THE #BLACKLIVESMATTER MOVEMENT: WHAT IS AT STAKE?

March 26, 2015
Welcome and Introduction
Dr. John Devlin, The W.A. Franke College of Business

Community Discussion
Dr. John Devlin, The W.A. Franke College of Business
1) To what patterns of behavior and power relations is #BlackLivesMatter responding? What evidence is there for the existence of these patterns? (P3)
2) Do you support all aspects of the #BlackLivesMatter vision for America? Why or why not? (P4)
3) What are the most promising strategies for addressing problems with racism in America, especially problems faced by African Americans? (P5)
4) To what extent does #BlackLivesMatter seek the fulfillment of values we all share? (P6)

Closing Questions and Recap of Discussion
Campus Committee (P7)

Special thanks to our partners, supporters and venue hosts!
#BlackLivesMatter is a social movement responding to racism in America faced by African Americans.

Different individuals from a minority group may be affected by racism differently. In addition, there are different expressions or types of racism. Each type can be intentional or unintentional.

**Casual racism** “racially-insensitive” language or actions (including stereotypes) that often go unnoticed in everyday interactions.

- “I’m not racist but…” Alltogethernow.org claims that prefacing a potentially racist statement with this does not make said statement less offensive.
- “Yes but where are you really from?” This question implies that someone who does not have white skin cannot really belong to the country they live in; they must be from somewhere else.

**Blatant racism** A form of racism that involves obvious discrimination or prejudice towards others on the basis of race.

**Structural racism** the legacy of American slavery and the systematic exclusion of racial minorities from aspects of society.

**Institutional racism** “the way government and other public or private institutions systematically afford White people an array of social, political and economic advantages…while marginalizing and putting at a disadvantage African Americans and many other people of color.” – ERACE. In March 2015, the U.S. Department of Justice released a critical report on police and court practices in Ferguson, MO. Some findings provide evidence of institutional racism in Ferguson:

- The **67% of Blacks** in Ferguson account for **93% of arrests** made from 2012-2014.
- The city’s enforcement practices are shaped by **revenue needs** rather than **public safety**.

**White privilege** advantages from which white people systematically benefit. This privilege can exist without consciousness of its presence by the dominant group which helps it maintain racial hierarchy. Examples:

- *Not* being followed in a store while shopping
- *Not* being questioned about one’s qualifications for a job or ability to get into a college
- *Not* having to worry about being stopped by law enforcement while walking or driving
- Being able to ignore race
It may seem obvious that black lives matter. The #BlackLivesMatter movement advocates more than that claim, however. The movement aims to be well rounded, addressing all the ways in which all types of black people can be left powerless, subject to deprivation of basic human rights, poverty and state violence. This includes black individuals who are women, girls, men, boys, gay, bi-sexual, queer, lesbian, transgender, immigrant, incarcerated, and differently abled. BlackLivesMatter.com lists several components of the vision.

**An Immediate End to Police Brutality and the Murder Of Black, Brown & All Oppressed People**

**Full Employment For Our People**

**Decent Housing Fit for the Shelter of Human Beings**

**An End to the School to Prison Pipeline & Quality Education for All**

**Freedom from Mass Incarceration and an End to the Prison Industrial Complex**

Regarding the mass incarceration of African Americans, The Sentencing Project reports that more than 60% of those in prison are racial and ethnic minorities, 40% are African American.

- The United States Census Bureau for 2014 stated that the U.S. population is 77.7% White, 13.2% Black or African American, 1.2% Native American, 5.3% Asian, and 17.1% Hispanic or Latino.

**Lifetime Likelihood of Imprisonment**

- **All Men**: 1 in 9
- **White Men**: 1 in 17
- **Black Men**: 1 in 3
- **Latino Men**: 1 in 6

- **All Women**: 1 in 56
- **White Women**: 1 in 111
- **Black Women**: 1 in 18
- **Latina Women**: 1 in 45

This question asks us to think about where changes are most needed and where changes are mostly likely to have a positive impact.

In laying out the path to their vision, BlackLivesMatter.com makes a series of national demands. The demands suggest that society needs to make significant changes to reach the movement’s vision. Here are some (though not all) of the demands:

**BASIC HUMAN RIGHTS**

“…an end to all forms of discrimination and the full recognition of our human rights; we demand full, living wage employment for our people; we demand decent housing fit for shelter of human beings and an end to gentrification; we demand a racial justice agenda from the White House that is inclusive of our shared fate as Black men, women, trans, and gender-nonconforming people; we demand access to affordable healthy food for our neighborhoods.”

**EDUCATION**

“…an end to the school to prison pipeline and quality education for all; we demand a public education system that teaches the rich history of Black people and celebrates the contributions we have made to this country and the world.”

**AN END TO THE PRISON INDUSTRIAL COMPLEX**

“…an immediate end to police brutality and the murder of Black people and all oppressed people; we demand freedom from mass incarceration and an end to the prison industrial complex; we demand an aggressive attack against all laws, policies, and entities that disenfranchise any community from expressing themselves at the ballot; we demand the release of all U.S. political prisoners; we demand an end to the military industrial complex that incentivizes private corporations to profit off of the death and destruction of Black and Brown communities across the globe.”
4) To what extent does #BlackLivesMatter seek the fulfillment of values we all share?

To think about what’s at stake in this discussion, we can think about how the #BlackLivesMatter movement relates to a range of democratic values. Does #BlackLivesMatter appeal solely to values we all share? Why or why not?

VALUES OF DEMOCRACY

- **Liberty** an individual or group’s ability to operate freely within a society; one’s way of life, behavior, etc. are not restricted unless it infringes upon another’s liberty.

- **Balance between order and liberty** having more laws or regulations in place decreases one’s liberty, while increasing liberty means decreasing laws and regulations.

- **Balance between liberty and equality** one who has so much liberty that they completely dominate another (in terms of wealth or ownership of goods) can decrease equality.

It may seem obvious that black lives matter, just as all human lives matter. Indeed, #AllLivesMatter has emerged as an additional mantra in some circles. But #AllLivesMatter is controversial in this context.

- Some may use the hashtag “#AllLivesMatter” as a counter to #BlackLivesMatter as a means to unite different communities against general injustice.

- However, #AllLivesMatter has been considered an “insensitive appropriation of a phrase created by black Americans in search of solidarity following the tragedies that have befallen young black males,” according to Nazar Aljassar from The Cavalier Daily.

- George Yancy from The New York Times interviewed Judith Butler, a Maxine Elliot Professor at the University of California, Berkeley who commented on #AllLivesMatter with “we cannot have a race-blind approach to the questions: which lives matter? Or, which lives are worth valuing…we miss the fact that black people have not yet been included in the idea of ‘all lives.’
HOT TOPICS CAFÉ CAMPUS COMMITTEE

The “hot topics” in the on campus Hot Topics Cafés on the NAU campus are nominated and selected by student representatives of clubs and organizations on NAU Campus that represent diverse constituencies and viewpoints. We thank our student committee members for their participation.

Kaitlin Baker, Philosophy in the Public Interest
Glenda Chavez, Franke College of Business Ambassador
Jessica Hardi, Mentor, Peer Jacks
Alexander Hayes, Business Leadership Program
Jordan Millidge, Mentor, Peer Jacks
Brianna Miloz, Franke College of Business Ambassador
Brendan Moore, Franke College of Business Ambassador
Gabriella Nunnally, Social Justice Committee, Chair, Black Student Union
Taylor Vargecko, Business Leadership Program
Jonathan Walker, Franke College of Business Ambassador
Emma Wentz, Philosophy in the Public Interest
Torrey Westfall, Business Leadership Program
Jayme Worden, Franke College of Business Ambassador

NAU’s Philosophy in the Public Interest is non partisan and does not endorse any position with respect to the issues we discuss. Philosophy in the Public Interest is a neutral convener for civil discourse.

Sources
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http://righttothecity.org/we-cant-win-a-right-to-the-city-unless-black-lives-matter/

NEXT ON CAMPUS HOT TOPICS CAFÉ:

Gender Inequality: economic disparity and related issues

Thursday, April 16th
5:30 - 7 p.m.
Gardner Auditorium
REMAINING HOT TOPICS CAFÉS THIS SPRING

**FLAGSTAFF**

General Topics
**The Value of Live Performance**
Wednesday, April 1st, 2015, 6 - 7:30 p.m.
Museum of Northern Arizona

Environmental Topics
**Setting Personal Environmental Priorities**
Thursday, April 23rd, 2015, 2:30 - 4 p.m.
Museum of Northern Arizona

**Changing the Climate around Climate Change**
Wednesday, May 6th, 2015, 2 - 3:30 p.m.
Museum of Northern Arizona

**SEDONA**

General Topics
**The Value of Live Performance**
Friday, April 3rd, 2015, 4 - 5:30 p.m.
Yavapai College, Sedona Center

Environmental Topics
**Setting Personal Environmental Priorities**
Thursday, April 16th, 2015, 2:30 - 4 p.m.
Yavapai College, Sedona Center (OLLI)

**Changing the Climate around Climate Change**
Monday, May 4th, 2015, 3:30 - 5 p.m.
Sedona Public Library

**NAU CAMPUS**

General Topics
**Gender Inequality: economic disparity and related issues**
Thursday, April 16th, 2015, 5:30 - 7 p.m.
Gardner Auditorium, The W.A. Franke College of Business, NAU