Police Brutality Responses Then and Now: The Effect Poverty, Demographics and Police Funding has on Police Brutality Response to Civil Rights Movements

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Abstract

This study examines the police brutality response during the Black Lives Matter protests, and the reoccurring pattern of police brutality as a response to Civil Rights Movement protests. The study first acknowledges the history of police brutality responses to Civil Rights Movement and how this history affects the responses today. There are eight cities involved in this study that are being compared in four different datasets. The cities data are based on four independent variables, those being population, demographics, police budget in 2020, and persons in poverty. This study will analyze if these four independent variables will influence the dependent variable which is the presence of police brutality as a response to the Black Lives Matter protests in these cities.

Keywords: Black Lives Matter, Civil rights movement, Police brutality
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Introduction

Police violence and brutality against marginalized groups, specifically Black and Brown people during Civil Rights Movements has been a reoccurring pattern since the times of Slavery. America’s first creation of law enforcement were slave patrols, a system that was based on policing enslaved Africans and their everyday life in case they were to ever go out of order. This harsh policing is continued during the Civil Rights Movement of the sixties, the riots or rebellion of the seventies, and now during the Black Lives Matter (BLM) protests. Since the Civil Rights Movement of the 1960s, police have time and time again responded with force or brutality towards protests or rebellion of Black and Brown people. The Black Lives Matter movement prompted the reoccurring pattern of police brutality again as a response to the grievances protestors faced. However, over the years there have been underlying factors that affect the police responses during these movements.

In 1964, President Lyndon B. Johnson declared the War on Poverty after seeing the tremendous effect poverty has had on disadvantaged groups. These groups are African Americans and other non-white groups such as Mexican Americans and Puerto Ricans. The War on Poverty was followed by new legislation that provided funding to new social welfare programs to help urban cities stricken with poverty. Although the word race wasn’t explicitly in the legislation, the neighborhoods that received help were predominantly Black and Brown. The issue with Johnson’s War on Poverty, however, was that it didn’t address the root cause of marginalized groups’ oppression, and thus did not stop the demonstrations and riots in these communities. So, when President Lyndon B. Johnson declared the War on Crime, less than a year later after the War on Poverty, this began the modernization of the police force that is known today. Furthermore, this began an influx of funds to local police departments by the
federal government, specifically police departments located in urban cities with Black and Brown populations.

Even though years have passed since the initial Civil Rights Movement of the 1960s, the response of police brutality and violence seems to remain constant in the recent years of the Black Lives Matter protests. Especially, in the recent BLM protests of 2020 after George Floyd’s murder, sparking what some may say is the biggest civil rights movement in history (Buchanan et al, 2021). This movement was particularly different than the previous Civil Rights Movement of the sixties because of the masses of white suburban cities and towns participating in the movement as well. Although the Black Lives Matter movement proved to be one of the first movements that had a large amount of white participation in protests, there were still protestors facing brutality from the police. This research aims to study and explore the trend of police response in predominantly white cities in comparison to predominantly nonwhite cities. As well as analyze the reoccurring pattern of the police brutality response to the Black Lives Matter protests in 2020. In addition to analyzing how the factors of poverty, demographics, and police funding have contributed to and affected police brutality today. This research explores the connection on larger, low-income, diverse cities with a higher presence of Black and Brown or nonwhite protestors and how they are more likely to suffer police brutality compared to smaller predominantly white, affluent cities during the Black Lives Matter movement.

Demographics, The War on Poverty, and The War on Crime

A. History of Policing and its Relation to Demographics: Black Rioting as Rebellion

Black people have had a history of being brutalized by white people dating back to the beginning of slavery. This systemic discrimination of brutalization of Black people specifically during their efforts in civil rights movements has become a reoccurring theme in United States
History. In the book *America on Fire*, Elizabeth Hinton details the gruesome history Black people have faced in the hands of white mobs and elaborates on the word “riot” and how it has been conceptually misconstrued throughout history as an effort to further police Black and Brown people. The negative connotation that came with Black people and rioting started in the 1960s, with President Lyndon B. Johnson being one of the first to define urban riots as closely related to “juvenile delinquency problems” (Hinton, 2021). Hinton makes a distinct connection between the police response to “riots” from Black people, translating as the same response and brutality Black people faced when they were brutally attacked during multiple race riots in the Jim Crow era. In 1908, a lynch mob comprised of five thousand people came down upon Springfield, Illinois, destroying Black businesses, killing two Black men, and driving Black families out of their homes. This was followed by one of the most gruesome acts of terror in the nineteenth century where Black families had the choice of being shot to death or burned alive in East St. Louis. The purpose of white mobs Hinton illustrates was to fundamentally stunt the growth of Black people in all aspects of life such as “jobs, leisure, the franchise, and to the political sphere” (Hinton, 2021). Riots have been occurring far before civil rights movements against Black people since the beginning of the Jim Crow era, and it was not until violence surfaced against repressive regimes by Black people that riots were seen as truly criminal. And the response to maintain these “riots” is the use of law enforcement and “law and order”. Now instead of the white mob inflicting pain on Black communities, Hinton argues that local police picked up “many of the previous functions” of the former white mobs (Hinton, 2021). The point that Hinton is trying to convey is that the “riots” that President Johnson was quick to label as such, Hinton discusses should be better understood as rebellions by Black Americans. As they were not engaging in collective violence to protest police brutality but also to protest the way
Black people have been treated in the system. However, Black Americans' acts of rebellion were not seen as a fight for their rights in the same way college students at the Greensboro Sit-ins rebelled against Jim Crow. A significant protest where four North Carolina A&T students, Joseph McNeil, Franklin McCain, Ezell Blair Jr., and David Richmond sat at a whites-only lunch counter. The next day two dozen students arrived at the same counter and by April over fifty thousand students were involved in the sit-in movement (Hinton, 2021). Hinton makes a connection across marginalized groups such as Mexican Americans and Puerto Ricans, who were also turning to rebellion to advocate for their rights as well. Although Latino and Hispanic communities may not have experienced the extent of severe discrimination Black communities have faced in American history, they have experienced a substantial amount from white communities. Hinton’s argument explains how Black and Brown communities rebelled against the unjust system for years in the twentieth century, and this trend continues with the Black Lives Matter movements in the twenty-first century.

B. War on Poverty

Lyndon B. Johnson declared in his 1964 State of the Union address, A War on Poverty to fix the problem and the growing rate of poverty in low-income communities. According to Johnson, the cause for the War on Poverty was “to give our fellow citizens a fair chance to develop their own capacities” in the different social aspects of life and give a community adequate resources to raise their children properly (Hinton, 2017). In the book, From the War on Poverty to the War on Crime, Hinton outlines that the flaw in Johnson’s War on Poverty plan focused on the effects of poverty in low-income communities and not the root cause. Johnson’s first act of legislation to help combat poverty was The Economic Opportunity Act of 1964 which invested 1 billion to fight poverty and consisted of a multitude of social programs that aided low-
income and urban cities. This act was followed by the creation of the Office of Economic Opportunity (OEO) which worked to provide aid in thirty-three states (Hinton, 2017). Although Johnson’s legislation passed did not explicitly include racial language it implicitly worked towards righting the wrongs done to the Black community by southern states and protests in the Civil Rights movement. Nonetheless, Johnson’s war on poverty, as Hinton explains, did not address the root causes of Black Americans' plight in the United States. So, when riots broke out in Harlem, one of the same neighborhoods that were a target of the social welfare programs of the Economic Opportunity Act of 1964, Johnson emphasized ‘law and order’ (Hinton, 2017). Johnson then declared the War on Crime a year after the War on Poverty, now putting money into law enforcement and thus beginning the over-policing of low-income communities suffering from poverty for decades to come.

C. War on Crime and its Effects on Policing Today

The “War on Crime” that Lyndon B. Johnson declared in March 1965, is what gave way to an escalation of police power for decades to come. This was the beginning of an increase in funding being allocated towards police departments to control crime in neighborhoods. This was followed by the Safe Streets act in 1968 which also contributed to an influx of funding for police departments. Hinton emphasized that between 1965 and 1968 the federal government allocated a total of “$20.6 million” to programs that revolutionized police departments. The Safe Street Act of 1968 invested another 400 million into law enforcement for means of modernization and created the Law Enforcement Assistance Administration (LEAA). The LEAA was used to administer these funds and quickly became one of the largest federal agencies in the seventies (Hinton, 2017). This large lump sum was accredited towards “riot-control training... AR15s and M5 carbines, steel helmets, three-foot batons... tear gas”, some of this equipment is still used by
police officers to subdue 2020 Black Lives Matter protests (Hinton, 2021). Los Angeles, which is also a city being observed in this study, had the second-largest grant to the police department in 1967 following the Watt’s Rebellion in 1965. By 1970, the federal allocation for local police departments had increased to 300 million, “a 2,900 percent increase in five years” (Hinton, 2021). President Johnson’s main goal for this act was to better equip police officers for future Black rebellions, or in the government’s view, riots. According to President Johnson, more police patrols could be effective because they led to deterring crime by having “more and speedier” arrests, and taking offenders off the street (Hinton, 2021). Hinton makes a connection on how the increase in police funding, because of the War on Crime, increased police presence in neighborhoods that were predominantly Black and Hispanic or Latino. This increase in police presence caused an increase in Black rebellion in the 1960s and 1970s. Hinton explains that rebellion usually was a result of the meddling of law enforcement, the unjust enforcement of laws in Black and Brown neighborhoods, and the overall frustration of Black and Brown neighborhoods. Hinton describes this continuous pattern of over-policing and rebellion as “the cycle”, “that helped define urban life in segregated, low-income, Black, Mexican American and Puerto Rican communities” (Hinton, 2021).

This cycle that Hinton discusses is the cycle that is still reoccurring today: Black Americans are still being disproportionately killed by police and at a higher rate in their neighborhoods. The response to these killings is protests or riots, and what Hinton calls Black rebellion to stand against the injustices that are faced, which when not viewed as peaceful by police are met with police violence. The events that have occurred in recent years since the creation of the Black Lives Matter movement have mirrored that of the riots in the sixties and seventies. Even though forty years have passed, rebellion remains persistent in Black
communities. Hinton credits this towards the simple cause and effect of brutal racism that has failed to be addressed in the policy of the United States. Although President Lyndon B. Johnson made valiant efforts to aid low-income communities with the War on Poverty, the War on Crime coupled with systemic racism negatively impacted Black and Brown communities. Hinton compares the state of Black and White America in 1965 and 2020 and concludes that Black Americans are still severely disadvantaged compared to their white counterparts. Today, the Black household only holds a fraction of income compared to their white counterparts, Hinton translates this to $29,000 less per year (Hinton, 2021). Furthermore, in both 1965 and 2020 poverty rates amongst Black Americans were twice as much as their white counterparts, and three-quarters of white families own their homes compared to less than half of Black communities. To add to these disparities, low-income communities receive less funding for their public schools, leading to high undereducation among Black and Latinx communities (Hinton, 2021). In other words, the disparities of Black communities haven’t drastically changed in the riots of the sixties, despite the growth of the Black middle class and many other successes socially and economically.

**Methodology**

This paper is using a qualitative analysis method that compares three groups of two cities. The two cities in each group are all within sixty miles of each other. In each group, there is one city that has a more diverse population of Black and Brown individuals, and another city that has a predominantly white population. Each group is as follows: Syracuse and Skaneateles, Bronx and Washingtonville, Los Angeles Fairfax District and Simi Valley, and Washington D.C. and Bethesda, Maryland. The study is broken down into three independent variables, the main independent variable being demographics, the following two being the police budget in 2020,
and the percent of people in poverty. These three independent variables were chosen because of the history these variables have in accordance with police brutality. The police budget was researched by analyzing each city's fiscal year budget for 2020, and how much was allocated to the respective police departments. The population and percentage of people in poverty is data derived from the United States 2020 Census. The study of these cities is a compilation of research that details the police brutality during the Black Lives Matter Protests in 2020, if any, and whether the four variables influence the presence of police brutality. In addition to this research is an interview with an organizer of the Black Lives Matter rally in Washingtonville, New York. The research will determine whether these three variables affect the dependent variable which is the presence of police brutality.

**Population, Demographics, Police Funding, and Poverty Rate and its effect on Police Violence Response in the Black Lives Matter Movement of 2020**


The murder of George Floyd sparked a nationwide mass movement of BLM protests spreading across the country. George Floyd was murdered by police officer Derek Chauvin, in Minneapolis, Minnesota after the officer kneeled on Floyd’s neck for eight minutes and forty-six seconds. Floyd’s murder was recorded and broadcasted over social media platforms, igniting a mass movement of protests across America. The first case study in this research is a comparison of two cities, Syracuse, and Skaneateles where one city has a higher Black and Latinx population than the other. The protest in Syracuse on May 30, 2020, started peacefully where protestors met at the Public Safety building and marched or slowly drove for several hours through parts of the city. According to Sakia Daye, one of the first people who arrived, the crowd was young and diverse, and they were joined by drivers as well. It wasn’t until nine pm when a man shattered a
window at the Onondaga County Courthouse and a small group of protestors followed, that a group of police officers stormed the entire group. The police response to the uprising of the small group of protestors was storming the entire group while yelling “move back” and using weapons labeled as “less lethal” (Libonati & Lohmann, 2020). Officers fired non-lethal pellets at the crowd and some protestors headed downtown forgoing resisting the officers' forward movements. The number of police officers increased to disperse the protestors, releasing tear gas and using rubber bullets at different points in the protest (Libonati & Lohmann, 2020).

Meanwhile, in Central New York an overwhelming amount of white people gathered in suburbs for a BLM protest, and one town just twenty-two miles from Syracuse is Skaneateles (Nett, 2020). This town led a peaceful protest on June 12, 2020, organized by seven college students who formed a group called Skaneateles for Social Justice. During the protest, people shared their stories and experiences and there was even a police car provided to lead the march (Weidner, 2020). The police response to the Skaneateles protest was drastically different than the protest in Syracuse. This can be contributed to the factors studied which are demographics, population, police budget, and poverty, which are shown in Table 1 below.
Table 1
Population, Budget, People in Poverty and Demographics and Its Effect Towards
Police Brutality in Syracuse and Skaneateles

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Syracuse</th>
<th>Skaneateles</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>DV: the presence of Police Brutality</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>no</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Main IV: Demographics</td>
<td>White, alone not Hispanic or Latino: 49.4% Black: 29.4% Hispanic or Latino: 9.5%</td>
<td>White alone, not Hispanic or Latino: 97.7% Black: 0.2% Hispanic or Latino: 1.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Population</td>
<td>148,620</td>
<td>7,209</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Police Budget in 2020</td>
<td>48 million</td>
<td>152,960</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>People in Poverty</td>
<td>33.3 percent</td>
<td>2.5 percent</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


The information collected in the table was derived from the United States Census, aside from the police budget which was found in the respective cities' 2020 fiscal year budget. The first independent variable, demographics shows that Syracuse has a higher percentage of Black and Hispanic or Latino people compared to Skaneateles. Additionally, the table shows that Skaneateles lacks diversity when it comes to nonwhite groups compared to the city of Syracuse. The table also shows the differences in police budgets as Syracuse’s police budget is roughly three hundred times bigger than the Skaneateles police budget. And the percentage of people living in poverty in Syracuse is roughly 13.2 times as much as the people living in poverty in Skaneateles. One can argue that these drastic differences can be due in part to Syracuse’s bigger population compared to the Skaneateles. However, since Johnson’s War on Crime which introduced an increased budget allocated to police departments, these increased police budgets have been in communities with higher poverty rates and low income. It is in these same
communities where police violence responses are most prevalent against Black rebellion or 
“riots”.

B. New York City and Police Brutality Response during BLM Protests

New York City (NYC) is one of the most diverse cities in the United States, comprised of 
five Burroughs and multiple neighborhoods. According to the 2020 US census, the percentage of 
white people not including Hispanic, or Latino is 31.9, following 23.8 percent of Black people 
and 28.9 percent of Hispanic and Latino (US Census Bureau, 2020). The diverse city has also 
had one of the worst policy brutality responses during the Black Lives Matter movement. 
Attorney General Letitia James released a statement announcing the lawsuit against the New 
York Police Department (NYPD) for the use of excessive force during the Black Lives Matter 
protests. The lawsuit specifically charged NYPD, the City of New York, Mayor Bill de Blasio, 
NYPD Commissioner Dermot Shea, and NYPD Chief of Department Terence Monahan with 
failing to address the pattern of abuse by “not properly training, supervising, and disciplining 
Andrew Cuomo called on the Office of the Attorney General (OAG) to investigate police 
misconduct and since May 30, 2020, the OAG received more than 1300 complaints and pieces of 
evidence that were derived from phone calls and hotlines. In addition to this was a three-day 
public hearing with over one hundred protestors, community-based organizations, elected 
oficials, and even NYPD commissioner Shea who testified, and over three hundred written 
testimonies were submitted. Many of the complaints fell in between the timeframe of May 28, 
2020, to December 11, 2020, the same time frame that the BLM Protests were on a rise. The 
OAG found that NYPD officers had struck protestors with “blunt instruments” at least 50 times, 
pepper spray was deployed unlawfully in at least thirty incidents, and unreasonable force was
used at protestors at least seventy-five times (New York State Office of the Attorney General, 2021). The lawsuit highlights many different instances where the use of force ended in grave injuries for protestors. In one instance, Luke Hanna who was participating in a protest at Cadman Plaza was struck in the back of the head by NYPD despite complying and was forced to get ten staples to the back of his head. In another instance Andrew Smith who was participating in a Brooklyn Protest, had his face mask pulled down and was pepper-sprayed in the face with no warning. Furthermore, Smith did not receive any medical attention after being pepper-sprayed which is against NYPD policy. And when the body camera footage was released, the footage contained the officer's voice who pepper-sprayed Smith saying, “I took the guy’s goggles, I ripped the s--- off and I used it” (New York State Office of the Attorney General, 2021). The use of force by NYPD officers was blatantly extreme, and the evidence was overwhelming. During the BLM protests there proves to be a clear pattern of police brutality being high in New York City, a city where the white population is the minority.

One of the worst instances of police brutality is in a city that is being used in this study. On June 1 of 2020, Mayor de Blasio imposed a curfew in New York City that specifically exempted first responders, legal observers, and jail support, providers. However, in a June 4 protest in the Mott Haven neighborhood of the Bronx, officers detained 12 legal observers for violating curfew, even though legal observers were exempted from Mayor de Blasio’s order. At the June 4th protest in Mott Haven officers also used kettling to trap and arrest protestors, by using their bikes to physically push protestors together and crush them. After this tactic, police arrested at least 249 people for “violating curfew” and others were brutally assaulted with batons. Furthermore, an officer was caught on footage stating that it was okay to arrest legal providers, proving the officers were going against Mayor de Blasio’s executive order. A total of
nine percent of the Bronx, county population is white alone, not Hispanic or Latino, while 43.6% percent is Black and 56.4 percent is Hispanic, or Latino as shown in Table 2 below.

C. Police Response to BLM Protest in Washingtonville, New York, and Analysis of Data

In a predominantly white town just an hour away from the Bronx, a Black Lives Matter Rally within the same week as the disastrous Mott Haven protest was held. The town of Washingtonville has a population of 64.2 percent of white people not Hispanic or Latino, 15.8 percent Black and 18.7 percent Hispanic or Latino as shown in Table 2 below. The Black Lives Matter rally held on June 7, was organized by college student Diasia Burroughs. Burroughs stated that for the rally to happen, she had to get permission from the mayor of Washingtonville about the location and time. Since two public parks, Vern Allen Park and Memorial Park were being used, Burroughs had talked to a family friend who was a Trustee of Washingtonville to help organize the rally. The mayor had allocated two hours from 12-2 for the rally to be held. Since this was the beginning of COVID, water and snacks were not allowed to be given out. During the rally, hundreds of residents of Washingtonville gathered at Memorial Park to make their way over to Vern Allen Park. There were police riding bikes while hundreds of residents walked during the rally and police were present at both parks. The rally had an agenda where speakers came, songs were sung, and demonstrations were held. It was a peaceful rally with no issues since the police knew about the rally beforehand and were dispatched for the specific event.
Table 2
Population, Budget, People in Poverty and Demographics and Its Effect Towards Police Brutality in the Bronx and Washingtonville

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Bronx</th>
<th>Washingtonville</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>DV: the presence of Police</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brutality</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Main IV: Demographics</td>
<td>White alone, not Hispanic or</td>
<td>White alone, not Hispanic or</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Latino: 9.0%</td>
<td>Latino: 64.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Black: 43.6%</td>
<td>Black: 15.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Hispanic or Latino: 56.4%</td>
<td>Hispanic or Latino: 18.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Population</td>
<td>1,472,654</td>
<td>5,657</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Police Budget in 2020</td>
<td>5.61 billion (All of NYC)</td>
<td>2 million</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>People in Poverty</td>
<td>24.4%</td>
<td>3.5%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


Human Rights Watch (HRW) released a ninety-nine-page report which investigated the brutal police response to the protest on June 4, 2020, in Mott Haven. The report details the socioeconomic background of Mott Haven and how there has been a trend of over-policing in the city. According to the data in Table 2, 24.4 percent of people live in poverty in the Bronx, with the city of Mott Haven ranked highest for the percentage of homeless students, with 18 percent being homeless from kindergarten to high school (Human Rights Watch, 2020). The most significant detail about Mott Haven is that it is the most heavily policed neighborhood in the city of the Bronx according to the HRW. Out of the seventy-seven precincts in New York City, the 40th precinct in Mott Haven “has received the third-highest number of civilian complaints about police misconduct, and the most complaints for police use of physical force” (Human Rights Watch, 2020). A New York Times investigation of the 40th precinct found that there has been a trend of violent crimes being unsolved in Mott Haven, but low-level crimes have an
overwhelming amount of over-policing. Furthermore, the commanding officer of the 40th precinct Christopher McCormack was caught on recordings telling his officers to “conduct more street stops of ‘male blacks 14 to 20’” (Human Rights Watch, 2020). The sentiments of McCormack targeted African American males, in a neighborhood that is already overpoliced. When it comes to education in the South Bronx, where Mott Haven is located, School District 9 has one of the lowest graduation rates and highest dropout rates of any school district in the state. The undereducation rates of the South Bronx can contribute to the lack of school funding that is received for low-income communities such as this one. In many instances, especially in low-income communities, education is underfunded, while policing continues to be on a steady increase. This is mentioned by Historian Elizabeth Hinton, after President Johnson declared the War on Crime which began the increase of police and its departments in low-income communities and the steady decline of education. The low education rate in the South Bronx and its history of over-policing coupled with the high NYPD police budget as shown in Table 2, shows the effect the War on Crime had on low-income communities today. Additionally, the Bronx is an example of how heavily low-income cities are policed, which leads to a higher rate of police brutality as seen in the Mott Haven protests.

In comparison to Washingtonville, New York City and the Bronx is significantly larger which can be part of the reason why the police budget is significantly larger. However, Table 2 shows that the Bronx, which had a higher police budget, percentage of people in poverty, and a higher nonwhite population than Washingtonville, also had a presence of police brutality during their protests. Furthermore, the interviewee Diasia Burroughs accredits how she went about the event and the demographics of the town as to why there was no presence of police brutality. Burroughs states.
D. Police Brutality Response in Los Angeles and Simi Valley

Los Angeles is not a stranger to police brutality as the city broke out into protests and riots after the video of Rodney King, an African American man who was brutally beaten by Los Angeles Police Department (LAPD) officers, was aired on national news after a local bystander filmed the altercation. The four white police officers who had beat Rodney King were acquitted, leading to five days of civil unrest in riots that resulted in thousands arrested, over fifty dead, and more than two thousand people injured (Hinton, 2021). Almost thirty years later, Los Angeles protestors still suffer from police brutality during the George Floyd protests. In a 101-page report by the City Counsel, it found the LAPD were not adequately prepared for their response to protests in Los Angeles. Their findings included that the police force needs improvement in areas including using less-lethal tools, mass arrests, preparedness and training, and wellness.

In terms of less-lethal tools, the City Counsel found that after June 3, 2020, less-lethal munitions were not entirely used. These less lethal munitions can be sponge rounds or rubber projectiles that will not cause a fatal injury if used properly. However, according to the City Counsel’s report, rough inventory records indicate over 3,400 and 6,200 rounds of the 40mm and 37mm munition respectively, were never returned to the Department armory. Furthermore, the City Council found that there was six “serious use of force investigations” that were protest-related and currently being investigated (Gerald, 2020). According to the LAPD Manual section, a use of force in this sense is defined as, an incident involving deadly force, a use of force resulting in death or hospitalization, and any intentional or unintentional head strike with an impact weapon that leads to “serious bodily injury” (Gerald, 2020). The findings in the report were that most injuries sustained by protestors appeared to be the use of less-lethal munitions from 40mm. According to an article from the Los Angeles Times, a 27-year-old Black man
Derrick Sanderlin was hit by a foam bullet from a 40mm weapon, leaving him with a ruptured testicle. Another protestor, Breanna Contreras was standing far behind San Jose protestors when a foam bullet hit her temple leaving severe bruising and a bloody eye. In the Fairfax district of Los Angeles, Deon Jones, a Black protestor suffered a lash from a police baton across his back by an LAPD officer according to the LA times as he ran (Rector et al., 2020). Even worse, as he looked back a police officer aimed and shot a less-lethal weapon right in his face, suffering cracked bones, a head injury, and stitches. According to the LAPD’s Department policy when it comes to the use of less-lethal weapons, officers should not aim at people’s heads or necks. Despite this policy, numerous protestors’ injuries have been to their head or their upper body, completely violating this policy. Not only was Jones shot in the face, but protestor Eric Schuh was hit with a projectile cracking his teeth and busting his lip open. Schuh stated he “threw his hands up and tried to duck behind a car” however the bullet had struck him. Danyel Norman, Schuh’s friend was also hit in the throat seconds after (Rector et al., 2020).

Within the same week of the violent Fairfax District protest in Los, Angeles, forty miles away was a protest in Simi Valley, California. Simi Valley is a predominantly white affluent city with a population of 125,356 according to the 2020 United States Census. Simi Valley is also the same white neighborhood, where the first trial of Rodney King took place, almost thirty years earlier (Childs & Rode, 2020). Mikiiya Foster, UCLA student, and organizer of the Simi Valley protest on June 6, 2020, stated the protest was more diverse than she expected it to be. While another protestor stated they felt like a minority at a Black Lives Matter protest, insinuating that despite the diverse turnout, the protestors were majority white. Foster worked with other community organizers to organize the protest on June 6th to which 2,000 and 3,000 people gathered and marched to City Hall. At City Hall protestors sat in silence for eight minutes in 46
seconds, the same amount of time George Floyd was held down, and at the end of the protest were provided free transportation back to their cars (Childs & Rode, 2020).

The protest police response at Simi Valley was vastly different than the response at Fairfax, two cities just forty miles from each other. There are four factors that could account for the two different responses. The table below shows data of the four factors and their effect on whether police brutality was present.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Los Angeles</th>
<th>Simi Valley</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>DV: the presence of Police Brutality</strong></td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Main IV: Demographics</strong></td>
<td>Black or African American: 8.8%</td>
<td>Black: 1.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>White alone, not Hispanic or Latino: 28.5%</td>
<td>White alone, not Hispanic or Latino: 58.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Hispanic or Latino: 48.1%</td>
<td>Hispanic or Latino: 24.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Population</strong></td>
<td>3,898,747</td>
<td>126,356</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Police Department Budget in 2020</strong></td>
<td>3,152,584,739</td>
<td>$1,417,867</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>People in Poverty</strong></td>
<td>16.9%</td>
<td>7.5%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


Although Los Angeles’ Black population is only slightly larger than Simi Valley’s, Fairfax has a significantly larger Hispanic or Latino population compared to Simi Valley. As shown in the previous case studies there has been a trend in the United States for neighborhoods that have a higher Black and Brown population, to also have an increase in police brutality. The city of Los Angeles, however, has had a history of police brutality in response to protests since
the Watt’s Rebellion in 1965, which resulted in 34 deaths, over 1,000 injuries, and over 4,000 arrests by police (The Martin Luther King, Jr., Research and Education Institute, 2018). The city of Los Angeles poverty rate is also twice the size of Simi Valley, although this can be due to the larger-scale population of Los Angeles. Even so, this does not negate the fact that Los Angeles, a city that is predominantly nonwhite, has an increase in people in poverty, and police department funding. The recent case studies have shown that larger cities, that are more diverse or predominantly nonwhite have had a direct relationship with police funding and the percentage of people in poverty.

E. Police Brutality Response in Washington D.C. and Bethesda, Maryland (MD)

The attack on peaceful protestors by Park Police at Lafayette Square is one of the most well-known instances of police brutality during the 2020 Black Lives Matter protests. The Park Police were sued for their excessive use of force and an Oversight Hearing was held before the Committee on Natural Resources U.S. House of Representatives. A statement from Hon. Raúl M. Grijalva, a representative in Congress from the State of Arizona iterated that at around 6 pm, half an hour before the D.C. curfew Park Police and law enforcement moved in on peaceful protestors. This led to peaceful protestors, bystanders, and even members of the press being caught up “in the chaotic barrage of shields, batons, horses, projectiles, and tear gas” (U.S. House of Representatives Committee on Natural Resources, 2020). At the Oversight Hearing another witness, Kishon McDonald a protestor at Lafayette Square relays his experience of the event. McDonald described the protest as a peaceful protest until right before 6:30 pm when officers started approaching without saying a word and came directly in front of the group. Then McDonald saw a line of police in “riot robocop gear” before they forcefully pushed through the crowd with their shields (U.S. House of Representatives Committee on Natural Resources,
According to McDonald himself and the crowd started to retreat when police started to throw tear gas and flash-bang grenades as they were attempting to retreat. To McDonald, this was an action that was uncalled for since the protestors were already attempting to leave and added more difficulty to the situation.

The next day on June 2nd, just seven miles away from the wealthy, the predominantly white affluent town of Bethesda, Maryland held a protest with more than a thousand people. People rallied at the Connie Morella Library where people spoke about their experiences with racism and injustice in the United States. Police officers even blocked traffic to allow the protestors to march in the streets and rode along on their bikes. According to Bethesda Magazine around thirty police officers were at the protest and an extra thirty or forty were ready to be called if needed. Overall, the protest was peaceful, with police aiding protestors as opposed to using painful tactics against them as was seen the day before in Lafayette Square (Adhikusuma, 2020).

The statistics of these two cities based on population, demographics, poverty rate, and police budget are vastly different as shown in Table 4 below.
Table 4
Population, Budget, People in Poverty and Demographics and Its Effect Towards Police Brutality in Washington D.C. and Bethesda, Maryland (MD)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>DV: the presence of Police Brutality</th>
<th>Washington D.C.</th>
<th>Bethesda, MD</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td></td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Main IV: Demographics</th>
<th>Washington D.C.</th>
<th>Bethesda, MD</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>White alone, not Hispanic or Latino:</td>
<td>37.5%</td>
<td>71.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Black: 46.0%</td>
<td></td>
<td>4.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hispanic or Latino: 11.3%</td>
<td></td>
<td>9.1%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| Population                          | 689,545         | 68,056       |
| Police Budget in 2020               | $559,526,918    | $295,327,329 |
| People in Poverty                   | 15%             | 3.6%         |


The table above shows the differences in demographics, population, police budget, and people in poverty between Washington D.C. and Bethesda, Maryland. Washington D.C. is a significantly larger city with a much more diverse population compared to Bethesda, Maryland. Furthermore, the data shows in Table 3 that Washington D.C.’s poverty rate is almost five times more than Bethesda, Maryland. As for the police budget, it is almost double the amount of Bethesda, Maryland. Although Washington D.C.’s population is significantly larger, which accounts for a larger police force, Washington D.C.’s population is majority Black and Brown. The data from Table 3 ultimately suggests that Washington D.C., a larger city, with a higher percentage of non-white groups, larger police funding, and a higher poverty rate did have a presence of police brutality in response. While Bethesda, Maryland a predominantly white city did not have a presence of police brutality in response to their Black Lives Matter protests which can be a result of its population, demographics, police budget, and poverty rate.
Conclusion

“... The economic deprivation, social isolation, inadequate housing, and general despair of thousands of Negroes teeming in Northern and Western ghettos are the ready seeds which give birth to tragic expressions of violence.”

-Martin Luther King Jr. in response to the 1965 Watts Rebellion

As stated by Martin Luther King and analyzed by Elizabeth Hinton, the systemic roots of racism gave rise to Civil Rights Movements. And although the effect of these issues was addressed in President Johnson’s declaration of the War on Poverty in 1964, the root causes behind these communities were never fixed. This led to the continuation of mass civil rights movements, and the presence of police brutality in response to every movement, creating the cycle that Hinton discusses.

The scope of this study is relatively small and does not span the multitude of cities that comprise the United States. The conclusion of the study is based on the results of the eight cities chosen, and if a larger study was conducted could prove to be different results. However, in each case study that consisted of two cities, there were recurring themes present in each. All four factors used in the study seem to be interrelated when analyzing the effect these four factors had on the presence of police brutality as a response. One of the findings of this study is that a bigger population will equate to a bigger police budget than a smaller population. However, a bigger population that is majority nonwhite, tends to have a larger police budget as opposed to a smaller population that is majority white. Another finding of the study is that these large, nonwhite cities tend to have a higher poverty rate compared to predominantly white, affluent cities. Ultimately, these factors of large, majority nonwhite cities with a higher police budget and a higher rate of
poverty have shown to influence the presence of police brutality in Black Lives Matter protests in 2020. As opposed to smaller, predominantly white predominant cities with a low poverty rate, that have shown in this study to have no presence of police brutality as a response to Black Lives Matter protests in 2020.
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