

Chapter 19

Black Radicalism, Black Consciousness, Black History, and Black YouTube: A New Age Revolution

Cheryl E. Mango
Virginia State University

INTRODUCTION

A new age Black revolution is currently waging on YouTube by passionate African American social media personalities determined to help Black people defeat and rise above White supremacy's boundaries.¹ In recent years, social media sites like Facebook, Twitter, Snapchat, Instagram, BlogTalkRadio, and YouTube have reformatted Black radicalism in the United States by providing zealous African American activists with an online platform to boldly express their concerns and gain a following by using the internet. As a result, significant shifts in Black revolutionary thought or consciousness and new protest methods have developed in combination with the rapid growth in human dependency on computer capabilities.² The new virtual home for Black resistance to White-led racial oppression is rooted inside the Black radical tradition of remaining committed to an idealized, Black liberationist goal of securing self-regulating social, political, cultural, and economic freedom for people of African descent worldwide.

Though many African Americans use social media to express their discontent with racial oppression, the online Black resisters of focus are small in number, yet large in influence. The Black YouTube rebels in this study are either a part of or affiliated with the following YouTube channels: BlackNews102; SaNeterTV, BlackMagik363; BabaTVEveryTimeFire; ZaZa; KnowTheLedgeMedia; YoungPharaoh; SiriusMindz; BrotherBenX; TariqRadio; PrinceIfatunde; YourBlackWorld; and UrbanX.TV. The thought

¹ Jonathan M. Cox, "The Source of a Movement: Making the Case for Social Media as an Informational Source Using Black Lives Matter." *Ethnic and Racial Studies* 40, no. 11 (2017): 1847-1854.

² Ibid.

leaders are both eagerly and often hesitantly referred to as spearheads of the Black Conscious Community. The Black Conscious Community is a conglomerate of sporadically allied African Americans who advocate replacing mainstream Black philosophies and institutions with Afrocentric and Black Nationalist ideas and action. The YouTubers of focus were chosen due to their loose connections and because they are among the most influential and thought-provoking in their justifications for the complete transformation of the psyche and physical reality of all people of African descent.³ Many of the Black YouTube radicals are often offended by the term and categorization of “YouTube Revolutionary” or “Web-Oblutionary” because they believe such titles diminish the importance of their online and in-person work. Yet, the label is appropriate and reflects unique characteristics that make the online Black militants’ important voices in the current political and social media landscape.⁴ The new virtual presence in Black radical thinking and action amassed by these YouTube radicals are worthy of serious scholarly study because they represent a critical stage of development in Black revolutionary history and consciousness.

AN OVERVIEW OF STAGES OF BLACK RADICALISM IN THE UNITED STATES

Black radicalism, militancy, or resistance to White supremacy in the United States has remained a central feature in African American history from the slavery era throughout present times.⁵ Whenever repression was present, African Americans used confrontational means to liberate or free themselves from White control. Blacks’ combative actions demonstrated the connections between Black radicalism and Black

³ KEYOFLIFE Production. “Red Pill Talks the New COINTELPRO & a Code of Conduct for the Black Conscious Community!!!” YouTube, 46:43, January 20, 2017. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-zGaXN-FIHg&t=150s>.

⁴ KEYOFLIFE Production. “Red Pill Sounds Off on Conscious Platforms: ‘I Have to Publicly Separate My Self from Them.’” YouTube, 47:51, May 28, 2017. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=24jEuY93D38>.

⁵ Gaye Theresa Johnson and Alex Lubin, *Introduction to Futures of Black Radicalism* (London: Verso Books, 2017).

consciousness because they both involve a state of mind that seeks to actively challenge racism through means like spirituality, politics, education, and even violence. Years prior to social media's rise, different forms of Black radicalism emerged to respond to the prevailing types of racial oppression. During Africans' sixteenth to nineteenth-century Middle Passage, many soon-to-be slaves revolted against their White captors. Their resistance methods were both passive (discreet) and active (vigorous).⁶ Though detained, Africans always longed to free themselves from their confinement, which was a form of mental, yet passive resistance. Forms of passive resistance also included sabotaging tools and crops and faking illnesses. In contrast to passive Black resistance, one example of active resistance occurred in 1839 on the Spanish *La Amistad* slave ship during the Middle Passage. After the Mende people of Sierra Leone banded together to violently overthrow the White captors who were charged with shipping them from Africa to the Americas for slavery, the Mende resisters attempted to force the remaining Spanish men to steer the ship back to Africa. Instead of sailing to Africa, the White men directed the ship to the East Coast of the United States, which landed on Long Island. Despite the Mende failing to return their slave ship to Africa, they successfully proved their case for freedom in the American courts on the grounds that slave trading (not slavery) had been illegal in the United States since 1808.⁷ Similar active forms of resistance occurred during Africans' enslavement period in the United States, particularly in the form of slave revolts. Blacks were expected to accept their inferior status and live under the rules that Whites defined for them. Yet, the pressures of having limited freedom and little control over their own affairs often expanded into a philosophical and concrete arena known as Black radicalism. The concept concerns people who believe in forcefully overthrowing existing political, social, and economic norms to create a new Black reality where Africans worldwide lead their own affairs free from racial oppression.

⁶ Olivier Pétré-Grenouilleau, "Processes of Exiting the Slave Systems: A Typology," in *Slave Systems: Ancient and Modern*, ed. Enrico Dal Lago and Constantina Katsari (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008), 233-264.

⁷ Marcus Rediker, *The Amistad Rebellion: An Atlantic Odyssey of Slavery and Freedom* (New York: Penguin, 2012).

Black radicalism intensified in the hostile, post-slavery environment known as Jim Crow segregation. The racial group's suffering did not go unnoticed by revolutionary-minded Black leaders. In the early 1900s, Marcus Garvey and other similar Pan-Africanists developed radical solutions that included pushes for Blacks in America and around the world uniting to control the lands and live in Africa. Garvey's Pan-Africanist calls were followed by Black Nationalists like Elijah Muhammad, who believed that Blacks in America should separate from mainstream society and form their own. Though Pan-Africanism and Black Nationalism became central features in Black radical thought and action, Communism also played a defining role in the Black revolutionary tradition.⁸ Ideologically, Communism calls for everyone to have an equal amount of resources and power. Many African Americans also believed Communism was the solution for ending Black oppression. In the United States, Communists were considered radical and enemies to the federal government due to its direct opposition to American economic norms such as capitalism. From the 1930s through the 1950s, the anti-Communist pressures failed to prevent African American singer Paul Robeson and lawyer Benjamin J. Davis from advocating for Communist solutions to help Black people free themselves from socioeconomic and racial depravity.⁹ The men's radical calls for Communist action influenced the turbulent 1960s and 1970s era Black Power Movement leaders and organizations such as the Black Panther Party for Self-Defense.

In 1966, in Oakland, California, Huey P. Newton and Bobby Seal founded the Black Panther Party for Self-Defense in response to police brutality against local African Americans. The Black Panther Party's promotion of armed self-defense and Black Nationalist programs that included providing free breakfast, education, and healthcare

⁸ William L. Van Deburg, *Modern Black Nationalism: From Marcus Garvey to Louis Farrakhan* (New York: New York University Press, 1996), 23-28, 97-103, 240-250.

⁹ Jordan Goodman, *Paul Robeson: A Watched Man* (London: Verso, 2013); William L. Van Deburg, *Modern Black Nationalism: From Marcus Garvey to Louis Farrakhan* (New York: New York University Press, 1996), 23-28, 97-103, 240-250.

for African Americans rapidly gained the attention of Blacks across the nation. Newton and Seal educated the organization's members on their constitutional rights to carry weapons. Black Panthers were influenced by Black radicals like Malcolm X, who strongly criticized Martin Luther King Jr.'s Civil Rights Movement notions of peaceful demonstrations and Blacks integrating into the mainstream America.¹⁰ From 1952 until 1964, X was a member of the Nation of Islam (NOI), a religious and Black Nationalist organization led by Elijah Muhammad. X popularized NOI radical teachings such as believing White people were devils and promoting African Americans separating from Whites to form their own nation. X also influenced famed boxer Muhammad Ali's adoption of Islam, criticism of Whites' oppression of Blacks, and refusal to fight in the Vietnam War after his 1966 military draft. X's doctrine also played a pivotal role in the Black Panthers' calls for Blacks to stop serving the military. X, Ali, and the Black Panthers believed that African Americans should not help the United States attack other non-White people when the country treated Black people with disdain. Instead, the Black Panthers called for a revolution at home.¹¹ Not only did the Black radical organization want Black people to defend themselves against White acts of violence, a few of their members like Eldridge Cleaver engaged in gunfights with police. Many members also believed that a violent overthrow of the government was necessary to end the demonization of Black people. Government powerbrokers considered the Black Panthers' attempts to organize, educate, and protect their communities as radical threats to the country's national security and ultimately shattered the organization.¹² The Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI), led by J. Edgar Hoover, destroyed the Black Panthers by engaging in unlawful tactics including planned assassinations of Black Panthers with a FBI surveillance and infiltration program called COINTELPRO.¹³ Though the Black Panthers disbanded in the early 1980s, the organization took Black radicalism in the United States to new heights with its racial pride

¹⁰ Jeffery O. C. Ogbar, *Black Power: Radical Politics and African American Identity* (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 2005), 57, 86-90, 109, 155, 171, 186.

¹¹ *Ibid.*, 18, 20, 21, 28, 60,

¹² *Ibid.*, 94-95, 199.

¹³ *Ibid.*, 175, 199.

and revolutionary politics. In the early 1990s, Aaron Michaels formed the New Black Panther Party, which Khalid Muhammad and Malik Zulu Shabazz expanded in the late 1990s and early 2000s. Similar to the original Black Panther Party created in 1966, the New Black Panther Party promoted Black Nationalism and Black self-defense. Muhammad's activism was considered so radical by opponents of his Black resistance ideology that in 1993, the United States Congress voted to censure him. Congress' contempt for Muhammad did not stop him and fellow Black revolutionaries from continuing the Black radical tradition of unapologetic attempts to secure complete Black liberation.¹⁴

In the 1980s, the Afrocentric and African cultural nationalist scholars who were active during the 1960s and 1970s Civil Rights and Black Power Movements such as Molefi Kete Asante, Frances Cress Welsing, Marimba Ani, and Maulana Karenga gained momentum. They were on television shows like *Tony Brown's Journal* and *Phil Donahue* spreading their philosophical ideas for an intellectual and cultural Black revolution.¹⁵ However, similar to the YouTube resisters of study, during the 1960s and 1970s, theoretical divisions existed between Black radical political nationalists and cultural nationalists on which direction was best for defeating African American oppression. In 1969, the Black Panthers and the US Organization led by Karenga, epitomized the rift when a shootout erupted between the two groups at UCLA. Though the F.B.I.'s subversive and questionable COINTELPRO program was largely to blame for the tensions, the Black Panthers' Marxist political and economic inclinations and the US Organization's focus on the re-acclimation of African Americans with African culture reflected the two groups' divergent positions. Both were Black Nationalists who were determined to liberate Blacks from an oppressive system of racial control, but with different approaches and values.

¹⁴ Christian Adams, *Injustice: Exposing the Racial Agenda of the Obama Justice Department* (Washington, DC: Regnery Publishing, 2011), 112-116.

¹⁵ Duron Chavis, "Dr. Frances Cress Welsing on *Donahue*," YouTube, 45:01, February 11, 2012, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iqUXlgRGX7I>; Tony Brown, "Tony Brown's Journal—Dr. Maulana Karenga," YouTube, 1:05, December 29, 2016. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=U60WmAH3jIc>.

The same debates are prevalent among the Black YouTube resisters whose YouTube channels' different focuses reflect their varying positions. The present era's YouTube revolts are a continuation of the 1980s recharge of the Nation of Islam, which Louis Farrakhan helped to propel after assuming leadership of the organization in 1981. Farrakhan continued to champion the NOI's promotion of Black Nationalism and Black liberation through the NOI teachings of Black self-dependence. The NOI and Afrocentricity were also instrumental in the creation of Black-Conscious or political hip hop. During the 1980s and early 1990s, rap groups and artists—namely, Public Enemy, X-Klan, Brand Nubian, Queen Latifah, and KRS-One—promoted images and content aimed to reconnect Black people with their African roots, while battling racial oppression and the devastating effects of crack cocaine infesting Black neighborhoods. The hip-hop group NWA also contributed to Black radical political messaging with their Gangsta Rap approach to challenging police brutality against African Americans like the infamous 1991 police beating of Rodney King in Los Angeles, California. In the 1990s, Black radicalism remained prevalent in mainstream popular culture, especially with the World Wrestling Federation's (WWF) Nation of Islam-themed wrestling group, the Nation of Domination. In 2013, social media Black activism transformed into a radical Black movement known as Black Lives Matter (BLM).¹⁶ BLM challenged the police killings of unarmed Black men, including Trayvon Martin, Tamir Rice, and Michael Brown. Many of the murders were filmed and viewed on social media sites such as Facebook and YouTube.¹⁷ Though BLM shared many social media characteristics of the YouTube activists studied in this chapter, it is important to note that the two groups' Black liberationist philosophies, politics, methods, and associations are different. Despite their distinctions, both sects of online radicals reflect the continuation of the Black radical and revolutionary tradition in the United States through the use of modern internet technology.

¹⁶ Cheryl L. Keyes, *Rap Music and Street Consciousness* (Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 2004).

¹⁷ Christopher J. Lebron, *The Making of Black Lives Matter: A Brief History of an Idea* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2017).

YOUTUBE'S ROLE IN THE ONLINE BLACK RADICALS' DESIRES TO DESTROY AND CREATE A NEW AFRICAN AMERICAN REALITY

Radical Black resistance to racial oppression has occurred in every stage of African American history, leading the revolutionaries to use the resources that are available to communicate and achieve their Black liberationist goals.¹⁸ In discussions regarding the contemporary era of Black radicals who use YouTube as their major expressive outlet, it is important to note that the activists are not a monolith; they have diverse perspectives, backgrounds, styles, strategies, and features. Even with their differences, similarities exist in their sporadic online connections, common beliefs, and overarching aims of Black liberation from what they call White supremacist society. In today's world, social media is a preferred format for many Black radicals for a number of reasons, especially aims that concern creating a new civilization for African people in America and worldwide. Although the online campaigners have gained substantial followers in their rejection of Black racial oppression through the use of social media sites like BlogTalkRadio, Twitter, and Facebook, YouTube serves as the primary audiovisual way for them to express their views. YouTube is a free, easy-access way for online Black activists to instantly get their points across to millions of people by posting videos that are easily searchable by topic and person, which is different from other social media sites like Facebook that have often closed or private "Friend" models that make searching topics and videos challenging. Additionally, viewers can watch billions of hours of available content whenever they desire and without the pressures of following, friending, joining, or adding that other social media sites may require. The Google-owned company also allows a more intimate and personal online exchange because of its real-time, conversational video displays that provide watchers with an ability to closely analyze the words, movements, homes, cars, families, clothes, and other features displayed in the videos. Furthermore, YouTube Chat allows YouTube personalities to host instantaneous conversations, while interacting with

¹⁸ Gayraud S. Wilmore, *Black Religion and Black Radicalism: An Interpretation of the Religious History of African Americans*. (New York: Orbis Books, 1998), vii-x.

their viewers in the chat feature. There are also economic benefits for users who upload content on YouTube because the social media company monetizes videos and often pays uploaders for the number of views, likes, and subscribers received. YouTubers can ask their viewers to donate to their personal crowd funding campaigns on websites like Patreon, PayPal, and GoFundMe. African Americans in particular use social media at higher rates than other racial groups, which strengthens the Black revolutionaries' online cause and relevance.¹⁹ More importantly, YouTube also provides their users with large room for freedom of speech and content which allows the Black radicals to articulate their unorthodox messages. With the growing popularity of social media, it is likely the Black revolutionary presence would exist within widely-used and highly-influential online spaces like YouTube. The YouTube rebels use their online platform to express fiery rhetoric that challenges the White power structure's anti-Black leanings and advocate for a Black-owned and controlled reality.

A major factor in Black radical thought and practice rests in communicating with their African American counterparts in hopes of awakening them from what the revolutionaries consider a deep sleep or state of unconsciousness that Whites forced upon the racial group during slavery and Jim Crow. Many Black radicals believe that suffering from centuries of constant White oppression have placed African Americans' convictions, consciousness, political awareness, views of the world, everyday habits, and self-will in a state of darkness and fear. From their perspectives, the continual repression has limited the ability of people of African descent to create their own, thriving, oppression-free, Black-dominated society. The online activists maintain that Blacks are unaware that they counterproductively further their own subjugation and strengthen White supremacy when they participate in mainstream society avenues such as practicing Christianity; working in and spending money at companies that are not owned by similar-minded Black-conscious persons; serving in the military; receiving an education in predominantly White

¹⁹ Harriot, Michael, "National Urban League's 2018 'State of Black America:' Tech Companies Don't Care About Employing Black People," *The Root*, May 4, 2018, accessed July 31, 2018. <https://www.theroot.com/national-urban-leagues-2018-state-of-black-america-tec-1825777076>

primary and secondary institutions; voting in elections; and even visiting Westernized hospitals and doctors. The above-mentioned beliefs stem primarily from their ideas that White people create and control these institutions for their own Eurocentric or White interests to further their White culture and power. Many of the Black radicals' Black counterparts actively seek White acceptance and practice assimilationist over liberationist politics, meaning that they would rather manage the challenges of living in a discriminatory society than work to liberate or free themselves from the oppression entirely. Black middle and upper-class members who lean more towards adopting European standards of living, dress, politics, religion, and other attributable features and reject Black revolutionary thought and practice are major disappointments and concern for the online resisters. The YouTube radicals often criticize members of their same racial group for aiding the perpetuation of White supremacy more than they attack White supremacists.²⁰

Many Black radicals consider the revolution, evolution, or transformation of Black society vital to the survival of African Americans and other Africans globally. From the online radicals' points of view, Black people living in a White supremacist society has disrupted the group's ability to thrive inside a civilization created by them that promotes Black success and a complete reclamation of their indigenous culture. The Black resisters argue that tragedies like slavery, Jim Crow, and colonialism are bound to happen again

²⁰ The ideas expressed by the Black YouTubers highlighted in this writing stem from an array of YouTube channels and perspectives. For further information on the online activists' political philosophies and desires see: BLACKNEWS102, "Sankofa And Dr. Issa Correct Tazaryach Pseudo Information on Marcus Garvey RBG." YouTube, 1:01:29, June 11, 2018. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9dik0Vo4MI0>; GENERAL SETI. "No Apologies for Being a Soldier for Afrakan Liberation!!!" YouTube, 1:02:19, August 10, 2018. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=J0v8h8gegIM>; Your Black World. "The Dr. Boyce Watkins reaction to Umar Johnson v Roland Martin Interview." YouTube, 1:07:30, June 10, 2017. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EaFGctYmMqg>; Tariq Nasheed, "Tariq Nasheed Talks about Defining the Narrative." YouTube, 2:59:19, July 22, 2018. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Mr6BJeadghE>; Sirius Mindz. "Mind Control in the Music Industry w/ Professor Griff on WSHR 6 6 2018." YouTube, 1:30:14, June 6, 2018. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=57KUtEol710&t=2647s>; BABATV EVERYTIMEFIRE, "Atty Malik Zulu Shabazz States Our Case." YouTube, 37:41, April 21, 2018. [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=t6MNIoQpnyk&t=1900s](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=t6MNIoQpnyk&t=1900s;);

unless a strong, united, regenerated, independent, conscious or awake Black civilization exists. According to the online revolutionaries, the creation of a Black-dominated or independent society does not necessarily mean a civilization where Whites are attacked, vilified, or dominated in the same way that White supremacy has affected Black people. Hence, the Black rebels' main purpose is not advocating for Black supremacy based upon racial superiority or hate because of one's skin color alone. Violence is rarely advocated by the Black YouTube resisters, although self-defense is a central underpinning in their discussions. Laws against the internet promotion of violence may prevent public discussions of armed resistance. Instead they are militant, forceful, radical, rebellious, and revolutionary in their online intensity, determination, urgency, rhetoric, and nonconformist ideologies.²¹

In response to the European and American model of racism based upon skin coloration, the Black radicals' calls for an independent Black civilization existing to provide a safe space for people of African descent to live and succeed without the worries of racial discrimination and disconnection from their pre-slavery, pre-colonial culture. Inside of their Black world model, all people of African descent would develop an Afrocentric and Black nationalist mentality, then unite to create and operate their own educational, government, political, economic, military, family, and other necessary institutions. The online activists have found an influential companion in social media, particularly YouTube, for achieving their goals of educating African people across the Diaspora on how to transcend their inferiority and dominate their own affairs. Social media is a powerful wake-up tool that provides the Black revolutionaries with a direct reach into the minds of limitless viewers. The purpose of the Black radical messaging online is to inform and influence their audience's everyday actions. The practical effects of the new age, internet-to-in-person Black revolution is facilitated on sites like YouTube and measured by how intensely the Black social media rebels' information campaign penetrates into and guides the real lives of their viewers. If the YouTube revolutionaries can spark an awareness or

²¹ Ibid.

consciousness inside their followers that leads them to contribute to the idealized, independent Black Nation, then the online dissenters have scored a victory.

HISTORICAL AND PHILOSOPHICAL INFLUENCES OF THE BLACK YOUTUBE RADICALS

Black history and philosophical thought serve as the primary foundation of the online African American rebels' purpose and ideology. In their goal of constructing an alternative Black reality, they regularly hold in high esteem and reference Afrocentric, Pan-Africanist, Black Nationalist, Black Liberation Religion and Spirituality, and Afrofuturist thinkers, organizations, leaders, events, and points of view. Although the five schools of thought are not the same concepts, they are similar in their overall goals of changing the minds of Black people for the purpose of creating a new African experience. The social media influencers incorporate Black radical history and philosophy to help African Americans recover from what they believe is a mental, political, cultural, and social theft that prevents Blacks from attaining freedom and victory. As a result, religion, spirituality, organization, politics, education, technology, economics, aesthetics, clothes, symbols, jewelry, identity, natural hair, diet, health, naturalism, policing, discipline, language, and music derived from their conception of a Black-conscious and African indigenous historical and philosophical context are important.²²

BLACK LIBERATION RELIGION AND SPIRITUALITY

Black Liberation Religion and Spirituality, or the notion of practicing racially-specific, spiritual liberation for African and African American, serves a major foundation of the online rebels' theoretical framework. Many of the YouTube revolutionaries' identities, motivations, and beliefs derive from spiritual movements that value combining political and social justice with doctrinal practices specifically tailored to Black people and their

²² Ibid.

liberation. Among them are the Moorish Science Temple of America, Nation of Islam, Black Hebrew Israelites, Nation of Gods and Earths, Rastafari, Afrikan Village, Temple of New African Thought; Shrine of the Black Madonna, and Nuwaubian Nation.²³ A faction of Black resisters also practice traditional African spiritual systems like Kemetic or Egyptian science, which involves African Americans reconnecting with religious cults from the ancient African civilization known as *Egypt* to Western scholars and *Kemet* to the ancient Egyptians themselves. Many members of the online Black Conscious Community also practice African spirituality systems such as Vodun, Ifa, Palo, Candomblé, and Santeria.²⁴ Another group follows occultism, mysticism, and metaphysics, while a small minority considers themselves Atheists and Agnostics.²⁵ In mainstream society where the majority of African Americans since the slavery era have practiced Christianity, the Black Conscious Community's Black liberation religious and spiritual orientations are often considered radical. In contrast, the YouTube radicals often rally against African Americans practicing Christianity because they consider the theology a "slave religion" or a religion that White slave masters forced upon Africans in the Americas.²⁶ Instead, they argue that African Americans should practice their pre-slavery and pre-colonial religions and spiritual systems to free themselves from racial oppression.

BLACK NATIONALISM

²³ Saneter Studios, "The Evolution Conference Panel." YouTube, 46:43, April 12, 2015. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=S1sbcs5WPB8>.

²⁴ Ibid; blackmagic363, "Bro. Oba: Understanding the Fundamentals of Urban Voodoo and Alchemy." YouTube, 2:11:06, November 12, 2016. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5o-31zf-j3E>.

²⁵ blackmagic363, "Dr. Phil Valentine, Aseer the Duke of Tiers, and Bro. Panic: Gathering of the Metaphysical Masters." YouTube, 18:22, June 14, 2018. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IYlasVLrzEg>; Real Black Atheist Scholar, "Real Black Atheist Scholar Presents: The Importance of Real Black Atheism." YouTube, 58:20, December 29, 2017. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7iR2Kxxb1N8/>

²⁶ djvlad, "Dr. Wesley Muhammad on Black Christianity Being Slave Making Religion (Part 1)." YouTube, 14:19, August 23, 2017, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=a_vds-lzCEI.

Historical and philosophical Black Nationalism also drives the online rebels' crusade. Black Nationalism is the idea that Black people should create their own distinct educational, religious, economic, cultural, political, social, and even defense institutions. Black Nationalism is a concept that African Americans have adopted since their enslavement. Martin Delany, an African American doctor, soldier, and abolitionist, is often considered the father of Black Nationalism. In 1850, after Delany and two fellow African Americans were dismissed from Harvard Medical School because of their race, Delany concluded that Black people needed to create their own establishments to survive in America. As slavery and racism continued to torment African Americans in the United States, Delany's promotion of Black Nationalism intensified. In 1852, he published *The Condition, Elevation, Emigration, and Destiny of the Colored People of the United States*. In the book, he expressed his disillusionment with African Americans' ability to ever overcome racial repression in the United States. Instead, he insisted that Blacks in America should emigrate to Africa, the Caribbean, or Latin America and create their own new nation. Though Delany failed to realize his goal of a mass exodus of African Americans nationalizing in another geographic region, his Black Nationalist calls guided the philosophies of many successive African American organizations and leaders.²⁷ The Nation of Islam, Black Panthers, New Black Panther Party, and the modern-day social media Black Conscious Community are parts of Delany's legacy. A major tenet of Black Nationalism is non-conformism, non-assimilation, and non-integration into mainstream or White-dominated society. Black Nationalists believe that Blacks should found, support, and participate in their own establishments.²⁸ The political philosophy is therefore considered revolutionary, radical, or extreme because Black Nationalism involves Black people consciously or purposely creating new institutions and ideas that counter those found in everyday society.

²⁷ Robert S. Levine, ed., *Martin R. Delany: A Documentary Reader* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2003).

²⁸ Dean E. Robinson, *Black Nationalism in American Politics and Thought* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001).

The YouTube rebels have managed to inspire and create Black Nationalistic endeavors by-way of the internet. In their calls for Black-owned and controlled enterprises, they utilize online crowd funding campaigns to finance their Black-conscious activities that include backing African centered K-12 schools, creating African inspired holistic health centers, and aiding their ability to spend time online spreading their Black Nationalist messages. They often use their social media platforms to promote their personal business endeavors and products. Vending is also a major Black Nationalist activity that the online rebels conduct in-person. Many of their merchandise are available for online purchases; however, at Black-conscious events, numerous online resisters sell their products at vending tables. Websites like WeBuyBlack.com and online movements such as OneUnited Bank Black Money Matters and the Tulsa Real Estate Fund are also examples of new age, online Black Nationalism.²⁹ Although the YouTube radicals face challenges in creating their fully independent Black Nation, they still manage to find creative ways explain their Black Nationalists positions to their audience while encouraging them to support their online and in-person ventures, especially their independent Black media undertakings.

PAN-AFRICANISM

Pan-Africanism is another political and philosophical standpoint of the online activists. Pan-Africanism is a concept that Black or African people from all over the globe should gain racial pride and unite to improve the social, economic, and political condition of Africans wherever they live. The ideological context stems from the history of slavery in the Americas and Caribbean and colonialism in Africa forcing Africans across the Diaspora into an inferior political and social status. Over the course of modern history, many notable Pan-African movements and leaders have attempted to unite Africans globally to

²⁹ blackmagic363, "Red and Blue Pill speak at BAM Festival with Black Businesses." YouTube, 1:04:29, May 26, 2015.
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=muYdBmnTT4A&t=1485s>.

help them recover from the hardships of racial discrimination at-large. Edward Wilmot Blyden was an avid Pan-Africanist born in the Caribbean in 1832. He moved to Liberia, a country in West Africa, with African Americans who emigrated to the country during slavery. Blyden wrote many influential writings advocating for Pan-Africanism because he believed the political philosophy was the only method for Black people around the world to have political, social, and economic freedom. He died in 1917. Blyden's Pan-African activities were followed by many Black leaders, namely Haile Selassie, Kwame Nkrumah, Thomas Sankara, Malcolm X, W. E. B. Du Bois, Kwame Ture, and Muammar Gaddafi. However, Marcus Garvey, a Jamaican who lived from 1887 to 1940, was one of the most popular Pan-Africanist. During the early 1900s, he led the largest Pan-African political organization to ever exist, which was known as the Universal Negro Improvement Association and African Communities League (UNIA-ACL). The organization's members followed and supported Garvey's plans of removing European colonial powers from Africa so that non-continental and continental Africans could own and control African resources and politics.³⁰

Garvey's iconic Red, Black, and Green Pan-African flag is a major inspiration for YouTube and on-the-ground radicals such as the Pan-African Liberation Movement in Baltimore, Maryland. They commonly sport the colors and call themselves "RBGs" to reflect their historical and political Pan-African orientations.³¹ The RBG movement has gained mainstream appeal. For example, in 2018 the shoe company Nike released the RBG Equality Air Force One shoes, which display the Pan-African flag. The YouTube resisters' online and in-person influence and business concepts likely led Nike and other major companies to fulfill a demand for Pan-African attire.³² Before mainstream

³⁰ Dean E. Robinson, *Black Nationalism in American Politics and Thought* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001).

³¹ Saneter Studios, "When RBG Meets Hebrew Israelism & Discussing Unity and True Activism." YouTube, 20:13, April 8, 2017.
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QBMP1iK7thc>.

³² "The Nike Air Force 1 High Will Be Part of Next Year's Black History Month Lineup." Sole Collector, last modified December 3, 2017, accessed July 31, 2018.
<https://solecollector.com/news/2017/12/bhm-nike-air-force-1-high-2018-release-date>.

corporations ventured into the modern-day commercialization of Black-consciousness, Black revolutionary entrepreneurs such as Tariq Edmondson created the African Pride Sneaker and Rocklin Hotep Negash launched his African-themed clothing and shoe company, Negash Apparel and Footwear. Although many of the online Black rebels are advocates of Pan-Africanism, many have a distrustful opinion of modern-day Africans from the continent of Africa. A large portion of the YouTube radicals believe that many continental Africans would rather participate in White supremacist institutions over uniting with African Americans, Afro-Caribbeans, and other Blacks to own and control Black affairs.³³ Despite their disappointments with continental Africans who fail to take strong Black Nationalist and Pan-Africanists stances similar to South African political leader, Julius Malema, the social media activists promote a Pan-African flag and agenda of Africans from all over the world tackling global Black oppression through political, social, and economic unity.

AFROCENTRICITY

Afrocentricity also drives the YouTube protestors' quests to liberate African Americans and all Black people around the world from what they call the system of White supremacy. Afrocentricity is a philosophical concept that was defined and popularized with Temple University scholar Molefi Kete Asante's *Afrocentricity: The Theory of Social Change* (1980).³⁴ According to Asante, Afrocentricity is an intellectual paradigm that involves interpreting the world from an African perspective. Essentially, Afrocentrists argue that because of the demanding role that Eurocentrism or White domination has played in the lives of Black people in America and globally, the manner in which they view reality derives from a White perspective. For example, an Afrocentrist might ask why African

³³ BLACKNEWS102. "Sa Neter with His African Brothers Exposing the Coons Moors Sell Outs." YouTube, 35:33, July 28, 2017.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LHoCDEptNWc>.

³⁴ Molefi Kete Asante, *Afrocentricity: The Theory of Social Change* (African American Images: 2003).

Americans consider a European-style suit and tie professional or business attire, or why do African Americans speak English, with no knowledge of traditional African languages? Instead, they would encourage Black people to question and understand what professional attire and language consisted of in Africa before outside groups like the Arabs and Europeans invaded the continent and imposed their Arabian and European norms and traditions on Africans. The Afrocentric idea is that at all times and on any occasion Black people should centralize and integrate African life, culture, and traditions that existed before outsiders, especially Whites, changed the African and African American reality.³⁵

The online radicals uphold many prominent Afrocentric scholars, organizations, movements, and traditions in high esteem while using them as a template for establishing how they believe Black people should conduct themselves. Afrocentric scholars commonly referenced include Cheikh Anta Diop, Chancellor Williams, George G.M. James, John Henrik Clarke, Amos Wilson, Yosef Ben-Jochannan, Joy DeGruy, Frances Cress Welsing, Ivan Van Sertima, James Smalls, Leonard Jefferies, Mfundishi Jhutym, and Reggie Mabry. Along with Afrocentric scholars, race critics such as Steve Cokely, Dick Gregory, and Neely Fuller Jr. are often referenced by the YouTube activists. In their quests to achieve their Black liberationist goals, the online influencers often integrate philosophical concepts from Afrocentric traditions especially Kwanzaa. Kwanzaa is an African and African American holiday created in 1966 by Maulana Karenga, an Afrocentric scholar, African cultural nationalist, and the leader of the US Organization (US). The YouTube resisters often incorporate the tenets of Kwanzaa to explain how they believe the Black community should operate free themselves from their oppressed conditions. Kwanzaa is celebrated every year between December 26th and January 1st and includes seven principles known as the *Nguzo Saba*. One of the seven principles is celebrated on every day of Kwanzaa, which include: 1. *Umoja* (Unity); 2. *Kujichagulia* (Self-Determination); 3. *Ujima* (Collective Work and Responsibility); 4. *Ujamaa* (Cooperative Economics); 5. *Nia*

³⁵ Ibid.

(Purpose); 6. *Kuumba* (Creativity); 7. *Imani* (Faith).³⁶ Every faction of the online resisters promotes Kwanzaa and Afrocentric values in their attempts to create a new pro-Black reality in either explicit or implicit ways.

More importantly, the YouTube rebels use the works of Afrocentric scholars trained in traditional Western colleges and universities as the basis of many of their assumptions. Though they respect the work of a select groups of Black academics who they believe are in line with the Black Nationalists, Pan-Africanists, Afrocentric, and Black Conscious agenda, most of the social media activists do not have college or university degrees or training. Many of the YouTube influencers are self-taught, street and online scholars who distrust the standard K-12 and post-secondary educational institutions. Many YouTube revolutionists dismiss orthodox schooling as the “White Man’s Education” system, meaning inherently anti-Black.³⁷ Instead, they have formulated their own educational paradigms and schools of thought and use YouTube to educate their viewers on disciplines including history, science, religion, business, music, art, film, anthropology, medicine, physical education, sociology, military science, psychology, politics, and technology. Education is extremely important to the YouTube radicals’ purpose, activities, and cause because they believe that White supremacy has purposely led Black people almost to their demise through misinformation and inaccurate education, thereby furthering Black inferiority and White superiority. In 1933, Carter G. Woodson, a famous African American historian, raised the same issues in *The Mis-Education of the Negro*.³⁸ Like Woodson, the YouTube radicals have attempted to counter what they consider a distorted education system by creating their own online and in-person education systems that include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Aboriginal Medical Association and University (Atlanta, Georgia)

³⁶ Keith A. Mayes. *Kwanzaa: Black Power and the Making of the African American Black Holiday* (New York: Routledge, 2009).

³⁷ NehemiYah, “Dr. Umar Johnson (Exposes the Mis-Education 2012) Full Lecture,” YouTube, 3:25:55, October 1, 2013, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=g64OSkGYFpQ>.

³⁸ Carter G. Woodson, *The Mis-education of the Negro* (Create Space Independent Publishing, 1933).

- Amen Ra Squad University (Online)
- Black Liberation Radio (Online)
- The Black Business School (Online)
- Huey P. Newton Gun Club (Dallas, Texas)
- Meta Center of Chicago (Chicago, Illinois)
- Moorish School of Law and History (Baltimore, Maryland)
- Muhammad University of Islam (Chicago, Illinois)
- Queen Aafa Sacred Wellness University (New York, New York)
- Shabazz University (Online)
- University of Kemetian Science (DeLand, Florida)
- Unlearn to Relearn Academy (Atlanta, Georgia)
- Usha Herbal Research Institute (Honduras).

The formation of these Black-owned and -created educational institutions reflect the Black Conscious Community's attempts to combine Black Liberation Religion and Spirituality, Black Nationalism, Pan-Africanism, Afrocentricity, and other Black Conscious schools of thought to achieve their goal of using the internet to spur a Black revolution or transformation of the mental and physical reality of Black people through alternative or outside of the mainstream measures. Black Conscious bookstores such as Black and Nobel (Philadelphia, Pennsylvania), Black to the Basics Bookstore (Grambling, Louisiana), Everyone's Place (Baltimore, Maryland), and Nubian Bookstore (Morrow, Georgia) aid the Black radical cause by providing materials necessary for Black-centered activities. The purposeful avoidance of typical academic establishments, along with the creation of Black Conscious educational institutions is often considered radical, drastic, or extreme by those who disagree with their ideas, methods, and efforts. However, for the YouTube activists, the radical and revolutionary criticisms are celebrated because they are deliberately attempting to disrupt accepted norms.

AFROFUTURISM

Afrofuturism also plays a significant role in the social media rebels' online to in-person Black revolutionary pursuits. Afrofuturist philosophy involves combining art, fashion, science fiction, fantasy, history, technology, spirituality, cosmology, meditation, and mysticism with Afrocentricity to create a new future for Black people in the U.S. and across the globe. In 1993, Mark Dery, a White cultural critic, coined the term Afrofuturism in his "Black to the Future" essay, in which he interviewed Samuel Delany, Tricia Rose, and Greg Tate about their Afrofuturistic works and concepts. Black music artists who have been noted to display and express Afrofuturistic characteristics include Erykah Badu, Earth Wind and Fire, Jimi Hendrix, Lauryn Hill, Public Enemy, Sun Ra, Jill Scott, and Solange. Festivals like AfroPunk held annually in Brooklyn, New York, are also associated with Afrofuturism. Science fiction movies and comics *Space is the Place* (1974), *Get Out* (2017), and *Black Panther* (2018), are also considered Afrofuturistic because they merge esoteric science fiction with a new Black future where Africans are in the superior position.³⁹

The YouTube resisters rely on Afrofuturism, especially the mystical and science fiction elements, to search for and explain deeper meanings and interpretations of life and reality. Major motivations for the radicals' Afrofuturist leanings stem from their belief that nothing in the world actually functions in the manner that humans believe. As a result, the social media activists constantly endeavor to decode, interpret, or unravel what they consider the hidden meaning to life, cosmic, and natural events. The YouTubers often combine concepts from quantum and theoretical physics with Afrofuturism to decipher and predict what events like dreams, solar eclipses, natural disasters, and Super Bowl winners and subjects like astrology, numerology, and melanin mean for Black people's past, present, and future.⁴⁰ Reasoning stems from their notions that humans,

³⁹ Ytasha L. Womack, *Afrofuturism: The World of Black Sci-Fi and Fantasy Culture* (Chicago, Lawrence Hill Books, 2013).

⁴⁰ blackmagic363, "Aron Ramses speaks on AfroFuturism, Conscious Science Fiction, and Fantasy Culture." YouTube, 31:33, July 2, 2017. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ODeW59zKSnI>.

especially people of African descent, are socially programmed or forced into a confusing mental maze by White exploiters who seek to control their minds and prevent them from understanding and freeing themselves from their oppression. The Black YouTubers utilize their online voices to offer solutions for the alleged zombie-state of Black people. The majority of their solutions is steeped in an ancient Egyptian or Kemetic proverb, "Man, Know Thyself." The online resisters believe that if Black people know their true powers and history, the group would return to their pre-slavery and pre-colonial greatness.⁴¹ For these reasons, Afrofuturism is principal in the online radicals' revolutionary and Black Conscious platform because the philosophy concerns transforming the mind and manipulating reality to liberate Black people from their assumed unconsciousness and inability to rise above oppression.

ONLINE PROFILES OF A FEW BLACK YOUTUBE REBELS

The online radicals' YouTube profiles reflect the combination of Black Liberation Religion and Spirituality, Black Nationalism, Pan-Africanism, Afrocentricity, and Afrofuturism in their Black revolutionary thinking and action. Each YouTuber's particular perspective determines the degree to which each philosophical or historical school of thought they highlight. In other words, if one of the activists leans more toward African-centered education as a solution for ending Black suffering, then Afrocentricity and Afrocentric scholars' ideas may form the basis or theme of their YouTube channel. As such, the majority of their topics, opinions, and audience may center within that particular YouTuber's Afrocentric frame of reference. There are also many online radicals who approach their channel in a manner that applies a broad combination of Religion and Spirituality, Black Nationalism, Pan-Africanism, Afrocentricity, and Afrofuturism to deliver their content, making their particular frame of reference indistinguishable. Despite the

⁴¹ blackmagic363. "Mfundishi: Ancient Kemetic Spirituality Is the Parent of All Modern Religions." YouTube, 29:51, April 13, 2018.
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZtxWAHj04dM>.

differences in their styles and perspectives, the aforementioned schools of thought guide all of the Black activists' revolutionary commentary and are the unique substances that make them a part of the Black Conscious Community.⁴²

There are also a number of other similarities in the Black Conscious YouTubers' online profiles, perspectives, and methods of delivering their radical messages. The majority of the revolutionary YouTubers is socially, politically, and economically conservative, yet liberal in their notions of free thinking, and they are indifferent to the Democrats, Republicans, and mainstream politics at-large. Following a path laid forth by their Black radical predecessors such as Noble Drew Ali, Marcus Garvey, and Elijah Muhammad, the YouTube resisters' forms of Black conservatism are rooted in their notions of African traditionalism, Black Nationalism, and an overall distrust of conventional political systems. Although they are skeptical of the political system, Blacks receiving government reparations for slavery and Jim Crow is a priority issue for the social media activists. The online revolutionaries are also conservative in their views on homosexuality and feminism. The majority believe that same-sex relations are unnatural and in opposition to African notions of complementary relationships between man, woman, and child.⁴³ With regard to gender roles, many online radicals believe that the Black man should lead and protect the Black woman and family.⁴⁴ The YouTube radicals also share similarities in their naming practices. The majority use a personal and online moniker that may reflect their spiritual or political orientations. Overall, the YouTube resisters seeking to spark a Black psychological and physical revolution are distinguishable because their messages and YouTube channels are centered in the five recurring schools of Black radical thought commonly associated with the Black Conscious Community.

⁴² Phill T. Moreland, "(Part 2) Red Pill Builds on Conscious Community, Fake Teachers, and More." YouTube, 27:29, September 30, 2018.

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vijH_HZN1HU&t=1s.

⁴³ ForbezDVDPromo, "Should Gays Be Allowed to Teach in the Conscious Community? (Red Pill, Bro Polight, Sutek,Sa Neter)." YouTube, 9:41, June 18, 2014.

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=V_Jf-vmSLxQ.

⁴⁴ blackmagic363, "Mfundishi: Matriarchy vs. Patriarchy: What is Best for the Black Family?" YouTube, 45:31, October 24, 2015.

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bF_sCwLMnk.

Many of the Black radical YouTubers are either housed in or influenced by the Black Conscious activities located in Harlem, New York, on 125th Street. A number of videos are recorded in Harlem due to the location's historic and presently thriving Black revolutionary hub that includes the sale of African-centered merchandise and coalescence of Black radical thinking. A popular Black revolutionary YouTube creator known as Sa Neter is based in Harlem. He is the founder of the House of Konsciousness, a conglomerate of similarly-minded activists who organize events such as Black Conscious debates, information panels, and Black business exchanges. BlackNews102, SaNeterTV, and SaNeterStudios are three of his popular Black revolutionary YouTube channels. His content primarily concerns debates regarding Black Liberation Religion and Spirituality as well as the promotion of Black Nationalism and Pan-Africanism. Sa Neter also created the SaNeter Awards, which is a Black Conscious awards show, similar to the Black Power Awards held annually in Atlanta, Georgia. The purpose of the SaNeter and Black Power Awards is to acknowledge the work that Black revolutionaries contribute to their communities. Sa Neter's channels are affiliated with other Harlem-based Black revolutionary channels, including BabaTVEveryTimeFire, which hosts content from Black radicals like Eye Empress Sekmet, Hashim Nzinga, and attorney Malik Zulu Shabazz of the New Black Panther Party. Sekmet, Nzinga, and Shabazz often demand that African Americans become liberated by any means necessary or die, meaning the racial group must take their freedom and not wait on the American political system to provide it. In 2015, Sekmet's arrest for encouraging Blacks to defend themselves against White aggression on YouTube reflected the delicate, yet consequential intersections between online revolutionary activism and the law. The hardhearted freedom or death concept of Black liberation encapsulates the robust energy and character of Sa Neter's and BabaTV's channels. Even with the men's forceful styles, both have succeeded in uniting with prominent university professors, like Dr. Cornel West and Dr. Jahi Issa, who often appear on their channels. Yet, their hardcore approaches to Black liberation are consistent with

the demanding atmosphere entailed in the Black revolutionary and Black radical tradition.⁴⁵

Hip Hop is a driving force in the Black freedom revolution on YouTube because many of the resisters are inspired by the genre's real-life, hardcore messaging that reflects the pains and struggles of African Americans existing in a racially discriminatory society. BlackMagik363 is another New York-based Black revolutionary YouTube channel created by a Hip-Hop producer known online as Brother Rich. Though Rich rarely shows his face on camera, he commonly interviews contributors who provide Black radical and unorthodox interpretations of current events, politics, and popular culture primarily from a Black Liberation Religion and Spirituality and Afrofuturist perspective. BlackMagik363 is known for its occultist messages that embolden Black people by offering content regarding the group's alleged unused and unfulfilled hidden powers as proclaimed by the channel's spiritual guests. Among the occultist teachers are Noble Anpu, Aseer The Duke of Tiers, Brother Panic, Cambatta, Gano Grills, King Simon, and Dr. Phillip Valentine. Despite having their own YouTube channels, Know The Ledge Media, PhillTMoreland, and KTLEmpowerment, made up of twin brothers Red Pill and Blue Pill, also routinely appear on BlackMagik363. Red Pill and Blue Pill's names derive from the movie *The Matrix*. The brothers are known to make provocative connections between the movie's symbolic meanings regarding human unconsciousness and the complicated way that reality and life are structured for Black people. Yet, the Pills are revered by their activist compatriots for bringing a balancing and diplomatic approach to what is often a chaotic online and in-person Black Conscious Community due to the multiple perspectives and rebellion against mainstream society. The two brothers routinely promote technological and entrepreneurial dominance, veganism, artistry, and health as solutions for attaining Black liberation. Professor Griff, of the Black revolutionary Hip-Hop group Public Enemy, is also affiliated with BlackMagik363 and Red Pill and Blue Pill. Griff is a leader in the online Black radical rebellion. His YouTube channel, Sirius Mindz, mainly focuses on the rap star's

⁴⁵ SANETERTV7, "Is The 12 Tribes Chart Right and Exact?" YouTube, 1:35:41, July 3, 2014, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Ne7CAHLKetU>.

research into conspiracies such as White secret societies' attempts to undermine Black power and success. Following Griff's lead, a Black revolutionary who goes by the name Black Dot of UrbanX TV, also deals with secret societies, but is heralded by his followers for decoding the hidden meanings behind Hip Hop and serving as a primary driver of global events and world culture.⁴⁶

College-trained and corporate professionals have also joined in the fight to spark a mental and physical Black Revolution by offering information on YouTube. Dr. Umar Johnson, a child psychology expert who calls himself "The Prince of Pan-Africanism" on his Prince Ifatunde channel, has gained mainstream appeal for his radical ideas concerning Pan-Africanism, White supremacy, Black liberation, traditional African religion, and racial psychology. He is best known for research on what he considers a conspiracy to diagnose Black children with Attention Deficient Disorder (ADD) for the purpose of placing them in a school-to-prison pipeline. Johnson is also popular for his crowd-funding campaign to create a Black Nationalist and Pan-Africanist private school for Black males called the Frederick Douglass and Marcus Garvey RBG Leadership Academy. Dr. Boyce Watkins, a former Syracuse University finance professor, is also an active participant in the Black YouTube revolution. He provides a self-help, Black Nationalist message on his YourBlackWorld channel. His goal is to educate Black people on how to become economically independent and in control of their own affairs. He insists that he left his high-profile professor job for those reasons. Watkins routinely invites guests on his channel who share his educational and professional stature and ideas on Black economic empowerment like Dr. Claud Anderson, an economist in the Jimmy Carter presidential administration and author of *Black Labor, White Wealth* (1994). Watkins is also an advocate for including Black Conscious women's voices on his channel—namely, ZaZa Ali, Vicki Dillard, and Meechie X. Ali has her own channel, ZaZa, where she discusses issues that point out the negative effects of Bluetooth and wi-fi technology on Black people and promotes healthy relationships between African Americans in the fight for liberation.

⁴⁶blackmagic363, "Professor Griff, Lord Jamar, & Black Dot: Celebrities and the Masses Are Waking Up." YouTube, 1:39:31, July 15, 2016. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xr26mHyyqpg>.

Senior activist women known as Queen Afua and Mama Pill also appear on YouTube and argue that Black people need to properly heal and develop a healthy, African-centered lifestyle in order to free themselves from oppression. Online resisters who go by the names Young Pharaoh Allah, Polight, and Sara Suten Seti believe that Black women are so important and spiritual that the two men consider the women gods. Their reasoning stems from research showing that human life originated in Africa, leading them to assert that Black women gave life to all of humanity. There are also revolutionaries with more traditional radical messaging like Brother Ben X and Rizza Islam, who are young members of the Nation of Islam. Their content follows the disciplined, yet revolutionary Black Nationalist direction of Elijah Muhammad and Louis Farrakhan. Tariq Nasheed is another Black resister intent on freeing Black people from racial oppression by way of YouTube and other social media platforms. Nasheed has amassed a large online following with mainstream appeal, and he has appeared on news networks like *Fox* and *Al Jazeera* to discuss his conceptions of White supremacy dominating the lives of Black people. Nasheed has gained economic success with his *Hidden Colors* documentary series, which endeavors to inform the public of what he considers the hidden greatness of Black people and unknown terroristic activities of Whites. Nasheed and his fellow YouTube resisters who make up the Black Conscious Community have waged an online, on-camera, and in-person information war to free Black people from alleged mental slavery for the purpose of creating a new Black-owned and -controlled reality.⁴⁷

Although the YouTube radicals possess similar characteristics in their methods of communication, abilities to create their own institutions, and ultimate goals, a lack of uniformity exists in their organizational structures and abilities to unify and achieve their aims. Due to political, religious, and cultural differences, the online revolutionaries often find themselves entangled in internet civil wars between fellow Black radical social media comrades, which impedes upon their revolutionary goals. However, the YouTube resisters remain committed to using the internet to secure absolute freedom and liberation for

⁴⁷ Tariq Radio, "Tariq Nasheed Talk About Racist 911 Callers." YouTube, 1:39:31, July 1, 2018. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0igcgCeijqI>.

Africans in the U.S. and globally. Their works are so pronounced that an August 3, 2017, FBI report leaked regarding the highly controversial, Black Identity Extremist (BIE) classification, which highlighted groups and Black revolutionary characteristics associated with the YouTube intellectuals of the Black Conscious Community. The FBI considered BIEs Black separation fanatics who may carry out violence on police out of frustration with police brutality, persistent racism, authority structures, and existing political norms. On December 12, 2017, Rakeem Balogun, a military veteran and member of Guerrilla Mainframe and the Huey P. Newton Gun Club of Dallas, Texas, was the first BIE suspect detained by the FBI. Balogun's arrest was a result of his lack of expressed remorse on Facebook for a slain police officer. Though he won his case, Balogun's supporters and opponents of the BIE argue that the government should focus its attention on White supremacists and their long history of violence and avoid instituting another COINTELPRO debacle.⁴⁸ Despite the BIE classification, the war for Black liberation on YouTube and on other successive formats will likely continue because Black radicalism and a desire for a Black liberation is an American tradition that has remained alive since Africans' forced migration to the country in the 1600s. Similarly, Black consciousness, or the mindset that actively identifies racial injustices, will likely continue to promote acts of resistance like those seen on social media today that serve as intentional catalysts for radical and revolutionary change.

CONCLUSION

In sum, the modern-day, Black YouTube rebels combine a complex web of Black Liberation Religion and Spirituality, Black Nationalism, Pan-Africanism, Afrocentricity, and Afrofuturism history and philosophy to challenge global White domination and mainstream African American sociopolitical norms. Wary of conventional educational, political, economic, and cultural institutions, the social media resisters utilize YouTube to

⁴⁸ BLACKNEWS102, "Rakem Balogun of Guerrilla Mainframe Black Identity Extremist: He Took on the FBI." YouTube, 1:15:02, May 11, 2018. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hBYkvzs9FZY>.

bolster the creation of their idealized Black Nation through a targeted information campaign. The site is a convenient, cost-effective medium that allows each resister to cultivate their own platform to voice their Black revolutionary messages directly to their audiences. The rebels' philosophies and communications are considered radical because they are pro-Black, pro-sovereign, anti-integrationist, and non-conformist. They believe that comprehensive Black liberation is vital to the survival of African Americans and Africans worldwide. The radicals insist that freedom will come only through the complete transformation of the Black mind and, thereafter, the Black reality. Black consciousness is therefore critical to the objectors' missions because they believe that Black people must gain an in-depth knowledge of their pre-slavery and pre-colonial African past to properly understand and shape their present and future. The new age Black revolution on YouTube is a continuation of the Black radical tradition of taking extreme strides to secure Black freedom. The online Black resistance movement symbolizes the depths of Black subjugation, along with the dogged determination of African Americans to overthrow systems, people, institutions, and ideas deemed oppressive. The YouTubers' radical rhetoric, ideologies, and videoed real-life examples represent a new, important stage of development in Black revolutionary history and consciousness.

Review Questions

1. How is YouTube utilized and beneficial to the Black revolutionary cause?
2. Explain the roles that Black consciousness and Black liberation play in shaping Black radicals' YouTube activism.

Writing Prompt

Which people, events, organizations, and schools of thought from various periods in Black history are most closely associated with the Black radical YouTube resisters discussed in this chapter?