An Analysis of Corporate Responses
to the Black Lives Matter Movement

MaryClaire Schulz

Strategic Communications
Elon University

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Abstract

The Black Lives Matter movement, founded in 2012 to address the perceived anti-Black racism present in American society, has received support from several large U.S. corporations. This paper examined U.S. corporate responses to the social movement, exploring the corporate values and public responses of five companies within three different industries (including social networking, music-streaming, and sports brands). This paper also discussed the key role that company values, social responsibility initiatives, and mission statements play when a company responds to social justice issues. The study concluded that companies must take their main stakeholders into account before responding to polarizing social movements.

I. Introduction

Social movements in the United States have existed as a means of conveying stances on political and socially focused issues for two centuries, with the earliest records of social movements dating back to the mid-18th century (Tilly, 2005). As social movements have progressed and evolved over time, both large corporations and small businesses have taken stances on these actions and spoken out for or against certain issues. In contrast to less-polarizing movements, such as those focused on raising money for cancer research or bringing attention to the rights of children, some movements that address social injustices and systemic prejudices prove to be riskier for well-known companies and brands (Weinzimmer & Esken, 2016).

The Black Lives Matter movement, founded in 2012 to address the perceived anti-Black racism present in American society, has garnered support from some large U.S. corporations. This research examined which U.S. companies responded to the Black Lives Matter movement and how these stances might relate to company values.

II. History

In order to provide context for the issues discussed in this paper, brief histories of social movements in the United States and the Black Lives Matter movement in particular are described below. Social movements have existed for at least two centuries within the United States, and many early social movements were characterized by the mobilizations of certain groups to gain power (Plotke, 1995). Some early U.S. social

movements include those focusing on rights for factory workers, immigrants, child laborers, and former slaves. The mid-nineteenth century brought about the beginnings of organized feminism, a social movement that has fought for equal rights for women, including the right to vote. The Great Depression, a worldwide economic depression that affected the financial stability of the U.S. and left many Americans unemployed and impoverished, sparked an interest in the socialist and Marxist ideals of the Soviet Union in the 1930s. Thirty years later, the Civil Rights movement defined the United States. Plotke (1995) argued that many radical reform movements began to appear after the 1970s and described these mobilizations as "new social movements" (p. 115). He grouped environmental movements, LGBT+ movements, and movements by racial minorities into this category.

Occupy Wall Street, a defining social movement that began in 2011, questioned the concentration of wealth within a small percentage of the American population and utilized social media platforms to spread its message across the U.S. and across the world (Sanchez, 2016). In his analysis of modern social movements, including the Occupy movement, Gerbaudo (2012) examined the role of social media in modern activism and argued that activists have begun to use the internet as a public space to spread messages and rally support, much in the same way traditional activists use physical spaces to organize movements. Gerbaudo argued that new media will continue to be used by activists and will provide new creative opportunities to rally support for social movements.

Black Lives Matter was created in response to perceived racial injustice and police violence against Black citizens. It was founded in 2012 after an unarmed Black 17-year-old man, Trayvon Martin, was killed by White neighborhood watchman George Zimmerman (Black Lives Matter, n.d.). While Zimmerman was not a police officer, Black Lives Matter has brought attention to a multitude of violence and fatalities in interactions between American police officers and Black citizens. After the fatal shooting of Black 18-year-old Michael Brown by White police officer Darren Wilson in Ferguson, Missouri,[1] in 2014, the movement gained significant attention, and the hashtag #BlackLivesMatter began to appear in social media posts addressing racial inequality and injustice (Cobb, 2016). According to the movement's website, Black Lives Matter aims to work for a "world where Black lives are no longer systematically and intentionally targeted for demise" (Black Lives Matter, n.d., para. 5).

After conducting research on Americans' responses to the Black Lives Matter, the Pew Research Center found that about 22 percent of Americans opposed the movement while about 40 percent supported it (Horowitz & Livingston, 2016). Proponents of the movement tend to identify as Democrats, while the majority of Republicans surveyed seem to be somewhat or strongly opposed to the movement. Aside from this polarization of ordinary people across political party lines, some police organizations, such as New York's Patrolmen's Benevolent Association labor union, also blame the Black Lives Matter movement for the perceived "war on cops" taking place in the United States[2] (Lockhart, 2016, para. 2).

III. Literature Review

Corporate Social Responsibility and Risk

Many businesses engage in corporate social responsibility (CSR) practices to give back to communities and demonstrate a mission of greater social good. In the broadest sense, CSR is seen as "the relationship between business and the larger society" (Snider, Hill, & Martin, 2003, p. 175), but a standardized definition of CSR is widely debated. Carroll (1999) was one of the first researchers to analyze the evolution of CSR, focusing on the growing popularity of CSR initiatives throughout the 1970s and divergence into different areas of concern in the 1990s. Today, CSR initiatives are often clearly communicated via company websites and other online platforms, but some companies choose to be more ambiguous in their CSR communications to appeal to larger stakeholder groups (Scandelius & Cohen, 2016).

Romani, Grappi, and Bagozzi (2012) illuminated one purpose of CSR: fostering strong company reputations and encouraging positive perceptions among stakeholders. Bolton and Mattila (2015) argued that

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1 Wilson stopped Brown after Brown stole several packages of cigarillos from a local convenience store. An altercation between the two ensued after unarmed Brown tried to flee, which resulted in Wilson fatally shooting Brown.
2 This "war on cops" statement is referencing the death of five Dallas police officers who were shot and killed by Micah Xavier Johnson, a Black Afghan War veteran angry over police shootings of Black men, in July 2016. These shootings occurred after a peaceful protest against police killings of Alton Sterling (shot in Baton Rouge, Louisiana two days previously) and Philando Castile (see Footnote 3).

CSR may prove beneficial in times of company failure, as they found that consumers are still likely to support a company with strong CSR policies even after that company has failed to follow through with delivering a promised service. Overall, taking stances on socially focused issues through CSR initiatives is a way that corporations engage with different stakeholder groups and garner positive public attention.

Within a historical context, Luders (2006) examined how businesses analyze risk regarding social issues and protests during the United States' Civil Rights movement. This social movement, which took place in the 1950s and 1960s, involved fighting to end segregation and discrimination against African-Americans in the United States. Luders argued that corporations should conduct a cost-benefit analysis when weighing whether or not they should respond to a polarizing social movement. He illustrated his point by examining business responses of companies in North Carolina, Louisiana, Georgia, and Alabama during the Civil Rights movement and discussed how some corporate responses to ending segregation, such as desegregating lunch counters in Greensboro, North Carolina, could have more to do with avoiding the risk of losing business from protests and other disruptive events than concern for equal rights. Segerfund (2010) also addressed this issue in terms of modern-day anti-slavery movements, in which corporations advocate for international labor rights groups and just labor laws that are both morally-focused and related to the corporate economic climate.

Company Values and Mission Statements

Companies often use both public-facing and internal mission statements to communicate corporate values to public audiences, shareholders, and employees (Bartkus & Glassman, 2008). In her research on organizational moral values, Scott (2002) established that companies tend to express morals and values integral to their corporate cultures in mission statements. She went on to explain that mission statements and corporate moral codes are appropriate to examine when attempting to analyze a company's values. Both Scott (2002) and Leipzinger (2016) content analyzed corporate codes of particular companies. While Scott focused on broader ethical and moral categories, Leipzinger investigated the corporate codes of particular companies like Royal Dutch Shell and Johnson & Johnson to understand how each corporation expressed its social corporate responsibility goals.

Social Movements and Social Media

In addition to Gerbaudo's (2012) aforementioned research, other scholars have examined the growing role of social media in social movements. Youmans and York (2012) discussed how social media have allowed for uprisings in Egypt and Tunisia to be organized and successfully carried out. They addressed the role of governmental restrictions on the use of media to spread activist messages and examined the role of social media and social movements in a larger global context.

On the other hand, Bonilla and Rosa (2015) examined the use of hashtags and social media as a means of activism within the context of the Ferguson demonstrations that took place after the shooting of Michael Brown. Through an ethnographic approach to studying activist movements online, they showcased how hashtags provide social media users with the ability to connect with other like-minded activists and forge common political goals. They also discussed the increasing use of online outlets to gain support for racially focused social justice movements.

The current research addressed the increasing trend of using social media to further social justice movements and focused on the particular case of Black Lives Matter, a racial social justice movement. This examined cases of how American corporations took public stances on a polarizing social justice issue and how those stances might relate to corporate values.

To understand corporate public stances on the Black Lives Matter movement, the study set up two research questions:

RQ1: Which companies chose to respond to the Black Lives Matter movement, and how did they respond?

RQ2: For the companies that did respond to the Black Lives Matter movement, how do company social responsibility values relate to company stances on the polarizing social movement?

IV. Methods

A qualitative content analysis was used to examine the presence of corporate responses to the Black Lives Matter movement and the content of corporate responses from American companies within three different industries. In order to examine corporate responses across a wide range of industries, the top three most popular social networking websites, sports brands, and music-streaming services were selected based on 2016 studies published by Statista. Three companies from each of the three industries were selected based on the following criterion:

- Facebook, YouTube, and Reddit for social networking websites, based on market share of website visits (Statista, 2016a)

- Nike, Adidas, and Under Armour for sports brands, based on percentage of consumers who purchased (Statista, 2014)

- Spotify, Apple Music, and Pandora for music-streaming services, based on number of paying subscribers (Richter, 2016)

Following the selection of these corporations, each company's social media accounts and website were analyzed to determine if the company had publicly responded to the Black Lives Matter movement. Within the context of this research, company statements that include direct references to the Black Lives Matter movement, such as using the hashtag #BlackLivesMatter or mentioning the movement's name in any way, were considered responses to the movement (see Appendix A for coding protocol outline). Each corporate response to the Black Lives Matter movement was analyzed, and its form and language were examined. These responses were examined through open coding, a content analysis process that allows for themes to emerge throughout the coding process (Corbin & Strauss, 2008). Only five corporations that responded to the Black Lives Matter movement were examined in this paper's discussion section.

In order to examine how corporate responses to the Black Lives Matter movement may relate to corporate values or mission statements, the author analyzed the content of mission statements and self-proclaimed values of each company that responded to the movement. CSR theory outlines how corporations may choose to issue responses to public issues to appeal to certain stakeholder groups (Scandelius & Cohen, 2016), so this research also examined how they dealt with their perceived main stakeholder groups in relation to the Black Lives Matter movement.

Finally, this research briefly addressed potential financial repercussions from taking stances on the Black Lives Matter movement. Luders (2006) argued that businesses take cost-benefit analyses into account when deciding to issue responses to social movements, so this research included financial information in the form of stock prices and revenue statements of the corporations that issued responses in the time periods following the release of the responses.

V. Findings and Discussion

Social Networking Websites (Facebook)

Facebook, one of the original social networking sites, has supported Black Lives Matter through multiple public responses. On July 7, 2016, Facebook founder and CEO Mark Zuckerberg published a post on Facebook expressing sympathy for the Castile family after Philando Castile was shot and killed by police in Minnesota[3] (Wong, 2016). His post also addressed the need to continue to create a more connected and open world. The death of Castile was linked directly to Facebook as Diamond Reynolds, Castile's fiancée, had created a Facebook Live video stream to record the shooting aftermath, which showcased her confronting police officer Jeronimo Yanez after Castile was shot.

Following Zuckerberg's post, Facebook hung a sign on July 8 at its California headquarters reading "Black Lives Matter," in which the letters of the movement's name were made up of the names of victims of

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3 In July 2016, Philando Castile was pulled over outside St. Paul, Minnesota, as part of a traffic stop. After informing police officer Jeronimo Yanez that he was licensed to carry a weapon and had one in his pocket, Castile reached for his identification and was fatally shot by Yanez. His fiancée, Diamond Reynolds, and her young daughter were also passengers in the car.

recent violence between police and civilians (Brown, 2016). Additionally, earlier in February 2016, Zuckerberg posted a message on Facebook's company announcement page asking employees to stop replacing the words "Black Lives Matter" with "All Lives Matter" on the company's signature office chalkboard Facebook wall (Selyukh, 2016). He noted that while Facebook had never created rules regarding what employees can write on the wall, crossing out another person's message is considered to silence that person's speech and is disrespectful.

According to Statista, the majority of Facebook users (about 33%) are ages 25 to 34, while the second largest group users (about 26%) are ages 18 to 24 (2016b). The social networking site has about 1.4 billion monthly active users. With the rise of 360 degree video capabilities and Facebook Live, the site also reaches audiences particularly interested in up-and-coming media trends and is viewed as a tool for activists who want to broadcast live video as an event occurs.

According to Facebook's "About" page (2016), the social networking site's mission is "to give people the power to share and make the world more open and connected " (para. 1). The site promotes itself as a place that allows users to stay connected to family and friends and provides a platform to express issues that users find important. The company also has five core values it imparts to employees: (1) Be bold, (2) Focus on impact, (3) Move fast, (4) Be open, (5) Build social value (Facebook Careers, 2015). The company values individualism, creativity, and innovation in employees.

There seem to be no major changes in Facebook's stock prices or revenue during the time period following Zuckerberg's message to employees in February 2016, or after Zuckerberg's public response to Castile's death in July 2016 (YCharts, 2016a). However, Facebook did receive some backlash after NPR released a report on the lack of diversity in technology company employees (Selyukh, 2016). While Facebook claimed to revere diversity, 55% of its employees are White (while 32% of its employees are Asian, 4% are Hispanic, and only 2% are Black). Leslie Miley, a Silicon Valley diversity advocate, called for Facebook and other tech companies to cease using referrals from prestigious universities when hiring, particularly because these universities are primarily accessible to White, privileged students (Beres, 2016). In addition, Facebook was accused of censorship after the Facebook Live video posted by Reynolds was temporarily inaccessible due to a technological glitch after Castile's shooting (Sumagaysay, 2016).

Ultimately, Zuckerberg's posts and Facebook's Black Lives Matter banner supported the company's mission statement regarding openness, value of individuality, and expression of feelings. However, the breakdown of the company's employees by race did not align with Zuckerberg's focus on inclusivity and allowing oppressed voices to be heard. Facebook taking a stance on this particular social issue is not reflective of its behavior of possibly censoring graphic material posted via Facebook Live, which is frequently used to record shootings, protests, and other violence surrounding the Black Lives Matter movement.

Sports Brands (Nike)

Out of the three most popular sports brands within the United States, Nike was the only company to issue a public response to the Black Lives Matter movement in the form of a letter from its chairman and CEO, Mark Parker (McGirt, 2016). The letter, which was shared on July 15, 2016, with Nike's 32,000 employees and in Fortune's online newsletter on diversity in corporate America, was focused mainly on addressing the Nike employee team and their potential concerns about diversity in the workplace.

Parker employed the word "we" frequently in his letter and noted that Nike is attempting to battle bigotry and "stand for racial justice" within the workplace. He specifically mentioned a number of notable Nike-sponsored athletes who have spoken up for racial justice and referenced Nike's "long history" of fighting for equality (para. 2). He concluded the letter by mentioning that Nike is working on ways to improve the diversity of its staff, and details regarding these improvements are outlined in the company's sustainability report. Parker noted that company leadership will facilitate meetings to discuss concerns at major North American Nike offices. Under his signature, Parker included the popular movement hashtags, "#stoptheviolence" and "blacklivesmatter," which connect the letter directly back to the Black Lives Matter movement.

Nike's mission statement and core values revolve around inspiring and creating innovation for every athlete in the world (Nike, n.d.). Nike's definition of an athlete is summed up in a quote from company co-founder Bill Bowerman: "If you have a body, you are an athlete" (Nike, n.d., para. 2). Additionally, Nike has 11 maxims, including "be a sponge" and "do the right thing," which employees are required to know and follow at

all times (Nisen, 2013). These inclusive and all-encompassing mission statement and action-focused maxims showcase Nike's brand as both consistent and inclusive.

As a company that sells innovative sportswear, including exclusive products designed by famous company-sponsored athletes, Nike's main consumer audience is both focused on athleticism and brand recognition. Nike appeals to both sports fan and serious athletes. Additionally, Nike must also recognize that it must appeal to a major stakeholder group of professional athletes, many of which are involved in or supportive of social movements like Black Lives Matter.

In terms of financial response to Parker's letter, Nike's stock prices remained relatively steady after the letter was released and the company's quarterly revenue has increased from May 2016 to August 2016 (YCharts, 2016b).

It is important to note that this response may have been motivated by a previous incident in which Nike received criticism for its celebration of Law Enforcement Appreciation Day (Tuttle, 2015). In May 2015, Nike offered a 30% discount on any Nike purchases for law enforcement employees. This offer evoked a number of criticisms on social media, as Twitter users accused Nike of not recognizing its stake in Black consumers and started the hashtag #BoycottNike. Nike later issued a statement explaining that it had celebrated Law Enforcement Appreciation Day since the terror attacks of September 11, 2001, and did not intend to be insensitive toward issues between law enforcement and black communities. Though the incident occurred a year prior to Parker's statement, Nike may have been attempting to belatedly address this issue with consumer audiences through a letter from the CEO.

Overall, Parker's letter was interesting in that it was targeted to Nike employees but also strategically released via Fortune's diversity-focused online newsletter, thereby successfully reaching a wider online audience. Parker's focus on diversity in the workplace related not only to Nike's current business sustainability practice, but also to its core inclusive mission statement. In addition, according to Kell (2016), approximately 52% of Nike's employees identified as racial minorities as of May 2016. As the leader in sports brand sales within the United States, Nike issued a response from its chairman and CEO that successfully references its current practices, core values, and future focus on diversity in a sensitive manner, which was likely strategic in helping the company maintain its captive consumer and sponsored athlete audiences, particularly after being criticized for a perceived anti-Black Lives Matter action in the past.

Music-Streaming Services (Spotify, Pandora, and Apple)

Interestingly, out of the industries examined in this research, music-streaming services seemed to be the most active in responding to the Black Lives Matter movement. Spotify, currently the most popular music-streaming service, released a Black Lives Matter playlist in July 2016, which was made up of 46 songs about revolution, struggle, and identity from Black artists (Bates, 2016). The description of the playlist read "Songs to support the message of the #blacklivesmatter movement" (para. 1). This playlist provoked backlash from some Spotify users on Spotify's community boards, particularly those who stated that they have family members involved in law enforcement. One community board user stated that Black Lives Matter is a hate group and that Spotify "might as well have just made a playlist for ISIS" (Spotify Community, 2016, para. 2). A number of users wrote that they were canceling their Spotify subscriptions because they did not agree with a music-streaming service taking a stance on a social issue. On the other hand, other users responded with statements of support on Spotify's community boards, oftentimes challenging the angry comments from frustrated Spotify subscribers and explaining the overall peaceful and social justice-focused purpose of the Black Lives Matter movement.

Pandora, another music-streaming service, also came out in support of Black Lives Matter by posting a photo with a pro-Black Lives Matter message on its social media platforms in early July 2016 (Nolan, 2016). The message read, "Our hearts ache for all those who unfairly lost their lives. We stand with marginalized communities. We stand for racial justice. We stand for equity. And we stand together to make this world a better place. #BlackLivesMatter #LoveAboveAll." Much in the same way that Spotify received criticism for addressing social views as a subscription site, Pandora had to face some users who wrote social media posts with negative comments, such as "shut up and play music . . . no one is paying for your political views." A number of users also stated they would cancel their subscriptions to the service. Despite these statements of criticism, Pandora's posts on Twitter and Instagram also received thousands of retweets and likes. Many

social media users were pleased with Pandora's message of support and left comments thanking the music-streaming service for supporting the movement.

In comparison to Spotify and Pandora, Apple, owner of the Apple Music streaming service, has addressed both police and Black civilian deaths, but not Black Lives Matter specifically (Sumagaysay, 2016). Tim Cook, Apple's CEO, tweeted out multiple times in early July 2016 about "senseless killings" and how they "remind us that justice is still out of reach for many," and expressed sympathy for the "families of the fallen officers" in Dallas, Texas[4]. This response from Apple was more tempered than those of both Pandora and Spotify, and there were no major critical responses from Apple Music users or Apple consumers in general.

In regard to the mission statements and values of the analyzed music-subscription services, Spotify's mission is to provide unlimited music to people in a legal and accessible way (Spotify, 2016). Pandora's mission is "to play only music you'll love," while Apple's mission focuses more broadly on its products and its commitment to providing the best personal computing experience possible (Pandora, 2016; Blodget, 2013). Each of these music-subscription services have users from ages 18 to approximately 50, though Pandora has seen a major decrease in its number of active users in recent years due to the rise in popularity of competitor streaming services (Statista, 2016c).

In terms of financial responses, Pandora saw a drop in its stock prices after its social media posts in support of Black Lives Matter, but the company has been experiencing some financial troubles over the past few years due to the rise of new music-subscription services and a decreasing number of subscribers (YCharts, 2016c). Neither Apple nor Spotify saw particularly significant drops in stock after releasing their statements (YCharts, 2016d; YCharts 2016e).

In the case of these music-subscription services, the variety of responses and subsequent criticism provided an interesting comparison in reactions from different user communities. Spotify and Pandora received backlash from subscribers opposed to seeing social or political views from subscription services, and neither of these services' mission statements address much beyond a commitment to providing music for subscribers. On the other hand, Apple, a much larger corporation, released a statement on issues generally related to the Black Lives Matter Movement and expressed sympathy for both Black individuals and law enforcement officers who were killed. Though it is important to acknowledge that Apple Music is part of a much larger and well known corporation with well-regarded products, Apple's tempered response did seem to be much more well-received than the other two music-streaming services.

Overall, companies that chose to respond to the Black Lives Matter movement did so via letters from top leaders, such as CEOs, or through posts on company social media accounts. Some companies, like Spotify, chose to support Black Lives Matter through creating content that aligns with the service the company provides. Online responses tended to involve hashtags relating to Black Lives Matter, which align with Bonilla and Rosa's (2015) ideas about social movements taking advantage of hashtags to connect with supporters and consumers interested in social movements. In addition, many responses contained emotive language expressing grief, empathy, and concern regarding not just the Black Lives Matter movement, but also the greater state of social and racial inequalities in American society.

In terms of comparing responses to the Black Lives Matter movement across industries, it is notable that companies with mission statements that communicated values of inclusivity, diversity, and individuality chose to issue a response to Black Lives Matter, and tended to use emotive language to express distress and sympathy for those involved in the movement. On the other hand, Spotify and Pandora, companies with mission statements revolving mainly around the services they provide, faced criticism from a number of subscribers after attempting to express company stances on issues concerning racial justice.

Companies that took stances on Black Lives Matter were also deeply knowledgeable about their consumer audiences. Companies like Nike not only target its products to young, socially minded consumers, but also establish sponsorships and brand partnerships with talented athletes tied to the Black Lives Matter movement. It must take these audiences into account when choosing to issue a statement on a polarizing issue. Other companies, like Facebook, appeal to consumer and employee stakeholder groups by publicly supporting the Black Lives Matter movement and encouraging Black Lives Matter proponents to express themselves in the workplace. Despite this public support, however, Facebook faced criticism from those who advocate diversity in Silicon Valley as the company could be contributing to racial inequality for African

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4 See Footnote 2.

Americans with only 2% of its employee base identifying as Black.

The current research also raised the question of risk when corporations take stances on polarizing social movements. While companies would be unlikely to receive negative responses from stakeholder groups when supporting a less polarizing movement like cancer research, those issuing public stances on Black Lives Matter have faced hateful social media comments and threats from consumers who want to stop buying company products or services. Ultimately, though, the majority of these companies did not suffer major financial repercussions after publicly supporting Black Lives Matter. In fact, many of them received some appreciation from their target markets: young consumer audiences. A growing consumer base of socially minded, activist millennial consumers are looking to companies and brands that commit themselves to enacting social change and taking stances on issues that matter to them (Schawbel, 2015). In order to appeal to the generation that is becoming their main consumer target, companies that value diversity and inclusivity may continue to take stances on polarizing issues and appeal to younger target audiences that value socially responsible corporations.

VI. Conclusion

As the Black Lives Matter movement addresses perceived racial injustices within the United States, many companies chose to take public stances on this social movement. When they took stances favoring the Black Lives Matter movement, company values and mission statements seemed to play a role in people's responses to these stances. Companies that publicly value diversity were more likely to receive positive responses from their clients. Companies also responded to the Black Lives Matter movement in different forms; while some issued letters from company leadership, others addressed the movement on social media or through company services.

Ultimately, each company was likely evaluating its stakeholders, particularly its consumer audiences, when choosing to issue a stance on Black Lives Matter. Moving forward, companies must take into account the growing population of millennial consumers, who will be a major force in making purchasing decisions and favor companies that share their socially minded and generally progressive values.

This research cannot be generalized due to a small sample of corporations and industries analyzed. While only five companies within three industries were analyzed, a number of other corporations and industries have issued responses to the Black Lives Matter social movement. In addition, many of the source documents analyzed were only months old, so the study could not include multiple company responses that were generated following a number of deaths of Black Americans in July 2016. The Black Lives Matter movement is constantly growing and shifting, and these companies may change their stances or issue additional company responses to the movement as it progresses. For these reasons, this research only serves as a brief look at company responses to the Black Lives Matter movement at this moment in time.

Acknowledgments

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Appendix: Coding Protocol: Corporate Responses

Each corporate response was coded to answer the following six questions. For questions A, B, C, and D, one answer was assigned, while E and F could have multiple answers.

A. Presence of Response
   o Yes
   o No

B. (If answered yes to A) Industry Type & Specific Company
   o Music-Streaming Service (Pandora, Spotify, or Apple Music)
   o Sportswear Brand (Nike, Adidas, or Under Armour)
   o Social Networking Website (Facebook, YouTube, or Reddit)

C. Medium of Response
   o Social Media
   o Company Website
   o Digital news source
   o Print news source
   o Branded content

D. Responder
   o Company as a whole
   o Company leader
   o Public relations representative

E. Language vs. Action (Type of Response)
   o Language used (e.g., response expressing support for Black Lives Matter)
   o Action taken (e.g., donation to Black Lives Matter)

F. References to Black Lives Matter Movement
   o Use of BLM-related hashtag
   o Inclusion of BLM movement name
   o Tagging of BLM social media accounts