

# Unveiling the Roots: Tracing Origins of Historic Movements

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We've all heard of the Black Lives Matter movement right? Well if not, look no further for a brief history. Not only have we seen this movement erupt on social media sites such as Instagram. Most of us have seen trends like #BlackOutTuesday, but what does posting a black square actually do? It spreads awareness. However, before we spread awareness we need to be educated about this crucial movement. The Black Lives Matter movement was actually started in 2012 with the death of Trayvon Martin by firearm. But even before that in the 1960s, the Black Panther Party was founded in California. Today we'll take a look at where each of these historic movements come from.

We'll start by taking a look at the history of the Black Panther Party for Self Defense. As you could probably conclude from the name of their party, the intent of the founders Huey P. Newton and Bobby Seale was to protect African Americans from police brutality they were facing in their own neighborhoods. The Black Panther Party inspired change through the Civil Rights movement. Although both the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and the Voting Rights act of 1965 were passed prior to their formation (in 1966) there was still a lot of change needed especially in the mindsets of the white demographic of America. The Black Panther Party worked through dealing with the racism in the politics of the system, and by "system" I mean the biased police force and corrupt politicians. For instance, The Black Panther Party once marched into Sacramento to protest the signing of the Mulford Act which would have restricted access to guns. You may be thinking about how the BLM movement has been very active in the fight for gun control, but back in the 1960s the Black Panther Party viewed guns as vital to protect their

neighbors who were otherwise defenseless against evil groups like the KKK. The biased police force is exactly what started this movement in the 60s and now we see it again with the

Speaking of gun control, we'll now focus on the Black Lives Matter movement and how it came to be. As I briefly mentioned earlier, the start of this movement can be accredited to Alicia Garza, Patrisse Khan-Cullors, and Opal Tometi after the death of Trayvon Martin. With the start of the pandemic and George Floyd's death the Black Lives Matter movement gained immense traction. In a similar fashion to past movements, the Black Lives Matter movement fought for their beliefs through political action. As defined by the Merriam Webster dictionary, political action is "action designed to attain a purpose by the use of political power or by activity in political channels". Political action can be demonstrated in many ways, for example, members can donate money to organizations like the NAACP, participate in nonviolent protests and demonstrations, and vote/campaign for political candidates who align with your ideals. Although knowing that every single life (especially lives of Black Americans) is important may be common sense to you and me, over 50% of white people don't agree. So not only does this start pushing supporters and non-supporters away from each other but also expands on political polarization in America. No matter what political party we come from, most people can tell you that supporting BLM is a "Democrat" way of thinking while being against BLM is a "Republican" way of thinking, which simply isn't true.

Now that we know a little bit more about the history of the Black Panther Party and the Black Lives Matter movement then when we started, we can now start to spread awareness about both of these movements. For example, instead of just solely posting a black square we can add a

multitude of resources that go along with said black square that can help people in need and further the cause of both these parties.

So the next time you see someone talking about either of these parties incorrectly, you can use what you've learned here today or anywhere else to educate that person on what is actually factual about these historical movements. And now that we've learned about the past we can now educate and spread quality in the present as well as the near future.

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