

## **The Role of Anonymous Cyberactivism in the Black Lives Matter Movement in the United States (2014-2020)**

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### **Abstract**

The practice of racism in the US stems from a long history of slavery. The Emancipation Proclamation and the various laws that the Government had issued in an attempt to regulate the rights of black people did not prevent black discrimination from continuing to this day. This situation triggered the emergence of the Black Lives Matter movement, which is one of the biggest movements in the United States. This research discusses the role of Anonymous as a community using cyberspace during the Black Lives Matter (BLM) movement. This research applies the qualitative method using various kinds of secondary data ranging from books, related journals, government websites, and other online sources aiming to analyze the concept of cyberactivism and the idea of cyber libertarianism regarding the role of Anonymous within the BLM movement. This research shows that based on the cyber libertarianism concept the role of Anonymous is as one of the important information sources within the BLM movement by hacking and then propagating the information to the public. Based on the concept of cyberactivism, Anonymous has helped the Police in raising racism awareness. This racism has been rooted in the existing systems in the United States of America. Besides, cyberactivism by Anonymous using hacktivism has shifted the concept of hacking not only as a crime but also a resource of social movements.

**Keywords:** the Anonymous, Black Lives Matter Movement, cyberactivism, racism

### **Abstrak**

*Asal muasal praktik rasisme di AS adalah sejarah panjang perbudakan. Meskipun orang kulit hitam tidak lagi diperbudak setelah perang saudara usai dan juga dikeluarkannya Proklamasi Emansipasi, kemudian juga sudah banyak undang-undang yang mengatur tentang hak kulit hitam, namun praktek diskriminasi terhadap orang kulit hitam terus berlanjut hingga saat ini, yang kemudian melahirkan munculnya gerakan BLM salah satu gerakan terbesar di AS. Penelitian ini membahas tentang peran Anonymous sebagai komunitas menggunakan ruang siber dalam gerakan BLM. Penelitian ini menggunakan metode kualitatif dengan menggunakan berbagai data sekunder seperti buku, jurnal, situs pemerintah, dan situs online lainnya. Keseluruhan data yang telah dikumpulkan dan dimanfaatkan dalam makalah ini bertujuan untuk menganalisis konsep cyberactivism dan gagasan cyberlibertarianism tentang peran Anonymous dalam gerakan BLM. Hasil penelitian ini menemukan bahwa peran Anonymous, berdasarkan konsep cyberlibertarianism, adalah sebagai salah satu sumber informasi penting di gerakan BLM dengan cara melakukan peretasan dan menyebarluaskan ke publik. Berdasarkan konsep cyberactivism, Anonymous telah membantu peningkatan kesadaran akan rasisme yang dilakukan oleh polisi. Rasisme tersebut telah mengakar dalam sistem yang ada di Amerika. Kemudian juga cyberactivism yang dilakukan oleh Anonymous dengan cara hacktivism telah menggeser konsep peretasan dalam dunia maya tidak hanya sebagai tindakan kriminal tetapi juga sebagai salah satu sumber daya dalam melakukan gerakan sosial.*

**Kata kunci:** Anonymous Group, Black Lives Matter Movement, cyberactivism, rasisme

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## INTRODUCTION

The case of racial discrimination, especially the black race in the United States, has become one of the international concerns, as the raising awareness and movements made by the community in exposing discrimination cases taking place around them. Previously in the 16-20 centuries, it could even be said that until the 21st-century racism against blacks was common because of the culture of slavery that was practiced in the United States. Although then slavery was discontinued and abolished in the United States, discrimination against blacks continued.

About ten years after the issuance of the Emancipation Proclamation, there have been many cases of hanging against black people or what is known as "lynching". This practice has also become one of the roots of police violence and the racist legal system to date. Based on data from 1862-1968 as many as 3,400 black Americans were executed by hanging. Many of them have gone through unsuitable procedures such as being tried by force beforehand without proper court law. Many also experienced accusations from whites without the basis for their racial views. With so many cases of racial discrimination, the *Civil Rights Act of 1964* and the *Voting Rights Act of 1965* were formed (Lebron, 2017: 2-3). There have been many attempts to pass the bill on the death penalty (Lynching), but out of 200 proposals, only one has passed the congress, namely the *Justice for Victims of Lynching Act's* and there are no other laws relating to the death penalty experienced by black people. This law was only passed in 2018 after years of lynching practice (Smithsonian Magazine, 2020).

Police violence against blacks culminated in the release of a policeman named George Zimmerman for the murder of Trayvon Martin. This case later became the trigger and root of the formation of the

Black Lives Matter (BLM) movement. Black Lives Matter (BLM) was officially formed in 2013 but the roots of the movement have started since 2012. This movement is dedicated to fighting violence against black people, whether perpetrated by the police or not. This movement was formed by Alicia Garza, Patrisse Cullors, and Opal Tometi (Black Lives Matter, 2020).

BLM was originally a movement carried out on social media, first appeared on Facebook and then entered Twitter using the hashtag "#BlackLivesMatter" but only with that hashtag, this movement could become one of the big movements in America (history.com, 2013). By using this hashtag, people spread information about the movement and cases of violence against black people which then attracted public attention not only in America itself but throughout the world. Plus many people who are famous for using the hashtag spread awareness of police violence against blacks. These famous people usually have accounts with large followers so that what they write and share on their social media accounts reaches a wider audience.

In 2014 there was also a shooting that killed Mike Brown by Darren Wilson and was the year Anonymous joined the BLM movement which was called "Operation Ferguson". With this movement, many cases of injustice against blacks committed by the police have been exposed to the public. Many black people are jailed for actions they did not commit simply because there was a view that black people were "dangerous" and mostly "criminals".

BLM itself is said to be a movement inspired by or a legacy from the Occupy Movement because of its very similar forms of struggle, namely, both militant protests, both using digital means, an unclear leadership structure and what only

differentiates between targets and goals in outline (Gupta, 2015). Therefore it can be said that there will be no movement like BLM if the Occupy Movement does not occur. Anonymous has a big role in the Occupy Movement so that its role then extends to the BLM movement. Anonymous helps the BLM movement by exposing police data or parties related to the current case. Apart from being in BLM, Anonymous was also involved in exposing members of the Ku Klux Klan (KKK) or an extreme racism organization against blacks in 2015. Anonymous published data on members involved in the KKK. Anonymous involved in the KKK's exposure because the KKK threatened to use "deadly" means to anyone who protested against Ferguson's killer (BBC, 2015). Even though Anonymous had disappeared later, the group returned in 2020 when George Floyd died.

Previous studies that have been carried out related to cyberactivism and also related to Anonymous including research conducted in explaining the implementation of freedom of information by WikiLeaks, Anonymous, Pirate Party, and the law of freedom of information in Iceland. This study tried to explain the principle of freedom of information carried out by WikiLeaks, Anonymous, Pirate Party, and Iceland. Each of the parties described in this study has a cooperative relationship with one another. Each of the parties described in this study is also seen as actors pushing for information liberalization in democratic countries (Beyer, 2013).

The next research explained various views of international relations theory such as libertarianism, social libertarianism, and socialism towards Anonymous. The research explained how these theories were viewed and related to Anonymous. Also, this research explained about Anonymous briefly (Fusch, 2013).

Another previous study was conducted in Mexico. This research

attempted to explain the development of cyberactivism and also the roots of cyberactivism in Mexico from the time of the Zapatista movement, "#Necessary Internet movement" and "I'm 132 movement". This research explained one by one what the root of the movement, cyberactivism was, direct social movements, and what organizations involved and well-known in the movement. Although this research made Mexico an illustration of the discussion, this research also explained the evolution and history of cyberactivism which was divided into two periods, namely 1.0 and 2.0, and also described several examples of other movements that supported the explanation of the evolution of cyberactivism (Sandoval-Almazan and Ramon Gil-Garcia 2014).

The novelty of this study is that the author examines cyberactivism activities and also the role of Anonymous in the BLM movement in the United States in 2014-2020. Besides, the authors also use the concept of cyber libertarianism in explaining cyberactivism carried out by Anonymous.

## **Conceptual Framework**

### *Cyber Libertarianism/ Techno Libertarianism Concept*

First, the author will use the concept of cyber libertarianism to explain the role of Anonymous in the BLM movement. Cyber libertarianism is a term that emerged in the 1990s to refer to the philosophy used by hackers to develop the internet into a place free from government regulation. The purpose of this thinking is to be able to provide access to the public to everything, be it knowledge, government data, government criticism, access to social and economic interactions, or other rights that can be obtained from the internet without being restricted by the government. The government and the state are considered a threat to cyber libertarians. This concept is a concept that

sees that every individual should be able to access the internet freely and pursue their needs through the internet freely without being restricted because it is everyone's right (Goode, 2015: 78 and Bell et al., 2004: 35).

In the 2000s, cyber libertarianism faded due to the increasing number of government regulations that emerged on internet control and the discourse on internet freedom did not materialize. So that this philosophy becomes less relevant. Finally, many new movements took advantage of the power of the internet, one of which was Anonymous Group, David Golumbia (in Goode, 2015: 78) stated that Anonymous entered into the Cyber libertarianism entity and became one of the revivals of Cyber libertarianism. Anonymous has the same principles as the thought of cyber libertarianism, namely the principle of freedom of information and also the freedom to use the internet that cannot be restricted. Anonymous moves and threatens the government if the government tries to censor the internet and create regulations that limit internet use. The revival of cyber libertarianism can also be seen from the widespread use of social media. Many of the discourses and groups that discuss and are pro against Cyber libertarianism originate from the United States (Dahlberg, 2016: 1).

Characteristics of cyber libertarianism are technological determinism, where human needs are driven by technology and also met by technology. And how technology has a big influence on people's lives. The development of technology is one of the waves of community growth that cannot be felt. Also, this thinking emphasizes radical individualism, namely by encouraging individuals to free themselves from the control of other parties, especially control from the government. As well as believing in individual freedom in fulfilling their rational desires using technology. Cyber libertarianism sees government

restrictions on internet freedom as a threat to people's freedoms. The main value of cyber libertarianism is profit, how technology is used to meet social and economic interests (Winner, 1997: 14-15 and Dahlberg, 2016: 1).

The relationship between this concept and the research that the author wrote is as described in the previous paragraph that Anonymous is seen as a form of cyber libertarianism. The emergence of cyber libertarianism then influenced the formation of hacker groups such as the Anonymous group. Anonymous groups use cyberspace as a place where they achieve their interests, namely the interests of the people. The principles applied by this group are also in line with the basic principles of cyber libertarianism. It can also be said that the actions carried out by these groups are illegal and have violated regulations on internet use. With this concept, the author will use it to explain the use of cyber power used by Anonymous groups.

#### *Cyberactivism Concept*

Cyberactivism is related to the previous concept because Cyberactivism can be said to be a manifestation of the application of Cyber libertarianism thinking. Cyberactivism is the concept of social movements, organizations, collective action, and activism using internet resources or cyberspace. The success of a social movement or activism is determined by how many resources or opportunities can be used to get various encouragement and the internet is one of the tools that can be used by people in gathering support. Wellman (in Carty and Onyett, 2006: 239) describes cyberactivism as 'networked individualism' where people can easily build personal relationships that allow them to join more and more diverse online political communities from various places and even reach support from passive sectors (Nunes, 2020: 3; McCaughey and Ayers, 2013: 2, 14, 129).

Cyberactivism is an important component in activism, but also poses a new challenge for activists because it creates what is called "Slacktivism", a person who only makes a small contribution to social movements such as doing "like", "repost", "retweet" and others. . Usually these people are said to be just following the trend or too obsessed with the number of "likes" which do not understand the main purpose of the social movement that is being carried out. This in turn can lead to the ineffectiveness of social movements. But from the positive side, this "Slacktivism" at least disseminates something that can then raise social awareness and people who see the information (Sherer, 2015).

With the existence of Cyberactivism, gathering the masses to make social movements faster and easier. Traditional media has a limited capacity, but with the presence of the internet, this capacity has become broad. However, many researchers think that the internet or social media cannot be said to be a means of mobilization because not everything that is spread on the internet can be accounted for and also sometimes has many different views in interpreting information. Cyber activism's roots can be seen in the creation of a bulletin board system (BBS) which allowed people to exchange messages and files but then BBS developed into an online community. From BBS then it was changed to email and Newsgroup, which is a forum for online discussion which then continues to develop until now into the era of social media (Garcia, 2015: 2-3; McNutt and Menon, 2008: 34).

This concept has something to do with the research that the author will examine to identify forms of the role of Anonymous in the BLM movement. Cyberactivism is also related to the previous concept because cyber freedom creates social movements in cyberspace.

## **Research Method**

This study uses the qualitative method because it seeks to explain and describe the role of Anonymous in the BLM movement (Anggita and Setiawan, 2018). Sources of data used as a reference for this study are secondary data sources in the form of library data from books, research journals, government websites, and online media sites that can complement this research. The data taken generally relates to the conditions of discrimination and police violence against blacks in the United States. Then the data relating to the explanation of the role of Anonymous and how the influence of the group's role on views of the use of cyberspace and social movements. Then also data relating to BLM.

## **RESULT AND DISCUSSION**

### **The Roots of Racism in the United States**

Racism against black people in America can be seen from the history of trafficking of black people into slavery in 1525-1866 by European colonizers in America. It is even said that in history, Africa itself had practiced slavery long before the arrival of the European colonizers. However, the root of the practice of discrimination based on skin began when African people were forcibly kidnapped and brought by European colonizers to one of them is the American continent or what is called the "new world". European colonizers often explored to expand their plantations. To be able to run these plantations, of course, needed workers, but because the colonizers wanted to make the maximum profit they used slaves to reduce production costs. Initially, those who were made slaves were Native Americans or called "Indians", but because of the atrocities committed by the Spanish colonizers, it can be said to have committed genocide against Indians. Indians were replaced by slaves from Africa (Sylvester, 2000: 80-82).

African slaves first came to America in 1525 by Spanish colonizers to what is believed to be South Carolina. Then in 1619, the first 20 African slaves came to the British colony of Virginia, and since then African slavery expanded and spread rapidly. From 1525-1866, 12.5 million Africans were slaves in America and only 10.7 million survived. This slavery lasted more than 300 years and even many American leaders used slaves. This slavery was finally abolished after the civil war in America and Lincoln issued the "Emancipation Proclamation" which abolished slavery in America. Even though later slavery against blacks was abolished, discrimination against blacks continues even today, both openly and in a systematic manner (smithsonianmag.com, 2020, history.com, 2020 and Sylvester, 2000: 88 and 107).

Discrimination of black people can be seen in the enactment of the "Jim Crow" law which limits the rights and privileges of African-Americans which ultimately creates caste. The doctrine of "Separate but equal" is not equal but separates whites and blacks where whites are the highest caste while blacks are the lowest caste. For example, separation of seats in public transportation, separation of places to eat in restaurants, separation of public toilets, separation of classes in schools, and others where whites get better service than blacks. Even blacks did not have the right to vote before 1965. Then also black people do not have the same rights before the law as white legal rights. This separation was even normalized because it was considered "normal". Until finally the black community, the party most disadvantaged took movements against the application of the law. For example, the struggles carried out by many groups and figures, such as the NAACP, SNCC, Martin Luther King, and many more including recently "Black Lives Matter" (Brown and Stentiford, 2008: 43-44 and history.com, 2020).

## **The Anonymous**

The development of the times and technological sophistication resulted in a shift in social movements using cyber power. One example is the Anonymous Group. Anonymous Group is an international non-governmental group known for its movement using cyber power. This group is then seen as an activist group to attack the government based on people's freedom, the anti-corruption movement, the anti-authoritarian movement, and the struggle for the values of other people's freedom. For the community, what this group does is one of the means to open people's access to the government and as a form of saving the values of freedom. However, for the government, this is a national threat that must be stopped because it has exposed many secrets and depravity of the state. Not only that, but Anonymous groups also often block government websites and disclose government data to expose the bad things done by the government (Lawford, 2020 and German, 2012).

This group was formed rooted in a page used to access things related to anime called 2channel or 2chan. On this page, everyone is free to access and login anonymously, no need to log in and enter their identity. People who then enter the page can then discuss anime. But over time the discussion about the anime spread to other things such as stories about murders, bombings, and other stories. 2chan was then closed but Christopher Poole, one of the 2chan users, then created a page similar to 2chan named 4chan in 2003. The website then became a forum for leaking data, jokes against corrupt business people or governments, and many controversial posts that became a place to do the activist movement. From this page, it is formed into an organization that is more politically oriented (Olson, 2013: 26-28, Wong and Brown, 2013: 1019).

Anonymous Group received attention and was then seen as a group that carried

out Hacktivism and began to be oriented towards more political problems when this group attacked the Church of Scientology in 2008. The Church of Scientology is often involved in controversial issues such as using violence to silence anyone who criticizes, no trust in psychiatry that causes members to die from mental illness, and other accusations of brainwashing. Starting when the video of Tom Cruise's interview spread on the internet which the Church of Scientology then tried to remove, Anonymous then uploaded a video declaring war on the church for silencing and trying to hide information from the public. This caused many people to protest against the Church of Scientology. After its involvement in the incident, Anonymous became active in carrying out cyber-based activism movements, such as its involvement in the Tunisian Operation case, WikiLeaks, leaking data related to child trafficking, the Occupy Movement, and recently being involved in the case of the "Black Lives Movement" which has championed long ago and experienced its peak when George Floyd died (Lawford, 2020, Olson, 2012 and Underwood and Welser, 2011: 304-305).

This Anonymous action can indeed be said to have violated internet law because it attacked using a distributed denial-of-service (DDoS) method (Olsen, 2012). So it can be said that what Anonymous is doing is illegal. But also from the people's point of view, this group opens wider access for the community to see the existing government conditions. If no one uncovers this, the government will probably continue to keep this "secret" and it could hurt democratic values.

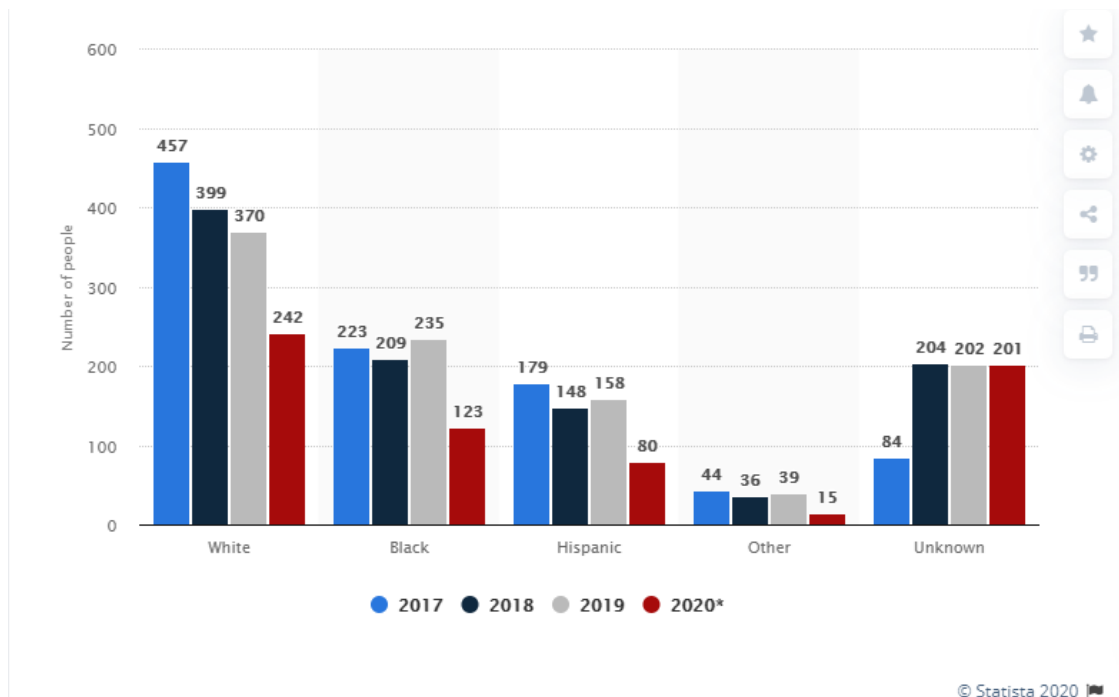
This Anonymous Group has played a role in various activist movements in the

international realm and this movement initiated by Anonymous can be said to be the root of social movements that use cyber power in the world. This Anonymous group has also contributed a lot to the activist movement, one of which is the Arab Spring which later inspired the Occupy Wall Street and Occupy Wall Street movements which are said to have influenced the emergence of the Black Lives Matter movement (Ryan, 2011).

### **Police Violence against Black People in the United States**

Based on the research results of several other research journals, black men in the United States are 2.5 times more likely to be killed by the police than white men in the United States. Meanwhile, black women were 1.4 times more likely to be killed by the police than white women. Black people in the United States face a 1 in 1000 chance of being killed by police aged 20 and 35 during their lifetime (Edward and Esposito, 2019: 2).

Based on research conducted by Schwartz and Jahn (2020: 5) of the 5494 victims of police violence in 2013-2017, 2353 victims with a percentage of 42.83% were white, as many as 1487 victims with a percentage of 27.07% were black, as many as 939 victims with a percentage of 17.09% were Latinos, and as many as 168 victims with a percentage of 3.06% were other races or ethnicities. When viewed from the number, white victims were more than black victims. However, if you want to see the data comparison, you need to see the population. Most of the black population in America in 2019 was 13.4% while whites accounted for 76.3% (census.gov, 2019).



Source: Statista.com, 2020

**Figure 1.**  
The death rate by police based on race in the United States

The statistical data above is data that shows the death rate by police based on race in the United States. From the statistical data above, it can be seen that the number of deaths experienced by blacks in 2017 and 2020 is almost 50% of the total deaths of white people. For 2018 and 2019 more than 50% of total white deaths. Although the number is still less than the number of deaths experienced by whites, it is worth remembering again that the ratio of the total black population in the United States is less than 15%. However, the data above shows a significant decline from year to year.

### **Anonymous Role in the BLM Movement**

Anonymous was only involved in the BLM movement a year after the BLM was carried out, namely in 2014 when the shooting incident of Mike Brown took place. This group usually conducts cyberactivism using social media facilities such as Twitter using a Twitter account following the name of the operation being

carried out, YouTube, and Facebook. This community demanded and threatened publicly on Twitter that they would widely disseminate the personal information of the police chief named Jon Belmar who was related to Darren Wilson, the perpetrator who shot Mike Brown. This is because at that time the identity of the perpetrator who killed Mike Brown was covered by the police, where this information should have become the right of the citizens of the United States. Anonymous sees the actions of the United States police covering up this information as injuring the freedom of citizens and contrary to the principles believed by this group. This threat is made to pressure the police so that the Mike Brown shooting case is investigated thoroughly and fairly. Then the group also released a statement asking the government to pass a law to set strict national standards for police behavior to prevent future police violence. Then the group released an audio recording of officers discussing the Mike Brown

incident. Not only carrying out attacks through the internet space, but this Anonymous group also carried out direct and peaceful demonstrations using the "Guy Fawkes" mask, which is a symbol of their community. And they threatened the entire Ferguson Police Department not to attack the demonstrators, otherwise, they would carry out document tracking and spread the personal information of Ferguson police officers to the public (Peterson, 2014b, Rogers, 2014 and Beran 2020).

In the 2014 BLM movement, the Anonymous group made a mistake because it spread the wrong information about the wrong person who was not the killer of Brown. Based on the results of an interview with Gabriella Coleman, a professor at McGill University, as well as the author of a book that discusses Anonymous entitled "Hackers, Hoaxers, Whistleblowers, Spy: The Many Faces of Anonymous" in Washington Post (2014), Coleman seeing that this error is not completely wrong, it is likely that the person whose data was disseminated was the person at the scene. But the likelihood of this person being the shooter is only about 50% because the evidence is so little (Peterson, 2014a). Coleman has a theory that this incident occurred because of an outside intruder who wanted to damage the reputation of Anonymous because the source of the identity that was spread was not from Anonymous but outside sources (Peterson, 2014b)

Of course, this is damaging the reputation of the hacker community. There are also many views that if you want to hack, do it secretly or infiltrate and disrupt the systems owned by the Ferguson Police Department, not by spreading personal information. But the failure of this community cannot be said to be a fatal failure, because this group has attracted the attention of the public both nationally and internationally which then could be an "invitation" for hackers out there to help

Anonymous in carrying out cyber activism (Peterson, 2014b). Not only is it one of the invitations but also what Anonymous is doing has received a lot of attention from the mass media and social media, where the demands issued by Anonymous are highlighted by all media so that it is more conveyed to the intended parties. These demands can then attract mass support. Also, people then saw new opportunities from resources for movement mobilization, namely by carrying out cyberactivism using the hacktivism method because basically the success of social movements is a movement that can take advantage of as many means as possible.

The mistakes made by the Anonymous group in Operation Ferguson were not due to Anonymous inability to carry out hacktivism but because Anonymous groups were not structured. There is no clear leader, no permanent and clear member names, no one knows the rules of the operation of this group because this group is very secretive. The party that made the mistake in spreading information was the person behind the @TheAnonMessage Twitter account, it was said that this account was not respected in the Anonymous community itself (Rogers, 2014). Before this information was disseminated, there was a debate on the Internet Relay Chat (IRC) between community members regarding the plan to leak the identity of the perpetrator (Peterson, 2014b). If this group had a clear leader, clear recruitment, clear laws, and clear permanent membership, this exposure of Operation Ferguson would have been very successful. However, because this community starts only from a community website where many people can access freely until now no one knows how this group works.

The next role played by Anonymous groups in the BLM movement can be seen from "Operation KKK". The KKK is a white supremacist extreme racist group that was formed after the civil war in America

ended. This group became a tool or vehicle for whites in the south to fight policies that built economic and political equality for black Americans. The KKK is also one of the historical pieces of evidence of white supremacy in America. Apart from targeting hatred against blacks the KKK also hates other minority groups such as the LGBT community, Jews, immigrants, and other groups (Durham, 2007: 5 and history.com, 2020b).

The KKK threatened to attack black people who participated in the demonstrations in the BLM movement. Anonymous then responded to the threat by threatening to leak the list of members of the KKK. This threat was then carried out by Anonymous, as many as 350 members were identified, including social media accounts owned by KKK members. Several KKK members whose identities have been spread by Anonymous such as Frank Ancona, Don Black, and Greg Ferrell have appeared in public and stated that they are not afraid of this and are proud of their status as KKK members. There are even three members of the FBI, one of them named Christopher Eugene Barker who is suspected of being an informant for the KKK. The KKK itself has confirmed that many of the names propagated by Anonymous are true but that some are just non-permanent members (Woolf, 2015 and Thaver, 2015). Besides leaking the identity of KKK members, Anonymous also carried out distributed denial-of-service (DDoS) attacks to bring down KKK's websites and also deleted Twitter accounts related to KKK (bbc.com, 2015). Then also Anonymous carried out a demonstration to the KKK directly using the mask "Guy Fawkes".

The exposure of KKK members was carried out by Anonymous because of the growing times and the growing awareness of the crimes of white supremacy, many people hate this KKK organization. The KKK is also seen as a terrorist organization. Members whose names are later

disseminated will certainly be threatened with hatred by the community or even lose their jobs or even be arrested for making hate speech and assault. Besides, there are also several names of senators and mayors in the South who are suspected of being members of the KKK (Frizell, 2015). Of course, this will affect the public view of these people and will threaten their position. Even though they later denied this, no one knew the truth as to what and how the role of the media in constructing the "image" of these people.

After that, the Anonymous community had disappeared for about three years and returned to action in 2020, including one of the actions in the BLM movement. Anonymous is back in action at the death of George Floyd. Floyd's death became one of the peaks that caused massive demonstrations and riots. Based on data released by ACLED, from 26 May to 22 August there were recorded more than 7,750 demonstrations related to BLM issues at more than 2,440 locations across 50 states as well as Washington, DC. ACLED also noted that 93% of the movements carried out were peaceful movements, which led to the movement becoming rioting due to the repressive actions of the police against the demonstrators. There have even been several incidents where the police seemed to only target black people, such as the shooting of Rayshard Brooks and Jacob Blake. Even though the two men were completely unarmed (ACLED, 2020).

Anonymous announced the return of their community through a video uploaded via a Facebook account. In the video, Anonymous declares war on the Minneapolis Police and also demands that they bring to justice those who were caught abusing George Floyd (Asmardika, 2020). Not long after Anonymous uploaded the video, news about the group's comeback spread widely on Twitter and became a trending topic discussed by Twitter users. Many of the Twitter users expressed their support for this

community. Then not long after Anonymous threatened the Minneapolis Police, the Minneapolis Police website was taken down by Anonymous (Spangler, 2020). Not only that, some people who belonged to the Anonymous community also demonstrated directly using the "Guy Fawkes" mask as a representation of their community.

Also, Anonymous hacked 251 law enforcement websites and collected 10 years of important police data, such as police and FBI report documents, and technical information about surveillance techniques and the results of intelligence meetings, including 700,000 police personal data. The hacked data was then published by Distributed Denial of Secrets (DDS), a website that often publishes confidential police data. This leak is called "Blue Leaks". 269 gigabytes of law enforcement data on its website. The uploaded data uses a file-sharing technology called peer-to-peer BitTorrent (Winston, 2020 and Lee, 2020). This hacking was carried out by Anonymous to expose the corruption in police agencies in the United States. With the data collected and disseminated, it can be seen what actions, strategies, meeting results, and also police reports in America.

This action can be seen from two sides, namely the pros and cons. The pro side and according to the principles of cyber libertarianism, will see this as an individual right to obtain information and should not be covered up. Citizens deserve to know what the elite parties are doing. Then it can also be seen that the actions taken by Anonymous can be avoided if the government and the police consider and listen to the aspirations of the people without being repressive towards the people. Also, there were many cases of police violence against black demonstrators which made the public even angrier and provoked more riots. However, when viewed from the counter side, this hacking action carried out by Anonymous

violates individual freedom and individual security because their data is exposed without the permission of the data owner. Besides, the data that are exposed are data from the police that have nothing to do with the ongoing problem. Also, this hack can be a boomerang for the national security of the country. It is feared that the scattered data will be used as a weapon by those who want to attack national security. Therefore, in carrying out hacktivism and cyberactivism, group coordination and careful consideration are needed before exposing the data that has been collected to avoid mistakes or weapons in the future. Also, keep in mind that internet space is a very large space and can be extraordinary things and also a danger if managed by an expert.

When Anonymous became a conversation on Twitter, there were many Twitter accounts on behalf of Anonymous, but these accounts had nothing to do with Anonymous. There are several accounts related to the Anonymous group, these accounts are named @YourAnonNews, @YourAnonCentral, @LatestAnonNews. These accounts are several Anonymous accounts with many followers and are considered credible as an Anonymous account. Until now, the Anonymous community is still active in spreading knowledge and conducting cyberactivism through these Twitter accounts. Currently, the discussion that is becoming one of the main themes is the presidential election which will soon be held in the United States. Anonymous certainly doesn't support Trump to become president again, so the contents of the Twitter account talk about Trump's badness and invite the public not to re-elect Trump as US president.

## **CONCLUSION**

Anonymous role in conducting cyberactivism is one form of cyber libertarianism. The success of cyberactivism carried out by this

community is not only measured by the success or failure of the movement. Moreover, the problem of racism has taken root in America, so it will take a long time to get rid of it. Also, there are still many people who have the belief to act racist against black people because they are influenced by their conservative thinking. The success of the role played by Anonymous can be seen from how Anonymous actions reach and get a lot of support from the wider community. Apart from that, with the emergence of this community, there have been many shifts in understanding of the use of "hacking" to achieve the goals of social movements. Previously, hacking was seen as a criminal and against the rules. But Anonymous then used this method and took advantage of the internet space to be able to mobilize movements.

The author's recommendation of this study is that there is a need for a clear organizational structure so that mistakes

that occurred in 2014 will not be repeated in the future. Furthermore, from the research that the author has done, the authors conclude that members of Anonymous lack clear communication between members so that there are often accounts acting on behalf of Anonymous but these actions turn out to be wrong and damage the image of Anonymous. The next recommendation is to increase the participation of the Anonymous community in other social and political problems because many other problems do not enter into Anonymous operations. For example, problems faced during a pandemic. Then the hacks carried out by Anonymous should be more focused on the perpetrators, but what Anonymous is doing is more about hacking the whole. Meanwhile, personal information from parties who are not involved has also been exposed, which is a form of deprivation of personal privacy.

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