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**Abstract**

**Black Panther Party: A Community Empowerment Movement or Violent Outlaws?**

There is a significant divide between Whites and African-Americans when it comes to their perceptions about the Black Panther Party.  For the mainstream white America the Black Panther Party is made up of violent outlaws and radicals.  For most of the African Americans the Black Panther Party was working hard to improve the community and end racism in America.  In this research project I test the hypothesis that there is a significant difference regarding the image of Black Panther Party between Whites and African Americans.  I examine why such a difference exists by providing an overview of the way media and the FBI affected their image. Second I examine the numerous community empowerment programs created by the Black Panther party that gave them a more positive image in African American community. I use a questionnaire to evaluate the perception of Black Panther party among White and African American students at Monmouth College.  The Reason for this method of selection is to see if there is difference in perceptions between the two different groups of people.  I am also conducting interviews with African-American elderly in my neighborhood who have some knowledge and perspective on the role of Black Panther Party over Spring break.  Through the surveys of White and African-American students and in-depth interviews of African-American senior citizens I hope to provide a better understanding of the relationship between race and image of the Black Panther Party.

**Black Panther Party**

The party that shook the world, better known as The Black Panther Party, played a huge role in the liberation and advancement of equality in the black community and oppressed people around the world. In this research paper I will highlight how the Black Panther Party was viewed around the world, the effects it had, and what things influenced the positive and negative view of what the Black Panther Party stood for. In order to do this I will talk about why the Black Panthers have a negative image among main stream society in America. One way I will do this is through how the Federal Bureau of Investigation labeled them as aggressive outlaws. Furthermore I will talk about what made them viewed as a positive image among the black community. One way I will do this is through highlighting the various amounts of programs they implemented into the communities. Why violence was necessary to help move the process forward from black inequalities going on in America at this time. In doing this I will talk about how the civil rights movement was only able to get us so far and how some people got tired of waiting. The image the Black Panthers had in 3rd world countries during the post-colonial era, to do this I will highlight different places who supported the movement. Also the ways that the party moved from revolution phase to reformist phase.

The Black Panther Party was a progressive political organization. The Black Panther party was started in 1966 in Oakland, California by Huey P. Newton. The panther was used as an image because it was a strong symbol. A black panther is known as a very strong and intelligent animal that has strong jaws. One thing the Black Panther party believed was ” the non-violent campaign of Martin Luther King Jr. had failed and any promised changes to their lifestyle would take too long to be implemented if simply not introduced” ( historylearningsite.co.uk). Therefore matters had to be taken into their own hands to achieve equality in education, housing, employment and civil rights for African Americans. They started as a revolutionary party but that phase lasted from 1966-1971. “Revolution involves the forcible overthrow of one system of governance in favor of another” (Kirkby 29). This became the groups central pillar plan to overthrow the American capitalist system. The next phase was called the Reformist phase which took place from 1971-1982 “among other things, this categorization is intended to denote the ascendance of the survival programs as the Panthers’ chief strategy for change in 1971 (Kirkby29). For example, they focused more on healthcare for the community and breakfast for the children. To do this they had to have educated people come in the community and give checkups to those who couldn’t afford healthcare.

**Negative image in mainstream society**

The negative image in mainstream society based on the articles I read stemmed many things. One huge influence was how the media portrayed them as aggressive outlaw. Second was only showing panther violence and not showing any of the good things they did for the community through their survival programs. A third thing that played a huge role was “Hoover publicly labelled the Black Panther “the single greatest threat to the internal security of the country.” (Kirby 51). This is a huge deal because he is the head of the FBI at the time and we were facing huge threats such as communism. This is due to the time of war and what’s going on around the world, which would greatly affect how mainstream society viewed the Black Panther Party. Fourth were the Renegades who joined the BBP but continued to goof off and fail to obey the rules of the organization. Fifth were the agent provocateurs “The agent provocateurs were police and FBI agents who had infiltrated the party and attempted to provoke party members into illegal activities that theoretically would not have engaged in without this outside provocation” (Franklin 553).

*Jacknapes: reflection on the legacy of the Black Panther party for the hip hop generation*

In this article there are a few things that impacted the negative image in mainstream society. The jacknapes, Renegades, and Agent provocateurs played a role in this. I will explain how each one of those three impacted the. The renegades were those who were apart of the Black Panther party who did not follow the rules. They did not change their behavior until they were busted. Now An example of a jackanape “ who not only refused to become “politically educated” and follow the party rules, but also failed to give up their criminal behavior once they became panthers” (Franklin554). This was considered a big issue because many negative view or connotations put on them were that they were only criminals who were outlaws who could not be controlled. A jackanape is also one who works based on what opportunity he has an example of this “he thinks his gun is something that he can use at will, to rip off stuff at will” (Franklin554). This would be considered to rob someone for money if he needed it. Next the agent provocateurs are police or FBI agents who infiltrated the party. Once infiltrating the party there main goal was to bring down other in the group. One way they would do this is by refusing to be political educated and trying to start drama between members in the party. An example of this would be “the agent will hinder your attempts to political educate these cats, and will lead them to do crazy things based on emotions rather than work based on understanding social change” (Flanklin 554). Also they would try to get the other to commit crimes in places where they knew they had back up to catch or arrest them.

**FBI role in negative mainstream view**

One thing I had to ask myself while doing this paper is why they FBI wanted to destroy the panther party. Another question was why were the panther declared a security threat when they were only trying to protect and defend their people from the mistreatment of the law and the police brutality that was going on at the time. I found it weird because it was almost as if the Black Panther party was considered a terrorist group since they had plans to create dissension within the group and other blacks. Also because they would try to kill or harm a panther at any chance they got. They used “Carly identified “opinion control---the provision of disinformation propaganda and media manipulation to be a primary element of the FBI’s counterintelligence program” (Brame & Shriver 248). If these tactics are used in the proper way I feel they can destroy any group. Another example is the research done in the Reading by Heynen states “works, which used FBI documents in very literal and problematic ways, all of my engagement with these documents has been critical, based on my understanding of how through their COINTELRO project, the FBI manipulated and lied about the efforts of the BBP in an effort to destroy them” (Heynen 408). COINTELRO was a secret FBI program designed to monitor and neutralize domestic groups deemed by FBI to be a danger to national security according to pbs.org/now/politics/cointelpro.html but seems to me they monitored anti-war groups and civil rights groups.

*The Federal-Local Interface of social control the FBI and the Winston-Salem branch of the BBP*

This article is mainly devoted to the FBI goal to destroy the Black Panther Party. It goes through strategies, tactics and the how they inflicted social controls on the group. According to Marx, the “largest single activity of activity of control” and “Prerequisite for most other activities “is information gathering (Brame & Shriver 249) the FBI would use intelligence gathering. One ways they would do this is through informants. Informants could entice other to preform illegal acts or reckless actions. As the article goes on it talks about the vast amount files the FBI had on the Black Panther party “The file, consisted of 2,895 total pages , is posted as 15 different parts in PDF format” (Brame & Shriver 251). The FBI files characterized the Winston-Salem branch of the Black Panther or other panthers as prone to violence.

The FBI and social control of the Black Panther party

For this section of the article it talks how the panther party ideologies triggered a strong reaction from the FBI. One reason being was because the panthers were known as the most dangerous black extremist group in the United States (Brame & Shriver 254). The reason they were title as this is because Hoover labeled them as the greatest internal security threat to the country. Hoover even went so far to even put a negative view on their breakfast for children program by stating that they used this as front to poison the youth mind. When in reality the program was to help make sure children were receiving the proper amount of nutrients and so that they could focus more in the class room. Another way the FBI tried to use social control was to create problems within ranks of the BBP. One other thing that can not go unnoticed is that the FBI counterintelligence program played a huge role in the deaths of high ranked member of the BBP. One of which is *Fred Hampton*which was the leader in Chicago, later on in this paper I will be interviewing his son Fred Hampton Jr to find out more information about the party. “One favored tactic was the use of anonymous mailing to sow distrust between groups, which on occasion provoked violent battlers between them” (Brame & Shriver 254). The last social control the FBI used against the panther was the informants who would provide them with information so that they could facilitate raid on the panthers which sometime resulted in injury or death of panther leaders.

Official FBI framing of the Black Panther party

This is considered to be the FBI planned to officially fame the Black Panther Party. First they start by labeling them as a practically threat to the local government by stating that they had possessions of weapons at all times. One way they did this was by stating that “co-founder Huey Newton was imprisoned on a manslaughter conviction in connection with the death of a police officer and indicated that violence toward police was a central aspect of the group” (Brame & Shriver 255). They also tied communist teaching to the Black Panther Party. While later in 1974 they dropped the revised version which stated that Huey Newton’s imprisonment as convicted had been reversed. Based on the fact that they reversed the appeal it makes me wonder if this was a tool used by the FBI to help provide a negative image to mainstream America. Also there is no mention of any of the positive aspects of the Panther party which has been listed in many of my other sources I have provided through this paper. Furthermore in the revised appendix of 1974 the FBI gave notice to the Panthers community programs and decrease in military stance. However, they still paint the picture of the panthers as a revolutionary group who has the main goal to overthrow the United States government. Now for the second person they used to destroy the group was the FBI coordinating with the Chicago Police to assassinate Fred Hampton. Where in this situation they it was a direct attack on the panthers because the police and FBI entered the house while everyone was sleep. Once they entered the house they shot Clark who was the brother on guard. Following that the FBI shot Fred Hampton at point blank range. Due to the aftermath discovery of this it was found that only one bullet was fired by a member of the BBP and that was done after he was shot. I ask myself was this an outright threat to scare the people into not standing there ground and fighting for their rights.

**Positive image among the Black Community**

Creating a positive image in neighborhoods in the black community played a huge role in the support it was given. One way it was able to gain the great amount of support was because the panther were willing to stand up for the rights of those being taken away in the black community. Another reason is because they were offering a different plan than the civil rights movement. My reason for stating this is because some got tired of waiting for change to happen and were ready to take matters into their own hands. This is what the Black Panther Party offered through standing up to police brutality. One way they did this was they had armed men in the community who knew the law and if they noticed an police officer denying the right of one they would stand up to them. Besides the strength they offered the community through justice enforcement they also were used as symbolic strength. There are still many things they did to portray a positive image in the black community for example by political educating blacks and personal transformation of its people to become better. One more thing we can not forget about is the breakfast programs for the children. In contrast to all of these good things I have listed. In one of my articles it talks about how some opposed them, until they realized the good that they were doing for the community. In the next few paragraphs I will be getting more in depth about how these programs operated and what they did for the community.

*Jackanapes: Reflections on the legacy of the Black Panther Party for the hip hop generation*

In this article it point out the positive transformation the Black Panther Party plays on its members. When doing this it points out the success of the Nation of Islam by stating how they turn black lumpen into Fruit of Islam. Then it goes on to tie it into the resurrection of the dead an example of this “We believe in the resurrection of the dead—not in physical resurrection—but in metal resurrection” (Franklin 557). This a positive thing the Panthers did for members of the community by informing them on political knowledge and steps to help the archive equality in the area they are aiming for. Another way the personal transformation occurred for member was from the criminal element.

*Bending the Bars of Empire from Every Ghetto for Survival: The Black Panther party’s Radical Anti-hunger Politics of Social Reproduction and Scale*

This article talks about many things but for this part of the paper I will only highlight the parts that talk about how they had apositive image throughthe programs they provided. The main program it highlights the Free Breakfast program for the Children Program. This program was initiated at St. Augustine’s Church in Oakland in September 1968 according to (Heyden 407). it Was stated that the heart of the organizations success stemmed from the free Breakfast for Children Program. One reason for this is because it was believed that feeding hungry children would “give strength to bend the bars that imprisoned them within the Babylonian ghettos and escape the oppression of the U.S. empire” (Heynen 407). To me this means that it will give the children a fair advantage and help them be able to obtain the information being taught to them in class. In the article it states that the breakfast held by the panthers help liberate them.

Geographies of Urban Hunger

In this part of Heynen’s article it talks about the geographies of Urban Hunger. More than 850million people across the planet suffer from hunger. Out of those you would not believe how many are children die from hunger every day, it is about 25,000-18,000. Lefebvre goes on to suggested that the philosophy of everyday life has been reduced to the dreary and demoralizing fact that people need to eat, drink, be clothed and so on (Heynen 408). Also it goes on to state that human bodies cannot exist without food. Later it goes on to talk about how “skiping breakfast leads to increased cognitive error, causes slower memory recall, and reduces children’s ability to distinguish among similar images” (Heynen 409). With the panther party having the knowledge of this I could see why this was one of their main program. One reason for this is because the children are essential to the progress of the future and advancement of a group of people. Lastly Heynen states that this program was used to insure survival and social reproduction.

Human Sustenance Program

This program was brought into play when the Mulford Act was passed which stopped people from carrying unconcealed guns in public. So the panther had to come up with a more peaceful way to stop police brutality. They came up with the idea of a decentralization campaign which used ballot box. This began in late 1968 when panther coal lined with the Peace and Freedom party this was a white radical organization. The point of this idea was “that those people living in those neighborhoods will actually do the hiring and firing of the policeman who patrolled the area” (Kirkby 37). The point of this would be to help ensure justice between police and people in the community. While the attempt to do this failed it showed great symbolism. In conclusion to this the article states “if decentralizing the police department was the Black Panthers’ most fundamental project, its free Breakfast for children was is most popular. The reason this shows a positive image to the black community is because it was trying to stop something that had been an ongoing problem in many communities.

Health Care Programs

This was yet another survival program introduce by the Black Panther Party that had a positive impact on the black community. One reason is because it was the establishment for free health clinics. In Kansas City, Missouri is the place where the free clinics first began “name the Bobby Hutton Community Clinic after the BPP’s” (Kirkby 42). This program began to spread to other cities. The reason the health care programs played a role in the positive image in the black community was because it was a response to help lower income families receive insurance. The reason for this is because due to the low wages many people did not have insurance to go to see doctor for regular medical treatment. The reason they were able to do this is because registered doctors and nurses volunteered their services free of charge (Kirkby 43). Another reason this had such an impact was because it made the community feel as if they were a part of it. I say this because people from the community could volunteer and receive some type of medical training or they assisted in operating the clinics. I know if I was growing up during this time this program would definitely have a positive outcome on the way I viewed them.

Education Programs

Based on the research I have conducted education played a huge role in the Black Panther Party because there goal was to further educate the community on what was going on. Also they provided steps to help change what was going on. This is why education programs had a positive image to people in the black community. In these education programs they taught Political education, works of Malcolm X, Mao Tse-tung, and many others. PE classes emphasized Marxism and revolutionary violence over Black history (Kirkby 45). In these classes they made sure they explained that class and race played a role in African-American repression. One quote I found interesting “With less resources and in a shorter time, the Panthers have done more for the black community than we have” because Rev. Herman Graham a Cleveland community center director stated this (Kirkby 46) lately one education program that I feel had a huge impact was the Liberation School. The liberation school served as a replacement program for the free breakfast program in summer months. This program was offered to children from age two to thirteen where they were educated on revolutionary history, revolutionary culture, and current events. One reason the Panther party had such a positive impact on the black community is because they did many programs that were for kids. While this was a time when many still believed it takes a village to raise a child.

Criminal justice Programs

This is another program that the Panthers held, the interesting thing about this is that the panther purpose was first to combat legal injustices in 1966. In the black community during this time period was a lot of legal injustices. The fact that someone was willing to stand up for them was positive. One thing the anthers created was the Community Alert Patrol. The reason for this program was because “We want freedom for all black me held in federal state, county and city prisons and jail” (Kirkby 47). This was considered a problem because blacks did not receive fair trials. Another reason is because they were not tried by a jury of their peers in court. A second thing they did was have seminars on constitutional law. This would inform them on how to conduct themselves in a situation if they were arrested. Huey Newton had mini book titled Pocket *Lawyer of Legal First Aid* which stated thing like “if you are stopped and/or arrested by the police, you may remain silent; you do not have to answer any questions about alleged crimes, you should provide you name and address only if requested” (Kirkby 47) this would help avoid being committed for other crimes. The third program is was able to gather information on took place during the 1970 in Settle. This program was known as the Free Busing to Prison Program. The reason this was established was because the Panthers found out that many families did not have the finical funds to get transportation to see their loved ones. This was a great program because it reached out to elderly ladies and young mothers who did not identify with the revolutionary goals right away. In return for doing this it would help influence the image of the Party in a positive way. One key part to this was they got the churches to lend them vans or buses, while gas stations would also give them gas. This shows that others are in great support of the Panther party.

**News Coverage of Panthers in different cities**

*Local News Coverage of the Black Panther party*

This part of the paper is directly from new coverage from other state regarding the Panthers. Based on previous claims in my paper some other sources were under the impression that the Panther party only received bad press, but in this article part of that is true. The reason I say part of that is because in this source it state one new paper source that mainly focuses on the survival program. This was the Cleveland Press. We also have to consider that the Panthers popularity and support was due mainly to the manner in which the media pandered them (Mencken 19). In this article it asks did the press cover panther survival programs, were panther framed as criminals or community activist working to improve poor people’s live. One thing that hindered the panther’s propaganda was the fact that they did not buy television ads to promote themselves; this would have help a great deal.

The Baltimore Press

In a time period of four years, the Baltimore Black Panther chapter had twenty-three articles devoted to them. Out of these entire articles, only one was devoted to the panther’s social service programs. Based on that majority, if not all, of the press coverage they were receiving was not favorable at all. For example, “thirty- nine percent of the news coverage focused on the shooting of two white police officers” (Jeffries 23). The example I just listed highlights one perspective that many Americans have of the Black Panthers or the Baltimore branch of Black Panthers except for in the black communities. Another story published in the Baltimore Press stated that police officers became the target of a shooting while simply filling out a report. The ironic thing about this was that no gunman was identified at the scene, but the police officials suspected that the Panthers did it (Jeffries 24). When a report is cited this way, we have to consider what kind of message it sends to the public. My reasoning for stating this is that many people consider police officers trustworthy; if the police say that the panthers committed the crime, it could lead people to believe that they really did. Concerning the amount of coverage to issues mentioned, the issues concerning ambushes of officers 39%, murdered informants 34%, panther newspaper 22%, Survival programs 1% and miscellaneous 1%. If I was a regular citizen who regularly reads the Baltimore Press issues on Black Panthers, it would lead me to believe that the panther are reckless outlaws.

The New Orleans Press

In the New Orleans press most of the news coverage was about two undercover cops that infiltrated a small branch of the Panthers (Jeffries 27). They totaled about forty percent of the articles. In some of the articles police claimed that once the panthers figured out that what was going on then the panthers viciously assaulted the two men. The statistics of the coverage states that among issued mentioned survival programs accounted for 23%. While this is not very high compared to the police informants and police raids, they are at least mentioning some good things about the panther. Even though they are doing this the bad media attention they are releasing overpower the positive messages by a lot.

The Cleveland Press

The Cleveland Press was uniquely different from the press in New Orleans and Baltimore. It was different because it showed significantly more coverage of the Panthers’ survival programs. More than half of the news articles that were publicized showed, mentioned, or discussed the Panthers’ free breakfast program, the medical clinics, and bus service (Jeffries 30). The bus program provided families and friends of those incarcerated with the opportunity of a reliable method of transportation to visit Ohio’s correctional facilities. I am sure that this program provided a strong impact on those with family members in jail, because it showed that they care about the well-being of the community. This shows that the Panthers are here to shift the Black community to an emphasis to social action. They also did this through free breakfast programs, medical clinics, and a bus service. The free breakfast program emphasized social action by offering free breakfast to the children, to help them focus more in school. Now, I will reveal the issues mentioned in the Cleveland Press, and the amount of coverage that was provided. Survival programs accounted for 50%, police raids/ shootings 30%, and the coalition between Panthers and other groups accounted for 20%. The amount of police raids covered being significantly less leads me to believe that Cleveland, as a whole, might have a better public image of the Black Panthers. My reasoning behind this is that clearly the media is not painting such a negative image of them, but they are showing how they are impacting the community in a positive way. Lastly, it highlighted them collating with other groups to help the community more, instead of other more negative things.

**Civil rights to Panthers**

*“Defend the Ghetto” Space and the Urban Politics of the Black Panther Party*

In this article Tyner explains how different areas were more susceptible to move from civil rights movement to the Panther party. This is shown by naming places where the civil rights movement seemed as if it had failed “Northern and Pacific coast cities not as places where civil rights organizing stalled or failed but as places where the postwar black freedom movement took unique forms and trajectories (Tyner 105). Then it goes on to state the civil rights movement gets more a different expression in northern cities due to the fact they “de facto rather than de jure segregation” . Also the struggle was different in northern places, for example it was discriminatory housing and education policies. In the south strategies were inadequate in confronting prejudicial de facto policies. Lastly by 1966 it was clear that the traditional civil rights organizations were unable to alter they systemic forces that adversely impacted the lives of African American people, particularly In the northern states (Tyner 108). If this was the case where do they turn? To another source that offers a different solution to obtain the same goal, which was the Black Panther party.

Understanding Panther Violence

This section of one of my articles it talks about understanding the reasons for panther violence. It highlights what led them to a different strategy for liberation. Prior to this many people followed the civil rights movement which used tactics such as non-violence, but many people got tired of the ongoing oppression. With that being said it could something being said they needed to send a different message in my opinion. This started change to fighting violence with violence when rights were not being provided in a fair manner. It was stated that they believed that violence was a rhetorical strategy designed to denigrate representatives of the white power structure to the point where African Americans would no longer be intimidated by them (Kirkby 31). To me this is stating that African Americans need to move in this direction so that they would no longer be afraid. One thing that ensured that they would not be afraid was the fact that they accumulated an enormous amount of guns and ammunition. This would be used by Vietnam veterans to train others in underground cells. Let’s make it known that the panthers violence was not unprovoked. This came about due to the fact African American’s were victims of political repression and racism. In a sense we can almost say that they were responding to the environment surrounding them. It’s almost like growing up and having to deal with a bully every day, eventually you will get tired of being picked on and you will have to stand up for yourself. In this case there was more than one bully, the Jim Crow law, police brutality, FBI, and the United States government. The FBI frequently initiated violence. One way they felt they could stop this was to arm the black populace “from house to house, block to block, and community to community, throughout the nation” the Panthers believed they would be able to “negotiate as equals” with representatives of the white power structure—the police (Kirkby 32). This is why panthers took their guns to the streets to defend their community against questionable police conduct. Lastly, I feel the assassination of Martin Luther King Jr played a huge role in the change because he was a symbolic symbol. He stood for peace and non-violence, so once he was gone I feel as if that dream was dead to many others.

**Revolution to Reformist phase**

This section is dedicated to capturing the revolution phase and reformist phase. While in the mist of doing this, I will explain how scholars divided revolution and reformist. Following that, I will explain what lead the change from revolution to reformist phase based on the research I have conducted. Radical self-defense organizations and social outreach groups is a good way to separate the groups as scholars identified (Kirkby 29). The Revolutionary phase takes place from 1966 to about 1971 and its Reformist phase takes place from 1971-1982. One thing titled along with the switch is the ascendance of the survival programs. This happened due to a change in modification in strategy, and categorizations are helpful for discerning these shifting trends (Kirkby 29). One trend that occurred was that community activism became vital to the party’s identity once it revised its policies. This is not to say that they did not focus on this before, rather that prior to 1971, the party did not succeed at putting enough emphasis on it. The article states this because the idea of revolutionary violence was the center pillar of the group’s plan to overthrow the American capitalist system (Kirkby29). While at that time it may have been considered that, we should ask ourselves why? One key reason could be that civil rights organizing stalled or failed (Tyner 105). I could argue that some people would feel this way due to the civil rights movement using non-violence and Dr. King getting assassinated. We also have to consider that the Black Panther party was born from frustration, which lead them to want to bring about immediate change. The reformist phase came about because the environment of the Black Panthers required a cautious response to alarming situations such as economic destitution, political neglect, crime, and alienation. The way they addressed these problems was through the social programs. To help the economic destitution, I feel they used the breakfast program and free clinics. For political neglect, they had classes that taught members how to use law in the proper way and to handle negative encounters with the law, such as police brutality. Another way these classes helped was to teach people their rights, so that the police could not rob them of those rights due to lack of knowledge in this area. Lastly, they taught people how to use the system to their advantage so that they could take steps to change politics, especially by voting to try to get someone in office that will support the movement they would want.

**Survey Results**

After collecting data on campus concerning the topic of the different view of the Black Panther party among African Americans and Caucasians, I came up with some interesting findings on both sides. To explain the results of the data I collected I will analyze it from a male and female perspective between the groups. My reason for doing this is because I felt the data could possibly be different based on gender and race. First, I will start with breaking down the data on the male and female perspective of Caucasian.

I surveyed seven Caucasian males on the campus of Monmouth College. I received some similar answers to question while other were different and even had a few shocking results that disagreed with what I predicted. First off, all seven of the participants happened to have heard of the Black Panther party. Second question asked what was the first world that pops into your head when you hear the term black panther party. There were many different terms that popped into their head when they heard the terms were Forrest Gump, 1970 Olympics, Washington DC, Malcom X, and race man. Out of these terms Forrest Gump accounted for four out of the seven. Third, I asked if they thought the panther party played a role in American politics and what was that role, for this question it was multiply choice. My results were four of seven positive, two had no opinion and one person answered neutral. According to my prediction I was wrong when it came to this question because I felt most would answer no opinion or neutral due to lack of knowledge. I also figured someone would answer by saying negative. In conclusion to analyzing the data from this I found the result from my last question most shocking. The question I asked was would you be willing to become a member. For this I figured I would defiantly not get the response that a Caucasian male would be willing to join let alone two out of seven. In the next paragraph I will explain the results I received for Caucasian females.

I surveyed eight Caucasian females on the campus of Monmouth College. I received results a little different from the Caucasian males. One difference was that only five of eight had heard about the Black Panther party. Another difference was that when they heard the term black panther party they had some similar terms such Malcom X, Forrest Gump, but other that were politics and black equality. Also, the amount for each term was more divided in numbers for example Forrest Gump accounted for two, Malcolm X accounted for two, and the other remaining numbers came from the other terms I listed. Now, for the third question I asked them concerning if the Black Panther party played a role in American politics. The results for that was no opinion for three of eight, four of eight neutral, and a mere one voted negative. The negative one was interesting because she had heard of the Black Panther party and attributed it to Malcom X and was not willing to join. For my last question I asked if they would be willing to join the party. My result for neutral one of the neutral responses was that they would not join. While the others that replied neutral answered that they would maybe join. Three out of the four who answered no opinion answered that they would maybe join.

I surveyed seven black males on Monmouth College campus. All of them have heard of the Black Panther party which coincidentally is what I predicted as my hypothesis. The second question I asked was what is the first term that pops into your head when you hear the term Black Panther party. I received several different terms which were militant, order, black power, black people and one of the founders of the actual party. The third question I asked was do you think the Black Panther party played a role in American politics which was a multiple choice question. I received one negative result which was confusing, but they responded negatively because they felt the Black Panther party had nothing to do with American politics. Four out of the seven responded positively and the other two responded neutrally. Lastly, I asked would they be willing to become a member of the Black Panther party. All that answered positively to my third question said they would join except one. Other than that I received two “no” responses to joining the Black Panther party.

I surveyed seven black females on Monmouth College campus concerning my topic of the Black Panther party. All seven replied that they had heard of the Black Panther party as I predicted. For my second question I asked what is the first word that pops into your head when you hear the term Black Panther party. The results for this were unique because I received a different term from almost every individual who took the survey. The terms I received were: revolution, movie, Civil Rights movement, justice, activist, organized and strong. Third I asked, do you think the Black Panther party has played a role in American Politics and the answers were five positive, one neutral and one had no opinion. Lastly, I asked would they be willing to become a member of the Black Panther party. The responses were almost split exactly down the middle except for the answer “yes” which received three while the other answers received two each. What I found interesting about the results of this was that the people who replied positively when referring to Black Panther party being a part of American politics said yes they would join or maybe they would join except one. This concludes the data I received from the surveys collected on Monmouth College.

**Interviews Results**

After composing my paper I decided it would be best to interview an older black audience to get an understanding of how things were doing this time. The reason for this is I wanted to ask an older audience or generation because there is more probability that they were directly affected and lived during the Black Panther era. So far I have had a hard time finding people to interview and while conducting these interviews I came to the conclusion that I had to ask a few different questions to get them more involved in the interview because some of my question seemed to answer the same things. During the interviews, (omit I conducted) I focused more on how they felt about the panthers, how media portrayed them, and the actually image of the panther from blacks in black communities.  
​ My first interview was received by an older African American male who was around the age of 70. His view and story about the panther party was very interesting because he played a role in some of the panther programs even though he was not a panther himself. He served as a musician for the panthers programs in California. He felt that the Black Panther party played a huge role in aiding the community. Furthermore, when I asked about how media portrayed the panther party negatively and the reason behind this. The respond I received was that the government was scared of the practice they stood for and how they went about trying to impact change. On another note in this interview we talked about how the media goal was to paint a negative picture in any situation that could have been link to the panther. When in reality the Black Panther party helped drop crime rates in the black community, united the black community, and fought against any type of unfair segregation. The way it united the black community was by bringing them together and helping put a stop to the harsh injustices brought about by  the government. Next I asked why did the government seem to given the civil right movement more praise or paint them in a positive way. My interviewee's response was that the Black Panther party was an introverted part of the civil right movement and because the methods they used didn’t shake the government in the same way it was a problem. I ended the interview by asking what is the next movement to emerge. He responded,” I feel the next movement to emerge will be a coalition of movements with many people coming together to address the problems or discrimination faced in our society”. Now I will move along to my second interview.  
​ In the second interview I conducted I ended up interviewing another male that happened to be around the age of 60. This interviewee was not a part of the Black Panther party but knew people who were. Most of the information he knew was from talks with people who were involved in it and through research on the topic of the panther party. When asked why did the panther party have such a negative image in the mainstream society he responded by saying main stream society feared a takeover by blacks or the panther party, this is why they received negative publicity. Next I asked what do you think about the FBI’s role in creating a negative image of the Black Panther party, his response was because it was a party established by the minority group which led to a fear of how it would affect society. Following that he believed that they had a lack of understanding and what they came to be. After this he went on to give his opinion on media’s role in creating a negative image of the Black Panther party. He stated all the media outlets went hand and hand in planting this seed in many stream American's head. Then he goes on to explain how during these times it wasn’t really acceptable for blacks to have a party or play a huge role in society, which also had a factor in the negative image of the party. Next I asked why the panther’s method differed from the civil rights group. He replied they got tired of police brutality, took a different role in the disrespect received in the black community, and took more of the same stance of Malcom X. My next question was it anything else you would like to share with me before we conclude this meeting. He stated that despite the aggression of the panther party they had a positive effect in getting things done but media tried to only focus on the negatives. Then  he went on to talk about how they helped the community by providing things for it that the government didn’t like neighborhood watch, youth programs, breakfast for kids, voting registration, and protesting against any racial injustice. They also gave blacks a leg to stand on because they let others know they cared through their actions. Lastly he ended by saying I don’t feel it was that the Black Panther party was negative but it was the aggression they took to change things which took America by storm for a group to rise up with such force. They wanted America to know that blacks could be contributing members to society because they were educated men who wanted to be seen by the knowledge they possessed and not the color of their skin.  
​ In my third interview I interviewed another male and received similar feedback with a different spin on it. He was not involved in the Black Panther party, but he knows people who were such as, one of the Black Panther parties in Chicago’s son. I asked why do you think the Black Panther party has a negative image in the larger society of America. He responded the press makes the first image political. It is the presses job to shape the public’s image of others. When he said this he was referring to the rich and wealthy being the true image makers of society and the rich has their eyes set against the poor. The press is also a buffer of hiding activities of the rich and politicians to make it seem as if they have nothing to do with what is going on. The institution wants people to think a certain way because they don’t want the attention directed towards them. This is why they are directly responsible for the view of the public. The rich uses any institution that is at their disposal during this time period to attack or manipulate black militant groups or other black groups. Then he goes on to say that the Jews control the press that writes most of the history books. If you are considered likeable by the Jews you will be written well in history. Then he brings up a book titled “Pausing the Game,” which talks about Jews anti-Semite theory by those in power. The Semite version would be the white people telling us our history which is the watered down version where they don’t tell you everything they did or everything that happened. The anti-Semite version would be those that are not in agreement with what the institute teaches you. Then I asked what do you think about the FBIs role in creating a negative image of the Black Panther party. He goes on to state that the first reason the police came into play was to catch runaway slaves. There has always been a color line to justify what happens every time a black person dies in the hands of the law, which is what the FBI did to the Black Panthers. He then goes on to say justice and law are two entirely different things. Lastly, I asked do you know of any community development projects that were run by the Black Panther party. He talked about the most famous one which was the breakfast program for kids. Also things like voter registration, helping others understand the law and community building projects. Every human need is a human right. The conversation ended by him stating that if the Black Panther party was wrong why is it today that the national rifle association is trying to make it legal to carry rifles again. Also the definition of militant is having or showing a desire or willingness to use strong or extreme and sometimes forceful methods to achieve something. This concludes the interviews I have conducted at this point in my research project.

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