resulting in a very low threshold to share content. Features such as comments and likes have created the opportunity to augment social activistic communication. Comments can lead to discussions which may lead to collective meaning making, because events are

discussed and connected which can result in perceived patterns and meanings of the events. Likes are a sign of approvement, which give value to statements and important messages are therefore more likely to be considered valuable and read by other people (Cornet et al., 2017). Because of its omnipresence, in 2017 it was the third most popular social media platform in the United States, Instagram has provided the BLM movement a platform which can be used to further develop the movement by efficiently raising massive amounts of awareness using visual communication (Cornet et al., 2017).

Snapchat emerged in 2016 as a major media platform in terms of online activism. This platform has accommodated social sharing and provided opportunities for experiencing events from a distance because of its functionalities (Haimson & Tang, 2017). Tumblr has provided an ideological platform to BLM around and directly after the first peak (Booten, 2016). This has enabled BLM activists to create meaning, spread awareness, and present new ideas and discourses, because discourses can be put into new contexts using this platform. This means that personal values and ideas regarding BLM are connected and shared which has led to new insights (Booten, 2016). In 2018, however, Tumblr lost many of its users following new restrictions that were laid upon posts, which has caused the platform to decrease in popularity for activistic purposes (Haimson et al., 2019).

*4.1.1.3 Platform Developments*

Different platforms have thus been relevant for BLM during different periods between 2014 and 2020. Already popular platforms have meanwhile been further developed and added additional features and functionalities which may have impacted activistic behaviour. Instagram (Li et al., 2018) and Twitter (Stewart et al., 2017) added new features to communicate, and Snapchat, Facebook, and Instagram have added livestreaming options to their platforms in the period between the two peaks of activity (Haimson & Tang, 2017).

In 2018 Instagram added a feature that allowed users to share other users' posts in their stories (Instagram, 2018). This caused Instagram to become an even more popular platform for activistic purposes, since this feature has facilitated slacktivism. Since the introduction of this feature users have been able to share content of other users with minimal effort. A post by the official BLM account, for instance, could be easily shared in a story by users who wanted to show recognition, but did not want to create their own content (Li et al., 2018).

Twitter has developed as well. In 2015 a quote feature was added to the platform, that allowed users to quote other users (Stewart et al., 2017). Furthermore, in 2017 the maximum

length of tweets was doubled to 280 characters (Boot et al., 2019). These developments may have been relevant for BLM activism, since conversations about BLM values have since the quote feature been able to be carried out more orderly. The users could since its introduction refer to specific quotes (Stewart et al., 2017). The increase of maximum number of characters in a tweet meant that users could apply more nuance in their debates on Twitter (Boot et al., 2019).

Furthermore, Snapchat added "Live Stories" in 2015, this feature allowed users to upload stories of an event which provided new opportunities to experience events that were happening (Haimson & Tang, 2017). Facebook also added a livestreaming functionality in 2016 (Haimson & Tang, 2017). Snapchat Live Stories and Facebook Live have had effects on online BLM activism that were similar to the effects of Periscope (Haimson & Tang, 2017; Tang et al., 2017).

### 4.1.2 Timeline Functional Developments

Table 1 shows when events relevant to BLM according to Anderson et al. (2020) and developments of functionalities that have come forward from the literature have taken place.

**Table 1**

*Timeline of Events Relevant to BLM and Functional Developments*

| Years | Events Relevant to BLM | Functional Developments |
|---|---|---|
| 2014 | Acquittal of police officer who shot Michael Brown | |
| 2015 | | Periscope launched; Snapchat introduced Live Stories; Twitter introduced quote feature |
| 2016 | Five police officers killed during a BLM protest in Dallas | TikTok launched; Instagram added stories feature; Snapchat emerged as a platform for activism; Facebook introduced livestreaming feature |
| 2017 | Acquittal of police officer who shot Philando Castile; President Trump called on NFL owners to fire players who protest during the national anthem | Twitter doubled tweet length |
| 2018 | Stephon Clark fatally shot by police officers | Tumblr lost popularity after new regulations on posts; Instagram added sharing posts in stories feature |
| 2019 | | |
| 2020 | Ahmaud Arbery fatally shot; George Floyd killed during detainment | |

**4.2 Utilisations**

The combination of social media and offline events has been key in generating activity regarding BLM, and this has been manifested in varying ways. Whereas Twitter and Facebook have mostly been utilised to mobilise and provide information during the early stages of the movement (Kitzie & Ghosh, 2015), later in the development awareness of protests has been spread using other platforms such as Instagram (Peng et al., 2019). BLM activists have also used social media to provide information on the causes and the goals of the movement (Rezapour et al., 2019). In the theme that belongs to this section findings about user behaviour and utilisations of social media platforms for BLM activism are described.

*4.2.1 User Behaviour*

Different social media platforms have been utilised for different purposes, and these purposes have changed over time. Between the two peaks of activity, BLM activists have utilised social media to conduct activism by appropriation of platforms and engaging in video

activism (Cornet et al., 2017; Haimson & Tang, 2017; Arif, 2018). Furthermore, certain activistic behaviours have increased in this period and therefore changed as well (Groshek & Cutino, 2016; Stewart et al., 2017).

*4.2.1.1 Appropriation*

BLM activists have used existing social media in ways the media may not have been intended to use. In this context, appropriation means how activists and other users appropriated perceived affordances of social media for online activism causes (Cornet et al., 2017).

Celebrities have utilised perceived affordances of social media to support online activism and BLM in particular. This behaviour has risen since stories on Instagram were introduced in 2016. Stories have been utilised by celebrities to show their support for the movement, and this has caused their fans to feel more engaged with BLM (Das et al., 2017). A sense of collective identity was created based on common interests, which has facilitated the fans in achieving goals such as recruitment and petitions. These fans have involved each other, for instance by using fan pages on Facebook, to spread awareness about events (Park et al., 2021). Awareness of the movement and engagement of activists have thus been influenced by celebrity appropriation and fan bases which have endorsed BLM more over time during the development (Das et al, 2017; Park et al., 2021).

BLM actors have utilised certain affordances of Instagram to work around restrictions of its features if they did not allow the intended actions of the users (Cornet et al., 2017). The platform, for instance, does not allow the sharing of links to webpages in posts, or the sharing of stories of other people (Cornet et al., 2017), and until 2018 users could not share other users' posts in their story (Instagram, 2018). Users have created workarounds, for instance by using third-party applications in a profile's biography which can link to multiple pages, and using screenshots of stories of other users in order to easily share this content (Cornet et al., 2017). In 2016 and 2017 Instagram users were using screenshots of posts to share in their story (Cornet et al., 2017), but in 2018 Instagram added a feature after which users no longer needed this workaround (Li et al., 2018).

*4.2.1.2 Increasing Utilisations*

Certain utilisations of social media platforms for BLM activism have increased over time. This increase in behaviour can also be regarded as a development in utilisations of social media activism for BLM. Instagram has become an increasingly popular platform for visual activism, i.e. showing visual content in order to send a message for activistic purposes

(Tang et al., 2017). Visual activism is an important factor of social media activism because it allows users to highlight contexts of social causes by showing what is going on using visual measures instead of words, and to showcase activistic behaviour of the people protesting on the streets (Cornet et al., 2017). This has led to increased engagement with BLM by social media users because the actions of activists could be better understood (Haimson & Tang, 2017). The features introduced by Instagram have also been utilised by BLM activists to generate awareness about the movement and to engage people in altering policies in society, which could sway societal values and norms on topics such as racism and brutality (Rezapour et al., 2019).

Social networks have had positive effects on the perceived identity and well-being of BLM activists, because they have provided means to facilitate self-expression (Groshek & Cutino, 2016). BLM activists who have engaged in online activistic behaviour have presented themselves as BLM supporters, which has strengthened their perceived identity as an activist (Das et al., 2017). Furthermore, the movement and activists' identities have shaped and transformed each other over time (Booten, 2016). When identities reshape, beliefs, values, and norms in society can reshape as well (Liu et al., 2017). Because of a stronger sense of identity by individuals, and a stronger collective identity, the BLM movement has evolved accordingly. The movement can rely upon self-identified activists who can spread awareness more effectively, because their values are perceived to be in line with their actions (Booten, 2016; Liu et al., 2017).

Furthermore, wikis were increasingly used between 2014 and 2020. Wikis have contributed to BLM in various ways (Twyman et al., 2017). The applications are independent of the movement but have served as a great memory production system and as a place to work on collaborative knowledge (Stewart, 2017; Twyman et al., 2017). Differing from social media platforms, wikis try to limit opposing frames within the subject, aiming for objectivity (Stewart et al., 2017). When uproars happened in the movement, such as big protests, different independent wiki authors worked together to create descriptions of all the events, which has resulted in more prominent knowledge storage (Twyman et al., 2017). This has helped to eliminate boundaries of space and time, making the knowledge accessible to people all over the world at any time (Twyman et al., 2017). Editors have collaborated to map significant events in the past that can be related to BLM, and this has led to important realisations, connecting events and finding patterns in behaviour (Stewart et al., 2017). This entails a process of collective sense-making, the editors have worked together to find meaning in events. Those processes are important to social movements because they have helped to

create meaning which has facilitated the formation of collective identities (Twyman et al., 2017). Additionally, wikis have helped to spread knowledge about events which are not prominent in mainstream media (Twyman et al., 2017). The use of wikis has therefore helped develop the BLM movement by strengthening collective identities and spreading awareness. During the development of the movement, this use has increased which has led to even stronger effects on the collective identity and awareness (Twyman et al., 2017).

### 4.2.1.3 Video Activism

Social media have also been utilised to perform video activism. Especially since the rise of platforms that focus on visual aspects, Instagram and Snapchat became popular for activism in 2016 (Cornet et al., 2017; Haimson & Tang, 2017), and TikTok in 2019 (Medina Serrano et al., 2020), video activism has become an important instrument of BLM (Boyd et al., 2021).

Cameras on mobile phones have played a large role in online BLM activism due to video activism (Boyd et al., 2021). The possibility to always have a camera empowers people to capture significant happenings (Scott, 2017). Because of the ubiquity of smartphones, everybody has the ability to record events they happen to witness, such as police violence (Haimson & Tang, 2017; Scott, 2017). Recordings of the deaths of Eric Garner, Walter Scott, and Freddie Gray have shown the public institutionalised racism, which has resulted in deaths (Scott, 2017). These videos have remained relevant over time because they could be shared on social media (Scott, 2017).

Furthermore, livestream applications have been utilised for video activism since their introductions in 2015 and 2016 (Haimson & Tang, 2017). Livestream apps have allowed activists to experience events as a group and can be used as a means for civic management (Haimson & Tang, 2017). Livestreaming BLM protests has led to mutual understanding and interaction among protesters because the livestreams visually showed what was being talked about. The embodied, intimate, and immediate nature of livestreams created a sense of immersion for viewers with the events happening on the streets, which has led to viewers feeling more engaged with the protests (Tang et al., 2017).

### 4.2.2 Timeline Utilisation Developments

Events relevant to BLM according to Anderson et al. (2020) and developments in the utilisation of social media for the BLM movement are presented in Table 2. The table includes utilisations which could be attributed to a certain year following the literature. Other

utilisations, wikis and self-presentation for example, are not placed in the table since they have happened increasingly on a constant basis between the two peaks.

**Table 2**

*Timeline of Events Relevant to BLM and Utilisation Developments*

| Years | Events Relevant to BLM | Utilisation Developments |
|---|---|---|
| 2014 | Acquittal of police officer who shot Michael Brown | |
| 2015 | | |
| 2016 | Five police officers killed during a BLM protest in Dallas | Celebrity Appropriation increased; Instagram workarounds by BLM activists; Visual Activism became popular; Video Activism became popular |
| 2017 | Acquittal of police officer who shot Philando Castile; President Trump called on NFL owners to fire players who protest during the national anthem | |
| 2018 | Stephon Clark fatally shot by police officers | |
| 2019 | | |
| 2020 | Ahmaud Arbery fatally shot; George Floyd killed during detainment | |

**4.3 Threats and Opportunities**

This section provides information about threats and opportunities which have occurred for the BLM movement according to six themes. Threats to the movement have manifested in several ways. So-called bad actors have infiltrated the BLM movement to spread misinformation (Stewart et al., 2017), to harass activists (Groshek & Cutino, 2016), and to manipulate information flows through communication (Arif, 2018). However, opportunities have arisen as well in the period between 2014 and 2020. Slacktivistic behaviour has developed into a valuable instrument for the BLM movement (Rho & Mazmanian, 2019), and the public sphere has grown over time (Peng et al., 2019).

*4.3.1 Framing*

Framing is a persuasion technique in which narratives and images are used in a specific way to implicitly highlight certain aspects of a subject (Rho & Mazmanian, 2019). The BLM movement has been described in various ways on different social media platforms and by different people. Different frames have clashed on Twitter, which has resulted in

confusion about the movement (Lin et al., 2018; Boyd et al., 2021). Outside infiltrators have played part in this by distributing misinformation, i.e. information that is not correct, which led to framing of events in controversial and manipulative ways (Arif et al., 2018). Counter-movements have sparked debates about the legitimacy of BLM, using the mantra Blue Lives Matter, stating that the police officials are heroes and not villains, and All Lives Matter, stating that BLM causes should not be prioritised over other people's problems (Stewart et al, 2017). The Blue Lives Matter versus Black Lives Matter debates were at their peak after five police officers were shot and killed, and nine more police officers and two civilians were injured, during a BLM protest in 2016 in Dallas, Texas. This has led to debates between activists using frames on events which happened to support their side (Arif, 2018). BLM frames are constantly formed, being negotiated, contested, and transformed during interactions between activists (Stewart et al, 2017). These frames have contributed to a collective identity, sustained action, and set the constraints and opportunities of the movement (Stewart et al., 2017). This has led to negative publicity of the BLM movement, especially around 2016 (Rezapour et al., 2019). On the other hand, frames have helped the movement grow as well by helping to showcase police brutality and racism (Groshek & Cutino, 2016; Rho & Mazmanian, 2019).

*4.3.2 Information Operations*

Social media companies have allowed information operations on their platforms (Arif et al., 2018). Information operations are actions which are conducted to affect the information, information systems, and information flows of groups of people or organisations. These operations have been conducted in order to manipulate public opinions on social movements and elections (Arif et al., 2018). Leading up to the 2016 United States elections, bad actors, i.e. people intending to manipulate outcomes, created fake BLM personas to influence the election results, aiming to suppress the turnout of Democratic voters by spreading misinformation (Boyd et al. 2021). Russian "troll" accounts have been recognised to be a large part of the debates between Blue Lives Matter and Black Lives Matter, using different accounts to support the different sides (Arif, 2018; Arif et al., 2018). This has resulted in misinformation consumed by activists on either side, which led to doubt, confusion, and manipulation (Arif et al., 2018). One of the consequences of these messages was that BLM was reframed as a movement aiming for a race-war (Stewart et al., 2017). Until 2016, Tweets regarding BLM were primarily positive about the movement. The information operations had

not visibly infiltrated the movement up until that point. Because of the information operations, more Tweets about BLM became negative in the following year (Stewart et al., 2017).

### 4.3.3 Harassment

BLM protesters' primary fears include online harassment (Wade et al., 2021). Surveilling agents are known to have created fake social media accounts to get in contact with BLM protesters and to eventually harass them, after trying to obtain inside information about protest plans (Wade et al., 2021). Within communities a lack of trust exists because of cyber bullying, resulting in a fear under participants to express themselves (Park et al., 2021). These feelings may have dampened the willingness to participate in the BLM movement (Wade et al., 2021).

Social media platforms provide opportunities for hostile communication (Wade et al., 2021). Users have the possibility to insult other users without fear of consequence because of the distance between users. The anonymity provided by the Internet has caused disinhibition which has led to hostile communications regarding BLM (Groshek & Cutino, 2016; Park et al., 2021). When people participate in social causes, their self-esteem often grows. This higher self-esteem may result in impulsive communication which can be perceived as toxic behaviour by the receiver (Groshek & Cutino, 2016). Mobile phones allow constant spontaneous communication opportunities, which has resulted in transmissions without proper considerations (Groshek & Cutino, 2016). This has led to a large number of uncivil tweets sent with regards to BLM. These uncivil tweets and harassment have come forward predominantly around 2016 (Groshek & Cutino, 2016).

### 4.3.4 Public Sphere

Social media can be regarded as an extension of the public sphere, which disable traditional gatekeepers (Kitzie & Ghosh, 2015; Stewart et al., 2017). Anyone, regardless of status, gender, race, or age, can communicate their opinion. That is an important reason why the BLM movement has been built on social media, because the marginalised group of black people finally have a platform which lets them be heard (Groshek & Cutino, 2016). The public sphere can be seen as the most important aspect of deliberative democracy, and since their introduction this takes place on social media (Rho & Mazmanian, 2019). When upheavals happen, such as a shooting, this can trigger emotional processes in people (Peng et al., 2019). Because of the accessibility of the large public sphere through social media these emotions can be shared by the user and interpreted by an audience (Peng et al., 2019). The public sphere, which has been constantly developing because of social media, has thus

contributed to the development of the BLM movement because it provides people a place to share their ideas about events, and this sphere has grown during the development because of growing usage of social media (Peng et al., 2019).

*4.3.5 Slacktivism*

Slacktivism has empowered a giant passive audience to participate in the BLM movement (Scott, 2017). Especially since Instagram and Snapchat became popular platforms for online activism in 2016, slacktivistic behaviour has increased because of the lower barriers for participating in activism these platforms provide (Cornet et al., 2017; Haimson & Tang, 2017). In the studied literature the effects of slacktivism have been questioned. Simply broadcasting information does not mean that an audience will actually consume and understand the content (Das et al., 2017). Slacktivism has also been described as a way to make people feel good about themselves with little actual input (Liu et al., 2017). Concrete calls for action seem to have had more direct effects, because the self-efficacy is higher for consumers in terms of helping the movement. Slacktivistic actions, on the other hand, have only had actual impacts when the activist's moral values are well-aligned with the social cause to begin with. The perceived honesty and believability of the sender create value which results in more interest of consumers of the content (Liu et al., 2017).

However, hashtag activism has been considered successful in stimulating critical conversations for the BLM movement (Rho & Mazmanian, 2019), and political hashtags have affected awareness and participation in the movement (Simpson, 2018). BLM is even described as proof that hashtag activism can be strategically used to promote awareness, because of the way the hashtag usage has grown and how the hashtag has been implemented in other aspects of life, such as sports (Rho & Mazmanian, 2019). Furthermore, massive amounts of awareness of the movement have been spread using slacktivistic behaviour, especially on Instagram (Cornet et al., 2017). Slacktivistic endeavours have therefore helped the BLM movement to reach a larger audience (Simpson, 2018).

*4.3.6 Privacy & Security*

Protests are unsafe environments (Wade et al., 2021). Apart from dangerous physical situations, technology has brought unwanted effects, such as digital threats from law enforcements, to the protesters as well (Boyd et al., 2021). Because of information operations in 2016 and the Cambridge Analytica scandal which became public in 2018, protesters have been asked to be cautious with their online actions (Arif, 2018; Boyd et al., 2021). Organisations have spread privacy and security advice online (Boyd et al., 2021; Wade et al.,

2021). Recommendations have included using end-to-end encrypted messaging systems and being cautious on social media, which has altered behaviour during protests in the more recent years of the BLM movement (Boyd et al., 2021). Furthermore, protesters have been afraid that footage of them in protests may harm family and work relations (Boyd et al., 2021). Such footage has also led to online harassment (Wade et al., 2021). Therefore, protesters have been asked to account for the privacy of their fellow activists on social media and to blur out faces (Boyd et al., 2021). Activists have stated that the safety of fellow protesters is their top priority, above their own safety (Boyd et al., 2021). All of this has impacted the ways people acted during protests which happened later in the development. Phones have been used less and social media usage has dampened by protesters on the streets because of the recommendations during later protests (Boyd et al., 2021).

*4.3.7 Timeline Threats and Opportunities*

In Table 3, the threats and opportunities which have occurred between 2014 and 2020 are presented in a timetable with the events that have been relevant to BLM (Anderson et al., 2020). Again, the threats and opportunities that could be attributed to a specific year have been included. The increasing public sphere has been left out of the timetable, since this has taken place on a constant basis in the period between the two peaks according to the literature.

**Table 3**

*Timeline of Events Relevant to BLM and Threats and Opportunities*

| Years | Events Relevant to BLM | Threats and Opportunities |
|---|---|---|
| 2014 | Acquittal of police officer who shot Michael Brown | |
| 2015 | | |
| 2016 | Five police officers killed during a BLM protest in Dallas | Peak in polarising frames; Information operations; Peak in uncivility and harassment; Slacktivistic behaviour started increasing |
| 2017 | Acquittal of police officer who shot Philando Castile; President Trump called on NFL owners to fire players who protest during the national anthem | |
| 2018 | Stephon Clark fatally shot by police officers | Cambridge Analytica scandal disclosed, more privacy measures |
| 2019 | | |
| 2020 | Ahmaud Arbery fatally shot; George Floyd killed during detainment | |

**5 Discussion**

The research question of the current study was: "In what ways has social media usage by Black Lives Matter actors changed during the development of Black Lives Matter in the period between 2014 and 2020?". To answer this question, this section combines the results of the current study with research discussed in the Introduction and Theoretical Framework. An analysis of social media usage from the peak in 2014 to peak in 2020 is provided. The results of this analysis help to provide answers to the sub-research questions. Afterwards, the limitations of the current study are discussed and recommendations for future research are described.

**5.1 Analysis**

In 2014, the first peak of online activity happened following the police brutality related deaths of Trayvon Martin, Eric Garner, and Michael Brown. When the policer officer who was responsible for the death of Michael Brown was acquitted, protests over the United States were initiated and online activity regarding BLM rose, resulting in a massive number of tweets containing BLM hashtags (Rickford, 2016). This peak was the result of many years of witnessed institutionalised racism which finally found a way to be expressed to the world because social media facilitated an extension of the public sphere through which black people, among others, were able to voice their discontent (Carney, 2016). Black Twitter became a place where black people could share their emotions and information, and this has facilitated the construction of a collective identity (Harlow & Benbrook, 2019). The extended public sphere brought an audience to the marginalised voices and awareness about the struggles of black people was generated, which led to global attention on the movement (Groshek & Cutino, 2016; Drakulich et al., 2020). Facebook and Twitter were the most important platforms for the movement and were mainly used to coordinate protests and mobilise and allocate resources (Mundt et al., 2018). Global news coverage followed which contributed to the development of large protests spread over the world (Rickford, 2016).

After 2014 the BLM movement developed further. More social media platforms emerged as platforms for activism. Although Instagram had existed since 2010, only later it became an important political platform (Cornet et al., 2017). Instagram became popular for sharing BLM content because of its focus on visual communication, which appeared to be an effective way to share emotionally loaded content. Visual content is more easily understood and evokes stronger emotions among people regardless of race, age, education, and class

(Cornet et al., 2017). The stories function that Instagram introduced in 2016, has provided low-threshold opportunities for users to engage in activistic behaviour, because the content is only visible for a limited time, and stories can be shared without much effort (Cornet et al., 2017). Especially after the introduction of a feature that allowed Instagram users to share the posts of other users in their own story, Instagram became prominent as a political platform for the BLM community (Li et al., 2018). Another platform, Snapchat, emerged as a political platform in 2016. Snapchat, like Instagram, is focussed on visual content and contains a stories function (Haimson & Tang, 2017). The functionalities of both these platforms lowered barriers for participation, which may have encouraged more slacktivists to participate in the movement (Halupka, 2018) and therefore provided opportunities for users to pour their emotions into political participation (George & Leidner, 2019).

BLM was an important topic in the debates leading up to the 2016 presidential elections (Anderson, 2016). In order to suppress Democratic voters' turnout, information operations were conducted. Bad actors infiltrated the BLM movement by creating fake personas, which were used to spread misinformation and manipulate the public opinion on BLM (Arif et al., 2018; Boyd et al., 2021). They spread fake racist narratives and participated in debates which has led to polarised arguments (Stewart et al., 2017) and frames set in narratives in manipulative ways (Arif et al., 2018). Confusion among activists, racist framing of events, and heated arguments online followed (Arif et al., 2018; Boyd et al., 2021), resulting in negative Tweets about BLM (Stewart et al., 2017). As mentioned in the Introduction, the popular opinion on the BLM movement swayed between 2016 and 2020 (Dutton et al., 2016; Cohn & Quealy, 2020; Parker et al., 2020). This may be partially explained by the information operations during the 2016 elections in the United States. These processes manipulated communication flows and spread misinformation, which led to confusion and resulted in negative opinions on the movement (Arif et al., 2018; Boyd et al., 2021). Furthermore, in 2018 the Cambridge Analytica scandal was disclosed (Isaak & Hanna, 2018). The data misuse of this scandal was especially evident during the 2016 elections and brought scepticism to people about social media (González et al., 2019). The disclosure of this scandal and its consequences may have impacted BLM social media usage, as extra attention was provided to privacy and security regulations in the later years of the development. Users were, for instance, asked not to post footage in which other activists were recognisable (Boyd et al., 2021; Wade et al. 2021).

The identities of activists are important, as the identities of all the participants combined form the social movement (Liu et al., 2017). When social media users identify as

activists on social media, followers may perceive their values as being in line with political content they post, which may lead to a more active consumption of the content by the followers (Booten, 2016; Liu et al., 2017). Thus, because more activists have openly identified as activists during the years of the development of BLM, content about BLM became more effectively spread (Booten, 2016; Liu et al., 2017). The construction of identities of activists has also been facilitated by the development of a collective identity (Stewart et al., 2017), which is crucial in social movements (Gerbaudo & Treé, 2015).

Black Twitter provided a foundation for online construction of collective identity during the first peak (Harlow & Benbrook, 2019) and social media platforms have remained important for this construction during the development of the movement (Stewart et al., 2017; Park et al., 2021). Celebrities have also played an important role in this. They have appropriated social media to support BLM, by posting about these causes and generating awareness (Park et al., 2021). This may have facilitated the construction of a collective identity among followers of those celebrities with regards to the BLM movement (Das et al., 2017). Furthermore, wiki pages about the BLM movement and its events have been constructed during this timeframe (Twyman et al., 2017). This has led to connected behavioural patterns in events, and facilitated collective meaning making, which also may have contributed to a strengthened collective identity (Stewart et al., 2017; Twyman et al., 2017). Videos showing police brutality were posted on social media which has led to discussions about those events (Scott, 2017). The collective sense making that happened during those discussions have also led to a stronger collective identity (Haimson & Tang, 2017).

In the peaks of activity massive protests occurred in the United States (Rickford, 2016). In the period in-between, protests have taken place but they were not as big as those in 2014 and 2020 (Bolsover, 2020). However, multiple killings of black people have happened during this period (Boylorn, 2020) which have not led to similar uproars, not in physical protests or in social media usage.

It is assumed that video activism has had a large effect on the protests since the first peak. During the first peak video footage was mainly distributed through traditional media sources, but since 2016 videos of what was observed were more commonly shared (Haimson & Tang, 2017). Recordings of the protests showed the world what was happening on the streets. This has led to increased understanding of the protests, and increased awareness of events that occurred during protests (Boyd et al., 2021). The availability of livestreaming applications have further increased engagement with the BLM protests among social media

users, because of the immersion that is experienced watching livestreams and the direct feedback functionalities the applications provide (Tang et al., 2017).

During the protests social ties are formed, which may increase the engagement with the movement and stimulate protest participation. Perceived shared goals and social interactions, in which, for instance, narratives about endured racism are told, enhance participants' commitment (Peng et al., 2019). Social ties strengthen the collective identity, and because of the collective identity people feel obliged to participate in protests (Polletta & Jasper, 2001). Online harassment of activists in protests conducted using social media, however, may have had a negative impact on the willingness to participate in protests among activists, since they fear being harassed themselves (Wade et al., 2021). Furthermore, activists have been afraid that video footage of them in protests may have negative impacts on their family and work relations (Boyd et al., 2021) or may be used to prosecute them (Wade et al., 2021). Privacy scandals that occurred may have strengthened these fears (Boyd et al., 2021). Social media usage on the streets therefore may have dampened in this period, since activists did not want to risk hurting fellow activists (Boyd et al., 2021; Wade et al., 2021). These may be part of the reason why protests in this period were not as big as those in the peaks. However, privacy issues remained when the second peak of the BLM occurred in 2020.

In 2020 George Floyd was murdered (Cappelli, 2020). Footage of this incident spread through social media (Cappelli, 2020), which resulted in global news attention and massive protests all over the world (Drakulich et al., 2020). The incident also led to an enormous presence of the BLM movement on social media (Anderson et al., 2020). By the time this second peak of activity occurred, the collective identity had been strengthened through, among others, the development of social ties (Peng et al., 2019) and collective meaning making (Stewart et al., 2017; Twyman et al., 2017). Furthermore, the video of the death of Floyd had sparked more debates (Michaels, 2020), which may have led to an even stronger collective identity promoted by the collective meaning making which happened during those debates. More users had identified as activists, and as their values were perceived to be aligned with the content they shared, the content was taken more seriously (Booten, 2016; Halupka, 2018; Liu et al., 2017).

**5.2 Sub-Research Questions**

Following this analysis and the results, the sub-research questions of the current study can be answered. The first sub-research question was "How have functional changes in social media platforms coincided with events relevant to BLM between 2014 and 2020?". Several

functional developments of social media platforms have coincided with events that have been relevant to BLM. New platform TikTok emerged as a popular platform (Medina Serrano et al., 2020) for social media activism and new livestream services such as Periscope brought new functionalities to BLM actors (Haimson & Tang, 2017). Instagram introduced a stories feature (Cornet et al., 2017) and later added a functionality to share posts of other users in one's story (Li et al., 2018). Twitter added a functionality which has allowed users to refer to specific quotes (Stewart et al., 2017) and later doubled the maximum length of tweets (Boot et al., 2019), which may have resulted in an increase of richness and civility of the platform. These changes have partly co-occurred with events relevant to BLM. The launch of TikTok and the rise of Instagram and Snapchat as popular platforms for online activism happened in the same year as the Dallas protest in which police officers were killed (Anderson et al., 2020). A year later, in 2016, Twitter doubled its maximum tweet length and the officer who shot Philando Castile got acquitted and President Trump tried to get NFL players who refused to sing the national anthem, as a form of BLM protest, fired (Anderson et al., 2020). The increased functionalities facilitated the BLM movement by allowing to spread visual information, involving younger groups, with for instance the introduction of the platform TikTok which is very popular among the youth (Auxier & Anderson, 2021), and thus increasing the public sphere.

The second sub-research question was "How have social media utilisations for activism developments coincided with events relevant to BLM between 2014 and 2020?". The main social media utilisation developments for BLM have been celebrity appropriation (Das et al., 2017), appropriation of Instagram by BLM actors (Cornet et al., 2017), and the popularisation of video and visual activism (Haimson & Tang, 2017), which all happened in 2016, the same year as the Dallas protest (Anderson et al., 2020). These developments may have been the results of the functional developments of social media. As Instagram and Snapchat became popular for activism, video and visual activism became popular as well. These platforms are focused on visual communication, therefore it seems likely that the functional developments are related to the changes in utilisation of social media. The utilisations also influenced the functional developments. For instance, when Instagram users found a workaround for limitations of Instagram to perform activism (Cornet et al., 2017), Instagram later added features which allowed the intended purpose of the workaround (Li et al., 2018).

The last sub-research question was "What opportunities and threats concerning the use of social media for BLM have coincided with events relevant to BLM between 2014 and

2020?". In 2016 the Dallas shooting of police officers took place (Anderson et al., 2020). Several threats and opportunities for online BLM activism occurred in the same year, namely polarising frames (Arif et al., 2018), information operations (Boyd et al., 2021), a peak in uncivility (Groshek & Cutino, 2016), and the start of an increase in slacktivism behaviour (Liu et al., 2017). The first three of these may be related to the shooting. Counter-movements of BLM, which got more attention because of the shooting, were infiltrated to spread misinformation in information operations (Arif, 2018). This may have led to polarised frames (Stewart et al., 2017) and a peak in uncivility and harassment (Wade et al., 2021). The disclosure of the Cambridge Analytica scandal (Boyd et al., 2021), as an external event, may have had a relation to the increase of privacy measures that were taken during protests in later phases of BLM (Boyd et al., 2021). Furthermore, slacktivism increased in 2016, as visual activism and story features provided a foundation for low-threshold activism, this thus coincided with functionality and utilisation developments (Cornet et al., 2017).

The answers to these three sub-research questions, together, form an indication of the ways social media usage by BLM actors may have changed in the period between the two peaks of activity. This study has contributed to collective sense-making of events regarding BLM that have taken place during the development of the movement, because they been put in a larger context. The analysis brought forward how changes in functionalities in social media platforms and user behaviour influence each other, and this has effects on the ways social media activism was conducted. Threats, internal as well as external of the movement, were found that may have caused difficulties in later parts of the development and should therefore be taken into account by actors of a social movement. Several potential reasons were identified, from a social media point of view, why cases of police brutality that occurred between 2014 and 2020 did not lead to comparable peaks as the ones in 2014 and 2020, including polarising frames, misinformation, harassment, and privacy issues. Future studies could focus on these topics to provide further explanation on the development of social media usage for activistic causes.

## 5.3 Limitations and Future Work

An extensive literature review was conducted based on 22 articles retrieved from the ACM Digital Database. This database is focused on computing research, therefore the results of the current study revolve around this domain and should be interpreted accordingly. Future studies could be conducted to look at the development of BLM social media usage from different domains, such as psychology or humanities. This could lead to new insights on the

development of social media usage in the BLM movement from multiple perspectives.

Furthermore, the current study looked at social media activism in a broad way, which has resulted in broad results. If the study had focused on certain aspects of social media activism, such as video activism or a specific platform, more in-depth findings might have been discovered. In this study it is described that adding a feature in Instagram, for instance, has facilitated the generation and spread of awareness. What this process precisely entails could be a subject for future studies. Research on this could provide useful information, such as what other features could be added to optimise the platform for online activism. Future research should, therefore, be conducted on more specific elements of social media activism regarding BLM.

The social media era covers merely a small part of history connected to racial issues. The BLM movement can, and should, be traced back to historic activists who fought for emancipation of black people (LeBron, 2017). The current study has not touched the history of emancipation activists, and a very important aspect of the movement has therefore not been taken into account. Future studies could focus on the connection between the history of emancipation activism and the online BLM activities. This could lead to important realisations regarding the development of the movement.

Other movements tied to social media, such as the #MeToo movement, have happened during the BLM timeframe (Jaffe, 2018). Research on other movements can be conducted to compare whether reported developments in social media have had a similar effect on these movements and whether information operations have had a similar impact. Discoveries of developments of other social movements could help the BLM movement grow by applying previously used techniques and strategies which could potentially bring the movement closer to achieving its goals. Furthermore, the popular opinion on #MeToo also swayed from overall positive to more negative during the movement (Rho & Mazmanian, 2019). Future studies could provide more information on why opinions on social movements sway and what practices could be applied to maintain positive opinions on social movements.

A final limitation of the current study could be the online focus. The BLM movement has been built on social media, and social media have been important in its development, as described in the current study. However, important BLM events have taken place on the streets. Large protests, even though they were coordinated using social media, happened on the streets. Offline BLM events could be focused on in future studies to find out how these have developed and have helped the movement develop.

## 6 Conclusion

In 2014 #BlackLivesMatter was used on Twitter in a, then, incredible amount of almost 200 thousand tweets in one day. However, on May 28th, 2020, the same hashtag was used in 8.8 million tweets, despite the facts that more social media platforms were introduced since 2015 and social media controversies have discouraged the use of social media since 2016. This 44-fold increase in tweets, gives an impression of the rise of social media activism, specifically for BLM, in the last six years.

Several factors may have positively influenced social media activism by BLM actors. The continuing growth of the public sphere may be one of the reasons for the increase in social media activism. More and more people used mobile phones and spent more hours on the Internet. As they got more engaged in the news, they formed an opinion which they shared on social media. Also, social media were developed further and made it easier to consume and spread content. Different social media platforms were used for different purposes. Twitter became more important and useful as a tool to arouse political debates, while TikTok, Snapchat, and Instagram lowered the barriers of participating and were used to share visual aspects of the movements. The landscape of social media evolved to include visual activism and stimulate slacktivistic behaviour. Celebrities and influencers became involved in the BLM movement and brought awareness of its causes to their followers. The collective identity of BLM activists strengthened.

While online activism is expected to keep growing as the public sphere increases and it becomes easier to participate, there are also increased risks on the horizon, which may require more rules and regulations. The line between the freedom of speech and spread of misinformation is becoming thinner as organisations and sometimes even governments attempt to bend people's opinions. Technological developments make it more difficult to distinguish real from fake news, and this makes participating in offline events riskier. As the effectiveness of the BLM movement depends on the combination of online and offline activism, it is crucial that the privacy of the activists and their families is protected to certain extents. Social media platforms and social movements, such as the BLM movement, could work together to improve the online and offline safety of their activists, to ensure that social involvement keeps increasing in the next six years.

## References

Agustina, J. R. (2015). Understanding Cyber Victimization: Digital Architectures and the Disinhibition Effect. *International Journal of Cyber Criminology, 9*(1), 35.

Al-Hasan, A., Yim, D., & Lucas, H. C. (2018). A Tale of Two Movements: Egypt During the Arab Spring and Occupy Wall Street. *IEEE Transactions on Engineering Management, 66*(1), 84-97.

Anderson, M. (2016) 3. The Hashtag #BlackLivesMatter Emerges: Social Activism on Twitter. *Pew Research Center*. Retrieved from https://www.pewresearch.org/internet/2016/08/15/the-hashtag-blacklivesmatter-emerges-social-activism-on-twitter/.

Anderson, M., Barthel, M., Perrin, A., & Vogels, E. (2020). #BlackLivesMatter Surges on Twitter After George Floyd's Death. *Pew Research Center*. Retrieved from https://www.pewresearch.org/fact-tank/2020/06/10/blacklivesmatter-surges-on-twitter-after-george-floyds-death/.

Arif, A. (2018). Designing to Support Reflection on Values & Practices to Address Online Disinformation. In *Companion of the 2018 ACM Conference on Computer Supported Cooperative Work and Social Computing* (pp. 61-64).

Arif, A., Stewart, L. G., & Starbird, K. (2018). Acting the Part: Examining Information Operations Within #BlackLivesMatter Discourse. In *Proceedings of the ACM on Human Computer Interaction* (pp 20, 1-27).

Auxier, B. & Anderson, M. (2021). Social Media Use in 2021. *Pew Research Center*. Retrieved from https://www.pewresearch.org/internet/2021/04/07/social-media-use-in-2021/.

Ayaburi, E. W., & Treku, D. N. (2020). Effect of Penitence on Social Media Trust and Privacy Concerns: The Case of Facebook. *International Journal of Information Management, 50*, 171-181.

Bennett, W. (2003). Communicating Global Activism. *Information, Communication & Society, 6*(2), 143-168.

Bolsover, G. (2020). Black Lives Matter Discourse on US Social Media During COVID: Polarised Positions Enacted in a New Event. *Centre for Democratic Engagement, University of Leeds.* Retrieved from https://arxiv.org/abs/2009.03619.

Bonilla, Y., & Rosa, J. (2015). #Ferguson: Digital Protest, Hashtag Ethnography, and the Racial Politics of Social Media in the United States. *American ethnologist, 42*(1), 4-17.

Boot, A. B., Sang, E. T. K., Dijkstra, K., & Zwaan, R. A. (2019). How Character Limit Affects Language Usage in Tweets. *Palgrave Communications, 5*(1), 1-13.

Booten, K. (2016). Hashtag Drift: Tracing the Evolving Uses of Political Hashtags Over Time. In *Proceedings of the 2016 CHI Conference on Human Factors in Computing Systems* (pp. 2401-2405).

Bosch, T. (2017). Twitter Activism and Youth in South Africa: The Case of #RhodesMustFall. *Information, Communication & Society, 20*(2), 221-232.

Boyd, M. J., Sullivan Jr, J. L., Chetty, M., & Ur, B. (2021). Understanding the Security and Privacy Advice Given to Black Lives Matter Protesters. In *Proceedings of the 2021 CHI Conference on Human Factors in Computing Systems* (pp. 1-18).

Boylorn, R. M. (2020). Teaching at the End of the World. *Communication Education, 69*(4), 525-529.

Braun, V., & Clarke, V. (2006). Using Thematic Analysis in Psychology. *Qualitative Research in Psychology, 3*(2), 77-101.

Brown, M., Ray, R., Summers, E., & Fraistat, N. (2017). #SayHerName: A Case Study of Intersectional Social Media Activism. *Ethnic and Racial Studies, 40*(11), 1831-1846.

Brünker, F., Wischnewski, M., Mirbabaie, M., & Meinert, J. (2020). The Role of Social Media During Social Movements – Observations from the #metoo Debate on Twitter. In *Proceedings of the 53rd Hawaii International Conference on System Sciences* (pp. 2356-2365).

Buchanan, L., Bui, Q., & Patel, J.K. (2020). *Black Lives Matter May Be the Largest Movement in U.S. History*. The New York Times. Retrieved from https:// www. nytimes.com /interactive/2020/07/03/us/george-floyd-protests-crowd-size.html.

Byrd, W. C., Gilbert, K. L., & Richardson Jr, J. B. (2017). The Vitality of Social Media for Establishing a Research Agenda on Black Lives and the Movement. *Ethnic and Racial Studies, 40*(11), 1872-1881.

Cappelli, M. L. (2020). Black Lives Matter: The Emotional and Racial Dynamics of the George Floyd Protest Graffiti. *Advances in Applied Sociology, 9*(10), 323-347.

Carney, N. (2016). All Lives Matter, But So Does Race: Black Lives Matter and the Evolving Role of Social Media. *Humanity & Society, 40*(2), 180-199.

Chang, Y., Tang, L., Inagaki, Y., & Liu, Y. (2014). What is Tumblr: A Statistical Overview and Comparison. *ACM SIGKDD Explorations Newsletter, 16*(1), 21-29.

Chen, G. M., Pain, P., & Barner, B. (2018). "Hashtag Feminism": Activism or Slacktivism?. In *Feminist Approaches to Media Theory and Research* (pp. 197-218). Palgrave Macmillan, Cham.

Cohn, N., & Quealy, K. (2020). *How Public Opinion Has Moved On Black Lives Matter*. The New York Times. Retrieved from https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2020/06/10/upshot/black-lives-matter-attitudes.html.

Coiera, E. (2013). Social Networks, Social Media, and Social Diseases. *Bmj, 346*, 1-4.

Cornet, V. P., Hall, N. K., Cafaro, F., & Brady, E. L. (2017). How Image-Based Social Media Websites Support Social Movements. In *Proceedings of the 2017 CHI conference extended abstracts on Human Factors in Computing Systems* (pp. 2473-2479).

Coursaris, C. K., van Osch, W., & Brooks, B. (2014). Social Media Marketing on Twitter. In *International Conference on HCI in Business* (pp. 155-165).

Daft, R. L., & Lengel, R. H. (1986). Organizational Information Requirements, Media Richness, and Structural Design. *Management Science,* 32(5), 554– 571.

Das, S., Goard, J., & Murray, D. (2017). How Celebrities Feed Tweeples with Personal and Promotional Tweets: Celebrity Twitter Use and Audience Engagement. In *Proceedings of the 8th International Conference on Social Media & Society* (pp. 1-5).

Davenport, S. W., Bergman, S. M., Bergman, J. Z., & Fearrington, M. E. (2014). Twitter Versus Facebook: Exploring the Role of Narcissism in the Motives and Usage of Different Social Media Platforms. *Computers in Human Behavior, 32*, 212-220.

Dewing, M. (2010). *Social media: An Introduction* (Vol. 1). Ottawa: Library of Parliament.

Dixon, P. J., & Dundes, L. (2020). Exceptional Injustice: Facebook as a Reflection of Race and Gender-Based Narratives Following the Death of George Floyd. *Social Sciences, 9*(12), 231-254.

Drakulich, K., Wozniak, K. H., Hagan, J., & Johnson, D. (2020). Race and policing in the 2016 presidential election: Black lives matter, the police, and dog whistle politics. *Criminology, 58*(2), 370-402.

Dutton, S., De Pinto, J., Backus, F., & Salvanto, A. (2016). *Negative views of race relations reach all-time high – CBS/NYT poll*. CBS News. Retrieved from https://www.cbsnews .com/news/negative-views-of-race-relations-reach-all-time-high-cbsnyt-poll/.

Flesher Fominaya, C. (2010). Collective identity in social movements: Central concepts and debates. *Sociology Compass, 4*(6), 393-404.

Freelon, D., Marwick, A., & Kreiss, D. (2020). False Equivalencies: Online Activism from Left to Right. *Science, 369*(6508), 1197-1201.

George, J. J., & Leidner, D. E. (2019). From Clicktivism to Hacktivism: Understanding Digital Activism. *Information and Organization, 29*(3), 1-45.

Gerbaudo, P., & Treré, E. (2015). In Search of the 'We' of Social Media Activism: Introduction to the Special Issue on Social Media and Protest Identities. *Information, Communication & Society, 18*(8), 865-871.

Ghobadi, S., & Clegg, S. (2015). "These days will never be forgotten…": A Critical Mass Approach to Online Activism. *Information and Organization, 25*(1), 52-71.

Glenn, C. L. (2015). Activism or "Slacktivism?": Digital Media and Organizing for Social Change. *Communication Teacher, 29*(2), 81-85.

González, F., Yu, Y., Figueroa, A., López, C., & Aragon, C. (2019). Global Reactions to the Cambridge Analytica Scandal: A Cross-Language Social Media Study. In *Companion Proceedings of the 2019 world wide web conference* (pp. 799-806).

Groshek, J., & Cutino, C. (2016). Meaner on Mobile: Incivility and Impoliteness in Communicating Contentious Politics on Sociotechnical Networks. *Social Media+ Society, 2*(4), 1-10.

Haimson, O. L., & Tang, J. C. (2017). What Makes Live Events Engaging on Facebook Live, Periscope, and Snapchat. In *Proceedings of the 2017 CHI conference on human factors in computing systems* (pp. 48-60).

Haimson, O. L., Dame-Griff, A., Capello, E., & Richter, Z. (2019). Tumblr Was a Trans Technology: The Meaning, Importance, History, and Future of Trans Technologies. *Feminist Media Studies, 21*(3), 345-361.

Halupka, M. (2018). The Legitimisation of Clicktivism. *Australian Journal of Political Science, 53*(1), 130-141.

Harlow, S. (2012). Social Media and Social Movements: Facebook and an Online Guatemalan Justice Movement that Moved Offline. *New Media & Society, 14* (2), 225–243.

Harlow, S., & Benbrook, A. (2019). How #Blacklivesmatter: Exploring the Role of Hip-Hop Celebrities in Constructing Racial Identity on Black Twitter. *Information, Communication & Society, 22*(3), 352-368.

Herrick, S. S., Hallward, L., & Duncan, L. R. (2021). "This is just how I cope": An Inductive Thematic Analysis of Eating Disorder Recovery Content Created and Shared on TikTok using #EDrecovery. *International Journal of Eating Disorders, 54*(4), 516-526.

Ho, S. (2020). *A Social Media 'Blackout' Enthralled Instagram. But Did It Do Anything?* NBC News. Retrieved from https://www.nbcnews.com/tech/social-media/social-media-blackout-enthralled-instagram-did-it-do-anything-n1230181.

Hong, G. (2020). Influence of the Police Force on Black Lives Matter. *Technium, 14*(1), 661 669.

Hu, Y., Manikonda, L., & Kambhampati, S. (2014). What We Instagram: A first Analysis of Instagram Photo Content and User Types. In *Proceedings of the International AAAI Conference on Web and Social Media* (pp. 595-598).

Hunt, K. (2019). Twitter, Social Movements, and Claiming Allies in Abortion Debates. *Journal of Information Technology & Politics, 16*(4), 394-410.

Ince, J., Rojas, F., & Davis, C. A. (2017). The Social Media Response to Black Lives Matter: How Twitter Users interact with Black Lives Matter Through Hashtag Use. *Ethnic and Racial Studies, 40*(11), 1814-1830.

Instagram. (2018, May 17). New: Share Feed Posts to Instagram Stories [Blog post]. Retrieved from https://about.instagram.com/blog/announcements/new-share-feed-posts-on-instagram-stories.

Isaak, J., & Hanna, M. J. (2018). User Data Privacy: Facebook, Cambridge Analytica, and Privacy Protection. *Computer, 51*(8), 56-59.

Ishii, K., Lyons, M. M., & Carr, S. A. (2019). Revisiting Media Richness Theory for Today and Future. *Human Behavior and Emerging Technologies, 1*(2), 124-131.

Jaffe, S. (2018). The Collective Power of #MeToo. *Dissent, 65*(2), 80-87.

Kaplan, A. M., & Haenlein, M. (2010). Users of the World, Unite! The Challenges and Opportunities of Social Media. *Business Horizons, 53*(1), 59-68.

Karduni, A., & Sauda, E. (2020). Anatomy of a Protest: Spatial Information, Social Media, and Urban Space. *Social Media+ Society, 6*(1), 1-15.

Khan, M. L. (2017). Social Media Engagement: What Motivates User Participation and Consumption on YouTube?. *Computers in Human Behavior, 66*, 236-247.

Kitzie, V., & Ghosh, D. (2015). #Criming and #Alive: Network and Content Analysis of Two Sides of a Story on Twitter. *Proceedings of the Association for Information Science and Technology, 52*(1), 1-10.

Klerks, G., Hansen, N. B., O'Neill, D., & Schouten, B. (2020). Designing Community Technology Initiatives: A Literature Review. In *32nd Australian Conference on Human-Computer Interaction* (pp. 99-111).

Krutka, D. G. (2020). Move Slower and Protect People: Toward Social Media Inquiry and Activism in Social Studies. *Social Education, 84*(2), 113-117.

Kshetri, N., & Voas, J. (2019). Thoughts on Cyberbullying. *Computer, 52*(4), 64-68.

Lai, M., Tambuscio, M., Patti, V., Ruffo, G., & Rosso, P. (2019). Stance Polarity in Political Debates: A Diachronic Perspective of Network Homophily and Conversations on Twitter. *Data & Knowledge Engineering, 124*(101738), 1-20.

Lane, K., Williams, Y., Hunt, A. N., & Paulk, A. (2020). The Framing of Race: Trayvon Martin and the Black Lives Matter Movement. *Journal of Black Studies, 51*(8), 790-812.

Langford, C. L., & Speight, M. (2015). # BlackLivesMatter: Epistemic Positioning, Challenges, and Possibilities. *Journal of Contemporary Rhetoric, 5*(3), 78-98.

Lebron, C. J. (2017). *The Making of Black Lives Matter: A Brief History of an Idea*. Oxford University Press.

Lerner, A., He, H. Y., Kawakami, A., Zeamer, S. C., & Hoyle, R. (2020). Privacy and Activism in the Transgender Community. In *Proceedings of the 2020 CHI Conference on Human Factors in Computing Systems* (pp. 1-13).

Lewis, K., Gray, K., & Meierhenrich, J. (2014). The Structure of Online Actvism. *Sociological Science, 1*, 1-9.

Li, H., Bora, D., Salvi, S., & Brady, E. (2018). Slacktivists or Activists? Identity Work in the Virtual Disability March. In *Proceedings of the 2018 CHI Conference on Human Factors in Computing Systems* (pp. 1-13).

Lim, J. S., & Golan, G. J. (2011). Social Media Activism in Response to the Influence of Political Parody Videos on YouTube. *Communication Research, 38*(5), 710-727.

Lin, Y., Hoover, J., Portillo-Wightman, G., Park, C., Dehghani, M., & Ji, H. (2018). Acquiring Background Knowledge to Improve Moral Value Prediction. In *2018 IEEE/ACM International Conference on Advances in Social Networks Analysis and Mining (Asonam)* (pp. 552-559).

Liu, F., Ford, D., Parnin, C., & Dabbish, L. (2017). Selfies as Social Movements: Influences on Participation and Perceived Impact on Stereotypes. In *Proceedings of the ACM on Human-Computer Interaction* (pp. 72, 1-21).

Lucas, G. R. (2014). NSA Management Directive# 424: Secrecy and Privacy in the Aftermath of Edward Snowden. *Ethics & International Affairs, 28*(1), 29-38.

Madison, N., & Klang, M. (2020). The Case for Digital Activism: Refuting the Fallacies of Slacktivism. *Journal of Digital Social Research, 2*(2), 28-47.

Maqbool, A. (2020). *Black Lives Matter: From Social Media Post to Global Movement*. BBC. Retrieved from https://www.bbc.com/news/world-us-canada-53273381.

Marín, V. I., Carpenter, J. P., & Tur, G. (2021). Pre-Service Teachers' Perceptions of Social Media Data Privacy Policies. *British Journal of Educational Technology, 52*(2), 519-535.

McCafferty, D. (2011). Activism vs. Slacktivism. *Communications of the ACM, 54*(12), 17-19.

Medina Serrano, J. C., Papakyriakopoulos, O., & Hegelich, S. (2020). Dancing to the Partisan beat: A First Analysis of Political Communication on TikTok. In *12th ACM Conference on Web Science* (pp. 257-266).

Michaels, N. (2020). Posting about BLM Made it a Movement Pushing for Real Change. *Youth & Society, 72*(7), 1285-1311.

Miller, R., & Melton, J. (2015). College Students and Risk-Taking Behaviour on Twitter versus Facebook. *Behaviour & Information Technology, 34*(7), 678-684.

Miller, V. (2017). Phatic Culture and the Status Quo: Reconsidering the Purpose of Social Media Activism. *Convergence, 23*(3), 251-269.

Mosquera, R., Odunowo, M., McNamara, T., Guo, X., & Petrie, R. (2020). The Economic Effects of Facebook. *Experimental Economics, 23*(2), 575-602.

Mundt, M., Ross, K., & Burnett, C. M. (2018). Scaling Social Movements Through Social Media: The Case of Black Lives Matter. *Social Media+ Society, 4*(4), 1-14.

Murthy, D. (2018). Introduction to social media, activism, and organizations. *Social Media+ Society, 4*(1), 1-4.

Naik, R. (2021). An Open Letter: "The Revolution Will Not Be Televised, But It Will Be Streamed Live". In Bocense, M., Gröppmaier, S. S., Harju, B., & Starke, A., *Where My Girls At?* (pp. 53-66). München, Germany: University Library of Ludwig-Maximilians-Universität.

Nguyen, B. T., & Allen, A. J. (2018). Social Media and the Intrauterine Device: a YouTube Content Analysis. *BMJ Sexual & Reproductive Health, 44*(1), 28-32.

Norman, D. A. (1999). Affordance, Conventions, and Design. *Interactions, 6*(3), 38-43.

Norris, P. (2004). Young People & Political Activism. *Harvard University, John F. Kennedy School of Government*, 1-32.

Ott, B. L. (2017). The Age of Twitter: Donald J. Trump and the Politics of Debasement. *Critical Studies in Media Communication, 34*(1), 59-68.

Papakyriakopoulos, O., Hegelich, S., Shahrezaye, M., & Serrano, J. C. M. (2018). Social Media and Microtargeting: Political Data Processing and the Consequences for Germany. *Big Data & Society, 5*(2), 1-15.

Park, S. Y., Santero, N. K., Kaneshiro, B., & Lee, J. H. (2021). Armed in ARMY: A Case Study of How BTS Fans Successfully Collaborated to #MatchAMillion for Black Lives Matter. In *Proceedings of the 2021 CHI Conference on Human Factors in Computing Systems* (pp. 1-14).

Parker, K., Horowitz, J., & Anderson, M. (2020). Amid Protests, Majorities Across Racial and Ethnic Groups Express Support for the Black Lives Matter Movement. *Pew Research Center*. Retrieved from https://www.pewresearch.org/socialtrends/2020/06/12/amid-protests-majorities-across-racial-and-ethnic-groups-express-support-for-the-black-lives-matter-movement/.

Peng, H., Budak, C., & Romero, D. M. (2019). Event-Driven Analysis of Crowd Dynamics in the Black Lives Matter Online Social Movement. In *The World Wide Web Conference* (pp. 3137-3143).

Polletta, F., & Jasper, J. M. (2001). Collective Identity and Social Movements. *Annual review of Sociology, 27*(1), 283-305.

Powell, A., Overington, C., & Hamilton, G. (2018). Following #JillMeagher: Collective Meaning-Making in Response to Crime Events Via Social Media. *Crime, Media, Culture, 14*(3), 409-428.

Preibusch, S. (2015). Privacy Behaviors After Snowden. *Communications of the ACM, 58*(5), 48-55.

Razak, A. A., Mansor, N. A., Razak, R. A., Nawi, N. M. M., Yusoff, A. M., & Din, N. (2020). Changing Awareness About Health Behavior: A Study Among Young Instagram Users. *The Journal of Behavioral Science, 15*(1), 19-33.

Rezapour, R., Ferronato, P., & Diesner, J. (2019). How do Moral Values Differ in Tweets on Social Movements?. In *Conference Companion Publication of the 2019 on Computer Supported Cooperative Work and Social Computing* (pp. 347-351).

Rho, E. H. R., & Mazmanian, M. (2019). Hashtag Burnout? A Control Experiment Investigating How Political Hashtags Shape Reactions to News Content. In *Proceedings of the ACM on Human-Computer Interaction* (pp. 197, 1-25).

Rickford, R. (2016). Black Lives Matter: Toward a Modern Practice of Mass Struggle. *New Labor Forum, 25*(1), 34-42.

Rotman, D., Vieweg, S., Yardi, S., Chi, E., Preece, J., Shneiderman, B., . . . & Glaisyer, T. (2011). From Slacktivism to Activism: Participatory Culture in the Age of Social Media. In *CHI'11 Extended Abstracts on Human Factors in Computing Systems* (pp. 819-822).

Sandoval-Almazan, R., & Gil-Garcia, J. R. (2014). Towards Cyberactivism 2.0? Understanding the Use of Social Media and Other Information Technologies for Political Activism and Social Movements. *Government Information Quarterly, 31*(3), 365-378.

Scott, S. A. (2017). Mediatized Witnessing and the Ethical Imperative of Capture. *International Journal of E-Politics (IJEP), 8*(1), 1-13.

Segerberg, A., & Bennett, W. L. (2011). Social Media and the Organization of Collective Action: Using Twitter to Explore the Ecologies of Two Climate Change Protests. *The Communication Review, 14*(3), 197-215.

Senthil Kumar, S., Saravanakumar, K., & Deepa, K. (2016). On Privacy and Security in Social Media – A Comprehensive Study. *Procedia Computer Science, 78*, 114-119.

Simpson, E. (2018). Integrated & Alone: The Use of Hashtags in Twitter Social Activism. In *Companion of the 2018 ACM Conference on Computer Supported Cooperative Work and Social Computing* (pp. 237-240).

Simpson, E., & Semaan, B. (2021). For You, or For "You"? Everyday LGBTQ+ Encounters with TikTok. *Proceedings of the ACM on Human-Computer Interaction* (pp. 252, 1-34).

Smith, M., Szongott, C., Henne, B., & Von Voigt, G. (2012). Big Data Privacy Issues in Public Social Media. In *2012 6th IEEE International Conference on Digital Ecosystems and Technologies (DEST)* (pp. 1-6).

Smith, B. G., Krishna, A., & Al-Sinan, R. (2019). Beyond Slacktivism: Examining the Entanglement Between Social Media Engagement, Empowerment, and Participation in Activism. *International Journal of Strategic Communication, 13*(3), 182-196.

Stanley, P. (2020). Unlikely Hikers? Activism, Instagram, and the Queer Mobilities of Fat Hikers, Women Hiking Alone, and Hikers of Colour. *Mobilities, 15*(2), 241-256.

Stewart, L. G., Arif, A., Nied, A. C., Spiro, E. S., & Starbird, K. (2017). Drawing the Lines of Contention: Networked Frame Contests Within #BlackLivesMatter Discourse. In *Proceedings of the ACM on Human-Computer Interaction* (pp. 96, 1-23).

Tang, J. C., Kivran-Swaine, F., Inkpen, K., & Van House, N. (2017). Perspectives on Live Streaming: Apps, Users, and Research. In *Companion of the 2017 ACM Conference on Computer Supported Cooperative Work and Social Computing* (pp. 123-126).

Theocharis, Y., Lowe, W., Van Deth, J. W., & García-Albacete, G. (2015). Using Twitter to Mobilize Protest Action: Online Mobilization Patterns and Action Repertoires in the Occupy Wall Street, Indignados, and Aganaktismenoi Movements. *Information, Communication & Society, 18*(2), 202-220.

Trevisan, M., Vassio, L., Drago, I., Mellia, M., Murai, F., Figueiredo, F., . . . & Almeida, J. M. (2019). Towards Understanding Political Interactions on Instagram. In *Proceedings of the 30th ACM Conference on Hypertext and Social Media* (pp. 247-251).

Triệu, P., & Baym, N. K. (2020). Private Responses for Public Sharing: Understanding Self-Presentation and Relational Maintenance via Stories in Social Media. In *Proceedings of the 2020 CHI Conference on Human Factors in Computing Systems* (pp. 1-13).

Twyman, M., Keegan, B. C., & Shaw, A. (2017). Black Lives Matter in Wikipedia: Collective Memory and Collaboration Around Online Social Movements. In *Proceedings of the 2017 ACM Conference on Computer Supported Cooperative Work and Social Computing* (pp. 1400-1412).

Valenzuela, S. (2013). Unpacking the Use of Social Media for Protest Behavior: The roles of Information, Opinion Expression, and activism. *American Behavioral Scientist, 57*(7), 920-942.

Vaterlaus, J. M., Barnett, K., Roche, C., & Young, J. A. (2016). "Snapchat is more personal": An Exploratory Study on Snapchat Behaviors and Young Adult Interpersonal Relationships. *Computers in Human Behavior, 62*, 594-601.

Vázquez-Herrero, J., Direito-Rebollal, S., & López-García, X. (2019). Ephemeral Journalism: News Distribution Through Instagram Stories. *Social Media+ Society, 5*(4), 1-13.

Velasquez, A., & LaRose, R. (2015). Social Media for Social Change: Social Media Political Efficacy and Activism in Student Activist Groups. *Journal of Broadcasting & Electronic Media, 59*(3), 456-474.

Verble, J. (2014). The NSA and Edward Snowden: Surveillance in the 21st Century. *ACM SIGCAS Computers and Society, 44*(3), 14-20.

Vicari, S. (2013). Public Reasoning Around Social Contention: A Case Study of Twitter Use in the Italian Mobilization for Global Change. *Current Sociology, 61*(4), 474-490.

Wade, K., Brubaker, J. R., & Fiesler, C. (2021). Protest Privacy Recommendations: An Analysis of Digital Surveillance Circumvention Advice During Black Lives Matter Protests. In *Extended Abstracts of the 2021 CHI Conference on Human Factors in Computing Systems* (pp. 1-6).

Ward, K. (2018). Social Networks, the 2016 US Presidential Election, and Kantian ethics: Applying the Categorical Imperative to Cambridge Analytica's Behavioral Microtargeting. *Journal of media ethics, 33*(3), 133-148.

Weimann, G., & Masri, N. (2020). Research Note: Spreading Hate on TikTok. *Studies in Conflict & Terrorism,* 1-14.

Wilkins, D. J., Livingstone, A. G., & Levine, M. (2019). Whose Tweets? The Rhetorical Functions of Social Media Use in Developing the Black Lives Matter Movement. *British Journal of Social Psychology, 58*(4), 786-805.

Williamson, V., Trump, K. S., & Einstein, K. L. (2018). Black Lives Matter: Evidence That Police-Caused Deaths Predict Protest Activity. *Perspectives on Politics, 16*(2), 400-415.