Police brutality has become a common topic among people and scholars over time. It didn't just happen suddenly. It's an issue that's been around for a long time where police officers use unnecessary or extreme force. We need to understand the history of police brutality and how it has evolved in order to truly get the issue's start, its changing factors, and its current effect on society. Studying this issue is key because it reveals the different parts of brutality that often go unnoticed or unreported. Looking at it from a historical viewpoint helps us critique police behavior patterns and assess if our efforts to stop this behavior are working. Racism and social biases are real problems in society and are seen in police institutions.

The Evolution of Policing and Its Correlation with Brutality

Policing in America has a complex origin, much of which traces back to the enforcement of laws supporting slavery, known as "slave patrols." These patrols were tasked with catching runaway slaves and preventing slave revolts. This brutal system evolved over time into a more organized institution, but traces of its roots can still be observed in negative interactions between police and minority communities.

In the 1960s and '70s, police brutality against activists in the Civil Rights and anti-Vietnam War movements sparked widespread public outrage. Despite these instances, policing has progressively evolved, with changes like community policing and better training. The historical connection between enforcement and brutality still remains a topic of debate, reflected in the calls for police reform today.

The Historical Progression of Policing Practices

When policing first started, it was a community effort, with local volunteers helping to enforce the law. without strict rules and control measures, this system created inconsistencies and abuses, paving the way for future police brutality. Start being responsible! When official police forces were formed in the 19th century, police brutality cases increased due to strict power structures, lack of accountability, and widespread discrimination. Remarkably, in 20th-century America, with Jim Crow laws and civil rights struggles, police brutality against minorities increased.

Understanding the Relationship between Policing and Instances of Brutality

The U.S. formed its police based on several examples, such as slave patrols and night watches. These groups, known for extreme violence, painted police as oppressive, especially among minority groups. Over time, the police shifted to focus more on crime fighting, but their brutal reputation stuck. New technologies, such as body cameras, and the rise of social media have put police misconduct under the public lens. Even though many cops really do strive to protect and serve, any occurrence of police misconduct greatly fuels the image of police brutality.

Major Incidents of Police Brutality throughout History

It has happened many times throughout history. Study its history and how it has evolved to understand the important events that have shaped people's views and led to changes in society. In the 1960s, during the Civil Rights Movement, police brutality was evident. Take, for example, the Bloody Sunday incident in 1965. Here, the police hurt peaceful protestors severely with unnecessary force. Fast forward to the 1992 Los Angeles Riots. Four police officers beat Rodney King, a Black man, brutally but were not punished. This caused a big riot.

It also brought up discussions about police being unfair and abusive towards people of certain races. More recently, in 2014 and onwards, Michael Brown, Eric Garner, Tamir Rice, Freddie Gray, and George Floyd lost their lives due to unnecessary police violence, sparking protests all over. These incidents once again brought attention to the issue of racially charged police brutalities. The history of police brutality shows that it is often rooted in bias and stereotypes, specifically racial ones. We've had to face the big problems in our police system as a result.

Racial Disparity: The Role of Race in Police Brutality

Police forces, since they were first set up, have often unfairly treated people of color, especially African Americans, with open prejudice and violence. Recognize that past practices of slavery and segregation are now reflected in a criminal justice system that unfairly targets racial minorities. In the mid-1900s, the civil rights movement confronted racism directly, with many instances of unfair police violence against peaceful protesters. This time period showed the power struggle between the police forces, who are given legal power, and racial minorities fighting for equal rights.

Today, racial inequality in police violence remains, despite legal improvements towards racial equality. Research indicates that African Americans are more frequently stopped by police, searched during these stops, and even subjected to force. The killing of unarmed Black people by police officers in recent years has caused widespread protest and movements like 'Black Lives Matter.'.

Systemic Changes and Their Effects on Police Brutality

Systemic changes mean changes to the basic or fundamental parts of a system over time. When we talk about police violence, systemic changes are about how people's opinions, laws, and institutional rules change to affect how the police work. Historically, policing in America started with slave patrols and has had several changes, both good and bad. In the late 1800s and early 1900s, politics led to corruption and violence within the police, who were often used to enforce unfair laws and control society.

In the 1960s, the Civil Rights movement started a big push for changes to stop police violence. People started to see police injustices and demand changes. Laws like the Civil Rights Act were created, and organizations like the Police Foundation were set up to regulate how police behave. But in the late 1900s, policies like the "War on Drugs" and "Three Strikes" brought back tough policing, especially towards minority communities. The result was more biased and violent behavior from police. In the 2000s, the Black Lives Matter movement has caused another big shift in changing police violence.

My Final Perspective

It goes beyond race and social class. This issue severely damages the community by causing fear, anger, and distrust towards the police. We must study this history to properly address the problem. Policymakers, police agencies, and the public need to work together to tackle it effectively. It's essential to improve transparency, boost community-based policing, and drive stricter actions against police misconduct. This change can help to fight police brutality. We urgently need to replace divisions with togetherness, bias with understanding, and denial with acceptance.