

Article

Race and Racism in Bermuda

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Abstract: The legacy of chattel slavery persists in the lives of Black people all over the world. The current state of race relations in Bermuda is shaped by the underlying features of European domination and imperialism that gave birth to chattel slavery. The current racial climate in Bermuda is an example of the long-term impact of chattel slavery and the system of controls that followed. The damaging consequences of these systems of exploitation and oppression continue to shape the life chances and opportunities of Black people. Racial ideas, attitudes, and behaviors influence contemporary race relations between Black and White people throughout the African Diaspora, including Bermuda, which is the focus of this essay.

Keywords: racism; Bermuda; race relations; chattel slavery; racial exploitation; racial legacy

“Bermuda is governed by Blacks, yet a waitress will still not serve me.” (Howe 2001)

1. Introduction

I first took interest in race and racism in Bermuda while working on a manuscript in 2010. Like much archival research, my interest in racial politics were further peaked by not only some of the material in the archives but also Michelle Alexander’s visit during my stay. Alexander was discussing her then recently published book, *The New Jim Crow*. I was visiting the island at the time to explore the Nation of Islam in Bermuda. During Alexander’s talk, I considered the similarities between Black Bermudians and their U.S. counterparts. For instance, Bermudians at Alexander’s lecture noted concerns related to mass incarceration on the island. In addition, Black Bermudians raised issues of racism in areas of employment, education, and healthcare. Black people in the United States raise similar concerns, including the warehousing of Black bodies, police surveillance and targeting, health disparities, and exploitation of labor. Scholars have focused on Bermuda’s labor unions, specific groups, and individuals related to Marcus Garvey’s movement, the Black Panther Party, and to a lesser degree, the Nation of Islam. Other works concerning the island explore slavery, racism and tourism (See [Bernhard 1999](#); [Hodgson 1988](#); [Packwood 1975](#); [Prince 2012](#); [Swan 2009](#), pp. 36, 77–78). Places like Jamaica, Barbados, and other parts of the British Caribbean have also been closely examined, specifically the impact and legacy of colonialism. Few works focus on the legacy of racism from slavery to the 21st century and attempt to draw comparisons across the African Diaspora. Bermuda has especially been largely ignored. This work considers several questions.

Nearly 200 years since the emancipation of Black people in former British colonies, what can the history of race and racism tell us about current racial politics? What are some of the similarities that we find between Bermuda and the United States in terms of the legacy of race and racism? What are the consequences of chattel slavery and the subsequent systems of control that influence racial ideologies, behaviors, and attitudes that are so deeply embedded in the sociocultural and political DNA of Bermuda, the United States, and other parts of the Americas where chattel slavery existed? As one of the earliest English settlements in North America, the first to import enslaved Africans, a strategic military site in the Atlantic during World War II, a popular American tourist destination yet



Citation: Jeffries, Bayyinah S.. 2022. Race and Racism in Bermuda. *Genealogy* 6: 89. <https://doi.org/10.3390/genealogy6040089>

Received: 22 September 2022

Accepted: 11 November 2022

Published: 21 November 2022

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a territory of the United Kingdom that sits in close proximity to the United States, Bermuda stands as an important site to understand the legacy of white supremacy in North America. This essay focuses on the history of race and racism in Bermuda, from chattel slavery to the early 21st century.

2. Slavery, Racial Dominance, and the Law

Bermuda was not only the first permanent English settlement in the Americas, prior to Virginia, but also the earliest colony to engage in importing enslaved Africans. The first Africans arrived in Bermuda in 1612. The slave population grew by way of both importation and natural increase. By 1670, nearly 3000 Africans lived on the island of Bermuda, compared to the 4000 Whites (Eberle and Schreier 2013, p. 285). As the number of Black people increased, Whites' anxiety about rebellions escalated, and they moved to institute laws that would limit the Black population. For example, in 1674, Bermuda passed one of the first laws prohibiting the importation of Black people (Bernhard 1999, p. 192). Despite the law, the Black population continued to increase, reaching about "47% [of the population] by the 1770s . . . and . . . by the early 1800s . . . blacks outnumber[ed] whites." (Bernhard 1999, p. 285).

Outside of the initial numbers of Black people in Bermuda and their eventual majority status in the population, we know very little about the early life and experiences of these people, such as what African countries they came from, what languages they spoke, the values they shared, or what religious traditions they practiced prior to enslavement. Writings by Mary Prince, a former slave in the Bermuda colony, provide most of what is documented about the lives and community of people of African descent on the island, while other information comes from the records of the Assize (the English court) and writings by White colonists in Bermuda.¹ It is likely that the local culture of Bermuda faired similarly to other parts of the Americas, drawing from diverse African traditions in foods, music, religious practices, and languages.

In terms of the early social and political condition of early Africans on the island, scholars disagree concerning their initial status. Some argue that the early colonists did not perceive, label, or treat Africans as slaves but as indentured servants. These assertions are based on the initial reluctance of colonizers to use the term slave or enact initial laws to govern the interactions between Europeans and Africans. Their hesitation seems most evident in the arrival of the first Africans to Port Comfort, VA, in 1619. Instead of designating them as slaves, scholars argue that they were not referred to as such and subsequently were treated as indentured servants. While the Bermuda colony began mostly with the importation of European indentured servants, as the import of Africans grew, European indentures declined, and Blacks became the major labor force working not only the land but also on the ships throughout the Caribbean. The shift occurred because slavers worried about coalitions between Africans and European indentures. They may also have realized that they may lose their free labor force without making clear distinctions between the indentured and would-be slaves and defining the parameters of slavery. Still, whether Africans were free, enslaved, or indentured, they did not hold the same rights nor share the same privileges as their European counterparts (Bernhard 1999, pp. 39–40). According to Bernhard, "bills of sale and indentures dating from the 1630s show that 'blacks' term of servitude were markedly different from those of white servants." (Bernhard 1999, p. 49). Additionally, "white apprentices and indentured servants had lengths of service ranging from five to ten years, [while] Blacks and Indians had, with a few exceptions, a single length of servitude: 'four score and 19 years.'" (Bernhard 1999, p. 49).

Until 1686, the Somers Island Company controlled Bermuda, and most of its trade centered on the agricultural industry, particularly tobacco. The tobacco produced in Bermuda was not as robust as its Virginia and Maryland counterparts and, therefore, secured very little profit. Commensurate with this inadequacy, plantations in Bermuda never reached the size or production of those found in the other British colonies such as Jamaica, and the largest number of slaves recorded to be owned never surpassed forty for

any one individual. With this lack of scale, Bermuda colonists moved toward maritime work, which became the most important sector of their economy. Despite large plantations being absent from the island, slavery in Bermuda still remained just as harsh, uncertain, and lifelong as on large plantations throughout the Americas.

As mentioned earlier, the very presence of Africans stirred great anxiety in the European population. In turn, this fear led to harsher and more frequent slave codes, laws, and methods of punishment and intimidation as a means to maintain control over slaves and prevent rebellions. Like other parts of the Caribbean and the U.S., Bermuda did not have maroon communities or large numbers of fugitive slaves because of its isolation, although there were some rebellions. In 1656 and again in 1661, some of the enslaved planned unsuccessful revolts (Bernhard 1999, pp. 83–84). Torture, burning, floggings, and death sentences for recaptured runaway slaves were common practices in British colonies. These strict and inhumane responses were unjustly forced on the small free Black population as well, most likely because free Blacks posed a danger to the institution of slavery. Free people were seen as instigators who would encourage rebellion. There were fears of losing free labor and of enslaved people blending in with an increasing free population. Therefore, every effort was taken to discourage and thwart the expansion of a sizable free population. In response, the colony legislature “passed a number of statutes imposing even greater restrictions on . . . free people.” (Watson 1989). For instance, “greater restrictions [were placed] on manumitting slaves . . . ” (Watson 1989). Laws also attempted to limit the commercial activities of free people: “In 1779, an act passed to prevent vending or retailing goods, wares or merchandise by Blacks, Mulattoes, or Mustees . . . [and] also prevented] the sale of goods by lottery, dice, cards, and raffling.” (Packwood 1975, p. 119). Moreover, owners required certificates to participate in the sale of meats, fish, and other food items (Packwood 1975, p. 119). In 1806, Bermuda officials implemented an act to exclude Black people from owning or inheriting land (Packwood 1975, p. 120). These laws and others shaped and refined ideas about race, and race relations in Bermuda as well as other British colonies.

Free Blacks faced similar challenges in the United States. Colonies passed laws that attempted to limit the freedoms of free Black people in terms of work, mobility, political involvement, and in some cases, land ownership. In 1818, Georgia’s legislature passed a number of laws to prohibit free Blacks from purchasing land. Other states implemented similar statutes or enacted challenges to Black land ownership. For free Black people in the United States eligible to purchase land, whites used violence and other means to prevent land acquisition (Copeland 2013, p. 648). Land ownership, then and now, represented a path toward economic independence.

It should be noted that a few measures in Bermuda did provide opportunities for the limited inclusion of Black people. For example, while in other British colonies, children born to Black mothers shared their life sentences, in 1827, Bermuda officials passed a law that allowed both slaves and free Blacks to purchase their children as slaves or to pay for their manumission as a way to “ameliorate the condition of slaves and free persons of colour.” (Kawaley 2004, p. 13). This stipulation may indicate that the long-standing practice of separating Black families may have been less favorable to Whites in Bermuda compared to the United States. The evidence suggests that although not supported by law, slave unions and marriages in Bermuda, like in the United States, were sometimes acknowledged and respected by owners. In Bermuda, officials also made it possible for slaves and free persons to be viewed as “competent witnesses before the court,” although to do so, they had to “produce certificates of good character.” (Kawaley 2004). By contrast, Black people in the United States were never seen as competent witnesses, whether free or enslaved.

Bermuda slave owners urged slaves and, at times, required them to attend church. Further, the enslaved were held to a moral expectation similar to Whites on the island and received punishment for “fornication, adultery and bastardy.” (Bernhard 1999, p. 191). In Bermuda, Black people usually earned their liberation as a result of the execution of a will

upon the death of an owner, as a result of old age, after serving an allotted time period, or after being freed by their parents as a result of the 1827 Act. In no way did these inclinations toward the seemingly humane and just treatment of people of African descent ameliorate the injustice of servitude. English colonies, including Bermuda, shared laws restricting miscegenation, manumission, political involvement, and traditional African religious practices. Most laws derived from colonizers' beliefs about Black people's behaviors, intellect, and morality, or concerns over social interactions between the races, or out of fear that free Blacks would violently lash out against their European oppressors.

In the early 1800s, Bermuda again issued a statute meant to control the behavior of free Blacks, whom they felt were acting outside the confines of expected racial decorum. The statute attempted to "restrayne the insolences of the Negro," restricting the freedom of their movements, denying them the right to carry weapons, and forbidding them the privilege of independent barter . . ." (Craven 1937, p. 362). The Governor of Bermuda issued a decree that made it unlawful for "any such person as to carie and behave themselves mutinous or proudly against his Majestties Subjects." Other pronouncements mandated that any talk of rebellion or act of a revolt would result in trial and execution (Kawaley 2004, p. 13). These laws became more frequent as unease heightened about not only rebellion but also the increase of the free Black population, which remained small (Packwood 1975, p. 180).

Threats of rebellion also led to the increase of laws to control both the enslaved and free populations in the United States. Some schemes sought to remove free Black people from the country entirely. Laws enacted to limit Black people's ability to meet in large groups, openly practice religion, learn to read and write, move freely between the states, marry across racial lines, resist their servitude, and other restrictions were the norm in the U.S.

3. Black Liberation in Bermuda

The abolition of slavery and emancipation of Black people in the British colonies was brought about by a combination of African resistance in both the colonies and in Great Britain itself. Growing public outcry at the brutality of chattel slavery, concerns about the increase in deaths of human cargo, a burgeoning abolitionist movement in Europe capable of applying considerable political pressure, the economic feasibility of a free and enslaved labor force, and later the French and Haitian revolutions all contributed to the emancipation of enslaved peoples outside the United States. As a result, in Britain, the end of slavery came in 1772. The English banned the Atlantic slave trade in 1807, and then, in 1833, they outlawed chattel slavery in all their colonies, although the illegal trade would continue well into the mid-1800s. Slavery in most of the British colonies did not immediately end in 1833. Britain underwent a process that was both immediate and gradual at the same time in that only slaves under the age of six gained immediate liberty. As part of the Slave Abolition Act of 1833, British officials made slaves essentially the property of the state and subsequently forced them into what they called apprenticeships. Instead of granting full liberation, ex-slaves, under the apprentice system, continued to serve their former owners mostly unpaid.

Their tenure as apprentices depended on their designated class during enslavement. For instance, first-class apprentices consisted of those who worked directly for their owners, either in labor associated with agriculture or manufacturing, and the second class included workers generally hired out by owners. Owners of the first- and second-class apprentices planned to release their apprentices (slaves) in 1840. Apprentices assigned to the third class became free from their apprenticeship in 1838. Antigua, Bermuda, and Trinidad did not adopt the apprenticeship mandate, at least not formally. As a result of considerable protest from the newly freed and their allies, the apprenticeship system was officially abolished in the British colonies, though it still became part of the formal education system in the majority of the colonies, including Barbados, Bermuda, and Jamaica. In the end, the British financially compensated owners for their slaves, while ex-slaves received no such recompense for their more than two hundred years of labor.

After the British Slave Abolition Act of 1833, Bermuda officials passed the Emancipation Act, resulting in two constitutional amendments. The First Amendment not only ended slavery but made it unlawful. In the U.S., slavery ended as a result of the Thirteenth Amendment in 1865; however, enslavement was still legal for those convicted of a crime. No such parameter was included in the British act. Bermuda's Second Amendment granted the same rights to Black people that their White counterparts already enjoyed, at least in theory. It also afforded them the right to vote, serve on juries, and take part in the political system as actual "electors and Candidates." (Kawaley 2004, p. 14). However, this second amendment also changed the property qualifications, thereby excluding a great number of newly freed Blacks from participating in the political system or serving on juries. Bermuda's new laws actually contained numerous loopholes, like the property qualification, that would continue to disadvantage Black people for the next one hundred years. In fact, the emancipation of Black people, and subsequent laws supposedly aimed at addressing their unique predicament, did not grant Black people full citizenship. Without property, equal access to the political system, and economic opportunities, Black people in Bermuda remained wholly deprived for many years to come. Though the Act was passed in 1834, it did not go into full effect until August 1838 (Tom Zoellner 2020, p. 250).

In the United States, changes to the constitution allowed for full participation, except for women. The Fourteenth Amendment provided the criteria for citizenship and equal protections, and the Fifteenth Amendment gave Black men the right to vote. Subsequently, states passed Black codes to frustrate the efforts gained during Southern Reconstruction. Following Reconstruction Jim Crow, both de facto and de jure limited the freedoms of Black people in the U.S. and, to some degree, mirrored the inequities Bermudians faced in all levels of society, including housing, education, schools and cemeteries.

4. Post-Emancipation Challenges and Responses

Similar to the U.S., racial capitalism and racism in Bermuda continued to endure after emancipation. While Bermuda's constitutional amendments opened up possibilities for equality, they simultaneously ensured the White minority would remain in power and the majority Black Bermudian population would be socially and politically disenfranchised. Black Bermudians who were hopeful, but uncertain, about what freedom would bring sought to purchase land, exercise political power, earn a wage, and secure respectable work when possible. Black Bermudians tried to avoid the domestic and agricultural work embroiled with slavery but failed because the White minority held sociopolitical and economic power and used their power to confine Blacks to domestic work and other menial jobs. Opportunities to work outside of these fields were generally denied, and dedicated civil rights organizations to help in their transition, outside of a few churches, were initially limited. A number of examples illustrate these inequalities such as segregated schools, beaches, and other public accommodations. In the United States, the above issues in addition to physical violence, such as lynchings, race riots, and medical experimentation and abuse also plagued Black Americans.

When the more than 4000 recently freed Black Bermudians gained their freedom in the 1830s, the government did little to support them as no provisions were made for freedmen to successfully acquire property. The lack of property ownership hampered Black Bermudians through the late nineteenth and most of the twentieth century. According to Eva N. Hodgson, a Bermudian writer and educator, most Black people could not afford to own land which was linked to the economic and political system. She noted, "There were few Negroes indeed who could manage to earn, outright, in one life-time both the land and the house. The white man held the mortgage and more or less literally, owned the black man's 'soul.'" (Hodgson 1988, p. 65). In Bermuda, the ownership of property intertwining with the political process, housing segregation, and limited employment helped keep Black Bermudians landless and powerless. While a few Black people who met the property qualifications successfully took part in the political process, the White minority retained power.

In terms of education, Bermuda never passed any legislation that made it unlawful for Black people to learn how to read and write, as had happened in the United States. Still, most Bermudians in 1833, the year of emancipation, were likely unschooled, given that by the early 20th century, school was compulsory only for seven- to thirteen-year-olds (Christopher 2015). Churches, like the Black Anglican Church in Bermuda, were instrumental in building institutions for the education of young Black youth both before and after emancipation. The first recorded school opened for Black Bermudians in 1811, located in St. George Parish. In 1838, the Bermuda government supported common school education. In 1855, although the Bermuda government built the St. Paul School, which they designed to be integrated, strong opposition by Whites led to its closure within a year. The most successful school, Berkeley Institute, founded in 1897, formally opened to all races, but the actual enrollment was 98% Black. In 1945, Bermuda established the Howard Academy to provide secondary education for Black youth, thereby continuing the policy of maintaining racially segregated education facilities and resources.²

In addition to efforts by the Black Churches, Friendly Societies in Bermuda also played an important role in supporting education and other social service initiatives, particularly in the transition from slavery to freedom.³ The first recorded society in Bermuda was established in 1848, again in St. George's Parish. It was called the Somers Pride of India Lodge #899 (Bradshaw 2012). Friendly societies in Bermuda were similar to U.S. Black mutual aid societies. The Friendly Societies placed strong emphasis on a politic of respectability and self-help initiatives. A politic of respectability encouraged outward attitudes and behaviors that aligned with white expectations of morality. According to Michael Bradshaw, President of the Bermuda Friendly Societies Association in Bermuda, membership in the societies was not exclusively to Black people, though their focus was the advancement of that particular group (Bradshaw 2012). While attentive to self-help, the movement dedicated itself to supporting the poor, orphans, widows, and the physically disabled after emancipation. Friendly societies created "money-lending programs, raised funds to help build and maintain Black schools, advocated for better work conditions, and equal pay." (Jones 2004, p. 90; Bradshaw 2015). They also provided legal representation when necessary and financial support for funerals (Jones 2004, p. 90; also see Bradshaw 2015). Societies assisted in establishing reading and writing groups to promote basic literacy and sought to provide employment to women who were locked out of the Bermudian workforce on account of race, particularly in the medical field (Wood 2016). According to Bradshaw, Friendly Societies served a range of roles that included "organizing and supporting the newly freed masses; acting as a center for socialization and self-help projects; tasked as a 'spokesperson organization' for neglected sectors of the community that was acceptable to the ruling oligarchy; situating itself as a vehicle for 'rapid sophistication and acculturation' of the masses; and, positioning itself as a vehicle to provide and manage the welfare resources for the masses." (Bradshaw 2015). Consequently, Bermuda's Friendly Societies filled a much-needed gap, as they significantly aided in meeting the social, educational, and economic needs of the Black community in Bermuda in the years after emancipation (Bradshaw 2015). Groups like the National Association of Colored Women (NACW) and later the Urban League similarly provided such support for Black communities throughout the United States. NACW members provided social services to those most in need since their founding in 1896. Like Friendly Societies in Bermuda, NACW sought to uplift the Black race, especially women, through self-help initiatives.

5. Reinforcing Racial Hegemony

In the years after emancipation, Bermuda embraced a system of White hegemony that advanced the White minority, while encumbering the Black majority, in almost every stratum of society. Blacks continued to face housing discrimination, experienced poor health care options, and possessed fewer opportunities for employment, or if working, received lower wages and lacked opportunities for advancement. Nearly every institution in Bermuda remained segregated and unequal, even preferring White immigrants over

local Black Bermudians for jobs. In the U.S. Black people also contended with a White immigrant class that eventually enjoyed full citizenship that remained out of their reach.

Racial inequality remained most evident in public services. Black Bermudians lodged complaints with the Race Relations Council to address chronic racial injustice. The Council was established to improve race relations on the island. For instance, in 1966, Mrs. Phillips, a local, lodged a complaint with the Council when she applied for a job as a Night Receptionist. The job announcement specifically indicated the preference for a Bermudian. When she interviewed with the hospital Superintendent, the desire for a Bermudian was again mentioned. Nevertheless, the hospital opted to hire a White expatriate in place of a Bermudian. Mrs. Phillips complained that, like other qualified Black Bermudians, she continued to be passed over for jobs for which she was qualified due to local businesses' bias in favor of White "colonials" (Phillips 1966). Another example of racial slight occurred in the hiring practices of the police force. Bermudian political officials sought to recruit Europeans from the United Kingdom to avoid hiring an island of Black police officers. Recruitment efforts focused on securing labor from the United Kingdom, which resulted in a majority White male expatriate police force, denying the bulk of Black Bermudian men and women entry to law enforcement. Those Black men who were eventually allowed onto the police force remained in the lowest ranks (King 2003, p. 253). It would not be until the 1980s that real change would be seen when Bermuda appointed its first Black Bermudian-born Commissioner of Police. However, the government continued to maintain racial segregation in other civil service jobs (King 2003, p. 253).

In terms of labor, Black Americans faced underemployment or suffered disproportionately from unemployment. The NAACP and Urban League, like Bermuda's Race Relation Council, raised legal challenges to various forms of employment discrimination. The targeting and over-policing of Black bodies remains a major concern in the United States. Historically, Black people remain under-protected and overpoliced; and the lack of representation in police forces throughout the country persists. Countless Black people have died at the hands of police, the warehousing of Black bodies endures, and Black people are disproportionately engaged in the criminal justice system. Calls for more Black police officers, and conversations about redirecting police resources for social service initiatives to combat crime, employment, education and housing issues have been made by Black people and their allies.

Other mechanisms of racial exclusion in Bermuda also persisted. For instance, the Hotel Keeper's Protection Act allowed Whites to turn away "undesirables," generally meaning Black people. The Act permitted business owners to maintain segregated eating facilities, resorts, beaches, and lodgings that catered to American desires for a racially segregated vacation destination. Sports clubs and other social venues followed suit by refusing to serve Black people and other non-Whites. Dignitaries from other countries, like Sir Edwin McDavid, C.M.G., C.B.E, a legislator from the West Indies, the Speaker of the House of Barbados, West Indian journalists, and nine members of the House of Parliament, were all met with racial insults and chronic discrimination while visiting Bermuda from the 1940s to the 1960s (Hodgson 1988, pp. 87–88; Brown 2011, p. 50).

6. Confronting Racial Tyranny

In response to intransigent racial inequality, the Association for Bermudian Affairs and, later, Bermuda's Race Relations Committee were established. The Association, mostly a Black middle-class group with one White member, was formed in the 1940s to address the racial segregation practices of public spaces and to address restrictions on voting (Brown 2011, p. 51). According to Walter Brown, a Bermudian professor of history and politics, the Association found little success in its efforts to desegregate public facilities . . . because it lacked the skills to mobilize the majority of Bermudians, particularly "the black workers." (Brown 2011, p. 52). In 1953, the Colonial Parliament appointed a committee to address racial issues. This group, mostly White politicians, failed to enact a single policy that ushered a change for Black people or a shift concerning race relations. The Race Relations

Advisory Council, made up of community members instead of politicians, seemed a little more successful. They sought to study the racial climate of Bermuda, investigate, collect data, and validate if discrimination claims were valid, and made recommendations to remedy the problems. In its basic philosophy, the Council established itself as a Christian community whose goals included making Bermuda “the model to the world in the matters of human relations.” They hoped to create a place where “every Bermudian boy or girl of any race will have good reason to feel that because he or she is a Bermudian, there is no position to which he or she cannot aspire.” ([Race Relations Advisory Council 1968e](#)).

The Council laid out its plan to secure additional power in three areas from the government. First, it sought to increase its authority over investigations concerning racial discrimination. Some of the Council wanted to be able to subpoena witnesses as part of the investigation process. Unfortunately, the majority of the council voted this idea down, citing that the witnesses brought before the council might feel not only “resentful and non-cooperative” but the use of subpoenas might give the Council the “appearance of a judicial body, which the committee felt would be undesirable” and undermine its work ([Race Relations Advisory Council 1968a](#)). Members found more agreement in the second area: conciliation. The Council already obtained authority to address grievances about racial discrimination but “were of the opinion that greater conciliatory powers could only be provided under law and envisaged anti-discrimination laws in housing and employment, which would allow for the settlement of disputes by a conciliation board,” such as the Race Relations Council ([Race Relations Advisory Council 1968c](#)). The area of Prosecution was the last area the Council hoped to gain some authority. The Council wanted to bring actual cases to the Courts instead of simply making recommendations on behalf of the injured parties. The Council needed to be careful in selecting which cases it would encourage to move forward in the Courts, fearing exacerbating race relations or perpetuating racial stereotypes. Cases less likely to win favor in the courts were simply addressed by sending letters and reprimands to local businesses and other stakeholders on behalf of the complainants.” ([Race Relations Advisory Council 1968d](#)).

The Race Relations Council managed a number of complaints. Although historian Quinto Swan argues the committee existed as “a government tool and did nothing to change the underlying causes of racism and segregation [on] the island—white economic and social power,” the Council did successfully seek remedies for individual cases, proposed a number of legislative changes, and made considerable recommendations around housing, employment, and other social issues ([Swan 2004](#), p. 36). In an effort to better define itself and also to be an actual agent of change for the improvement of race relations on the island, the Council reached out to the United States for direction on at least one occasion. In a letter to the Governor of Delaware, the Council asked for information on how a law on housing and employment discrimination was being enforced, the number of complaints received as a result of the law, and how those complaints were being handled. They also asked if a copy of the actual Delaware Code, which “defined the duties and powers of the State Human Rights Commission,” could be sent to them. The Council hoped that, with some direction, they would be able to make a strong proposal to introduce fair housing legislation in Bermuda ([Race Relations Advisory Council 1968b](#)). The Governor’s office complied, sending the Council the Bi-Annual Reports from the State Human Relations Commission ([Race Relations Advisory Council 1968b](#)). At least indirectly, the Race Relations Council’s efforts led to the Race Relations Act of 1965, 1968, and the Race Relations Council Act of 1970 ([Race Relations Board 1968](#)).

The most common grievances about racism handled by the Council involved issues of employment, education, and the refusal of services in places like hotels, restaurants, and beauty salons ([Statistician, Colonial Secretary Office 1968](#)). The Council urged government officials to do more to help recruit Black Bermudians for jobs and also to base hiring selection on merit, not race. The Council also requested that steps be taken to maintain records on Bermudians studying and working abroad to recruit those qualified workers to fill positions on the island instead of seeking White expatriates. They also recommended

that a joint “skilled labor pool by business and government” be established that “would give opportunities of advancement to Bermudians” in skilled manpower areas ([Race Relations Advisory Council 1967](#)). Though the impact the Council actually made on the racial climate and the material condition of Black Bermudians between its founding in 1953 and its decline in the late 1970s is unclear, it clearly sought to help solve extensive racial problems in Bermuda and to make the island a “model of human relations”.

7. From Civil Rights to Black Power

With the rise in agitation in the United States and calls for equal rights on the island, the influx of organizations into Bermuda, like the Universal Negro Improvement Association (U.N.I.A.), helped illuminate the island’s racial climate during the early twentieth century ([Swan 2009](#), pp. 6–7). The Bermuda U.N.I.A., established in 1920, “thrived under the leadership of Antigua Reverends Hilton Tobitt and E.B. Grant and Barbadian George Morris . . . [who] were logically drawn to Garvey’s calls for self-determination.” ([Swan 2004](#), p. 13). “The Bermuda Division organized parades, lectures, rallies, and marches and flourished through its Juvenile Divisions, African Legions, Black Cross Nurses, and Silver Cross Band.” ([Swan 2004](#), p. 13). Moreover, the *Bermuda Recorder* newspaper was formed by A.B. Place and other Garveyites ([Swan 2004](#), p. 14). The *Bermuda Recorder*, like other twentieth-century Black newspapers, provided a much-needed lens to inform, view, critique, and address racial events and progress in Bermuda. Articles in the paper covered both local and international news as well as reported on school segregation, policing, political disenfranchisement, issues of employment, and racial discrimination in general.⁴

In terms of efforts to address continued racism, Bermudians organized a 1959 boycott of a popular theater house that resembled the 1955 Montgomery, Alabama, Bus Boycott in the United States. Like the Montgomery boycott, the Bermuda demonstration or Theater boycott challenged segregation in public facilities. According to Bermudian writer Eva Hodgson, students who had been politicized from universities abroad (mainly in the U.S.) formed the “Progressive Group,” and, through anonymous means, demanded the end to Jim Crow-like policies ([Hodgson 1989](#), pp. 15–16; [Protesting Group Arrested 1959](#)). Though the Progressive Group succeeded in integrating the theater and a few other public institutions, such as beaches, restaurants, and hotels, the general treatment of Black Bermudians and the extension of full equality remained out of reach. Just six years after the playhouse boycott, in a 1966 letter to the Race Relations Committee, a Mrs. Miriam Trott complained about her treatment at the Princess Hotel Beauty Salon, which refused to extend services to her because of her race. She expressed how she felt shamed and humiliated and contacted the Council in hopes of preventing any “other young or old lady to have to experience this type of embarrassment.” ([Trott 1966a](#)). In yet another letter from Mrs. Trott, she objected to Betty’s Beauty Salon’s refusal to do her hair during normal business hours. She complained that upon making a call to the salon, she was told “they could do her hair there but that it would have to be after hours . . . [she goes on to say about the owner that] she could not do my hair during business hours as it would be quite embarrassing to me, her customers and herself. But, if I wanted to come after hours she was sure that they could do a very good job with my hair.” ([Trott 1966b](#)).

The Council received similar letters from other Bermudians concerning the refusal of White local beauty salons to service Black people due to “not being qualified to handle the customer’s hair.” In response to these complaints to the Council, a memorandum dated September 1966 from a committee of “white beauty salon owners” claimed the accusations of racial discrimination remained unfounded. Instead, their decision not to service “coloured” people was, in their estimation, “not a racial issue, but entirely a technical one.” They go on to make four additional rationalizations as to why service to “coloured” Bermudians was not possible or desirable:

1. A vast majority of the “coloured” people in Bermuda have hair texture which requires special training, supplies, and equipment to style satisfactorily. The “white” hairdressers have not had this training, nor do they have the necessary supplies and

- equipment to do a meritorious job on this type of hair. No hairdresser who takes pride in his or her skill and artistry wants to do an unworthy job on a client's hair. Nor do we feel that there is any sound reason why they should try.
2. Regarding the minority of "coloured" people who have fine hair. It is very difficult to accept these and turn down appointments for their relatives and friends. If appointments are accepted and times reserved and the operator finds that he or she is not qualified to handle the customer's hair, much valuable time is lost, and the business suffers financially.
 3. As the hairdressing salons are rendering a very personal service, we feel that there is only disadvantage in changing the present policy. The fact that we are right legally is by no means the only reason that we are of this opinion. We sincerely feel that more damage would result to the personal relationships of the two races in Bermuda, if the "white" hairdressers accepted "coloured" clients, and inevitably did their hair in an unsatisfactory manner.
 4. As there are more than three times as many registered "coloured" hairdressing salons as there are "white" we feel that there should be no dissatisfaction or complaints of inconvenience as a result of our policy. ([Committee of White Beauty Salon Owners 1966](#)).

These White business owners continued to deny Black civil rights, and other institutions also challenged the progressive efforts: the government's ban of Garvey's *Negro World* and later the Nation of Islam's *Muhammad Speaks* newspaper; attempts to block establishing the Nation of Islam school under the School Act of 1926; the 1965 BELCO riots—a strike against the Bermuda Electric Light company that turned violent between strikers and police; and other expressions of Black agency as full citizens.⁵ According to [Hodgson \(1988\)](#), "nothing that hinted of a challenge or inspiration to the Negro mind was to be permitted or encouraged." ([Hodgson 1988](#), pp. 73–74). Any cause for Black people to stand up was interpreted as subversive and inciting racial tensions. Moreover, Bermudian racists used this ideology to silence any detraction from the racial status quo. In some ways, [Hodgson \(1988\)](#) claimed Bermudian racism, though not as physically dangerous as the U.S. version, stayed just as "hypocritical, more deceptive, and equally frustrating." ([Hodgson 1988](#), p. 76). Bermuda officials also labeled Blacks who voiced concerns about race relations as undesirable individuals who incite racial strife. As a result, they were either exiled from the island or blackballed.

Black people in the United States faced similar circumstances. Those associated with organizations like the NAACP or other civil rights groups found their affiliation could lead to their names being placed in local newspapers, loss of employment, business and home mortgages, and actual or the threat of physical violence. Many people also found themselves cast as communists Un-American, and under surveillance by government forces.

In terms of Black nationalism beyond Garvey, the Black Power conference in Bermuda deserves some attention ([Quinn 2014](#), p. 42). The July 1969 conference highlighted the major issues of Black people throughout the African Diaspora, particularly self-determination, education, lack of political agency, Black unity, and economic survival. According to the Special Branch Report of the Bermuda government, the reasons for holding the conference in Bermuda was "to polarize racial sentiment" at a local level and internationally to "coalesce Caribbean BP with other regional movements."⁶ As conference chair, Pauulu Kamarakafego "helped set the tone" and played a major role in planning for the Black Power Conference, while the Progressive Labour Party (PLP) Youth Wing was the major organizing body behind the event ([Swan 2009](#), pp. 36, 77–78). Education remained an especially important topic. Bermuda high schools were reserved for the wealthy, and the growing Black Power groups [were] demanding equal education and Black political independence for the Black majority ([Jeffries 2014](#), p. 148). Hodgson adds:

Black and white Bermudians often had no concept about how the other lived, unless they were Blacks working as maids or handymen in white kitchens and grounds. Education was totally segregated and like South Africa the funding

reflected the policy. There were four secondary schools for Whites funded by a government grant for \$4449 while there was a secondary school for Blacks funded with a government grant of \$975.00. In the '50's there were 616 white children of secondary school age (13 to 15) and 1883 Black children of secondary school age. (Hodgson 1989, p. 16)

Conference workshops discussed Black culture and history, the role of the Black Church, capitalism, police brutality, and media bias about negative depictions and reporting about Black people (Swan 2009, pp. 80–83). The Black Power Conference highlighted education as one of the most vital matters concerning the actualization of self-determination for Black people in the mid-twentieth century throughout the African Diaspora. The fact that the Black Power Conference in Bermuda took place amid “government hostility,” as stressed in official reports, and after the passing of Bermuda’s 1968 Race Relations Act, further exemplifies not only the persistent state of race relations as strained and menacing, but also the continued marginalization and vilification of Black people, particularly Black activists interested in self-determination, both in and outside Bermuda.

The Black liberation struggle in Bermuda took many forms. Bermudians were not only drawn to peaceful protest strategies like boycotts and economic sanctions, as boycott tactics deployed in the desegregation of the Bermuda Theater, but also the more radical agendas of organizations such as the Nation of Islam, Black Beret Cadre, and the Black Panther Party. “The year that the Nation of Islam actually came to Bermuda is still unclear; some members place it as early as 1960, while others as late as 1966.” (Jeffries 2014, p. 146). Black Bermudian men who worked on the docks and ships in Bermuda and who frequented the U.S. Atlantic Seaboard were exposed to the strong and growing African American Muslim communities, particularly New York and New Jersey (Jeffries 2014, p. 146). The Bermudian men attended Temple meetings in the United States and purchased and brought copies of the Nation’s newspaper, *Muhammad Speaks*, back to the island before it was eventually banned by Bermuda officials (Jeffries 2014, p. 146). Many found the message in the newspaper appealing as it rang true for most of them, given the current socio-political conditions in Bermuda (Jeffries 2014, p. 146). In addition, Bermudians applied the message of economic independence and self-help by operating Black Muslim businesses on the island. By eventually opening a school, Black Muslims managed to maintain a small level of control over their children’s education.

The Black Beret Cadre, a local Black nationalist-leaning group, also pursued an agenda committed to Black self-determination in Bermuda. As part of their manifesto, they “demanded the government initiate appropriate measures to guarantee that black people have land made available to them with a financial obligation in accord with their income . . . adequate housing for blacks and the eradication of sub-standard homes which existed in some black areas . . . and a revamped education system which exposed the ‘decadence of [a] white racist society and the evils of colonialism.’” (As quoted in Brown 2011, p. 137). According to Brown, a Bermudian scholar, the Black Beret Cadre was short-lived and never able to “create a national movement.” Brown indicated that, though ultimately unsuccessful, the Cadre provided an important springboard for the recognition, albeit cursory, of Black civil rights in Bermuda (Brown 2011, p. 138). While the Black Panther Party opened no official branch in Bermuda, their influence remained in not only the articulation and work of the Black Berets Cadre but also the cultural work of Bermuda’s Malcolm X Black Liberation School (Harvey 1971b; Chief Secretary’s Office 1971). The Liberation school, like Black Panther programs and Nation of Islam schools in the United States, were targeted by government officials and blamed for the continuation of racial tensions on the island. In several intelligence memos, it was suggested that parents of students enrolled in the school be reminded by Police Juvenile Liaison (likely as a means of intimidating Black parents) that by “allowing [their children to attend the school] . . . they [were] exposing them to the teaching of racial hatred and hatred of established authority, e.g., the [Bermuda] police force, government etc.” (Duckett 1971; Wynne 1971).

Founded in 1969, the Liberation school served a little more than seventy-six children between the ages of 8 and 12 (Harvey 1971a). Founders of the school wanted to “help Black children receive an education that [gave] them a full and true aspect of their place in society, the past, present and future.”⁷ Though the school closed several times between 1969 and 1971, the very existence of the school seemed to daunt Bermuda’s government officials, that Black people interested in these kinds of self-determination initiatives sought to undermine existing powers. In a meeting on 12 October 1971, officials stressed that the “school had started up again under Miss Jeanna Knight and that consideration must now be given for some direct action towards putting an end to it.”⁸ Based on the correspondence between police, the Race Relations Council, and other interested government parties, the school posed a viable threat to the status quo given that they educated young people “about the evils of the colonialist system and [familiarized] them with revolutionary principles”.⁹

The Nation of Islam, Black Beret Cadre, and elements of the Black Panther Party program and ideologies provided an important medium for action and a vehicle for self-determination. These groups attracted Black people who lacked real opportunities for sociopolitical advancement. For instance, Bermudian women found themselves confined mostly to domestic work prior to the 1960s, and Black males continued to work mostly in-service jobs or experienced high rates of unemployment. These organizations provided an important assessment and critique of the White minority’s role in maintaining repressive conditions for the majority Black population. Though Black Bermudians still outnumbered Whites well into the twentieth century, “there was total segregation and separation in churches and places of entertainment,” not to mention unequal pay (Hodgson 1989, p. 17). Major concerns consisted of police brutality, educational domination by Whites, a lack of self-knowledge and history of the Black Bermudian experience and contribution to the wider society, along with long-standing policies of racial discrimination. These issues prompted some Bermudians to readily embrace Black Nationalists’ agendas, from the Garvey movement to the Nation of Islam, for self-improvement, black entrepreneurship, and political and educational autonomy (Jeffries 2014, pp. 199–200).

In 1968, a two-day riot illustrated the serious landscape of race relations. In response, the Bermuda government convened a commission to investigate. The investigation produced “The Wooding Report”, which outlined issues related to what some viewed as the root causes of the unrest. The introduction of the report included both an acceptance and denial that racism remained a central problem in Bermuda. It states, “The Government especially welcomes the Commission’s conclusion that racial division, once deep and traditional, [had] been arrested” The report goes on to say: “To this end the Government intends to take early steps to consolidate and strengthen existing legislation in the field of race relations so to provide a charter for the promotion of integration in Bermuda and to make incitement to racial hatred a criminal offence.”¹⁰ The report made considerable reference to external forces and insinuated much of the racial discord on the island, at least from the view of political officials, originated from outside agitators like the Black Panther Party, Nation of Islam, and other Black Nationalists-leaning groups from the United States.

Alas, the report conveniently ignores charges of police brutality and fails to cover questions about education in terms of funding and teacher training, employment, drug laws, and the juvenile justice system. Like many reports of this type, full accountability and total confrontation of issues seemed evaded, and actual remedies remained evidently impractical and elusive (CURB n.d.).

8. The Post-Civil Rights–Black Power Climate

From the late 1950s to the 1970s, Bermuda remained plagued by racial conflict while Black people consistently challenged the status quo. Still, the demands by Black people for full equality, through boycotts, strikes, and other kinds of protests, resulted in only a few concessions by the White minority and little change in structural racism. Two parties emerged during the late 1960s in Bermuda: the mostly Black Progressive Labor Party (PLP) and the United Bermuda Party (UBP). The PLP not only supported calls for Black Power

but also pushed for complete independence from Britain. Unfortunately, because of its more radical stance, the PLP never came to power in Bermuda until the 1990s. Instead, the more conservative UBP led by Sir Edward Trenton Richard, the first Black Premier under Bermuda's new constitution, came to power in the 1970s. Accordingly, Richard, likely impacted by calls for Black Power on the island, in the U.S., and in other parts of the Caribbean, took a stand against racism while keeping most changes to mechanisms of power greatly unaffected. Though Richards was Black, the UBP continued to support the financial rule of the White minority. The United Bermuda Party would maintain control of the island for over thirty-five years (Smith 1999). Thus, by the 1980s, racial inequality prevailed, although most legal barriers had been removed. De facto segregation endured in the areas of education, housing, and political engagement. In particular, schools remained segregated due to Bermuda's own version of White flight. Much like the United States, when public schools in Bermuda attempted to desegregate, Whites sent their children to private schools. The impact of White flight on the island resulted in only 12% of whites attending public high school compared to 70% of Blacks (Darrell 1983, p. 113). Politically, Blacks gained some ground, holding important offices like premiership as well as cabinet positions. The political arena became more representative of the majority population, but little changed for the masses of Black people. Participation in the political process and more black faces in the government did not result in equality for all. Black Bermudians realized that elected politicians sought to only find a place within the existing system and not to actually transform it. When the Bermuda United Party came to power in the early 1970s, many saw them as too conservative to their Progressive Party counterparts, and as a result Bermudians found that little changed. Even with a Black Premier in place, the majority retained economic power, segregation in schools persisted, and other socioeconomic opportunities remained closed to most Black Bermudians.

Moreover, White expatriates continued to hold a privileged position, acquired higher wages, obtained more opportunities for work, business ownership, better healthcare, and experienced more economic advancement than Black Bermudians (Hodgson 1988, pp. 258–59). By the late 1980s, Hodgson indicated that the racial wealth gap in Bermuda had become a mammoth and that 17 percent of the population, who were white, “owned and controlled 92 percent of Bermuda’s wealth, and had imported 22 percent of the population to manage it; while, 56 percent of the population [who are Black] had available to them only 8 percent of the wealth.” (Hodgson 1988, p. 259).

In 1998, the Citizens Uprooting Racism in Bermuda (CURB), an interracial group dedicated to rooting out the remnants of racial inequality and injustice on the island, was founded. CURB wanted to address the persistence of racism at the structural level. Similar to the early Association for Bermudian Affairs and the Race Relations Council of Bermuda, CURB proposed initiatives to officials to address racial concerns and help eradicate racism at the institutional level, particularly in the government and criminal justice system. CURB provides lectures, workshops, and training around structural racism, mainly in education and policing. Though CURB became dormant after its initial founding, the concerned citizens revived the group in 2005. According to its bylaws, the committee consists of fifteen members. Its vision, as outlined in the organization’s brochure, declares that they are striving to “address the injustices and the impact of racism, past and present [and] proactively reinforce policies and practices that produce equitable power, opportunities and outcomes for all.” (CURB n.d.). Premier Ewart Brown of Bermuda proposed “The Big Conversation” in an effort to “dismantle white supremacy in Bermuda.”¹¹ In 2012, CURB sponsored a two-day conference focused on social justice, particularly issues around the criminalization and mass incarceration of young Black Bermudians. Bermuda is facing a similar problem as its U.S. counterpart in relation to the warehousing of young Black men, as discussed in Dr. Alexander’s book *The New Jim Crow*.

Hence, the introduction of people of African descent into Bermuda was brought about through the practice of chattel slavery, a direct result of the European practice of colonialism and imperialism. While chattel slavery was abolished, Whites had no intention of abolishing

the underlying destructive ideologies that had accompanied the system. Chattel slavery supplied the foundation for the de facto racial caste system supported by violence and oppression. Given this inception, there is no surprise that the Black population in Bermuda and the United States continues to face problems with education, mass incarceration, drugs, wealth disparities, housing, and unemployment. By 2009 Black Bermudian incomes trailed Whites median gross annual income by over \$20,000 “for Black and White workers in establishments with 10 or more employees.” In addition, the highest-paid jobs continued to be held by White Bermudians and non-Bermudians (Miller and Nadash 2010, p. 77). In addition, that same year, the president of Atlantic Philanthropies stated that “structural racism” persists in Bermuda (Miller and Nadash 2010, pp. 77–78).

In 2020, the unemployment for Whites in the United States averaged 7.3 percent while the jobless rate for Black people stood at 11.4 percent. In terms of national earnings, average weekly earnings for Whites \$1,046.52 and for Black Americans \$791.02 (Department of Labor, 2020).

In 2011, CURB recommended that Affirmative Action be considered to deal with wealth disparity between Blacks and Whites. The Affirmative Action initiative is especially needed to address economic inequity in Bermuda. “Inheritance tax, economic empowerment legislation for Black-owned businesses and payroll tax, and social insurance contributions linked to income, should also be considered, the group suggests.” (Bermuda Sun 2011). CURB continues to address racial discrimination through restorative justice and structural racism workshops. While the greatest beneficiaries of Affirmative Action have been White women in the United States, Affirmative Action is perceived as a tool used to advantage Black people at the expense of Whites. Affirmative Action in the U.S. remains under attack.

In 2020, David Burt, the Premier of Bermuda, addressed the issue of “institutional racism in Bermuda and said that further initiatives will be soon made by the Government to ‘build a more equitable society’” the same year Bermuda formed a Black Lives Matter chapter to address persistent issues of racial discrimination on the island. In the aftermath of the murder of George Floyd in the United States, BLM in Bermuda organized several marches as well as boycotts. Leaders targeted local supermarkets. Some of the online comments in response to their efforts mark the continued struggle in Bermuda, saying, “Yes, it is amazing that we are still standing. It is not without having to fight for every right, however. Yes, we have rights but historically and to this day, there are people who would work very hard, most of the time very covertly these days to deny those rights. They live amongst us. If not, there would have been no need for a march on Sunday.” The Black Lives Matter group wrote “no matter how hard we work, how educated we are, or what school we attend, attaining a prosperous life seems out of reach for most”. In addition, “the high cost of living in Bermuda, the high cost of food and economic disparity were listed as leading factors driving many Bermudians to leave to pursue greener pastures overseas. The group also stated that the high cost of fresh produce made it a “luxury” for Black Bermudians.” Lastly, the group: “While our ancestors built a foundation upon which we can live a life free of racial violence, locally we face a different, but equally significant threat—systemic racism. This has led to many Black Bermudians living as second class citizens in the only home they know. What is abundantly clear is that the time for change is now.” (Bermuda Real 2020).

The hashtag #BeingBlackInBermuda also started in June 2020 provided a platform for Bermudians to document and share stories of racism and its impact on their lives on the island. Contributors tweeted these sentiments:

BeingBlackInBermuda is “seeing white non med interns being allowed to shadow doctors after those same doctors told you they are too busy. Then they place you in the lab for the summer.” James Junior adds, it “is watching the traffic court judge treat white middle aged men with respect while acting condescending/rude towards everyone else.” Other voices echoed similar concerns like being Black in Bermuda “is being told not to express your opinion because you may not

get a job or promotion,” or being told in 1994 by the foreign chair of the math department that [you are] not qualified enough when [you just] finished [your] master’s degree in mathematics education, “ or slavery wasn’t so bad here and could have been worse,” and finally, “when you interview for a job and they are surprised that you are black . . . but sir you’re the foreigner in my country.” (#BeingBlackinBermuda 2020)

Black Lives Matter in the United States became a leading voice in the aftermath of the 2014 murders of Michael Brown in Ferguson, Missouri and Eric Garner’s in Staten Island, New York. Black Lives Matter groups, alongside local organizers like Make the Road New York, the Michael Brown Foundation, churches such as New York’s Abyssinian Baptist Church, other grassroots efforts, and national organization such as the NAACP continue to raise their voices about the injustices faced by Black Americans around policing, healthcare, education, housing, displacement, labor, and land acquisition in the United States.

More research needs to be conducted exploring comparative histories of the Black experience coming out of chattel slavery and its contemporary impact on people of African descent and race relations throughout the African Diaspora, with hopes of exploring, documenting, and excavating history and current solutions to racial conflict and persistent racial tyranny and imperialism. Social media offers an opportunity to collect comparative narratives across the African Diaspora as well as opportunities for strategies and solutions to confront persistent racial discrimination. Although the U.S. is often centered concerning conversations around race and racism, the legacy of racism and structural and institutional exploitation and violence is a global phenomenon that continues to reverberate wherever chattel slavery existed.

Funding: This research received no external funding.

Conflicts of Interest: The author declares no conflict of interest.

Notes

- 1 The Bermuda Archive, Karla Ingemann, and Lovell Harmon were instrumental in the completion of this work. (Prince 2012, p. 11). Bermuda only has a few entries in the Transatlantic Slave Trade Database at slavevoyages.org (accessed on 9 November 2022). The database provides information regarding the voyages of the Trans-Atlantic slave trade.
- 2 See (Tucker 1933); “Assemblymen Warned They Are treading On Dangerous Ground In Restricting Franchise 1951,” The Bermuda Recorder, Hamilton, Bermuda Archives, 3 February 1951.
- 3 Michael Bradshaw, President of Bermuda Friendly Societies Association; Officer and Member of Princess Royal Union Lodge #135 of the Independent Order of Good Samaritans and Daughters of Samaria, “The Bermuda Friendly Society Story: Unique Dialogues in Heritage and Culture Tourism Across the Trans-Atlantic World,” Paper Presentation in Liverpool, England, 2015 (Bradshaw 2015). Friendly Societies were mutual aid organizations and should not be confused with the Society of Friends, who were active in educational efforts in the United States.
- 4 *Bermuda Recorder* published from 1925–1975.
- 5 Internal Cabinet Memo “Muhammad’s Temple of Islam–‘Black Muslims’.” Response to Minister Byron Phillips request for University of Muhammad School in Bermuda, August 29, 1974. Bermuda Archives, Hamilton Bermuda.
- 6 Police Headquarters Summary of Special Branch, Bermuda Report on Black Power Conference held in Bermuda from 10 to 15, July, 1969. Bermuda Archives, Hamilton, Bermuda.
- 7 Confidential Memos “Black Power and Malcolm X Liberation School.” Appendix A. March 4, 1971. Bermuda Archives, Hamilton, Bermuda.
- 8 Notes of a Meeting at Government House, October 12, 1971. “Malcolm X Liberation School,” Bermuda Archives, Hamilton, Bermuda.
- 9 Confidential Memo “Black Power and Malcolm X Liberation School.” March 4, 1971. Bermuda Archives, Hamilton, Bermuda.
- 10 Report of Commission and Statement by Government of Bermuda, “Bermuda Civil Disorders 1968,” *Wooding Report*, Bermuda Archives, Hamilton, Bermuda.
- 11 Theodore Francis. Bermuda Race Relations Initiative The Big Conversation Final Report 2008. https://www.academia.edu/40894797/Bermuda_Race_Relations_Initiative_The_Big_Conversation_Final_Report_2008 (accessed on 19 September 2022).

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