

A Semiotic Analysis of Symbolism Used in Social Media Protest Images: A Comparative Analysis of #BLM and #EndSARS

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ABSTRACT

The study examines images used shared by protesters against police abuse on Twitter. Two Twitter campaigns are specifically chosen for this purpose; Black Lives Matter which originated in the United States of America in 2013 and EndSARS which originated in Nigeria in 2017. Although both campaigns have distinct qualities, they are unified by their singular purpose for human rights which are alleged to be violated by the police departments of the respective nations. With SNSs, activists are able to converge and express dissatisfaction with conditions and even feel empowered to make collective plans as well as take collective action. Such collective action is evident in both BLM and EndSARS campaigns where protesters post/share and reshare images the hashtags that have been created for the campaigns on Twitter. As all media text communicate meaning, the use of images in Twitter protests therefore becomes significant for media scholars who are investigating symbolic interaction of protesters and society at large. This investigation therefore becomes a semiotic action. The subject of semiotics which is dedicated to understanding how we perceive things.

The study therefore elicits and describes the similarities between BLM and EndSARS by asking three questions; What are the denotative similarities between images shared on Twitter in the BLM and EndSARS protests between 25 May 2020 and 31 October 2020? What are the similarities in physiognomic attributes in images shared in the BLM and EndSARS hashtags between 25 May 2020 and 31 October 2020? What are the similarities in icon, index and symbols between images shared in the BLM and EndSARS hashtags between 25 May 2020 and 31 October 2020? Data for the study

was manually retrieved from the BLM and EndSARS hashtags on Twitter and the visual attributes of each image collected for the study was assessed individually.

The study concludes that protest-related images communicate meaning to consumers of media images in ways that can influence their reaction to the protest or social cause. This is because of the established fact that people are drawn to images in order to be adequately informed about important issues.

Keywords: Semiotics, Protests, SNSs, Black Lives Matter, EndSARs.

ÖZ

Çalışma, Twitter'da polisin istismarına karşı protestocular tarafından paylaşılan görüntüleri inceliyor. Bu amaçla iki Twitter kampanyası özel olarak seçilir; 2013'te Amerika Birleşik Devletleri'nde ve 2017'de Nijerya'da ortaya çıkan EndSARS'ta ortaya çıkan Black Lives Matter. Her iki kampanya da farklı niteliklere sahip olmasına rağmen, ilgili ülkelerin polis departmanları tarafından ihlal edildiği iddia edilen insan haklarına yönelik tekil amaçlarıyla birleştirilmiştir. SNS'ler ile aktivistler, koşullardan memnuniyetsizliklerini bir araya getirip ifade edebiliyorlar ve hatta kolektif planlar yapmanın yanı sıra kolektif eylemde bulunma konusunda kendilerini güclü hissediyorlar. Bu tür kolektif eylem, protestocuların Twitter'daki kampanyalar için oluşturulan hashtag'leri yayınladığı /paylaştığı ve görüntüleri yeniden paylaştığı BLM ve EndSARS kampanyalarında belirgindir. Tüm medya metinleri anlam ifade ettikçe, Twitter protestolarında görüntülerin kullanılması, protestocuların ve toplumun sembolik etkileşimini araştıran medya akademisyenleri için önemli hale geliyor. Bu nedenle bu soruşturma ufuk açıcı bir eyleme dönüşür. Bir şeyleri nasıl algıladığımızı anlamaya adanmış gösterebilim konusu.

Bu nedenle çalışma, BLM ve EndSARS arasındaki benzerlikleri üç soru sorarak ortaya çıkarır ve açıklar; 25 Mayıs 2020 ile 31 Ekim 2020 tarihleri arasındaki BLM ve EndSARS protestolarında Twitter'da paylaşılan görüntüler arasındaki açıklama benzerlikleri nelerdir? 25 Mayıs 2020 ve 31 Ekim 2020 tarihleri arasında BLM ve EndSARS hashtag'lerinde paylaşılan görüntülerdeki fizyognomik özelliklerdeki benzerlikler nelerdir? 25 Mayıs 2020 ve 31 Ekim 2020 tarihleri arasında BLM ve EndSARS hashtag'lerinde paylaşılan görüntüler arasındaki simge, dizin ve

sembollerdeki benzerlikler nelerdir? Çalışmanın verileri Twitter'daki BLM ve EndSARS hashtag'lerinden manuel olarak alındı ve çalışma için toplanan her görüntünün görsel nitelikleri ayrı ayrı değerlendirildi.

Çalışma, protestoya ilgili görüntülerin, medya görüntülerinin tüketicilerine protestoya veya sosyal nedene tepkilerini etkileyebilecek şekilde anlam verdiği sonucuna varıyor. Bunun nedeni, insanların önemli konularda yeterince bilgilendirilmek için imgelere çekilmesidir.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Göstergibilim, Protesto, SNS, Siyah Hayatlar Değerlidir, EndSARs.

DEDICATION

This thesis is dedicated to God almighty and my family.

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Chapter 1

INTRODUCTION

We spend a significant amount of our daily activities interacting with the media. For media scholars, this raises questions on how we make meaning out of all the signs we are exposed to (Kennedy, Naaman, Ahern, Nair, & Rattenbury, 2007). Fortunately, semiotics can provide insight into how we generate meaning from all the media we are exposed to daily (Boykoff, 2011; Kennedy, Naaman, Ahern, Nair, & Rattenbury, 2007). Semiotics is an academic endeavour that is dedicated towards understanding how we perceive things other than ourselves (Johansen & Larsen, 2002). All living organisms have semiotic activities. The dog that barks or wags its tails at someone or another dog does so out of its semiotic abilities which researchers have defined over time – happiness, confidence, fright, submission or sadness depending on the way the tail is wagged (HPC, 2021). For example, when the tail is wagged to the right, the dog is said to be expressing emotion of happiness or confidence (Llera, 2021).

These interpretations may lead to actions which may lead to more interpretation and actions by others. Sebeok (1999) traces semiotics to Hippocrates who spearheaded the study of physiological symptoms caused by diseases between 460 and 377 B.C. As a conventional practice of signification, semiotics can be located within structuralism which holds that there are organizing principles and structures that guide how language exists and develops (Crow, 2010). The French linguist, Ferdinand Saussure and the American philosopher, Charles S. Peirce as recognized as the founding fathers of

semiology or semiotics (Silverman, 1983). Both Saussure and Peirce started two distinct semiotic tradition that are referenced by scholars who are involved in the practice of semiotics.

Crow (2010) further suggests that since language is structured to continue an order of hierarchy, visual language circumvents this hierarchy by infusing unofficial codes that are related to resistance. The use of images in protests can thus be deemed as appropriate for resistance because they include ‘second-order signifiers’ that would be relevant for any protest they are included in (Crow, 2010, p. 8).

1.1 Statement of the Problem

The purpose of the study is to determine signification similarities in the images used in two hashtags with similar message, #BlackLivesMatter and #EndSARS on Twitter. BLM was created by three women of colour – Alicia Garza, Patrisse Cullors and Opal Tometi - in America, after Trayvon Martin’s killer, George Zimmerman was found not guilty of Trayvon’s murder (Howard University, 2021). EndSARS on the other hand started in 2017 by a Nigerian Twitter user to document the abuses experienced by Nigerian citizens at the hands of Nigeria’s Special Anti-Robbery Squad (SARS) (Amnesty International, 2021). Both hashtags reflect the growing need to address an issue that has become a global concern for most in both developed and developing nations. The #BLM protests which started in 2016 were renewed in 2020 after a video surfaced of a white police officer kneeling on the neck of a black man in America (Hill, et al., 2020). The man, George Floyd died in the process. Similarly, the #EndSARS protests in Nigeria which began in 2017 received fresh vigour in 2020 after a video surfaced on Twitter that showed some police officers speeding off in a car after shooting a man (George, 2020). A common activity in protests witnessed in social

networking sites (SNSs) is the sharing of memes or images of people partaking in the protests. Since every media content is classified as a sign (Bignell, 2002), the meanings of signs included in the #BLM and #EndSARS protests demand scholastic enquiry. Thus, the study will aim to explore through Peircean semiotic tradition, the similarities in signs (if any exists) between both campaigns and the meaning they impart.

1.2 Aim of the Study

The aim of this study is to elicit the similarities and differences in types of images used on Twitter in the #BLM and #EndSARS hashtags, the signs in these images and their connotations. Furthermore, the study will attempt to determine if the similarities in causes (because both campaigns are fighting against police brutality and injustice) are evident in the types of images posted online in the hashtags.

1.3 Significance of the Study

This study is significant because it is among pioneer studies that attempt to draw out the similarities in both BLM and EndSARS campaigns. Even though both campaigns have been going on for some times (BLM started in 2013 while EndSARS started later in late 2017), scholarly attention has not been focused on their similarities even though both campaigns aim to protest against police brutality.

1.4 Motivation of the Study

The study is motivated by the need to find the iconic, indexical and symbolic similarities between BLM and EndSARS campaigns. Even though both campaigns have been carried out in two geographical locations which are separated by thousands of miles, the study recognizes the need to draw patterns in both campaigns because of the common goal of fighting police brutality. In doing this, the study will be extending scholarly literature by providing more insight on semiotic patterns of protests on SNSs.

1.5 Limitation of the Study

This study is limited by a number of factors. First, the study is limited to two protests, BLM and EndSARS protests in Nigeria which are similar in terms of causes. As a result, the findings of the study cannot be used to explain other movements that are unrelated to police abuse which this research is centered on. Also, in light of protests about police abuse, the research only used data retrieved from Twitter with restriction to the year 2020. Specifically, the period of study is limited to 25th May, 2020 and 31st October 2020. As a result, the findings of the study cannot be used to discuss hashtags about police abuse that trended in other years.

The study is limited to Twitter images posted within the #BLM and #EndSARS hashtags during the recent protests following George Floyd's death in the United States on 25th May, 2020 and the EndSARS protests in Nigeria which were renewed on 3rd October, 2020 to signify the events of George Floyd's murder which occurred on 25 May 2020 and the viral video of some police officers speeding off in a white vehicle after assaulting an unarmed Nigerian youth which appeared on Nigerian Twitter space on the 3rd, October, 2020. Thus, the period of the study is limited to 25th May, 2020 and 31 October, 2020. As such, the findings of this study cannot be generalized. Furthermore, the study is limited to Twitter. Thus, the findings of the study cannot be used to explain semiotic patterns of protests on other SNSs or traditional media channels.

1.6 Theoretical Framework of the Study

The study uses the theoretical underpinnings of the Peirce sign theory. The field of semiotics is sharply drawn between Saussurian semiology and Peirce's semiotics which although approach the overall concept of signs, are quite different in their

theoretical approach. Peirce's theory conceptualizes signification processes, representation, reference and meaning (Atkin, 2010). A semiotic investigation also includes such activities as the assessment of the visual characters and physiognomic attributes the media texts (Martin, 2014). The visual attributes that are therefore evaluated in the research include objects, dressing and hairstyles while the physiognomic attributes include face features present in images. These attributes are relevant to semiotics because they enable the typification process by using common cultural codes that can be used to assess meaning from an image (Leeuwen, 2001). A more elaborate discussion of the theoretical framework is discussed in the second chapter of this study.

1.7 Research Questions of the Study

Each academic enquiry is determined by its research questions. This is because the research questions help to establish the purpose of the study by probing pertinent issues within the context of the research. In line with this, the research raises questions that will seek to provide more insight on the similarities of the BLM and EndSARS protests on Twitter. Furthermore, the questions are directly related to the study of semiotics. As an academic practice that tries to create meaning in media texts, semiotics engages with the senses of the semiotician to elicit meaning. Specifically, this study draws on visual semiotics to probe the representation of images shared on Twitter within the BLM and EndSARS hashtags and the hidden meanings embedded in the images (Leeuwen & Jewitt, 2001). Representation in this context tries to determine the manifest content of the images which can easily be seen by any reader and this action is seen as denotative (Bouzida, 2014). It therefore answers the simple questions of what and how (Leeuwen & Jewitt, 2001) therefore the first research question that this

study asks will describe the concrete elements of the images shared by determining the what and how;

1. What are the denotative similarities between images shared on Twitter in the BLM and EndSARS protests between 25 May 2020 and 31st October 2020?

Answering the first research question will require a descriptive interpretation of what is expressed in the images retrieved for the study and how these ideas are recognized.

Since this level of signification is concrete/manifest (Leeuwen & Jewitt, 2001), it becomes critical that the what is clearly expressed so that readers can make similar interpretations. To achieve this therefore, the study therefore inspects the visual attributes of the images retrieved for the study as well as their physiognomic qualities (Martin, 2014). The study will therefore examine visual characters such as objects, dressing and hairstyles while also examining physiognomic attributes such as face features present in images. These attributes are relevant to semiotics because they enable the typification process by using common cultural codes that can be used to assess meaning from an image (Leeuwen, 2001). Physiognomy in semiotics refers to the ability of the semiotician to read recognize some qualities on the face (Sotto, 2019).

This practice is vital because the ability to read faces is important for reading an individual's inner and invisible character (Kronshage, 2017). Since semiotics is largely meaning-making practice and since protests usually involve despair, anger or dissent, physiognomy importantly combines denotative and connotative principles to that can be used to determine feelings of protesters as revealed in shared protest images. In line with this, the study asks;

2. What are the similarities in physiognomic attributes in images shared in the BLM and EndSARS hashtags between 25 May 2020 and 31st October 2020?

Peircean semiotics applies logic to the concept of the sign by creating a three-part classification of the icon, index and symbol which extend Saussure's two-part signification process of signifier and the signified (Yakin & Totu, 2014). This three-part process enables researchers in providing a holistic insight on the media text being analysed (Britt-MarieLindgren, Lundman, & Graneheim, 2020). The essence of this is to unify the codes that have been assigned in the denotative signification process. In light of this, the research asks;

3. What are the similarities in icon, index and symbols between images shared in the BLM and EndSARS hashtags between 25 May 2020 and 31st October 2020?

1.8 Methodology of the Study

To answer its research questions, this research will use a mixed approach. That is to say, both quantitative and qualitative research methods will be used to answer the research questions. Quantitative research will be used to numerically describe the data retrieved for the study (Mertler, 2016). Qualitative research on the other hand is mainly appreciated for its holistic analysis of data that provides researchers and their readers with meaningful understanding (Katz, 2015). Peck & Mummery (2017) clarify that by drawing insights from different ideas and disciplines, qualitative analysis takes a multi-faceted approach to research. This highly differs from the quantitative method which is more static and can be generalizable (Mertler, 2016). A more elaborate description of the methodology will be discussed in the third chapter of this study.

Chapter 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

The chapter discusses semiotics as a branch of communication, its definition, its structuralist perspective, two traditions of semiotics and other topics related to the study. The chapter explains the relevance of images in social protests. This validates the significance of the study which provides insights into the similarities between two movements that are influenced by different geographical and cultural structures even though they are spurred by similar needs.

2.1 Definition of Semiotics

Semiotics is part of the four humanistic traditions (rhetoric, hermeneutics, phenomenology and semiotics) that is argued to have had the most direct influence in setting the foundation for the field of media studies and it has continuously influenced the study of culture and communication since its elaborate conceptualization (Jensen, 2002). According to Deely (2005), semiotics contrasts with the actions of signs which is known as semiosis just as knowledge contrasts with what is already known. In this regard, when juxtaposed with semiotics, the process of generating meaning which is simply known as semiosis is strikingly different even though they are closely related. In simple terms however, semiotics is a linguistic theory that is concerned with how meaning is created (Martin, 2014) by studying signs (Chandler, 2017). This simple definition, while straight to the point can be confusing for lay people who would typically define signs as visual like road signs, symbols, signboards etc. While this may be true, signs can also be intangible. For instance, they can also include ‘words,

sounds and body language' (Chandler, 2017, p. 2). As much as that is the case, one key point in semiotics is that no sign exists in a vacuum as there is always a meaning to be communicated. Broadly, it is seen as the study of not just signs but also sign systems as well as communication (Deely, 2005). Systems in this regard validates the importance of communication models that describe the sender, message and receiver relationship because it suggests that communication requires system of understanding between the actors at play for it to work. In the same way, a sign always suggests a message that is both encoded by its sender and also decoded by its receiver.

Calling it the mathematics of the humanities, Andersen (2001) opines that semiotics can be used to create interactive systems that can be used to effectively convey messages. Mathematics in this context describes the logic in the sign system. For example, where there is a smoke, it seems logical to expect a fire. However, because the sign system in the humanities is an arbitrary one due to the diverse orientation or understanding of its actors, the meaning of a sign can be subject to the environmental orientation of the receiver.

Semiotics is argued to be closely aligned with media studies as it has made contributions to approaches to media studies (Noth, 1997). This is because media studies is geared at uncovering the various ways in which meaning is established in various textst and anything that can be read to create meaning naturally classifies as a media text. That is why media texts encompass all such things as film, radio, TV, newspaper, social media content, paintings, sculptures etc since they possess the qualities needed to be read. Because of its relevance to media studies, it is one of the traditions of qualitative media research (Martin, 2014).

Semiotics can also be defined as an attempt to understand how meaning is embedded in language, still images, moving images or objects and how these meanings are cultivated and understood by the people who come across them (Curtin, 2021). That is to say, semiotic analysis tries to establish the degree to which the relationship between qualities of a subject and the meanings derived from those elements are seen as significant. Significance in this context suggests the level to which elements in a sign create meaning to the readers.

The concept of semiotics can be traced to the basic idea that every living organism has the capacity to produce and interpret signs (Sebeok, 1999). With this in mind, it is unsurprising that the field itself can be found in various aspects of human endeavour and this is reflected in academic research. For example, Stojiljković & Trajković (2017) make a case for the existing relationship between semiotics and architecture by investigating the impact of structuralism on Yugoslavian architecture. With structuralism as a branch of knowledge that uncovers how ideology influences society through its state apparatuses or institutions, the various phases of civilisations are reflected in different civilisation across centuries. For example, in TRNC, it is common to find architectural designs that reflect the Byzantine era to reflect when the Island was part of the Eastern Roman Empire in 293 AD. Such architectural designs are towering and symbolize a period when the church, an institution of ideology according to structuralism, was in control of the Island.

Another common evidence of semiotics is found in brand as Manning (2010) asserts the variableness of the relationship of a brand to the universe thereby also affirming the universality of semiotics. That is why we know how to relate certain logos to certain brands. For example, Apple logo is now used to not only signify the fruit but

the Apple company; the silver circle with the three-pointed star is easily identified with Mercedes Benz; the head of the Medusa in gold is easily linked to the fashion designer, Versace etc.

In the article positive semiotics, Lomas (2019), suggests that semiotics and psychology originate from mind philosophy and are therefore related. As Deely (2005) implies, the history of semiotics is intertwined with the history of philosophy. This is because philosophy is closely related to the science of cognition and semiotics depends on cognition. Similarly, Culler (1981) describes the evidence of semiotics in tourism by asserting that the average tourist sees everything as a sign in itself. The field is by no means exhaustive and these are merely examples given to show the versatility of semiotics. In fact, the versatility of semiotics is captured in Noth's (1995) handbook of semiotics where he argued that semiotics did not have a unifying point of view because there are diverse 'schools and branches of applied semiotics' (Noth, 1995, p. 3). Yet, it is also argued to bind various methods of studies in humanities together by offering a common theoretical perspective for qualitative research (Deely, 2005).

According to Leeuwen (2005), semioticians perform three main roles;

- a) They collect, document and systematically catalogue semiotic resources.
- b) They investigate how these resources are used in specific historical, cultural and institutional contexts, and how people talk about them in these contexts.
- c) They contribute to the discovery and development of new semiotic resources and new uses of existing semiotic resources.

Similarly, Fiske (1990) describes semiotics as having three main concerns;

- a) The sign which entails researching various types of signals, as well as the various ways in which they communicate meaning and how they interact with the people who use them. Since signs are human, constructs that can only be comprehended in terms of how people make use of them.
- b) The codes or structures that are used to coordinate signs. This looks at how a number of codes have evolved to meet the needs of a society or community, or to manipulate the channels of communication.
- c) The cultural environment in which these codes and signs are used. This, in turn, relies on the use of these codes and signs to survive and take shape.

Although Ferdinand Saussure is credited for founding modern semiotics (Silverman, 1983), the entire concept of semiotics can be traced back to 460-377 B.C when Hippocrates initiated ***semeiotics*** to monitor symptoms (Sebeok, 1999; Cobley, 2010). The word itself can be traced back to the greek word, *semesion*, which means sign with *semainon* meaning signifier and *semainomenon* meaning signified (Yakin & Totu, 2014).

We live in a world of signs and we all have techniques to make sense of the signs we encounter. The basic idea of semiology/semiotics is summarized in Saussure's conviction that language existed before speech (Silverstein, 1970).

The Swiss linguist, Ferdinand Saussure and American philosopher, Charles S. Peirce are credited for developing semiotics into the body of academic endeavor that it is today (Silverman, The subject of semiotics, 1983). In order to reduce the risk of reducing the development of modern semiotics to these two important figures, it is also important to mention that the field received fresh vigour in 1958 by Levi-Strauss's

publication of structural anthropology where Ferdinand Saussure's principles of semiology were adapted to the study of primitive cultures and was later consolidated with psychoanalysis by Jacques Lacan (Silverman, 1983). Beyond the simple definition of the field as a study of signs, Silverman (1983) further describes as the study of signification with the full involvement of the human who actively participates in the signification process by using it and being defined by it. While Saussure and Peirce might have come from different backgrounds and approach semiotics differently (for instance, Saussure's called it semiology while Peirce called it semiotics), both scholars agree that it works as a system that requires both a subject and an object (Yakin & Totu, 2014). In fact, their distinctive disciplines are said to influence their unique approach to the subject (Jensen, 2002). For example, Saussure was a linguist while Peirce was both a philosopher and a logician.

Scholars who follow the semiotic tradition examine how people collaborate to construct meaning and how meanings can be distorted during the same process. The semiotic tradition is most often used to investigate media content in order to reveal how signs and symbols are used to construct artistic types of meaning (Eadie, 2009).

2.2 What is a Sign?

A common attribute of the various definitions or approaches of/to semiotics is the presence of a sign. It then becomes important to explain what a sign is in this context. In Charles S. Peirce's own words, a sign is something "which stands to somebody for something in respect or capacity. It addresses somebody, that is, creates in the mind of that person an equivalent sign, or perhaps a more developed sign" (Peirce, 1931, p. 228). Simplifying this definition, Jensen, (2002) explains that the meaning in/of signs is not about what we know but how we come to know what we think we know to the

point of justifying what we claim to know and this activity is evident in our everyday life. Furthermore, it is important to note that the interpretation of signs is not static but rather, it is a continuous process. For example, any given sign can be used to serve as a sign in the next step in interpretation. This is illustrated in the figure 2 below;

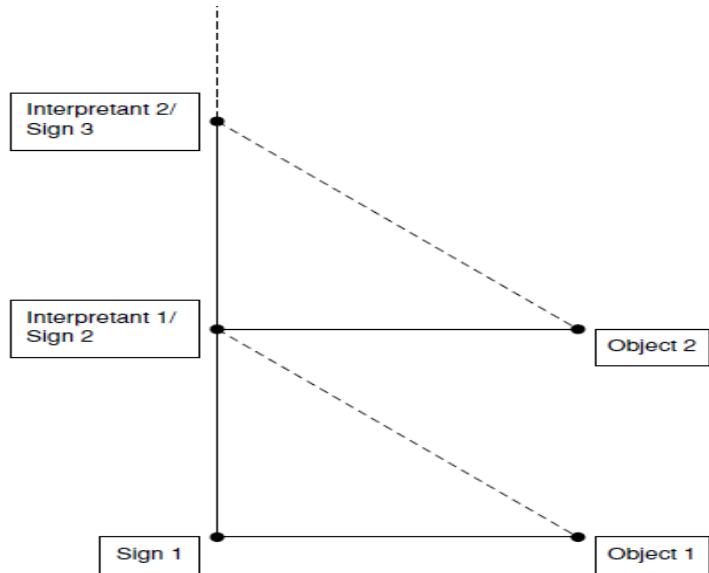


Figure 1: Process of interpreting the sign (Jensen, 2002, p. 19)

An easy way to understand this illustration is by picturing a traffic light which is the first sign that only represents the object without details on association between the sign and object. In the first step of the semiotic process, there is the light which ushers in the second step which is a car slowing down and eventually halting at the light. Here, the light is the object while the concept of the traffic light occurs at the second stage which suggests that the red light means something. The slowing down occurs at the third stage because of what the concept has communicated to the mind of the driver which stems thereby validating Silverman's (1983) arguments that we actively use and are defined by signs. Thus, a sign, also known as the *representamen* exists in relation to a second which is called the object which in turn determines the third which is called the *interpretant*.

2.3 Two Dominant Traditions of Semiotics

The origins of modern semiotics is traced to two important figures, Ferdinand de Saussure whose brand of semiotics is rooted in structuralism and Charles Sanders Peirce whose semiotics was rooted in pragmatism (Silverman, 1983). Since its early modern roots, semiotics has undergone different phases with various scholars taking interest in the subject Silverman (1983) who defines semiotics as the study of signification authoritatively argues that semiotics is versatile due to the various fields that have come together to expand its major concepts. There are various semiotic models with each serving very distinct purposes (Silverman, 1983). For instance, besides Saussurian and Peircian traditions, there is also the Lacanian model which includes psychoanalysis in its signification processes, Barthian semiotics which is vast, Greimas' semiotics which is famous for the semiotic square (Rossolatos, 2012) and narrative discourse (Ricoeur, Collins, & Perron, 1989).

2.3.1 Ferdinand de Saussure's Semiology

A linguist scholar, Ferdinand Saussure laid the foundations for general linguistic theory. He is regarded as the fathers of modern linguistics (Culler, 1986). Believing that the theory of linguistic signs should be put in a more general basis theory in the field of linguistics, he laid the ground for sign theory which emerged out of that field (Yakin & Totu, 2014). He is credited for being a major influence in structural semiotics because of his heavy reliance on linguistic concepts. Stressing that language is only one aspect of the semiological system, Saussure also states that it is the best example to show how a sign is arbitrary (Chandler, 2017). Calling the linguistic structure of signs and language as the most superior sign structure compared to others systems in the real world, Saussure also insists on the fundamental system of language in contrast to use of vocabulary (Yakin & Totu, 2014). Suggesting that semiotics grew within the

space of general psychology which became solidified as an academic field in the 19th century, linguists like Saussure regarded the subject as part of psychology (Lomas, 2019) because of its interpretive qualities which require the active participation of the one who is engaging in the interpretation.

Saussure's theory of sign is based on many viewpoints or basic principles, including the two-dimensional structure, the consensus or traditional system, and the networking relationship between the signs system and the subjective system (Yakin & Totu, 2014). Herein lies Saussure's major contribution to the subject of semiotics as the two-dimensional system which he developed separates the sign system into a signifier and signified, without which the sign system cannot operate (Chandler, 2017). Thus, for Saussure, the linguistic sign is a double entity in which both sides are prerequisite for the sign to function (Innis, 1985). Since Saussure's tradition originated from language, his starting point is without a doubt the word where he argues that the linguistic sign unites both concept and a sound image (Innis, 1985). It is his elaboration of the sound image that a psychological presence is felt because it recognizes the unification of both abstract and concept in the development of meaning where sign is the unifier (Innis, 1985). Furthermore, Saussure together with contemporaries like Sigmund Freud and Emile Durkheim insisted that the best way to interpret human behaviour is not by looking at the events themselves but by treating the events as part of a social system with "conventions and values" (Culler, 1986, p. 16).

In a nutshell, Saussure's sign theory emphasizes internal structure devoted to cognitive thought process or operation of human minds in structuring physical (material) or intangible (abstract) signs of their environments or surroundings, including the structure of linguistic signs in the language system that enables them to function as

human beings and interact with others. Saussure's theory is regarded as a supporter of the idea that language produces truth as opposed to the idea of representing it. This is because we use language to give meaning not only to things that exist in reality, but also to things that do not (Yakin & Totu, 2014).

Seeing as Saussure's model consists of these important concepts which he argues do not precede each other but co-exist (Chandler, 2017), it becomes necessary to explain what the signifier and signified stand for.

Signifier: The signifier is a pictorial representation of a sound or image. It describes the material form of a sign (Yakin & Totu, 2014). For instance, when the word, apple is spoken or written, the picture of the fruit or the Apple company immediately comes to mind.

Signified: In the same vein, the signified refers to the mental concept of the word or image that has either been spoken or written. It brings up what the concept of Apple relates to. For example, the fruit, health, the product and so on. Together, both concepts make up the sign system (Chandler, 2017). This is even further elaborated in denotation and connotation which Roland Barthes built on (Barthes, 1973; Barthes, 1977). Through Barthes, we come to understand that when people engage in semiotics, they are also engaging in two levels of meaning which are denotative and connotative (Barthes, 1977). While the denotative meaning is the common or literal description of a sign, the connotative meaning takes on the common description (denotative) and adds a latent meaning to the sign which may be socially, historically and culturally contextual (Maulana, 2016). Thus, there are surface and deep meanings for every media text (Shu-ping, 2017).

As there is no signifier without a signified, there is also no denotation without connotation. Building on this two-dimensional structure, Roland Barthes, who was both a French critic and follower of the Saussurean tradition re-conceptualized many of Saussure's arguments in the 1950s and 1960s (Martin, 2014). According to him, the first order of signification, according to Barthes, is the one in which Saussure served. It defines the relationship within the sign between the signifier and the signified, as well as the sign's external referent. This order is referred to as denotation. This alludes to the clear and explicit importance of the sign. A photo of a road scene means that specific road; the word 'road' signifies a metropolitan street fixed with structures (Fiske, 1990). Implication is the term Barthes uses to portray one of the three different ways in which signs work in the second request of implication. It depicts the communication that happens when the sign meets the sentiments or feelings of the reader or recipient and the upsides of their way of life. This is when implications move towards the abstract, or possibly the intersubjective: it is the point at which the interpretant is affected as much by the translator as by the article or the sign. For Barthes, the basic factor in implication is the signifier in this first order (Fiske, 1990). He investigates the marvel of implication or, as he puts it, second-order which means, whereby an implied can turn into the signifier for another level of meaning. Furthermore, he uses the popular signification of the rose as another example by stating that if he uses the roses to signify his passion, Barthes argues that only the signified and signifier are accounted for (Chandler & Munday, 2011). Thus, the roses have been passionified while their physical description (sign) is lost.

Barthes contribution to semiotics and cultural cannot be over-stated (Williams, 2003). His structuralist perspective which he infused into his works on semiotics lays an

important foundation for students in semiotics to follow. His critique of myths persuades the semiotics' student to try to investigate myths by carefully assessing the merits of mythological arguments before accepting them as occurring naturally. According to Williams (2003), Barthes draws on Saussure's discourse on semiotics to explain that the media's ability to produce signs and images in certain ways makes them indispensable to the reproduction of ideology. For example, the semantic intention of 'Jaguar' not only indicates the make of the vehicle, but it can likewise hint at wealth and opulence. Barthes brings the attention of the reader or user to how cultural context plays a crucial role in the production of meaning (Martin, 2014). As Martin (2014) further argues, this logic later became a critical approach that a focal reason of semiotics.

2.3.2 Charles S. Peirce's Semiotics

Unlike Saussure who has introduced the term 'semiology', Peirce proposed the term 'semiotic', which according to him is synonymous with the concept of logic that focuses on the knowledge of human thinking process as portrayed in his writing (Yakin & Totu, 2014). With the establishment of the International Association of Semiotic Studies in 1969 however, the consolidation of the field led to a consensus of semiotics as the accepted name of the field (Jensen, 2002).

In contrast to the binary concept of Saussure's theory, Peirce's theory of sign focuses on three-dimensional or triadic and trichotomy system. Peirce classifies sign into three aspects, namely i) sign or *representatum* or ground, ii) Object which is also referred to as *referent*, and; iii) *Interpretant*. The first aspect is synonymous with Saussure's concept termed as signifier which means physical signs (explicitly exist) (Leeds-Hurwitz, 1993) but does not have to be material in nature (Chandler, 2002). On the

contrary, Saussure's concept of signified and signifier, is divided by Peirce into two components, namely object and interpretant (Yakin & Totu, 2014).

Peirce's entry into the subject of semiotics was more from logic because he was a pragmatist (Perry, 2002). By classifying signs into icons, indexes and symbols, perhaps, one of Peirce's most important contribution to the subject of semiotics is his classification of signs which has simplified understanding for media scholars/students by giving them the language needed to discuss and explore visual images and nonverbal signs (Martin, 2014). This classification is elaborated below.

Icon and iconography: An icon bears a likeness to its image. This is frequently generally obvious in visual signs: a photo of my auntie is a symbol; a guide is a symbol; the regular visual signs indicating fine people's restrooms are symbols. In any case, it very well might be verbal: likeness in sound is an endeavor to make language notable (Fiske, 1990).

Index: An index is similarly easy to depict. It is a sign with a direct existential association with its item. Smoke is for example a signal for fire (Fiske, 1990). In semiotics of the web, Codognet (2002) gives an example of a web index by stating that the presence of hyper-links in a world wide web page signifies links between one page to another thereby showing the fluidity of the index sign.

Symbol: A symbol is a sign whose association with its object involves show, understanding, or rule. Words are, as a rule, images. For example, the red cross is a symbol. Similarly, numbers and letters are also symbols (Fiske, 1990).

2.4 Theoretical Framework

Because of the extensive work done on the field, semiotics can be regarded as both theoretical and methodological. However, this research turns to Algirdas Julien Algirdas Greimas whose narrative whose structural semiotics provides tools help semiotics separate concepts within a semiotic practice into actors and actants (Greimas, 1971). A relevant starting point for the study is therefore to the *seme* since Greimas regards it as the smallest unit to carry a unit and which contains details that further explain a semiotic property (Greimas, 1971). These details might be distinct qualities like male/female; young/old/middle-aged; small/large and so on. For Greimas, these qualities can aid in the production/communication of meaning (Beetz, 2013). The novel aspect of this present research is the application of Greimas' ideas to protest images. Thus, the study is not only a pioneer in comparing protest images between #EndSARS and #BLM protest images, it also incorporates a theory that has solely been restricted to the narrative world (literature, myths & legends, folklore, poetry, and so on to show that protest images also possess some elements of the narrative structure. This study therefore pushes this argument because of the personal observation that protest images carry elements that tell specific stories about social causes and social justice. This argument is even amplified within visual semiotics, another theoretical/methodological branch of semiotics which was popularized by Roland Barthes (Yang & Ming, 2015; Bouzida, 2014). Regarded as one of the remarkable contributors to semiotics, Barthes built on Saussure's legacy to study the language of non-linguistic texts like images, a task which made him a pioneer in that regard (Aiello, 2020). His postulations answer questions that explain the representational, interactive, as well as the compositional meaning of images (Aiello, 2020).

In addition, Greimas' narrative theory assists the semiotic researcher to analyze the image texts in the same system as one would analyze sentences. This is because of his incorporation of the basic communication structure of sender-message-receiver into the process which is aided by the use of basic communication elements. This incorporation then assists the research to engage in a signification process that allows them to inspect and compartmentalize the text within images into different isotopic sets (Beetz, 2013). It then becomes important to define isotopy. Isotopy is a concept that Greimas heavily relied on to identify coherence in a text. This coherence is drawn from the reoccurrence of certain linguistic characters within a text. It helps to unify concepts within a text in a way that the communication of meaning is guaranteed. A good way to explain this would be to use the letter O as an example. A semiotic student would begin by trying to unravel the connection between the letter o and the sound, o. Is the letter 'O' a constructed figure that represents the natural sound O or could it also mean 'oh' which indicates that one has come to an understanding of something? For example, the letter o can simply signify the alphabet or it can signify a vowel sound. Furthermore, the letter can be visually represented as an image or it can be visualized as a hand sign or it can even be used within a verbal sentence to represent an exclamation.

For example, the letter 'O' when depicted as a hand sign is used to signify white power following its rise in use by white supremacists during Trump's presidency (BBC, 2019). This resulted in the sign being added to the hate symbols to the Anti-Defamation League website as a hate symbol (Anti-Defamation League, 2021). Still, it is important to state that the hand sign has been used by many over the years as a positive gesture to show that something is okay (Swales, 2019). To determine isotopy

in this case, the semiotician's job would be to look for instances where the letter reoccurs and the context in which they occur in order to form a coherent meaning. This then suggests that isotopy which holds a text together (Beetz, 2013) can best be determined from an understanding of language. In addition, a semiotician trying to determine the isotopy of a text would also have to determine the objects and actors in the text in order to make a coherent argument about its meaning.

2.4.1 Semiotics and Structuralism

The field of semiotics is vast. As a result, there are diverse access points to it. The few examples given in the preceding section of this chapter proves this fast. However, Lorusso (2015) opines that a necessary requirement for accepting a cultural approach to semiotics starts with the adoption of a structuralist perspective. Both structuralism and semiotics as theoretical re-orientation of researches in the humanities and social sciences in the 20th century (Jensen, 2002). According to Chandler (2017), the study of semiotics can help media scholars to better understand the mediating role of signs and our roles in making meaning out of the signs we are exposed to. Because we make meaning and construct reality based on pre-existing knowledge we have been exposed to and such knowledge can be argued to stem from culture as the theories of symbolic interaction and social construction of reality show, one can argue that semiotics is rooted in culture (Baran & Davis, 2010). Also, as various media become the central system of modern communication by which we make and share meaning (Williams, 2003), media becomes entrenched in culture and semiotics and as Lorusso (2015) argues, semiotics of culture and semiotics in general cannot avoid being structuralist. Differentiating it from Althusser's structuralism of the 1970s, Lorusso (2015) clarifies that the rigidity that is usually associated with structuralism which involves the abstract, absolute or historical approach of creating

meaning does not need to apply in structuralist identity applied in semiotics. Rather, it should be viewed as a fundamentally structured system of meaning that is equally subjective, systemic and crucial (Lorusso, 2015). This difference, while important is still negligible enough to assign semiotics comfortably as a structuralist approach.

Because media encompasses all communication and communicative activities, media studies engages in diverse approaches. One of such approaches is structuralism which is a theory of culture that is also applied in other related fields of the humanities. Structuralism is an approach that argues that organizing principles that are entrenched in cultural artefacts guide cultural behaviour (Williams, 2003). Also, an important aspect of structuralist perspective in media is the systems and processes of ‘signification and representation’ that are evident in films, images, television, literary texts, adverts and so on, all of which are media texts (Williams, 2003, p. 53). Structuralism is important to semiotics because of its argument that there are ideological institutions like the religious institutions, schools, political institutions and the media that reproduce ideology in a way that it seems natural. Traces of this argument can be found in how we make meaning about everything. Meaning comes to use naturally because it has been reproduced and been presented to us in a way that we have accepted its intended meaning.

Presenting semiotics as a form of structuralism, Fiske (1990) describes the impossibility of knowing and understanding the world on its terms as it can only be understood through the linguistic and structural lens of our culture. Furthermore, he adds that structuralism emphatically denies the ability of humans to access the reality of the world around them and the entire universe in an objective manner. That is to say, our understanding is influenced by our subjective knowledge and understanding.

Besides, structuralism helps media scholars to track general features of all media texts (Jensen, 2002).

2.5 An Overview of Social Media

As technologically emergent platforms, social media are accessed through such technologies like laptops, mobile tabs, personal computers as well as mobile phones. This suggests that social media are mobile as they can be accessed on the go. The capacity of social media to allow users to connect have been one of its significant strengths over other technological advancements (Banya, et al., 2017). As Sajithra & Patil (2013) describes it, social media extends the word-of-mouth system by giving anyone with an access to technology to disseminate information to a larger audience. As word-of-mouth has long been known to being a reliable way of passing information (Sajithra & Patil, 2013), this strengthens the need for its use. The history of social media can be traced back to 1971 when the email was introduced even though there is a debate regarding its classification as part of social media due to it being more individualistic rather than collective. However, its introduction is argued to have set the tone for subsequent mass collaborations that followed (Sajithra & Patil, 2013). Tracing it back to its Web 2.0 roots, Boyd (2015) describes social media as a phenomenon that engages a system of tools, practices and ideologies that emerged from the dot.com bubble of the early 2000s.

After the dot.com crash, social media emerged as the first product of Web 2.0 in Silicone Valley when technology geeks started developing technology that would matter to people collectively (Boyd, 2015). Simply put, Web 2.0 itself can be described as technology that involves a series of web applications that enhance interaction among people, the sharing of information and even collaboration on the world wide web

(www). According to Brandtzæg & Heim (2009) social networking sites have emerged in recent years as the most popular tools of social media.

2.5.1 Social Networking Sites

The use of SNSs has grown exponentially over the years as more users use the tools they provide to connect and interact with others (Kuss & Griffiths, 2017). As the use of these platforms continue to rise, this growth in their use has been accompanied with questions about mediated participation among users (Fenton & Barassi, 2011). Some of the most commonly accessed web-based platforms include Facebook, micro-blogging sites like Twitter, Tumblr and other image sharing sites like Instagram, Snapchat, YouTube and so on (Gold, et al., 2011; Bialy & Jalali, 2015).

The effect of long-range informal communication destinations in the lives of its users cannot be overemphasized. This is on the grounds that SNS has both immediate and remote impact in each layer of users' lives (Parra-López, et al., 2011).

The utilization and impact of SNS across diverse platforms (counting traditional media) is overwhelming. Even traditional media organisations include their programs on SNSs in order to boost their ratings. This will not only boost ratings but will also increase their advertising potential.

One of the significant elements of SNS is its capacity to help set up, keep up, and support connections among friends, families, and partners by breaking barriers in distance and time (Vannucci, et al., 2017). Critically, the mobile technologies and their in-built capacity to interface with the web has additionally helped the utilization of SNS. Furthermore, academic scholarship in this area has suggested that an impressive

number of Facebook and Twitter users access their news mostly via their preferred platforms as opposed to the traditional media (Houston, et al., 2015).

SNS, has been beneficial to local and global citizens as access to local, state and international events or competitions has been created. Not only that, it empowers citizens to engage in protest action. For instance, social media sites have been influential in mobilizing citizens to participate in the Arab spring and Gezi park protests. This is a result of their capacity to allow users to share and re-share whatever they find newsworthy on the platforms without fundamentally looking for consent or endorsement. This is additionally confirmed in the investigation of Boulian (2015) who strongly posits that " a final stream of network research examines the extent to which civic and political participation is contagious among members of a social network " (Boulian, 2015, p. 525).

Organisational communication has equally benefitted from social media. For example, microblogging sites like Twitter have enabled organisations to share news, data and improvements about their organisations with their various relevant publics (Alotaibi, et al., 2017). This has likewise improved the relationship between organisations and their publics by enhancing their communication flow (Lovejoy and Saxton, 2012).

Because of its impact on social life of its users, SNS have seen significant increase in daily users as more users are opting to interact on these platforms (Seidman, 2013). For instance, users can utilize the platforms as a portrayal of them or to make a personality of how they need to be seen by society. This records for the purposes for people making their profile in a way through which they need to be distinguished.

SNS has extended the extent of relational correspondence with its capacity to empower users to achieve a consistent correspondence among residents and their chiefs (Kavanaugh, et al., 2012). For example, the utilization of online media has introduced a more comprehensive government in various networks. This is on the grounds that people can set up direct correspondence with their chiefs while adding to the running of their issues and giving ideas. These platforms have additionally filled in as a method for giving data to residents (Neilson, 2018). News and media associations presently set up their own SNS handles to attract a more extensive crowd and also fill in as an option in contrast to data.

In research, SNS assumes an incredible part as it helps researchers and organisations share data which has additionally made research simpler by guaranteeing worldwide joint effort. This is a clear claim in the findings of Rowlands, Nicholas, Russell, Canty, and Watkinson (2011) where they asserted that SNS has improved collaborative research, conferencing and planning meetings among experts.

SNS has additionally progressed into the medical field as it has given a path to viable and wholesome correspondence among doctors, health experts and patients (Tamara, et al., 2015). Notwithstanding, research shows that doctors and health experts have different opinions and disposition with regards to the utilization of web-based media as a method for speaking with their patients. Some express their hesitation because it cannot substitute physical examination of patients which is usually seen as the best way to genuinely assess a patient (Brown et al., 2014). Eventually, social media's capacity to bridge the communication gap among people.

2.6 Social Media and Social Protests

The Arab spring at the turn of the last decade ushered in a new conversation on the role of new media technologies like SNSs in empowering aggrieved or disadvantaged citizens to coordinate themselves for action against oppressive governments or to address perceived societal problems. As Segerberg & Bennett (2011) opine, 2009 was the year activists, police and the media stepped up their use of social media for communication, monitoring and mobilization activities. Since then, researchers have investigated the role of SNSs in promoting protests. Protests on social media enable protesters, researchers and observers alike to watch the events as they are happening in real time (Jost, et al., 2018). As reflected in Castells (2015), social media give previously marginalized groups communicative power by enabling them to create and set their own narratives on issues that affect them. As such, this empowers them to create counter-power.

Arguably, social media has been shown to foster social protests that are both online and onsite (Bastos, Mercea, & Charpentier, 2015). Not only that, the use of social media by activists to promote causes and debate issues has been shown to heighten interests from other social media users (Earl & Kimport, 2011). Since the Arab spring, the world has witnessed huge social media influenced protests after another. For example, massive environmental protests were driven by youths social media in Chile in 2011 to take a stance against the construction of power plants in a city in the country (Scherman, Arriagada, & Valenzuela, 2014).

2.7 The Role of Images in Social Protests: Empirical Review of Related Studies

There are a number of reasons why people seek out photos. Ryan (2012) reports that information gathering on serious events is one of the reasons people search for photos. Corrigall-Brown & Wilkes (2012) found during demonstrations/protests, images helped frame issues for people who are following the protests. They stressed that pictures foster public sympathy as they amplify important concerns for the public. An example can be cited from the origin of the Tunisian revolution. When, in December 2010, after being assaulted by government officials, the young Tunisian graduate who earned a living as a vegetable vendor set himself on fire, his acts catapulted into a sequence of events that would reshape the Middle East and North African Region (MENA) and reshape the way we see social media forever. As images of his demonstrations appeared online, a new type of revolution was birthed (Kharroub & Bas, 2016). The use of this example from the Tunisian revolution is not to suggest that this protest precedes semiotic studies but rather, it is used to show how images can trigger protests online. As argued, the image of the vendor set on fire served as a trigger for young Tunisians and their counterparts in the MENA region who harbored similar discontent and disappointment with the system (Kharroub & Bas, 2016).



Figure 2: Tunisian vendor who set himself on fire (Kharroub & Bas, 2016)

In their examination of 581 images during the Egyptian revolution, Kharroub & Bas (2016), found that pictures about crowds, protests, religious or national symbols elicited more desired responses than images of violent content that were shared by protesters. The role of visual images in protests has been probed by scholars. No matter the space they occupy, social movements produce images that capture the attention of people watching them (Corrigall-Brown & Wilkes, 2012). Questions are raised about the mobilizing role of photos in demonstrations and how they impact protests if that is to be the case (Casas & Williams, 2019). Also, people today are inundated with pictures in every area of their lives due to the proliferation of technology in modern society.

One of the advantages of protest images is that pictures exist longer in the minds of people who have seen them, so the problems they pose are not likely to go away easily (Casas & Williams, 2019). Images help to shape political attitudes in political demonstrations (Casas & Williams, 2019).

The use of images that are known as eyewitness accounts is a significant feature of social media demonstrations. For a variety of reasons, the use of photographs in social media demonstrations is said to be especially significant; in addition to offering eyewitness evidence, it is often used to suppress counter-surveillance and help protesters frame problems the way they want, as opposed to conventional media structures (Neumayer & Rossi, 2018).

Semiotics and structuralism were hugely influential in the application of semiotics and structuralism to art and visual media studies. This significance also impacted the application of semantic constructs to visual manifestations. Using Erwin Panofsky's iconography as a foundation, one of the proponents of the Saussurian tradition, Roland Barthes produced one of the most frequently referenced illustration of how picture and text can interact with one another in a variety of genres and the media (Moxey, 1995; Buchanan, 2010). The text either 'anchors' or 'delimits' the region. The meanings of the image are either anchored or defined by the text, or the reader's concentration is enabled to drift back and forth through the image and text like a loop (Jensen, 2002).

2.8 Overview of #BlackLivesMatter Protests

Black Lives Matter started as a Twitter movement under the Obama administration to voice dissent against the acquittal of George Zimmerman who killed a black teenager, Trayvon Martin for walking in a white neighbourhood (Taylor, 2016). The young black teenager had been walking from a store in a neighbourhood he was visiting with his father after leaving the house to buy a snack. His killer's motive for killing him was that he was wearing a hoodie in the neighbourhood which had reportedly been experiencing robbery (Hoffman, Granger, Vallejos, & Moats, 2016). The hashtag was officially birthed after the ended with a not guilty verdict in favour of Zimmerman

(Rickford, 2015). Following Zimmerman's acquittal, Alicia Garza reacted to the verdict by writing a love note to black people on Facebook which was shared to Twitter by her friend Patrisse Cullors with the hashtag #BlackLivesMatter (Hoffman, Granger, Vallejos, & Moats, 2016). The movement soon occupied physical spaces in 2014 in Ferguson, a city in Missouri after another African American was killed by the police in the same year (Edga & Johnson, 2018). The killing of unarmed Black people by the police in the United States has been a consistent theme in the protests. In 2020, fresh protests erupted when a video surfaced showing the police kneeling on the neck of another black man who later died from the event after he was heard telling the officer that he couldn't breathe (Burch, Harmon, Tavernise, & Badger, 2021).

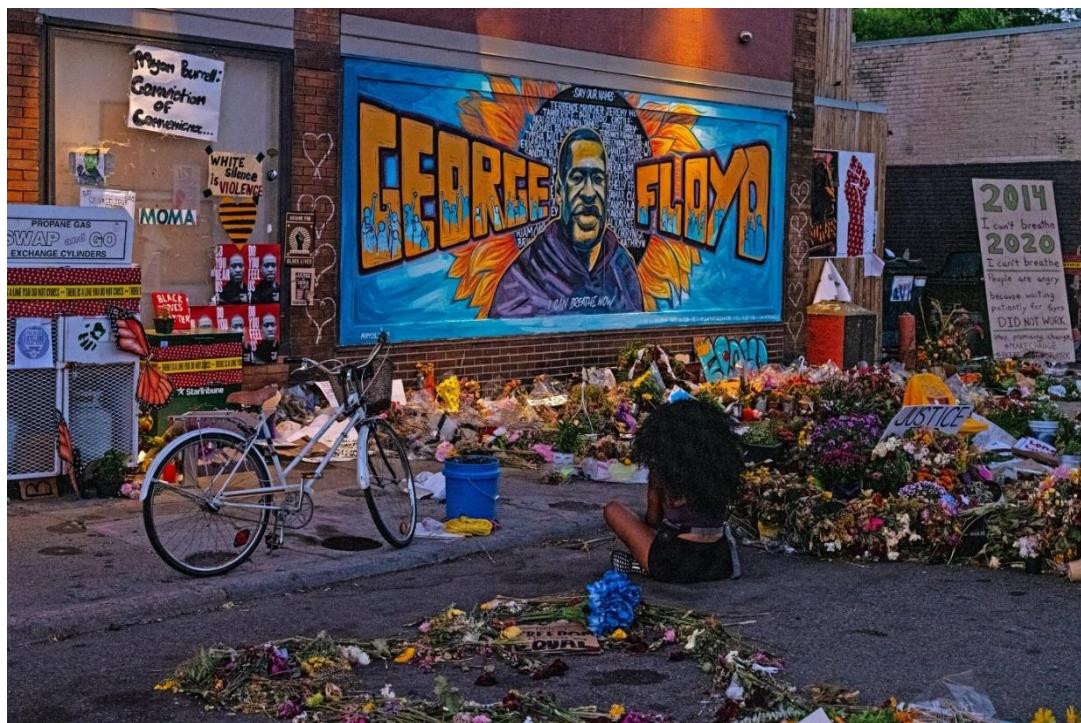


Figure 3: A protester sitting in front of George Floyd's mural (McFadden, 2021)

2.9 Overview of #EndSARS Protests

#EndSARS protests started in late 2017 following the extra-judicial killings and other violent acts of the SARS unit of Nigeria's police force. SARS, which stands for special

anti-robery squad was established in 1992 to respond to violent crimes like stealing, armed robbery, kidnapping and so on. in the Nigerian state. However, there have been various reports of illegal detention, false imprisonment, abuse, harassment and murder levelled against the unit. In fact, Amnesty International in Nigeria has documented dozens of cases where such accusations have been validated (Amnesty International, 2020). Since it first appeared in 2017, protests have been on and off but these previous protests have only managed to attract very minimal attention. However, fresh protests erupted in October 2020 when a video surfaced on Twitter that showed some offices speeding off in a white vehicle after allegedly shooting the owner of the vehicle thereby leaving him for dead (Al Jazeera, 2020). Following the outrage that followed the video, the police by responding by claiming the video was fake and arrested the user that posted the video therefore causing more outrage (Al Jazeera, 2020). The renewed protests which had now gone global persisted for several days until the fateful shooting that occurred at the site of protests on 20 October. This day is now remembered as Black Tuesday in Nigeria. The movement is arguably seen as powerful enough to challenge a government that was already grappling with various internal challenges (Tanko, 2020). Like #BlackLivesMatter, the #EndSARS campaign is also largely youthful (Rickford, 2015). Also, participants of both campaigns have insisted on their independence from corporate or formal organisations. In fact, one of the key features of the #EndSARS protests is the leaderless structure of the protesters.



Figure 4: An EndSARS protesters raises a Nigerian themed muffler (Favennec, 2020)

From the description detailed in sections 2.8 and 2.9, it logically follows that both #BLM and #EndSARS are connected by shared grievances and similar forms of protest. The shared grievances are largely driven by police brutality of unarmed youths in both the United States and Nigeria. With the shooting, killing and illegal detention of unarmed citizens in both countries, there emerged a pattern of violation of human rights and the lack of accountability on the structured system (Hoffman, Granger, Vallejos, & Moats, 2016; Amnesty International, 2020). In the same vein, similarities can be traced to the origin of both hashtags which is Twitter. Twitter has in recent years emerged as a strong platform for protesters in the world over (Grossman, 2009). Also, even though both campaigns have survived a few years since inception, protests have been on and off which momentum rising after any major incident. In 2020, the major events that triggered another momentum for both campaigns are George Floyd's murder in May 2020 which the world witnessed online and the video of abuse that emerged in Nigeria in October, 2020.

Chapter 3

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Based on its questions, aims and answers it determines to find, every research demands its own research methodology that would satisfy its needs. This chapter fulfils this demand by describing the research design in a way that would adequately answer the research questions. The research approach, data collection instrument and other critical issues relating to the study's data will be discussed in this chapter. As Saukko (2003) explains, the research methodology is a means of 'thinking through research'. That is because general views about how a study should be done ends up influencing the outcome of the study (Bryman, 2012). Another critical point raised by Saukko (2003) is that objectivity in research is a myth as each research is always informed by particular social realities, events and agendas. As this research relates to social specific social protests, it will perform the function of establishing how youth culture can incorporate visual imagery in their pursuit for social justice on social media.

3.1 Research Design

According to Bryman (2012), a study's research design describes the criteria employed to evaluate social research. It is constructed to guide the process of generating data that is suited to answer the study's research questions as well as analyzing the data that has been gathered (Bryman, 2012). In other words, it is a plan that details how a research inquiry is going to be conducted (Kenney, 2009). For this research therefore, the study employs case study research which helps the researcher provide detailed insight on specific cases (Starman, 2013). In the context of this present study, focus is on two

case studies; #BlackLivesMatter and #EndSARS. As such, this research is a case study. Although they are not restrictive, case studies are usually associated with qualitative research because they are deemed as valuable for generating detailed information about a case (Jensen, 2002). At the same time, the research is a visual communication research which according to Kenney (2009) has become more important for social researchers because of people's increased use of images in their social media activities.

Bryman (2012) further explains that once the researcher has selected the case study or studies in this case, the researcher then proceeds to determine if the research method would involve observation, conducting interviews, examining documents, or even administering questionnaires. In summary, the research design determines the best research method for a study.

3.2 Research Methodology

In the simplest terms, the research method helps the research to collect data that would assist the researcher in fulfilling the study's objectives (Bryman, 2012). Research in the humanities and social sciences is largely separated into quantitative and qualitative research (Bryman, 2012). These two fields take different routes to perform their investigation. Their difference is deeply entrenched in their general notions about society. While quantitative researchers assume the social world to be as real and concrete as the natural world, qualitative researchers see the social world as a manifestation of symbolic interactions which are sustained by human life (Kenney, 2009).

As earlier explained in the first chapter of this study, a mixed-methods approach is adopted in this research. The mixed-methods approach helps to provide an illustrative understanding of a research problem by combining both quantitative and qualitative research methods (Guetterman & Fetters, 2018). As such, both quantitative and qualitative methods are used in the study. A principle in quantitative research is that the world is measurable because of its stability and uniformness (Mertler, 2016). This is a positivist thought. Positivism, which is rooted in the physical sciences universally adopts a systematic and scientific approach to research (Mukherji & Albon, 2010). As such, researchers within this paradigm record data in a systematic manner with the intention of using universal knowledge to explain the data (Mukherji & Albon, 2010). This type of research therefore relies on cause and effect and gives little or no room for divergence. This therefore suggests that the quantitative method would not be sufficient to answer the research questions in this study. This shows the need for the qualitative method. Qualitative research is located within relativism which questions the rigidity of positivist method of enquiry which was largely scientific (Mills & Birks, 2014). The main purpose of the qualitative approach in research is to understand and provide insight on a phenomenon which largely has to deal with lived experiences of people (Mills & Birks, 2014). The qualitative research is mostly appreciated for its holistic interpretation of data which provides substantive understanding to researchers and their readers (Katz, 2015). Unlike quantitative research which believes that external forces in the environment shape people's behaviour thereby conditioning people to act in certain ways, qualitative researchers on the other hand expect people to construct their actions in ways that are meaningful to them after interpreting their social and natural world (Kenney, 2009).

Qualitative method approaches research in a holistic manner by moving away from the cause and effect relationship that quantitative research seeks to uncover (Njie & Asimiran, 2014). However, qualitative research also allows the researcher to be subjective (Ratner, 2002). Peck & Mummery (2017) explain that qualitative research takes a multi-faceted approach to research by drawing ideas from various thoughts and disciplines to provide rich insights into the experiences of individuals, groups, societies or civilisations. Thus, it takes the stories and experiences of people as very important as opposed to the goal of quantitative which usually seeks to generalize its findings. Quantitative research is usually faulted for not taking the unique experiences of research subjects into consideration. This is where qualitative research shines. Thus, qualitative research method is appropriately added to make up for the static approach of the quantitative method as it seeks to establish the denotations and connotations embedded in images shared during the #BlackLivesMatter George Floyd protests in 2020 and the Nigerian #EndSARS protests in 2020.

3.2.1 Research Method: Content Analysis

The method for analysis used in this research is content analysis. Conclusively, SNSs contain some of the largest hubs of information for users and researchers alike (Desai & Han, 2019). As a result, SNSs like Twitter provide access to information for professional and academic purposes, including leisure (Collins & Karami, 2018). One of the many ways researchers access the large texts shared on social media is content analysis as it enables researchers to be privy to the type of content shared and re-shared by users (Desai & Han, 2019).

Content analysis is said to employ abstraction to reduce and categorize data, a process that allows researchers to answer their research questions using concepts, categories

or themes (Kyngäs, 2019). Qualitative content analysis has often been used in media studies as media studies relies on media texts for analysis. In content analysis, the analysis can be performed by grouping texts into categories or themes where categories comprise of similar codes that are sorted in the same group while the themes unify the codes by bringing meaning to the grouped categories in a holistic manner (Britt-MarieLindgren, Lundman, & Graneheim, 2020). In this research, similar codes are grouped under the denotative category while the themes are discussed using the icon, index and symbol according to the Peircean semiotics tradition. The categorization is elaborated in the next section.

3.3 Instruments of Data Collection: Visual Semiotics

Visual semiotics provides a structural version of semiotics. It recognizes all types of messages as text which encourages research that intends to establish meaning in visual communication (Eco, 1979). The reason for this is founded in the semiotic principle that the entire human experience is an interpretive structure which is mediated and sustained by signs. In addition, Roland Barthes explains that images are polysemous suggesting that they carry multiple meanings which allow their readers to choose which elements to read and which to ignore (Fiske, 1990). The research combines Roland Barthes' visual semiotics and iconography because while it is important to look at the image itself, it is equally important to study the context behind images and their circulation (Leeuwen & Jewitt, 2001).

As such, in the images that will be analyzed for this research, the study will be using Roland Barthes' re-conceptualization of Saussure's two step signification process by using the denotation and connotation layers;

Denotation: What and who is depicted in this image?

Connotation: What ideas are being expressed in the image?

In semiotic research, analysis is done by exploring the words or images that make up the media text and this will encompass all the elements of the physical world in an image that would require the use of all five senses of the semiotician (Martin, 2014). That is why the use of denotation and connotation is crucial in this research. Denotation will help the researcher accurately describe the elements of the image. It includes such things as the appearance of objects in a photo, number of elements, distinct face marks etc. On the other hand, connotation will enable the researcher to infuse the element of iconography, indexicality and symbolism into this research. It helps to explain the ideas and values that are attached by the spectator to the images he/she is looking at and it also questions the rationale for attaching these ideas and values. That is to say, while visual semiotics will be used to collect data, the index, icon and symbol will be used to analyze the data (see appendix 1 for more details on this).

3.4 Sampling Technique

The paper uses convenience sampling to select the first 60 images that emerge from the Twitter search query of tweets posted with the hashtags, #BlackLivesMatter and #EndSARS between 25th May 2020 and 31st October 2020. This period was purposely selected because George Floyd's death occurred on 25th May 2020 while the #EndSARS protests in Nigeria revived on 3rd October 2020. In total, 120 images will be used in this research. Since this is a qualitative research, the goal is not to generalize but to understand how images are used in both case studies.

The use of convenience sampling of the pictures is because Twitter algorithm randomly curates tweets and brings them up when someone authorizes a search. Since what will come up is already randomly shown, convenience sampling is an appropriate choice of method. To collate data for the study there, Twitter advanced search settings were used. The settings allowed the researcher to manually input each hashtag separate in the query box while restricting the search period from 25th May 2020 to 31st October 2020. As the results appeared, the researcher proceeded to manually save the images. Posts that contained the same images were discarded in order to avoid data redundancy. Images for each hashtag were saved in separate folders and were numbered. The coding process followed the chronological order in which they were saved.

3.5 Ethical Implications

For any research that has to do with humans, the researcher must deal with the issue of consent (Ahmed, Bath, & Demartini, 2017; Weinhardt, 2021). This becomes challenging for the researcher whose data is gotten from internet users. In this research, this ethical problem does not arise because no internet user is identified in the research.

Chapter 4

DATA ANALYSIS

A successful research activity culminates in an analysis of data and presentation of findings. Here, the research has the opportunity to prove the validity of previous arguments made in the study to the readers. To perform this, the study uses the qualitative approach to answer the questions; what are the denotative similarities between images shared on Twitter in the BLM and EndSARS protests between 25th May 2020 and 3rd October 2020?; what are the similarities in physiognomic attributes in images shared in the BLM and EndSARS hashtags between 25th May 2020 and 3rd October 2020?; what are the similarities in icon, index and symbols between images shared in the BLM and EndSARS protests between 25th May 2020 and 3rd October 2020? To answer the questions, 120 protest images were retrieved on Twitter via the hashtags, #EndSARS and #BLM. As such, 60 images were retrieved from each hashtag. The retrieval period for both hashtags is from 25th May 2020 to 3rd October 2020. This chapter therefore presents the results of the qualitative analysis performed on data as well as the discussion of findings. Analysis of the data was performed using SPSS 4.0.

4.1 Presentation of Data and Analysis

4.1.1 Denotative Similarities Between Images Shared on Twitter in the BLM and EndSARS Protests in 2020?

Using Roland Barthes' visual semiotics, assessment of denotative qualities of the images used in the research was performed by separately looking at the visual

characters and physiognomic attributes of the images (Martin, 2014). These visual characters include objects, dressing and hairstyles while the physiognomic attributes include face features present in images. These attributes are relevant to semiotics because they enable the typification process by using common cultural codes that can be used to assess meaning from an image (Leeuwen, 2001). Examples of such visual stereotypes include headgear/headwrap that is commonly used among women of African descent, hijab that is commonly used among Muslim women, Afro hairstyles or dreadlocks, face piercings, tattoos etc. These attributes are important in semiotics study because they provide codes for the researcher to easily origins of such codes and this can subsequently influence the iconography, indexicality and symbolism of the images. Thus, the research question will be answered by looking at the similarities between attributes in both campaigns. These similarities will therefore be presented in tabular format as seen below;

Table 1: Crosstabulation of Objects in BLM and EndSARS Protest Images

		Objects in BLM		Total
		Yes	No	
Objects in	Yes	Count	29	35
EndSARS		% within Objects in	82.9%	17.1%
		EndSARS		100.0%
	None	Count	19	25
		% within Objects in	76.0%	24.0%
		EndSARS		100.0%
Total		Count	48	60
		% within Objects in	80.0%	20.0%
		EndSARS		100.0%

In Table 1 above, it is gathered that from the protest images retrieved from the EndSARS hashtag, 58.4% (35) contained objects in them while 48 (80%) images retrieved from the BLM hashtag contained objects in them. Thus, protest images from the BLM hashtag had more objects than protest images retrieved from the EndSARS hashtag during the selected period of study. This also reveals that the images that were without objects were significantly lower than the images that had objects in them.

Table 2: Crosstabulation of Images that Showed Dressing in BLM and EndSARS Hashtags

Dress	in	Yes	Dress in BLM		
			Yes	No	Total
EndSARS	Yes	Count	8	24	32
		% within EndSARS	25.0%	75.0%	100.0%
	No	Count	13	15	28
		% within EndSARS	46.4%	53.6%	100.0%
Total		Count	21	39	60
		% within EndSARS	35.0%	65.0%	100.0%

From the table above, it is revealed that about 35% ($n = 21$) images in BLM had some aspects of dressing revealed while 53.1% ($n = 32$) of protest images in EndSARS showed the dressing of protesters. Thus, it is concluded that EndSARS had more images with dressing than BLM. That is to say, BLM had more images that did not focus on dressing than its EndSARS protest counterpart.

Table 3: Crosstabulation of Hairstyles as Shown in BLM and EndSARS Protest Images

Hairstyles in	Yes	Hairstyles in BLM			
		Yes	No	Total	
EndSARS	Yes	Count	4	17	21
		% within EndSARS	19.0%	81.0%	100.0%
	No	Count	9	30	39

	% within EndSARS	23.1%	76.9%	100.0%
Total	Count	13	47	60
	% within EndSARS	21.7%	78.3%	100.0%

The table above shows that out of the 120 images retrieved for this study (60 for each hashtag), there were more images without hairstyles than there were images with hairstyles. For example, 35% (n = 21) of images in EndSARS had hairstyles as visual attributes in contrast to 65% (n=39) that did not contain any visible hairstyles. On the other hand, 21.5% (n = 13) of images in BLM had hairstyles in contrast to 78.3% (n=47) of images that did not reveal any hairstyles. This suggests that in protest images retrieved from both hashtags, there was less emphasis on hairstyles than there were images that focused on hairstyles. Furthermore, in all images, objects had a more combined significant percentage with 69.2 (n=83) and this is followed by dressing which had a combined percentage of 44.17 (n=53) while hairstyle has the least percentage with 28.33% (n=34). This shows that objects were a more common feature in all the images retrieved from the hashtags used in this study.

4.1.2 Similarities in Physiognomic Attributes

Comparing the art of self-reflection (phenomenology) to the art of facial perception which is also called physiognomy, Sotto (2019) concludes that the individual's ability to read texts influences their ability to read faces. This suggests that there is meaning in the face which can be read. Physiognomy in semiotics therefore refers to the ability to read recognize some qualities on the face (Sotto, 2019). It is also suggested that the ability to read faces is important for reading an individual's inner and invisible character (Kronshage, 2017). This study therefore draws on the arguments made by scholars about the importance of physiognomy to establish the relevance of facial attributes in protest images. This is because semiotics is largely meaning-making

practice and since protests usually involve despair, anger or dissent, physiognomy will be one of the most important things that can be used to determine feelings of protesters as revealed in shared protest images.

Table 4: Crosstabulation of Facial Features in BLM and EndSARS Hashtag

Features in EndSARS	Yes	Facial features in BLM			Total
		Yes	No	Total	
Count		4	8	12	
% within EndSARS		33.3%	66.7%	100.0%	
No	Count	7	41	48	
	% within EndSARS	14.6%	85.4%	100.0%	
Total	Count	11	49	60	
	% within EndSARS	18.3%	81.7%	100.0%	

In Table 4, the data shows that 18.3% (n=11) of the images highlighted facial features of either protesters or victims shown in the BLM images while 20% (n=12) of images in the EndSARS hashtag highlighted facial features of either protesters or victims shown in the images. Overall, there were more images without facial features than there were images with facial features as shown in the table. For example, a significant 81.7% (n=49) of images in BLM hashtag did not include images with protest pictures while 80% (n=48) of images in EndSARS hashtag did not highlight facial features. This suggests that facial features were not a significant part of the protest images in both protests.

Table 5: Similarities in Ideas Expressed in the Images in the BLM and EndSARS Hashtags

		Ideas expressed in BLM								Total
		Oppress ion	Equal ity	Justic e	Unity	Cour age	Stren gth	Self- promot ion	Others	
Oppression	Count	4	2	2	1	0	1	0	2	12

Ideas in EndSA	% within	33.3%	16.7	16.7	8.3%	0.0%	8.3%	0.0%	16.7%	100.0%
RS	Equality	Count	1	1	1	0	0	0	1	1
		%	20.0%	20.0	20.0	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	20.0%	100.0%
	Justice	Count	0	2	2	1	0	4	0	3
		%	0.0%	16.7	16.7	8.3%	0.0%	33.3	0.0%	25.0%
	Unity	Count	2	0	2	0	0	0	0	4
			50.0%	0.0%	50.0	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	100.0%
	Courage	Count	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	2
			50.0%	50.0	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	100.0%
	Strength	Count	2	2	2	0	0	0	0	6
			33.3%	33.3	33.3	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	100.0%
	Self-promotion	Count	2	0	2	1	0	0	0	5
			40.0%	0.0%	40.0	20.0	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	100.0%
	Others	Count	5	0	3	1	1	0	3	14
			35.7%	0.0%	21.4	7.1%	7.1%	0.0%	21.4%	100.0%
Total	Count	17	8	14	4	1	5	4	7	60
			28.3%	13.3	23.3	6.7%	1.7%	8.3%	6.7%	11.7%
			%	%	%					

Table 5 shows the most common ideas that were expressed in the images shared in the two hashtags studied in this research. These ideas were classified based on their frequency. Uncategorized ideas are the cumulative of various other ideas that did not have frequent appearances on their own but were included in the research because of their presence in the data set. In the table therefore, the variable with the highest frequency is oppression with 28.3% (n=17) in BLM protest images. For EndSARS images on the other hand, the percentage for oppression was lower as it had 20% (n=12) frequency in the data. The next item with the highest frequency on this table is

the justice variable which has 23.3% (n=14) in BLM hashtag while EndSARS hashtag has 20% (n=12) of the same variable within the dataset. This is closely followed by the ‘others’ category with 23.3% (n=14) of the images shared in EndSARS hashtag having diverse ideas that did not appear as frequently as others. For BLM, this variable occupies 11.7% (n=7). Strength has 10% (n=6) share in EndSARS data making it the fourth most frequent variable while it occupies 8.3% (n=5) in BLM data set. In BLM, equality has 13.3 (n=8) making it the fifth most frequent variable while it occupies 8.3% (n=5) in the EndSARS data. In EndSARS data, self-promotion variable 8.3% (n=5) in the data while the same occupies 6.7% (n=4) in BLM data. In both BLM and EndSARS, unity occupied 6.7% (n=4). Lastly, courage has 3.3% (n=2) in EndSARS while it occupies 1.7% (n=1). In order of frequency, it can be gathered that the most important variable in the dataset is oppression with 28.3% frequency while the least important variable is courage with 3.3%.

4.1.3 Similarities in Icon, Index and Symbols Between Images Shared in the BLM and EndSARS Hashtags

Icon, index and symbol were classifications developed by Charles Peirce who proposed that semiotics is synonymous with the concept of logic (Yakin & Totu, 2014). Together, the icon, index and symbol make up the three-dimensional system of the sign.

Table 6: Similarities in Icon, Index and Symbol in EndSARS and BLM Shared Images

		BLM			
EndSARS	Icon	Icon	Index	Symbol	Total
		Count	14	6	11
	Index	% within EndSARS	45.2%	19.4%	35.5%
		Count	7	2	0
	Symbol	% within EndSARS	77.8%	22.2%	0.0%
		Count	10	3	7
					20

	% within EndSARS	50.0%	15.0%	35.0%	100.0%
Total	Count	31	11	18	60
	% within EndSARS	51.7%	18.3%	30.0%	100.0%

The Table above compares the distribution of Peircean three-dimensional classification of sign in the EndSARS and BLM protest images retrieved for the study. The results show that icon had the highest frequency with 51.7% (n=31) of images in both BLM and EndSARS hashtags having mostly icons. Symbol has the second highest frequency with BLM images having 30% (n=18) while EndSARS images have 33.3% (n=20) icons. This makes index the classification with the lowest frequency for both hashtags having 18.3% (n=11) in BLM and 15% (n=9) in EndSARS hashtag. This means that there were more iconic elements in the images retrieved for this study than there were indexical and symbolic elements.

Since this is a qualitative study, is necessary to explain how these elements create meaning even though the analysis presents the distribution of the Peircean three-part classification of the sign. As a result, the chapter will proceed to exhaustively discuss these elements by using relevant examples from the data.

4.2 Qualitative Assessment of Data

Because meaning is socially learned, semiotic thrives on the ability of people to understand and respond to cues in texts (Barham, 2020). Peirce gives a steady progression from the icon to symbol (Barham, 2020). This study follows that pattern. But even though conventions are not required for people to understand and respond to signs, semiotics scholars still believe that there is need for deep reading in order to discern the aesthetic, cultural, emotional and moral meaning of a sign (Dunleavy, 2020). That is because of the diversity of the communication field and since this study

is a comparison between two similar hashtags that originated from two geographically, culturally, racially and ideologically different countries, it becomes important to carry out a deep reading of the signs in the protest image in order to discern their meaning as suggest by (Dunleavy, 2020). As such, some examples will be given from the data used in the study in order to provide some perspective (for a more elaborate explanation, please see Appendix I & II). In the course of a semiotic analysis, it is always important to expect some inter-relationship among the signs (Louwerse, 2011).

4.2.1 Iconography

In this study, icon is easily assessed from the pictures of protesting citizens. Today's digital space makes it accessible by the consensus that an icon represents an image after its own self (Barham, 2020). Following this logic, the images showing youths holding the Nigerian flag were iconic as they indicated that these were Nigerian youths on protest grounds. For example, an image gotten from EndSARS hashtag and used in this research shows a Nigerian youth standing on an elevated platform with two flags raised high in front consists of iconic cues. Under the picture is a caption from Nigeria's national anthem. In this picture, a direct connection is made between the call on the youths to arise and the youths arising to make their voices heard on the issue of police brutality.

Aesthetically, culturally, emotionally and morally, such an image above tells an elaborate story because it delves into the dynamic of how Nigerian youths perceive their citizenship within the Nigerian state. First, the spectator observing the picture can see an individual holding up two flags. One is a Nigerian flag while the other is an EndSARS flag. Secondly, the reader can read the words of the Nigerian national anthem. This is a cultural symbol because it requires prior knowledge of Nigeria's

national anthem to recognize this as a symbol. What this suggests however is an inter-relationship among the Peircean three-dimensions of the sign. As Louwerse (2011) contends, icons can have indexical or symbolic elements too. Indexically, the tag EndSARS signifies an end to police brutality. The line from Nigeria's national anthem draws into the Nigerian citizen's emotions because it strikes a cord of nationality which is also a call to rise in defence of rights while the last lines written on the image point to the moral responsibility of citizens to act. Lastly, the iconic representation of the clouds adds to the aesthetic elements of the picture. The dark hue symbolises a gloomy situation for the protesters while the swaying of the flag and the trees indexically suggests a wind while at the same time symbolising the new wave of events in the Nigerian state.

In BLM, an example of an iconic representation can be seen in an image that shows a young person standing on a car while waving a public address system. While this image is similar to that of the EndSARS protester standing on an elevated platform and holding up two flags, that there are also so many iconic signs in this BLM image. The spectator can see the buildings which indexically suggest that this is either a residential area or a commercial hub, the water in between the protester's legs suggest the physical strain that protesters subject themselves to while protesting on the streets; the car bears an image of itself while the BLM flag, like the EndSARS flag seen in the previous illustration symbolises an end to police brutality against blacks. Indexically, the public address speaker in the hand of protester illustrates the need to be heard. In contrast to the previous image, the sky in this picture is bright and optimistic for the future.



Figure 5: A BLM Protester (MalMccann, 2020)

4.2.2 Indexes and Connotations

In line with arguments made in the preceding sections of this chapter, a sign can be an icon, index and symbol at the same time. To illustrate this point, Louwerse (2011) uses a sheepdog that a child might be exposed to as a baby while learning words. After coming to understanding the meaning of dog and seeing it as an icon that represents a dog (for example, a domestic dog or man's best friend), as the child grows older, it will be able to associate the word dog with the icon that it learnt as a child. Similarly, indexical associations for the term 'dog' will come to be formed in the child as it meets other dogs (neighbour's dog, friend's dog, a dog in the park et.c) until the word 'dog' becomes a symbol for 'dog' on its own. In this regard, a dog has become an icon, an index and a symbol for that child. Following this logic, this study refers once more to the flags that were waved to serve as an index for Nigeria.

The Nigerian flag is identified by its colours which are colours green-white-green. As an icon, a flag is being held up by one of the many protestors during the EndSARS protests. As stated previously, the Nigerian flag is an icon as well as index (depending on the various sizes or forms in which the green-white-green designs are seen for instance, the T shirt being worn by the person in the picture illustrates this example because a Nigerian citizen will always associate it with the Nigerian flag) and it is a symbol at the same time. However, the blood stains on the flag signify death or danger for anyone reading the flag. In BLM hashtag, an example of the index can also be seen in an example of a BLM message that is painted on a major road;



Figure 6: A Street Painting of BLM Coloured in LGBTQ+ Rainbow Colours
(Schrader, 2020)

Since gay-rights activist, Gilbert Baker designed the LGBTQ+ rainbow flag in 1970, the rainbow has come to be known as a signifier for the LGBTQ+ community (Bitterman, 2021). As seen in figure 6 above, the words are scribbled in the gay rainbow colour, adding the determining word, 'all' to indicate an inclusion of the black

LGBTQ+ in the BLM movement. In this regard therefore, the rainbow colour can be seen as both an index for the LGBTQ+ and symbol for the community at the same time.

4.2.3 Symbols

A number of shared images in the protest had the image of a fisted hand which is a symbol for power. Although the origin of the clenched fist is still debatable (Goodnow, 2006), the fisted hand has come to be associated with protest movements (especially black movements) around the world. It is globally recognized as a rallying call against any form of oppression or injustice (Osei-Kof, Licona, & Chávez, 2018). A consistent pattern of raising the clenched fist was observed in the data retrieved for this study.

Example can be seen below;



Figure 7: A map of Africa symbolically represented in Nigerian national colours with the power symbol breaking into it (Smith, 2020)

In the image above, the clenched fist is seen breaking into the map of Africa. As argued, this is a symbolic invitation to the youths to rise in unity against oppression. Even though this is a Nigerian campaign as symbolized by the green-white-green, the

picture above acknowledges that this is a common problem in the African continent therefore the breaking of the fisted hand into the African map stands as a symbol that Nigerians are taking the charge in the fight against police brutality in Africa. The picture below illustrates the use of the clenched fist in the BLM hashtag;

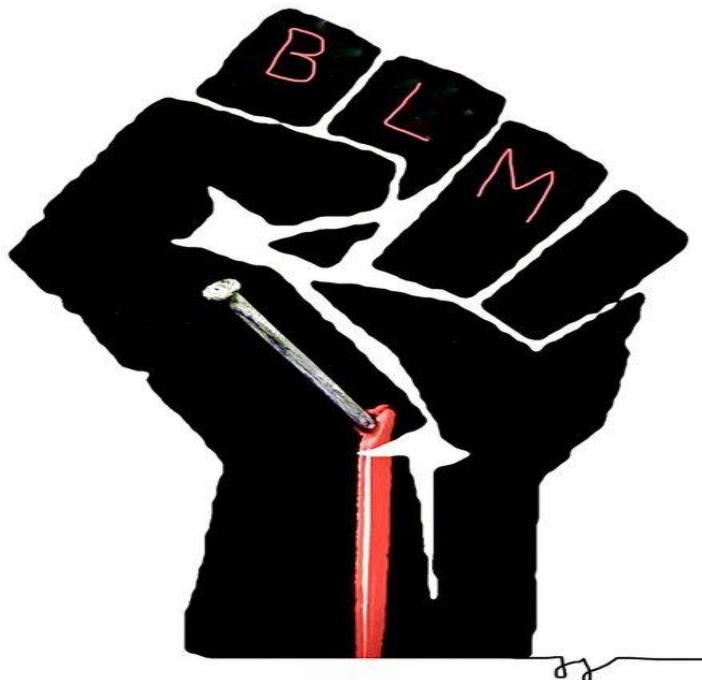


Figure 8: A Mural of BLM with the Power Fist (Josselyn, 2020)

Figure 8 above boldly shows the clenched fist in support of the fight against police brutality. The image itself contains elements that warrant an explanation. In this image, the spectator can see a nail piercing through the wrist of the clenched hand, with blood dripping down. This signifies pain and suffering that can even lead to death since blood signifies life. Also, the letters BLM are written on the fingers which reflect the message that black lives should be regarded as important. The sentiment in this image is the hope that this kind of protest could create more awareness on justice and equality which is a common sentiment in both EndSARS and BLM hashtags.

4.3 Discussion of Findings

The research set out to answer three questions. The analysis of the data retrieved for this study attempted to show the denotative similarities between images shared on Twitter in the BLM and EndSARS hashtags; the physiognomic similarities between attributes shared in the BLM and EndSARS hashtags and the iconic, indexical and symbolic similarities in the images retrieved from the BLM and EndSARS hashtags.

RQ1: What are the denotative similarities between images shared on Twitter in the BLM and EndSARS protests between 25 May 2020 and 31st October 2020?

Answering the research question was performed by separating the three denotative elements of Barthes' visual semiotics (Martin, 2014). To this end, analysis performed on the data retrieved for the research looked at physical qualities like objects, dressing and hairstyles depicted in the images. From the analysis, the research found that it is gathered that from the protest images retrieved, 58.4% (n=35) of images in EndSARS had objects in them while 80% (n=48) images retrieved from the BLM hashtag contained objects in them. This suggests that more than half of the protest images retrieved from both hashtags had objects in them. However, protest images from the BLM hashtag had more objects than protest images retrieved from the EndSARS hashtag during the selected period of study.

The subject of dressing is regarded as an important way to articulate the identity of subjects within a picture because they serve as cultural signifiers (Ajah & Egege, 2017). As such, in order to establish similarities in presence of 'dressing' as a denotative element of visual semiotics, a separate analysis was performed and this revealed that about 35% (n = 21) images in BLM had some aspects of dressing

revealed while 53.1% (n = 32) of protest images in EndSARS showed the dressing of protesters. It then follows that EndSARS had more images that showed some form of dressing than BLM. In other words, BLM had less images that showed some form of dressing than images retrieved from the EndSARS hashtag.

In visual semiotics, hairstyles are argued to possess cultural traits that could be developed and determined through a communicative system of form and content which not only narrates the story of people living at a particular time in history but is also part of a two-way communication process that involves the sender which in this case is the individual with the hairstyle and the recipient (Svetlichnaya, 2018). Even though hairstyles are found to be important for communication, this study did not find hairstyles to be relevant staples in the data retrieved for the study. For example, only 35% (n = 21) of images in EndSARS had hairstyles as visual attributes in contrast to 65% (n=39) that did not contain any visible hairstyles. BLM had a lesser percentage of images with hairstyles as the results show that only 21.5% (n = 13) of images in BLM had hairstyles in contrast to 78.3% (n=47) of images which did not reveal any hairstyles. As such, less images contained the hairstyles elements of visual semiotics in both BLM and EndSARS.

RQ2: What are the similarities in physiognomic attributes in images shared in the BLM and EndSARS hashtags between 25 May 2020 and 31st October 2020?

From the results, less images had physiognomic elements like the facial features in both BLM and EndSARS as a significant 81.7% (n=49) of images in BLM hashtag and 80% (48) in EndSARS did not include images with protest pictures did not highlight facial features. As such, there is great similarities between both hashtags in

terms of less attention to facial features as revealed in the data collated for the study. As stated earlier, physiognomy is important in semiotics because it affords the practitioner the room to study the character and invisible aspect of an individual (Sotto, 2019; Kronshage, 2017). With the less emphasis on physiognomic attributes seen in the shared images that were used in this research, it can be concluded that it was not possible to determine the emotions and feelings people shown in the images used in the study.

In order of frequency, it can be gathered that the most important variable in the dataset is oppression with 28.3% frequency while the least important variable is courage with 3.3%. This shows some similarities between both hashtags as oppression appeared as the most relevant variable that emerged from the results.

RQ3: What are the similarities in icon, index and symbols between images shared in the BLM and EndSARS hashtags between 25 May 2020 and 31st October 2020?

The results show that icon had the highest frequency with 51.7% (n=31) of images in both BLM and EndSARS hashtags having mostly icons. It is important to note that images retrieved for the study had more than one iconic symbol embedded within the images. Symbol has the second highest frequency with BLM images having 30% (n=18) while EndSARS images have 33.3% (n=20) icons. This makes index the classification with the lowest frequency for both hashtags having 18.3% (n=11) in BLM and 15% (n=9) in EndSARS hashtag.

Chapter 5

SUMMARY, CONCLUSION & RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Summary

This investigation was carried out to uncover the similarities, if any, and the differences between two police-abuse-related campaigns on two that occurred on Twitter. The campaigns, #BLM in the United States and #EndSARS in Nigeria which are similar in their fight for justice and fairness in the discharge of police duties could still be expected to be different in their ideology and approach for a number of reasons. First, geographically and culturally, there are social structures which each country has that the other lacks. Furthermore, the experiences, while very close may yet differ. For example, the United States has a history of slavery that spans across decades which took civil liberties away from their black slaves and which were returned in the 1960s after years of struggles. Even though these rights have been restored to the Black citizens of America, a systemic structure of slavery has ensured a continuation of some practices that were common during the era of slavery. In Nigeria, the colonial era passed on an abusive police structure that was initially created to subdue the Nigerian populace in order to protect the interests of the colonial masters of the time. This structure continued even after independence. These conditions gave rise to the BLM and #EndSARS movements respectfully. Both movements are also similar in their length of activism. While BLM officially started in 2014, EndSARS started in 2017 and both campaigns have always risen up to challenge the system anytime the need arose. For instance, the most recent BLM uprising occurred in 2020 after the death of

George Floyd while the most recent EndSARS uprising occurred in 2020 after a video surfaced online showing some police officers abusing an unarmed man and allegedly running away in the victim's car. In both instances, the videos that surfaced online spurred significant conversation across the globe, thereby making a valid case for a police restructuring. In spite of the similarities of both campaigns, which have engineered significant academic interest, this study was conducted to fill in a gap that has been left open by previous research. The research approaches the subject through a semiotic perspective by looking at the denotative and physiognomic attributes of the images shared on Twitter which the hashtags that represented both campaigns. Furthermore, the study also looked at the icon, index and symbols embedded in the shared images on Twitter. As a result, the research employed qualitative tools to assess the semiotic qualities of the shared images of both movements.

5.2 Conclusion

Everyday, we interact with media messages in many forms even though we are unconscious of this interaction (Bignell, 2002). This interaction also draws from meanings we make out of the media messages we encounter. This is even more significant in our interaction with images. The literature in this research reveal the relevance of images in civil/social since the increased initiation of social media platforms by activists for their activist campaigns. As stated in the literature, Segerberg & Bennett (2011) show that from 2009, activists, police and the media have increased their use of social media for communication, monitoring and mobilization activities. This has garnered the interest of researchers as there is evidence to show consistency in the investigation of the role of SNSs in promoting social protests like BLM and EndSARS. Protests on social media enable protesters, researchers and observers alike to watch the events as they are happening in real time (Jost, et al., 2018). This is done

through images. As reflected in Castells (2015), social media give groups that were previously marginalized the communicative power they need by enabling them to create and set their own narratives on issues that affect them. As such, this empowers them to create counter-power.

In light of the arguments made above, the study asks questions that determine the similarities and differences between BLM and EndSARS campaigns. The questions raised in the research were qualitatively answered by collecting images shared on Twitter within the BLM and EndSARS hashtags. 120 images were collected for this endeavour using a coding sheet. The coding sheet used in the study was designed following Roland Barthes' visual semiotics. Specifically, the research answers the following questions;

1. What are the denotative similarities between images shared on Twitter in the BLM and EndSARS protests between 25 May 2020 and 31st October 2020?

To answer this question, the images collected for the research were assessed by separately looking at the visual characters and physiognomic attributes of the images (Martin, 2014). The visual attributes that were evaluated in the research include objects, dressing and hairstyles while the physiognomic attributes include face features present in images. These attributes are relevant to semiotics because they enable the typification process by using common cultural codes that can be used to assess meaning from an image (Leeuwen, 2001).

From the analysis, it can be gathered from the data from the EndSARS hashtag, that 58.4% (35) contained objects in them while 48 (80%) images retrieved from the BLM hashtag contained objects in them. Thus, protest images from the BLM hashtag had

more objects than protest images retrieved from the EndSARS hashtag during the selected period of study. This also reveals that the images that were without objects were significantly lower than the images that had objects in them.

Furthermore, the analysis revealed that there was more focus of dressing in EndSARS images that were collected than there were dress-related images in BLM hashtag. In this regard, about 35% ($n = 21$) images in BLM had some aspects of dressing revealed while 53.1% ($n = 32$) of protest images in EndSARS showed the dressing of protesters. From this evidence, the research argues that dress-related images were more prevalent in EndSARS related images because physical appearance was argued to be one of the many reasons cited by members of the Nigerian police for harassing unarmed young people in Nigeria. In addition, there more images without hairstyles than there were images with hairstyles in the images. As such, this suggests that of the 120 images retrieved for this study, the physical appearance of protesters was not the focus in the images shared.

2. What are the similarities in physiognomic attributes in images shared in the BLM and EndSARS hashtags between 25 May 2020 and 31st October 2020?

Drawing on the arguments made by scholars about the importance of physiognomy to establish the relevance of facial attributes in protest images. This is because semiotics is largely meaning-making practice and since protests usually involve despair, anger or dissent, physiognomy will be one of the most important things that can be used to determine feelings of protesters as revealed in shared protest images.

This study reveals that facial qualities of the protesters in the images shared in the protests were not the central focus of the protests. This conclusion is drawn from the fact that there were more images without facial features than there were images with facial features as shown in the table. A significant 81.7% (n=49) of images in BLM hashtag did not include images with protest pictures while 80% (n=48) of images in EndSARS hashtag did not highlight facial features. In this regard, there is a significant similarity between both campaigns in terms of physiognomic attributes of the images retrieved for the study.

3. What are the similarities in icon, index and symbols between images shared in the BLM and EndSARS hashtags between 25 May 2020 and 31st October 2020?

To answer this question, a qualitative analysis was performed using Peircean tradition of semiotics which inculcates the three-dimension of the sign to analyse media texts. The results show that icon had the highest frequency with 51.7% (n=31) of images in both BLM and EndSARS hashtags having mostly icons. Symbol has the second highest frequency with BLM images having 30% (n=18) while EndSARS images have 33.3% (n=20) icons. This makes index the classification with the lowest frequency for both hashtags having 18.3% (n=11) in BLM and 15% (n=9) in EndSARS hashtag. This means that there were more iconic elements in the images retrieved for this study than there were indexical and symbolic elements. From the examples given in the analysis section of the preceding chapter, a direct connection is made between the call on Nigerian youths to arise as noted in Nigeria's national anthem and the protest-related activities that some youths engaged in during the EndSARS protests.

An indexical example given in this research can be drawn from a BLM message that is painted on a major street in a state in the United States. The message which says BLACK LIVES MATTER is scribbled in rainbow colours to indicate inclusivity in the movement. As it is known by now, the rainbow colour is significantly attached to the LGBTQAI+ community therefore the painting of the message in the rainbow colours bears some indexical connotation.

For the third dimension of Peircean tradition, the most symbolic sign this study establishes is that of the power fist which has come to be associated with black movements across the globe. The fisted hand was a consistent staple in the images analysed for the study as it was seen in various images shared on Twitter.

Conclusively, the study submits that protest-related images communicate meaning to consumers of media images in ways that can influence their reaction to the protest or social cause. This submission is drawn from the argument made by Ryan (2012) who argues that people are drawn to images in order to be adequately informed about important issues. Besides, Corrigall-Brown & Wilkes (2012) also argues that protest-related images have helped to frame issues for non-participants who are following the protests. This suggest that images shared in protests play an important role for the activists/people who are involved in the protests. This position is further buttressed by Kharroub & Bas (2016) who showed that protest-related images that show crowds of protesters, religious or national symbols elicited more desired responses from people following the protests than other kinds of images. This is because protest-related images have been established to capture the attention of the public. In light of this, the study argues that images shared in the BLM and EndSARS protests were instrumental in attracting the global attention the protests elicited. This argument is drawn from the

immediate causes of the 2020 protests of both BLM and EndSARS from which this study is restricted to.

5.3 Recommendations

Since this study was restricted to images from the 2020 protests, the study recommends that a more elaborate research that expands the research period should be conducted to provide a robust understanding of the layered similarities and differences between the images shared in both protests. This is because there are nuances that can be elicited from the cultural differences which the study did not take into consideration. Future studies can provide more understanding of this limitation by investigating how culture affected the physical and physiognomic attributes shared in the images that were shared on Twitter. Also, future studies can try to compare the similarities between images from both movements shared on Twitter and other social media platforms to uncover the type of images shared and the context provided in the shared posts.

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APPENDICES

Appendix 1: ENDSARS

S/N	Denotation				
	What do I see?				
	Visual stereotypes			Physiognomic attribute	
	Objects	Dress	Hairstyles	Face features	Outward appearance
1	-	-	-	-	A map of Africa drawn in Nigeria's green-white-green against a black background with a power fist breaking into the map
2	Yes	Yes	Braids	Make-up (bullet wounds)	A young lady in white dress is holding a blood-stained flag close to her face which has been cleverly painted to look like she has been shot on her forehead and her cheek. The date 20-10-2020 is written on the flag
3	No	No	None	None (it's a data map)	Infographic data showing the petition statistics over time
4	No	Yes	Yes	None	Headshot of four individuals that have been illegally detained
5	No	Yes	No	No	Not emphasized
6	Yes	No	No	No	None
7	Yes	Yes	No	None	They are all dressed in black with their heads mostly looking down
8	No	No	No	None	The young lady's appearance is drowned in the dark hue of the poster. *captioned image
9	Yes	Yes	No	No	Captioned image
10	None	None	None	None	Captioned image
11	No	No	No	No	Captioned image
12	No	No	No	No	Captioned image
13	No	No	No	No	Captioned image
14	Yes	No	Yes	None	Captioned image
15	Yes	Yes	No	None	Thugs and the police in one setting
16	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Two ladies in front of a police truck
17	No	No	No	No	Captioned image
18	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Protesters running away from water cannon trucks
19	No	No	No	No	Bullet shell
20	No	Shirtless	Yes	No	Captioned image
21	No	No	No	No	A cake
22	Yes	Shirtless	Yes	Yes	A young artist
23	No	Yes (green-white-green shirt)	No	No	A young man standing with his back to the camera holding up a blood-stained Nigerian flag

24	Yes	Yes (EndSARS design on T-shirt)	Yes	No	A young lady at an event wearing a shirt that has green- white-green fist and EndSARS in front of the shirt
25	Yes	No	No	No	Wrist-watches positioned to spell #EndSARS
26	No	No	No	No	Google route
27	No	No	No	No	A dove resting on the date 20- 10-2020
28	Yes	No	Yes	No	A celebrity marching with a placard
29	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	A young protester holding up a placard that calls for an end to killings
30	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	A young lady with a placard that calls for better police welfare
31	No	No	No	No	A hand holding a poster that says #EndSARS
32	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	A young man with a placard that tells a story
33	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	A child with a chain tied around his neck
34	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	A young protester
35	No	No	No	No	Captioned image
36	No	Yes	Yes	No	Captioned image
37	Yes	No	No	No	A blood-stained flag covering a body
38	Yes	Yes	No	No	A multitude of protesters
39	Yes	Yes	No	No	A line of protesters linked arm in arm showing solidarity
40	No	No	No	No	A power fist
41	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	A celebrity holding a poster while also showing the power fist
42	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	A young lady stands out among a crowd of protesters, holding up a banner
43	Yes	Yes	No	No	A young protester having a conversation with a police officer. The officer's antagonizing finger in the protester's face indicates that they are having an argument
44	No	No	No	No	A hand raised before a flying flag
45	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	The caricatures are all dressed in white
46	No	No	No	No	A flag with bloody fonts that show the date, 20.10.2020
47	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Some protesters are dressed in modern fashion while others are dressed in traditional Nigerian attire for going to the mosque

48	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	A young lady in black holding up a placard
49	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	The young protester's face is covered with a bandana
50	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	A blood stained green-white-green cloth covers the face of a protester whose forehead also has two drops of blood dripping
51	Yes	Yes	No	No	A protesting youth in modern outfit
52	No	Yes	No	No	The picture of death on a carriage, led by four horses that represent three ethnic regions of Nigeria
53	No	No	No	No	Captioned image with the date 20.10.2020
54	Yes	No	No	No	A worn-out, dirty looking hand that has a rusty chain tied around it
55	No	No	No	No	Captioned image
56	Yes	Yes	No	No	A young man standing in front of Che Guevara's poster
57	No	No	No	No	A group of protesters
58	Yes	No	No	No	A heavily misted image that suggests that tear gas has been shot at protesters
59	Yes	No	No	No	The protesters are dressed in modern outfits while the woman that leads them is dressed in a long hijab
60	Yes	No	No	No	The protester's back is turned to the camera

Isotopy

S/N	Objects	Actors
1	Flag, Power fist	None
2	Flag	Young girl (protester)
3	None	None
4	Headshots	Four individuals (imprisoned victims)
5	No emphasis	A multitude of young people (protesters)
6	Billboard	None
7	Placards, water	Mostly young men (protesters)
8	None	A young lady (protester)
9	Placards	Young men (protesters)

10	None	Dead victim
11	Headshot	Victims (imprisoned)
12	Banner	Protesters
13	Globe	None
14	Laptop	A young boy and a SARS officer
15	Sticks, clubs, guns	Thugs and the police
16	Police truck	Two ladies
17	Banner, placards, power fist	Protesters
18	Nose masks	Protesters
19	Bullet shell	None
20	None	A young man
21	Cake	A female figure
22	A guitar	A young man (artiste)
23	A flag	A young man (protester)
24	Microphone, lights	A young lady
25	Wrist-watches	None
26	None	None
27	A dove	None
28	A placard	A celebrity in protest (Burna Boy)
29	A placard	A young man (protester)
30	A placard, Nigerian flag	A Young lady (protester)
31	A hand, a poster	None
32	A placard	A young man (victim's friend)
33	A slave chain	A crying child
34	Flag	Protester (victim)
35	Poster	None
36	Poster	A victim
37	Flag	The body of a victim
38	A pigeon, a billboard	Protesters
39	Nose masks, purses, posters	Protesters
40	A painted hand	None
41	Poster	Celebrity in protest (Nancy Isime)
42	Poster, banner, T shirt	A young lady (protester)
43	Flag, vehicle	A young man (protester), a police officer
44	Wrist watch, bracelet, flag, the hand of a young protester	None
45	A falling placard with the words 'we are not lazy', stones, bricks	Caricatures of 9 people
46	Flag	None
47	Flag, banners, cars, shoes, mats	Protesters
48	Placard, banner	A young lady (protester)

49	Billboard, T shirt	A young man (protester)
50	Bloodied cloth	Protester
51	A poster	Protester
52	Carriage	Death
53	Captioned image	Caption
54	Chain	None
55	Captioned image	None
56	Poster	A young man (protester)
57	Feminist coalition symbol	A multitude of protesters
58	Phone, placard, Nose mask	Protesters running
59	Nose mask, placard, public address mic	Protesters led by a woman
60	Flags	A young boy (protester)

S/N	Connotation	
	Who do I see?	What ideas are expressed in the image?
1	-	The power fist is a symbol of protest against oppression. The placement of the fist within the map of Africa which is coloured in green-white-green may suggest that this is an African struggle with specific emphasis on Nigeria. The black background may be drawn from Africa's image as a black continent.
2	A young lady	This is solidarity for the alleged victims of the Lekki shooting that occurred on 20/10/2020.
3		Information
4		Calls for the freedom of our individuals illegally detained with details about their detention
5	A crowd of protesting youths	Hope in the future
6	Billboard	A message about the October 20 attack/Justice
7	Young people sitting on the floor	A sit-out protest that signifies tiredness. The all-black either signifies feelings of loss/hopelessness, mourning or black power. The visible placard carries the word #EndSARS on it/Oppression
8	A young lady crying with her face tilted upwards to the sky	Loss and hopelessness/Oppression
9	Young men sitting on the floor accompanied by a caption	Justice
10	Shows the image of a victim that was killed by the police	Call for justice
11	Shows three protesters that	Call for justice

	were arrested and detained during protests	
12	Protesting youths	Call for justice
13	Nobody.	Call for protests
14	A young man and a police officer	Self-promotion
15	Thugs and the police	Government sponsorship of violence/Oppression
16	Two ladies	Crowd dispersal
17	Captioned image	Information
18	Young people running away from a police truck that is shooting water to disperse the crowd	Crowd dispersal
19	A bullet shell that seems to have landed in someone's street	Oppression
20	Track list	Self-promotion
21	An #EndSARS cake	Self-promotion
22	An artiste	Self-promotion
23	A young man holding a Nigerian flag	Struggle/Equality
24	A young lady	Self-promotion
25	Wrist-watches	Justice delayed
26	None	Information
27	None	Death
28	Celebrity (Burna Boy)	Celebrity support
29	A young protester	End to police brutality
30	A young protester	Better police welfare package
31	A protester's hand	#EndSARS
32	A young protester	Injustice
33	A child	Oppression
34	A protester	Call for justice
35	A poster	Information
36	A poster	Call for justice
37	A blood-stained flag	Oppression
38	A group of protesters	End to brutality/semantic power
39	A group of protesters	Resilience/semantic power
40	A fist	Strength
41	A poster	Celebrity support
42	A protester holding up a banner	Equality/End to police brutality

43	A protester and a police officer	Courage
44	There is no face. Rather, there is a hand showing the power fist	Power
45	Caricature of 7 people lifting what seems to be the body of a victim, a caricature of another man that doesn't seem to care is shown standing beside them	Oppression
46	No actors. A bloodied Nigerian flag	Killing
47	Young Muslim protesters are praying on the ground while other protesters wait for them	Unity
48	A young lady holding up a placard with words that suggest she might be an entrepreneur	Oppression
49	A young man standing in front of protesters	Strength
50	A protester's face	Defeat
51	A protester	Injustice
52	A grave looking figure with victims in the back of the carriage	Failed state
53	Captioned image	Death
54	A hand bound by chains	Oppression
55	Captioned image	Semantic claims
56	A young man stands in front of Che Guevara's image	Warfare/power
57	An artistic assembling of protesters that	Unity

	come together to form the power fist	
58	Young protesters are running away from the tear gas	Crowd dispersal/oppression
59	Protesters are locked arm-in-arm as renowned activist, Aisha Yesufu leads	Unity and strength
60	A protester with his back against the camera as he waves two flags	Courage

Icon, index and symbol

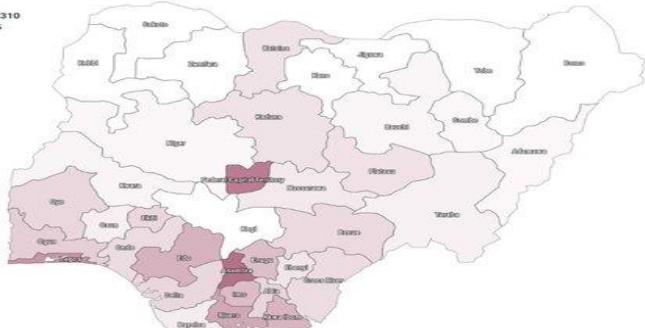
S/N	Icon	Index	Symbol
1	-	Yes	Yes
2	Yes	Yes	-
3	Yes	-	-
4	Yes	-	-
5	Yes	-	-
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7	Yes	-	-
8	Yes	-	-
9	Yes	-	-
10	Yes	-	-
11	Yes	-	-
12	Yes	-	-
13	-	-	Yes
14	-	Yes	-
15	Yes	-	-
16	Yes	-	-
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19		Yes	-
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21	Yes	-	Yes
22	Yes	-	-
23	-	Yes	-
24	Yes	-	-
25	-	-	Yes
26	-	-	Yes
27	-	Yes	Yes
28	-	-	Yes
29	Yes	-	-
30	Yes	-	-
31	-	-	Yes
32	Yes	-	-
33	-	-	Yes
34	-	-	Yes

35	-	-	Yes
36	Yes	-	-
37	-	-	Yes
38	-	Yes	Yes
39	Yes	-	Yes
40	-	-	Yes
41	Yes	-	-
42	Yes	-	-
43	Yes	-	-
44	-	-	Yes
45	-	-	Yes
46	-	-	Yes
47	Yes	-	-
48	Yes	-	-
49	Yes	-	-
50	-	-	Yes
51	Yes	-	-
52	-	-	Yes
53	-	Yes	-
54	-	-	Yes
55	-	-	Yes
56	Yes	-	-
57	-	-	Yes
58	Yes	Yes	-
59	Yes	-	Yes
60	Yes	-	Yes



#ENDSARS
JUDICIAL PANEL OF INQUIRY
ALL-TIME PETITIONS: NOV 2020 - MARCH 2021

Dataphyte



Sources: EIE and Yiaga Africa

Dataphyte.com

Dataphyte

DataphyteNG



SAMUEL OJO

(Dumped in Prison for breaking No Law)

AYODELE IBUKUN

(Lost 3 Months Pregnancy in Prison)

KEMISOLA OGUNNIYI

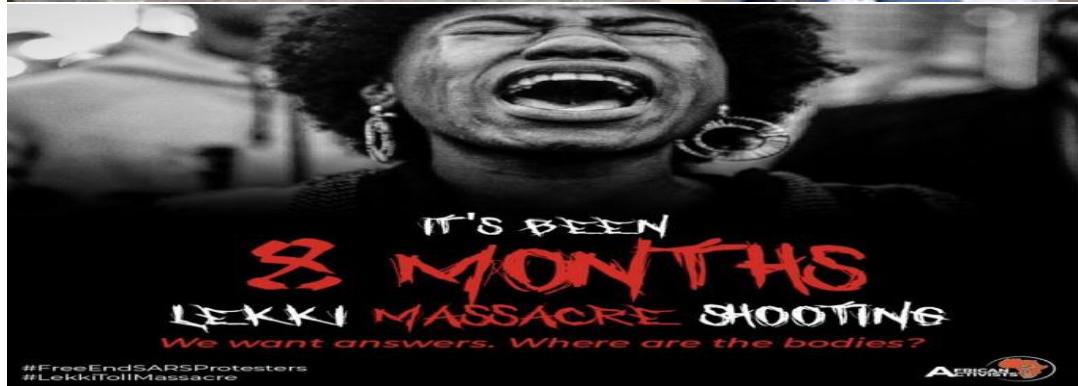
(Pregnant before arrest & had her Baby in Prison)

ANI OBINNA

(Dumped in Prison for breaking No Law)

**AKEREDOLU
FREE ONDO 4**







Young Nigerians at #ENDSARS Protest

#EndSARS: Pathologist tenders autopsy reports of 99 persons killed during protests





SANWOOLU FREE KIRIKIRI 16

1.KPANOU ROBERT 2.ALETILE DAVID 3.PETER JOHN 4.MURI GARUBA
5.GARFAR OLALARE 6.SUNDAY OKORO 7.AUGUSTINE CHUKWUDI.
8.LATEEF SEGUN 9.YAKUBU JIMOH 10.NASIRU DANJUMOH
9.ADEBAYO USMAN 10.ADEROJU THYOFILOUS 11.AYOBAMI SAHEED
12.AKINYEMI BOLAJI 13.OLAGOKE ADEWALE 14.GANIU AMBALI ARO 15.
SEYI AWOBOLA 16. DAMOLA LEIGH

#EndSARS Protest was very LEGAL!

NO TO ILLEGAL DETENTION

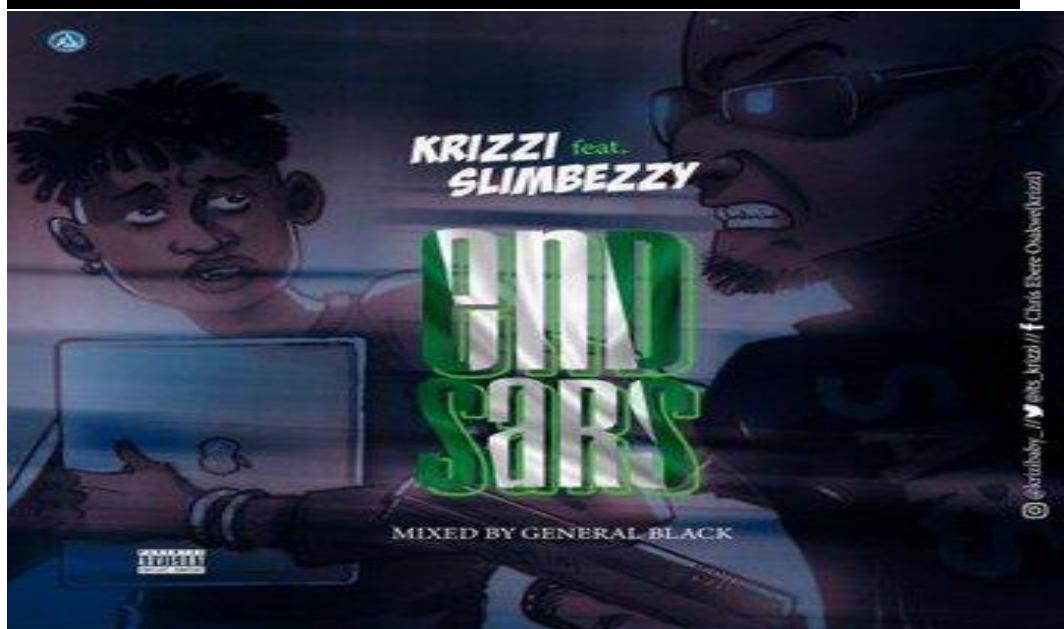
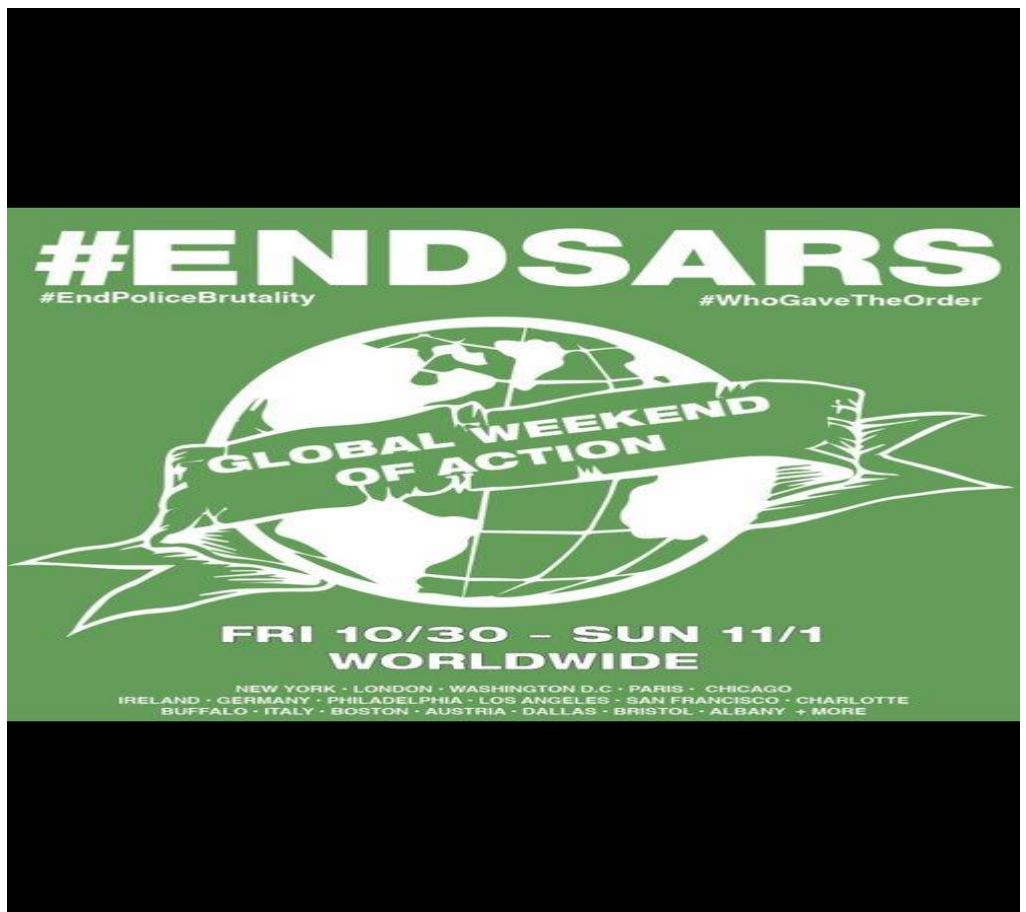


MAKINDE FREE

**OYO END SARS PROTESTERS
NOW!**

You Protested with them and sent 11 Youths to
Prison after the Protest.

#FreeOyo11





#EndSars #ThePeoplesPanel



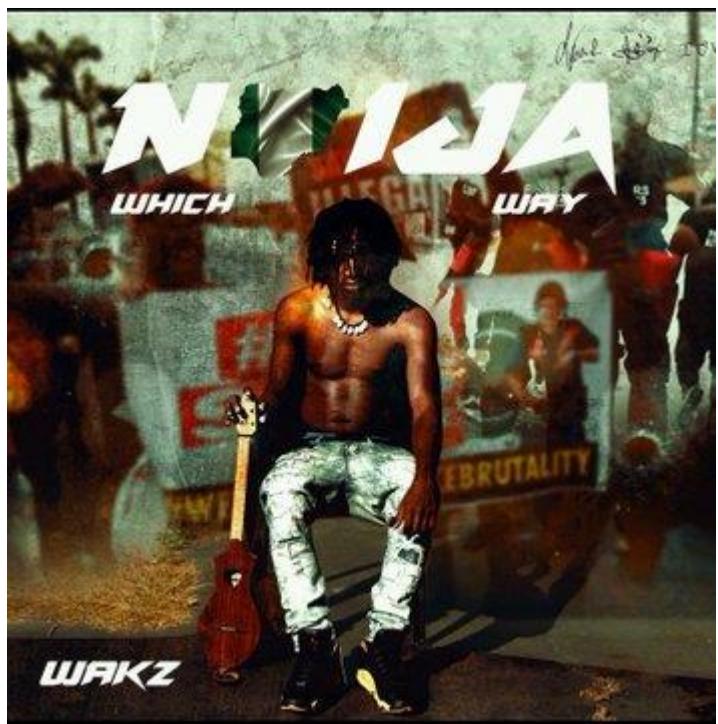
Do you know that **victims of police brutality** and individuals who have complaints of extrajudicial killings in Enugu State are expected to **submit all memoranda (complaints) not later than Friday 20th November 2020?**



Email: enugupeoplesspanel@gmail.com
Twitter: [@Enugupanel_](#)
Facebook: Enugu Panel
Phone no: 08098179969

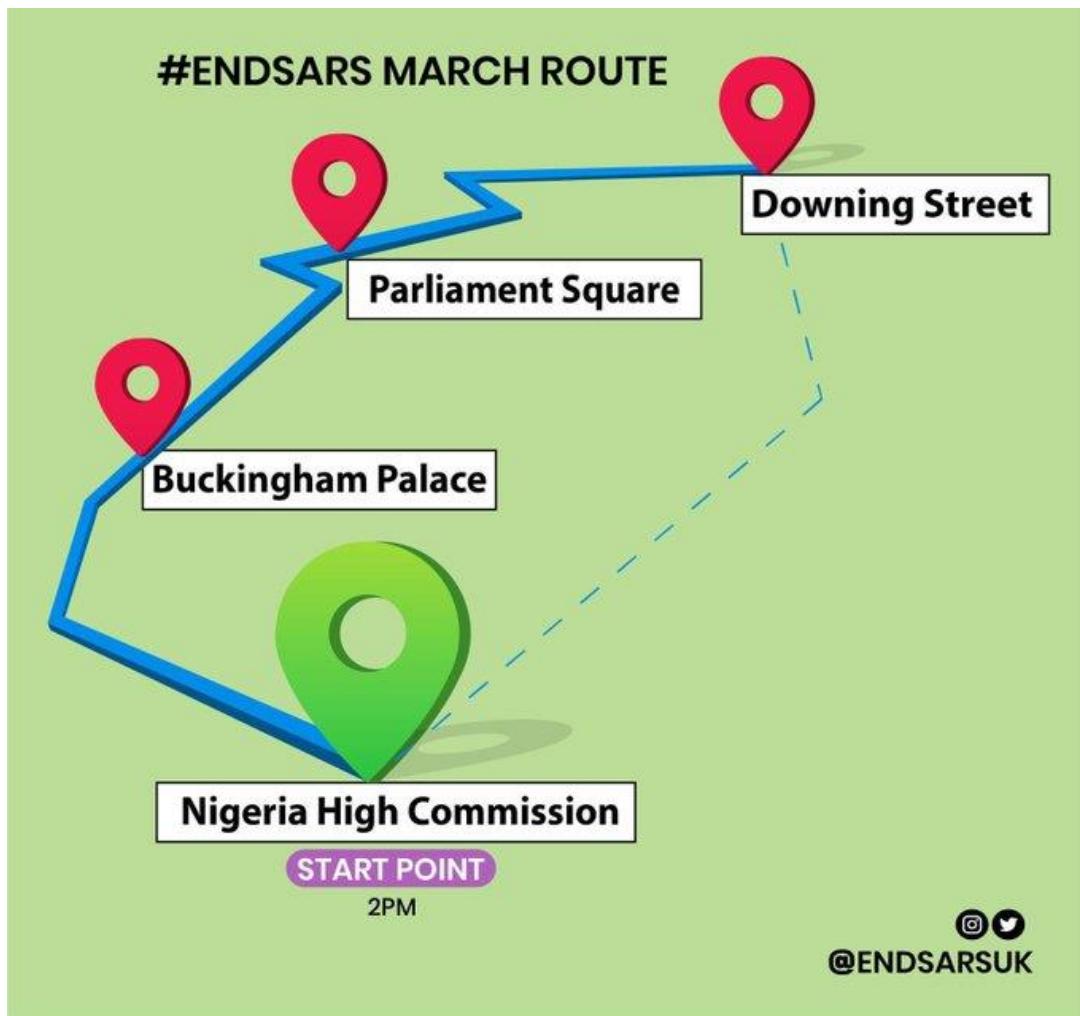








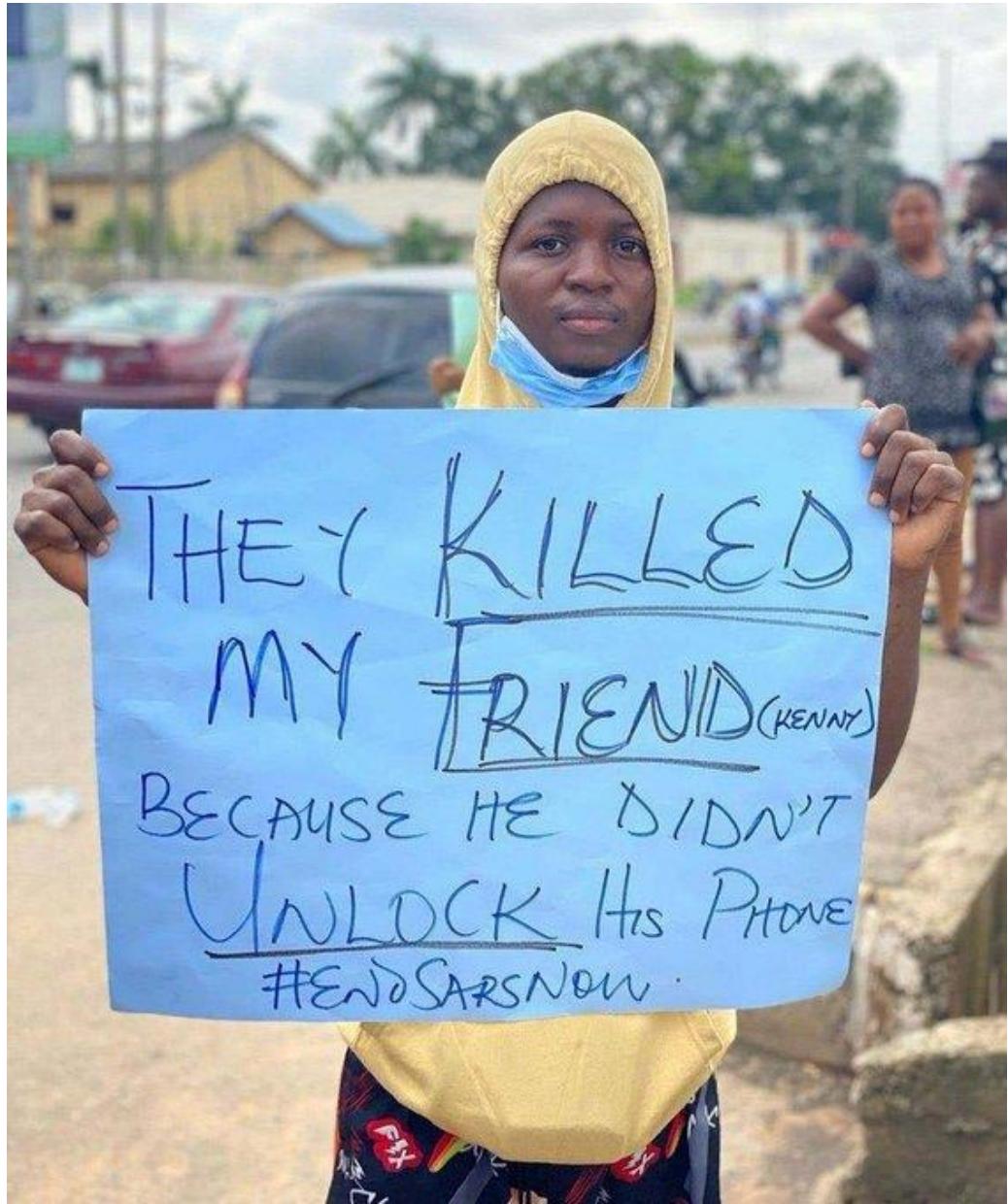


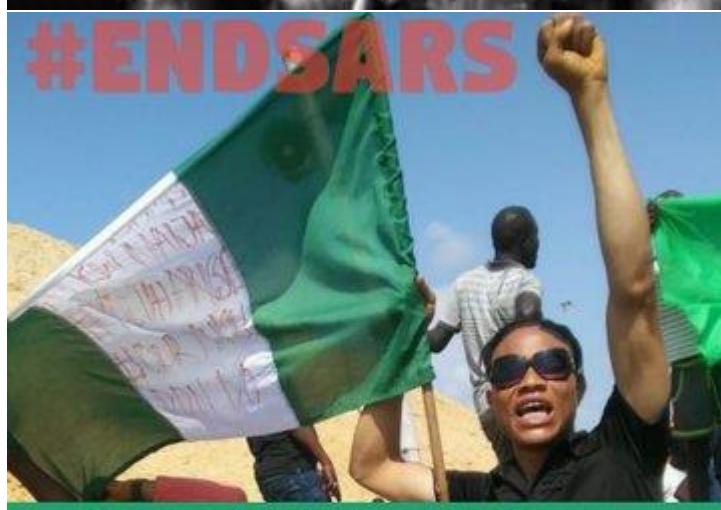
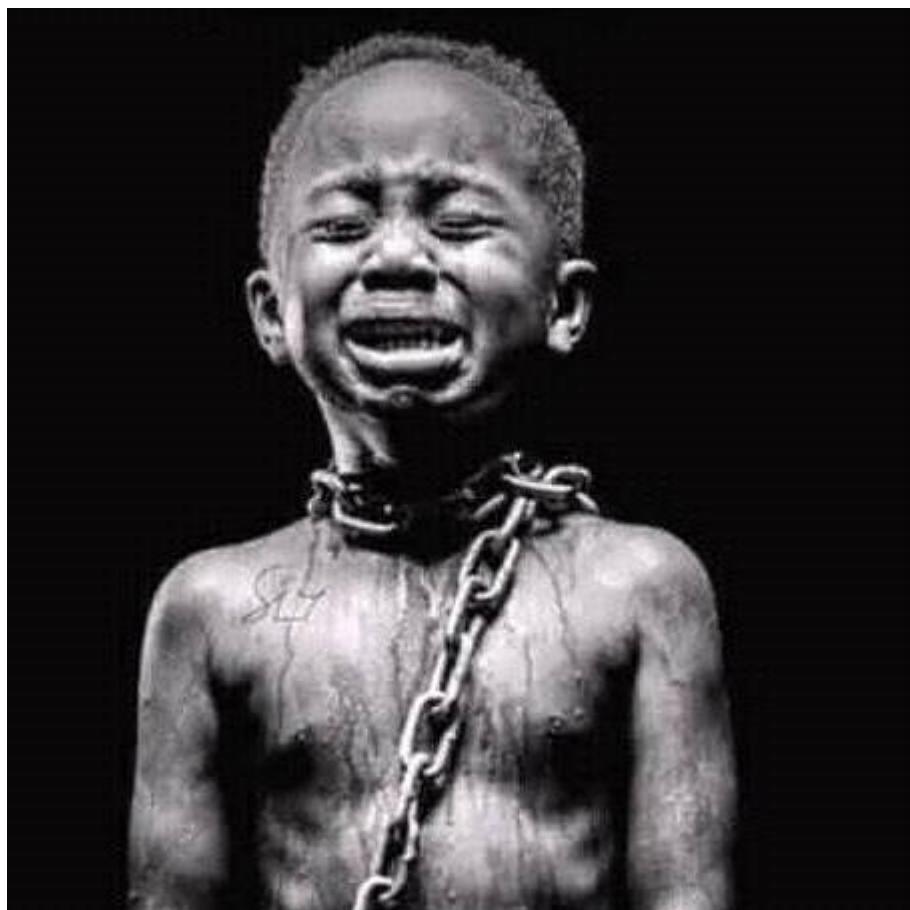










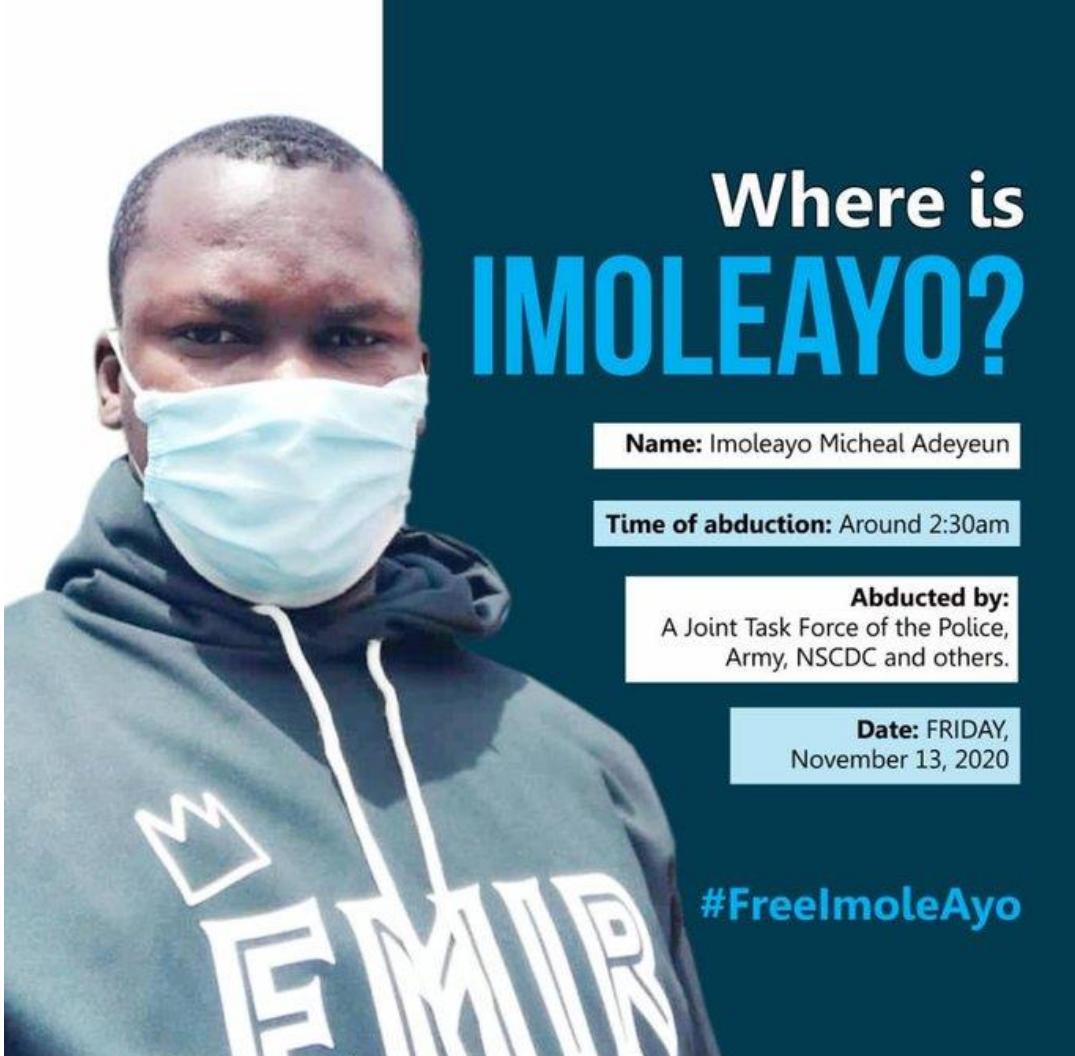


Charged with Armed robbery,
arson and rioting for

PROTESTING PEACEFULLY
FREE NICHOLAS MBAH

THE TRUE MEANING OF **END SARS**

E - EDUCATION AND ECONOMY REFORM
N - NATIONAL CONSTITUTION REFORM
D - DEBT ACCOUNTABILITY
S - SECURITY REFORM
A - ANTI-PEOPLE POLICIES CANCELLATION
R - RESTRUCTURING
S - SAVE COST OF GOVERNANCE



Where is IMOLEAYO?

Name: Imoleayo Micheal Adeyeun

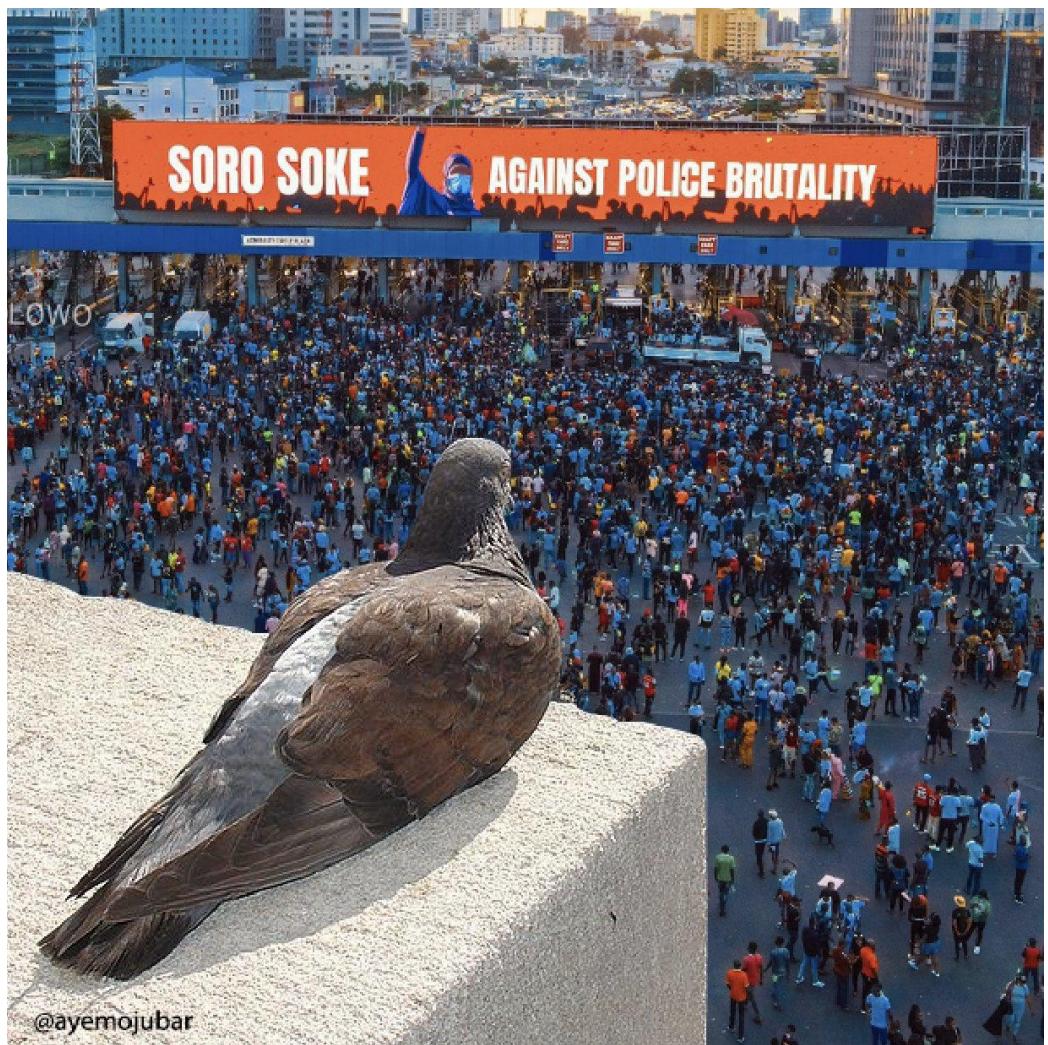
Time of abduction: Around 2:30am

Abducted by:
A Joint Task Force of the Police,
Army, NSCDC and others.

Date: FRIDAY,
November 13, 2020

#FreelmoleAyo















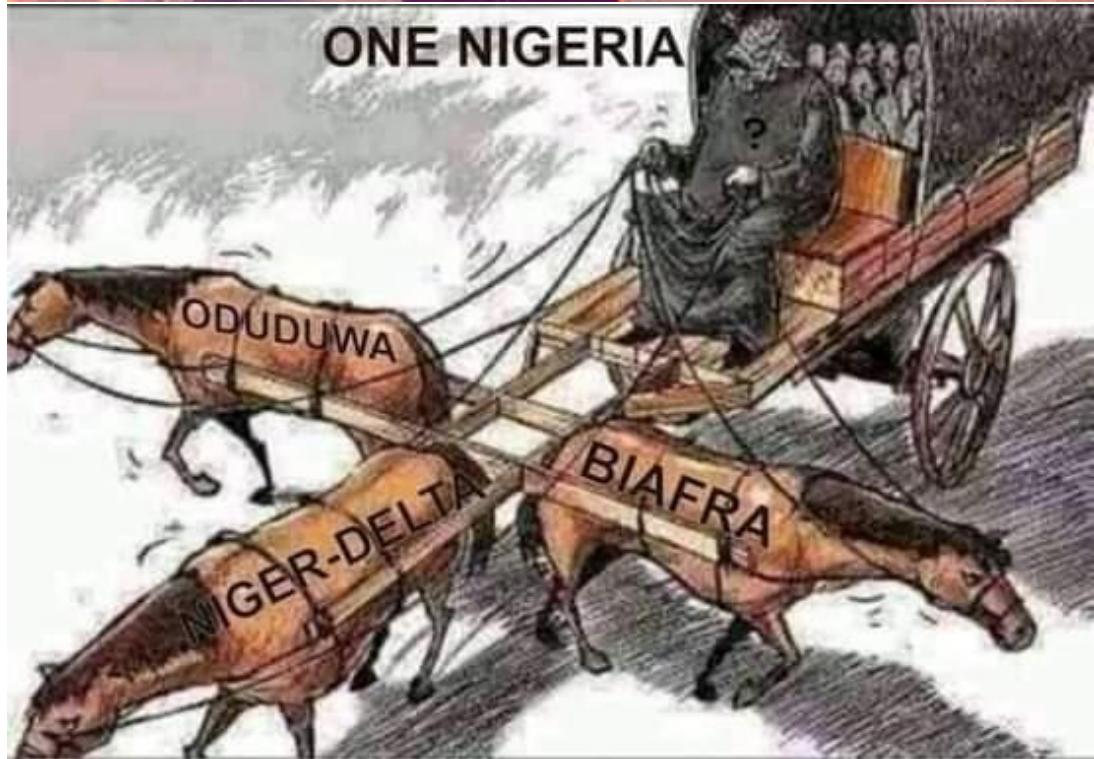






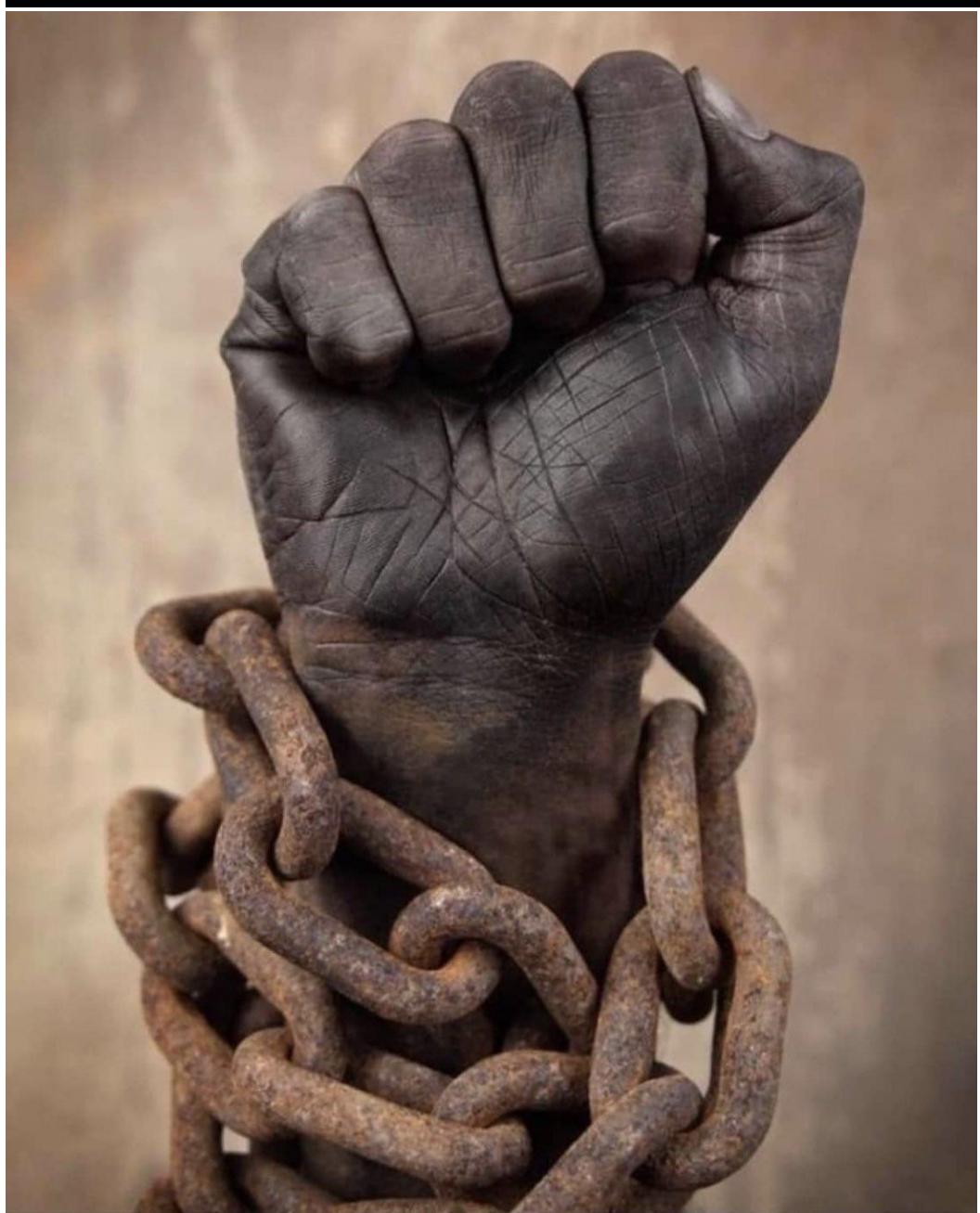








20.10.2020



A GENERATION SAYS:

OFF THE MIC

MY GENERATION SAYS:

SÒRÒ SÓKÈ



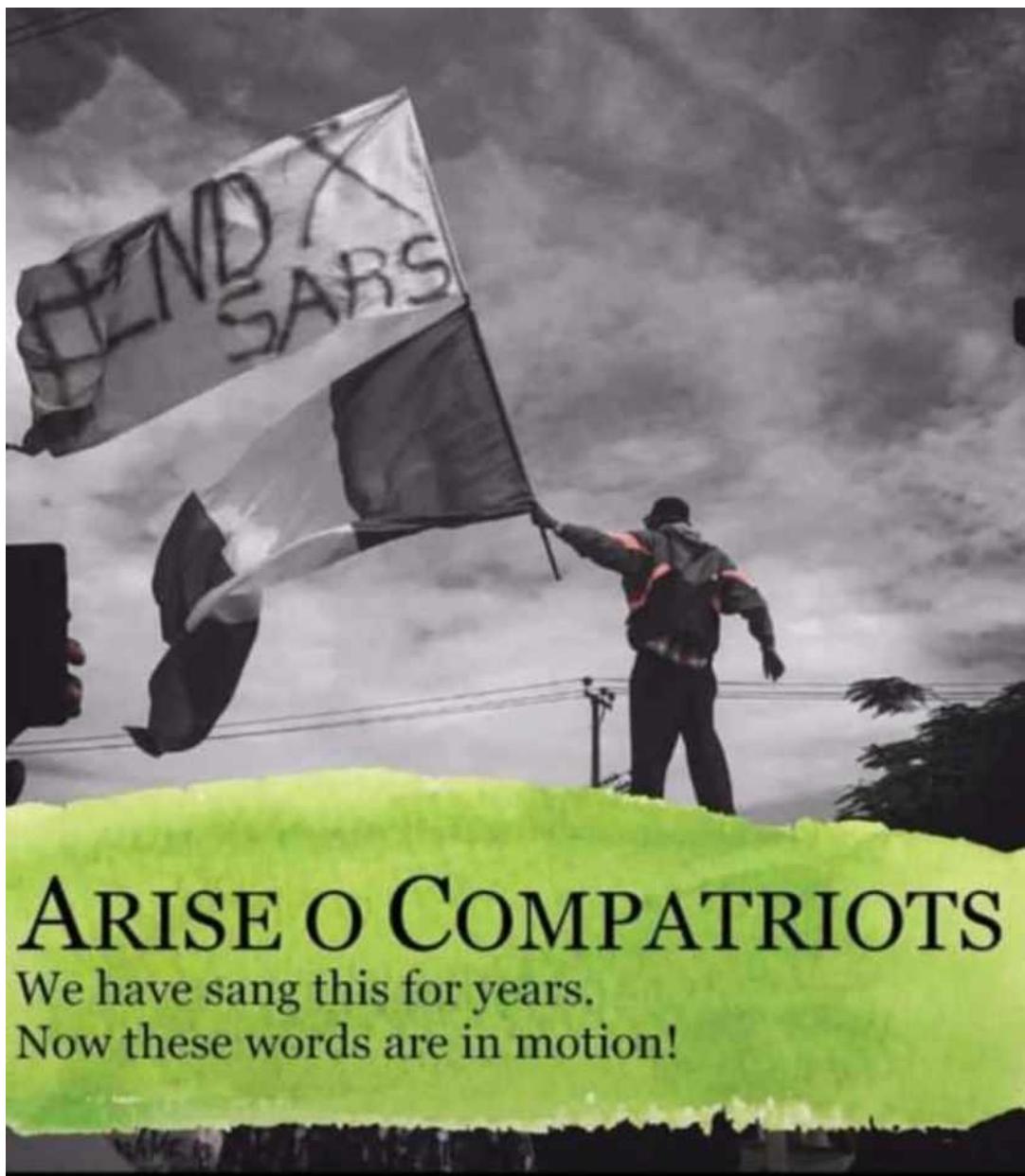
WE WOKE UP!











ARISE O COMPATRIOTS

We have sang this for years.
Now these words are in motion!

Appendix 2: BLM

S/N	Denotation				
	What do I see?				
	Physiognomic attribute				
	Objects	Dress	Hairstyles	Face features	Outward appearance
1	Yes	No	No	Yes	Image shows a white man defacing a mural and walking away
2	Yes	Yes	No	No	A group of white men (fire-fighters) showing support for BLM
3	Yes	Yes	No	No	A Pakistani man in a Dashiki as he paints George Floyd and BLM mural
4	Yes	No	No	No	A giant painting of BLM on a major road
5	No	No	No	No	Protesters stage a sit-out in an open space
6	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	A few black (seemingly African) protestors staging a night protest
7	No	No	No	No	A dark photo of few protesters standing above hundreds of other protesters
8	Yes	No	No	No	A multi-racial crowd of people
9	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	A young black lady staging a lone protest
10	No	No	No	No	Female protesters turn their backs to the camera
11	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	A lone female protester looks fierce as she raised her fist in power symbol
12	Yes	Yes	No	No	A faded painting of George Floyd
13	Yes	Yes	No	No	Middle aged protesters raise their fists in the power symbol
14	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Members of the sikh community participating in the protest
15	No	No	No	No	Protesters are taking a knee
16	No	No	No	No	Captioned image
17	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Exaggerated caricature of victims reflecting the last words of victims of police killing
18	No	No	No	No	Captioned image

19	Yes	No	Yes	No	Captioned cartoon
20	Yes	Yes	No	No	A painting of protesters
21	Yes	No	No	Yes	A mural of Floyd
22	Yes	No	No	Yes	An artistic depiction of Floyd
23	Yes	No	No	No	A stop-watch
24	Yes	No	Yes	No	A lone female protester
25	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	A protester standing among other protesters
26	No	No	No	No	Captioned image
27	Yes	No	No	No	Captioned image
28	Yes	Yes	No	No	A white man stands up to the police
29	Yes	No	No	Yes	A painting of Floyd
30	Yes	No	No	No	A woman in an African setting planting a tree to remember victims of police brutality
31	Yes	No	No	No	Captioned image (poster)
32	Yes	No	No	No	Captioned image
33	Yes	Yes	No	No	Protesters kneel in a park in what appears to be winter
34	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Protesters of different races raise their fists in power symbol
35	Yes	No	No	No	The image contains white billionaires that keep getting richer
36	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	A staunch supporter of the BLM movement
37	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Protesters in a park
38	Yes	No	No	Yes	A robocop and a victim
39	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	White ladies
40	Yes	No	No	No	A street pole decorated with ribbons and a George Floyd poster
41	Yes	No	No	Yes	Three cops cover their eyes as Floyd's murderer rests on his neck
42	Yes	No	No	No	A white man holds up a flag that says BLM
43	Yes	No	No	No	A middle-aged woman stages a lone protest
44	Yes	No	No	No	A caricature of Trump leaning on Floyd's casket
45	No	No	No	No	Captioned image
46	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	A sombre looking picture of protesters staging a sit-out protest

47	Yes	No	No	No	Protesters kneel at the beach in the middle of the day
48	No	No	No	No	White protesters lie down on a highway in the middle of the day
49	Yes	No	No	Yes	A mural of Floyd
50	Yes	No	No	No	Painted message
51	Yes	No	Yes	No	A little black girl
52	Yes	No	No	No	Protesters in black gather at night to hold a memorial service
53	Yes	No	No	No	Flowers placed at a victim's memorial
54	Yes	No	No	No	The protester stands on a vehicle with her back to the camera
55	Yes	No	No	No	Protesters demonstrate in a park
56	Yes	Yes	No	No	Women in protest
57	No	No	No	Yes	A protester playing dead
58	Yes	No	No	No	Looks to be an assembly of anti-BLM supporters
59	Yes	No	No	No	A monument
60	Yes	Yes	No	No	White women stand for a black woman that was murdered

Isotopy

S/N	Objects	Actors
1	Mural	Victim, aggressor
2	Posters	Protesters
3	Mural	Protester
4	Cars, buildings, skyscrapers	None
5	None	Protesters
6	Posters, nose masks, Africa beads	Protesters
7	None	Protesters
8	T shirts	Protesters, animals
9	Placard	Protester
10	None	Protesters
11	Nose mask	Protester
12	Painting	Victim
13	BLM nose masks	Protesters
14	Placards, T shirts	Protesters
15	None	Protesters
16	Playlist	Artistes
17	Nose masks	Caricature of victims
18	None	Victims
19	Police outfit	Police, citizen

20	T shirt, scarf, hat	Protesters
21	Mural	Victim
22	Drawing	Victim
23	A stop-watch	Protester
24	Placard	Protester
25	Placard, T shirts	Protesters
26	Captioned image	Captioned image
27	Poster	Victims
28	Shields, helmets, vehicles	Protester, police
29	Mural	Victim
30	Tree	Protester, children
31	A poster	Podcaster
32	A poster	Protesters
33	Placards	Protesters
34	Placards, T shirt, nose masks	Protesters
35	Banner, caption	Oppressors, protesters
36	Nose mask, traditional beads	Protester
37	Nose mask, T shirts, traditional beads, placards, tent	Protesters
38	Camera, baton	Victim, oppressor
39	Placards	Protesters
40	Street pole, ribbons, poster	Victim
41	Painting	Victim, oppressors
42	Flag	Protester
43	Bicycle, placard, nose mask	Protester
44	Casket, picture	Victim, oppressor
45	Captioned image	Protestors
46	T shirts, nose masks	Protesters
47	The beach	Protesters
48	None	Protesters
49	A painting	Victim
50	Painting	None
51	Placard	Protester
52	Torch lights	Protesters
53	Board, flowers	None
54	Public address system, BLM flag, vehicle, water	Protester
55	T shirt, nose mask	Protesters
56	Placards, microphone, T shirt	Protesters
57	None	Protester
58	USA flags, police helmets, poster, fireworks	Protesters
59	A monument	System of oppression
60	Placards	Protesters

Connotation

S/N	Connotation	
	Who do I see?	What ideas are expressed?
1	A white man walking away after defacing a George Floyd Mural	Oppression
2	A group of white men (fire-fighters) supporting the cause for racial justice	Racial justice/equality/unity
3	A Pakistani man painting a memorial for Floyd & BLM	Racial justice/equality/unity
4	There are no actors	Equality/Justice
5	Multitude of protestors with their backs to the camera	Unity
6	African protesters	Unity
7	Hundreds of protesters	Justice
8	Multiple protesters of different races having a protest walk	Unity
9	A lone protester throwing the power fist	Strength
10	A crowd of female protesters stage a socially distanced protest	Caution
11	A lone female protester throws the power fist	Strength
12	A faded image of a victim	Death
13	A picture of protesters accompanied by a caption	Self-promotion
14	Non-black protesters	Unity/Equality
15	Multi-racial crowd	Oppression
16	Captioned image	Self-promotion
17	Caricature of victims accompanied by a caption	Oppression
18	Captioned image	Information about victims
19	Captioned cartoon	Equality
20	A painting of two male protesters	Oppression/equality
21	A mural of Floyd	Justice
22	A drawing of Floyd drawn with the names of other victims	Oppression/justice
23	A stop-watch showing an athlete's run for the exact minutes it took for Floyd to die	Justice
24	A lone female protester carries a placard that contains the names of victims of police brutality	Justice
25	A lone male stands among a crowd of other protesters debunking the myth that the entire system is not corrupt	Corrupt system
26	Captioned image shows a youtuber soliciting for donation	Self-promotion
27	Captioned image which calls citizens to action	Justice

28	A lone one man bravely standing up to the police in protest	Courage
29	A mural of Floyd	Justice
30	A woman plants a tree in memory of victims while some little children watch her. These children represent the future. This is symbolic because trees are expected to grow	Honour
31	A captioned image	Self-promotion
32	A captioned image that features the images of protesters from other protests	Strength
33	White protesters kneel in protest	Oppression
34	Young protesters raise their hands in solidarity with the BLM movement	Strength
35	Captioned image	White supremacy, oppression
36	A young BLM supporter	Equality
37	The coming together of different generations of protesters depicts that the protest has been a long journey	Justice
38	A caricature of a victim half-buried in the sand as the droned cop wields a baton	Oppression
39	Two white ladies support the BLM in a park	Equality
40	Floyd's poster clipped to a pole	Justice, invitation to participate
41	A picture of a white man passing a painting of three cops looking away during the final minutes of Floyd's life	White supremacy
42	A lone protester	Equality
43	A middle-aged woman stages a lone protest while riding her bicycle	Equality
44	Symbol of white supremacy	White supremacy
45	Captioned image	Call to participate
46	Protesters in a sit-out looking defeated	Oppression
47	Protesters take the knee in a beach showing that every place can be a site of struggle	A stand against injustice
48	Protesters lie on the ground	Oppression
49	Art work of Floyd	Justice/self-promotion
50	Black lives matter message painted on a street in multiple colours to indicate inclusivity of LBGTQ	Equality
51	A little girl starting out early as she represents the future	Equality
52	A crowd of protesters in what appears to be a memorial service	Remembrance
53	A memorial site	Justice
54	A young female adult stands on a vehicle to show courage and leadership	Strength
55	The protester holding up a T shirt of Tupac is representative of all the issues that Tupac	Oppression

	rapped about in his songs which are still relevant	
56	The question asked in this symbolizes the uncertainty of the black live	Equality
57	A young lady does the mannequin challenge by playing dead	Oppression
58	Anti-BLM protesters are being protected by the police	White supremacy
59	The caption placed on the monument suggests a system that protects itself	Oppression
60	Few white women stand in a park to draw attention to another victim of police brutality	Oppression

Icon, index and symbol

S/N	Icon	Index	Symbol
1	Yes	-	-
2	Yes	-	Yes
3	Yes	-	Yes
4	-	-	Yes
5	Yes	Yes	-
6	Yes	-	-
7	-	-	Yes
8	Yes	-	-
9	-	-	Yes
10	-	Yes	-
11	-	-	Yes
12	Yes	-	-
13	Yes	-	-
14	Yes	-	-
15	-	Yes	-
16	-	-	Yes
17	-	-	Yes
18	-	-	Yes
19	Yes	-	-
20	Yes	-	-
21	Yes	-	-
22	Yes	-	-
23	-	Yes	-
24	Yes	-	Yes
25	Yes	-	-
26	-	-	Yes
27	Yes	-	-
28	Yes	-	-
29	Yes	-	-
30	-	-	Yes
31	-	-	Yes
32	-	-	Yes

33	-	Yes	-
34	Yes	-	-
35	-	-	Yes
36	Yes	-	-
37	Yes	-	-
38	-	Yes	-
39	-	Yes	-
40	-	-	Yes
41	Yes	-	-
42	-	-	Yes
43	Yes	-	-
44	-	Yes	-
45	-	-	Yes
46	Yes	-	-
47	-	Yes	-
48	-	Yes	-
49	Yes	-	-
50	-	-	Yes
51	-	-	Yes
52	Yes	-	-
53	Yes	-	-
54	Yes	-	Yes
55	Yes	-	-
56	Yes	-	-
57	-	Yes	-
58	Yes	-	-
59	-	-	Yes
60	Yes	-	--

This guy defaced a George Floyd mural in Long Beach, CA.



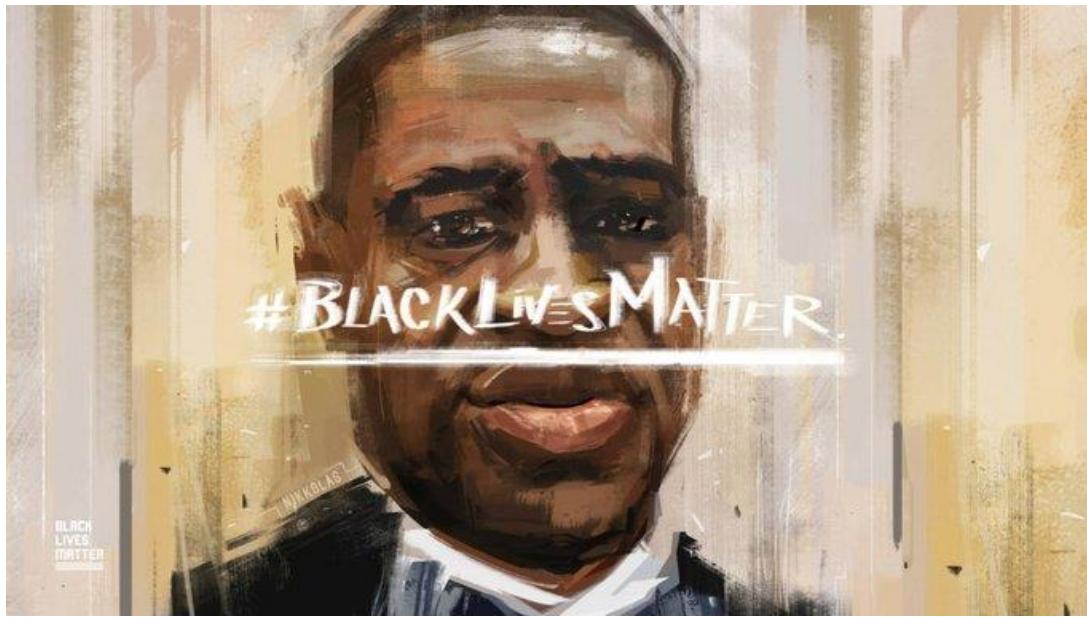














Genres

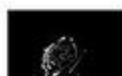
Featured

Charts



Songs

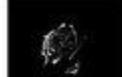
See All >



17. The Woo (feat. 50 Cent & Roddy Ricch) E

Pop Smoke - Shoot for the Star...

£0.99



18. For the Night (feat. Lil Baby & DaBaby) E

Pop Smoke - Shoot for the Star...

£0.99



19. Black Lives Matter

Claudy Ken - Black Lives Matter...

£0.79



20. However Do You Want It (feat. Krept & Konan & Ban...

Swarmz - However Do You Wan...

£0.99



Albums

See All >



1. Crabs in a Bucket Nines E



2. King's Disease E



3. Living Off Xperience E



4. Ru - EP Rude

Music Videos

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Music



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**BLACK LIVES MATTER**

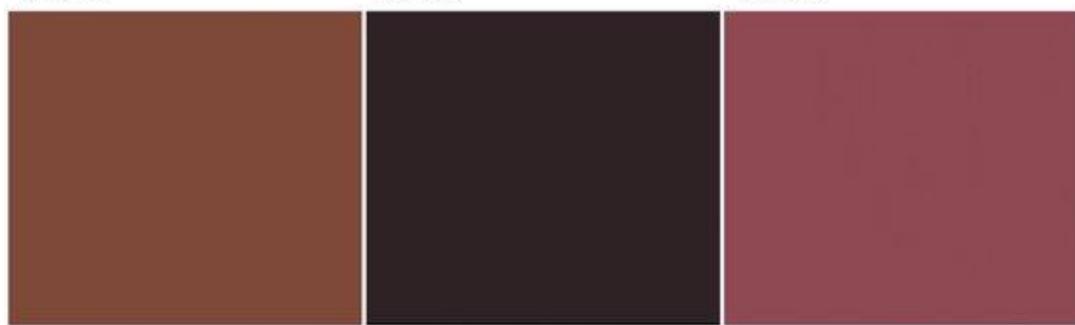
Trayvon Martin
26-02-12

BLACK LIVES MATTER

Eric Garner
17-7-14

BLACK LIVES MATTER

Tamir Rice
22-11-14

**BLACK LIVES MATTER**

Sandra Bland
13-7-15

BLACK LIVES MATTER

Philando Castile
06-07-16

BLACK LIVES MATTER

Elijah McClain
24-08-19

**BLACK LIVES MATTER**

Ahmuad Arbery
23-02-2020

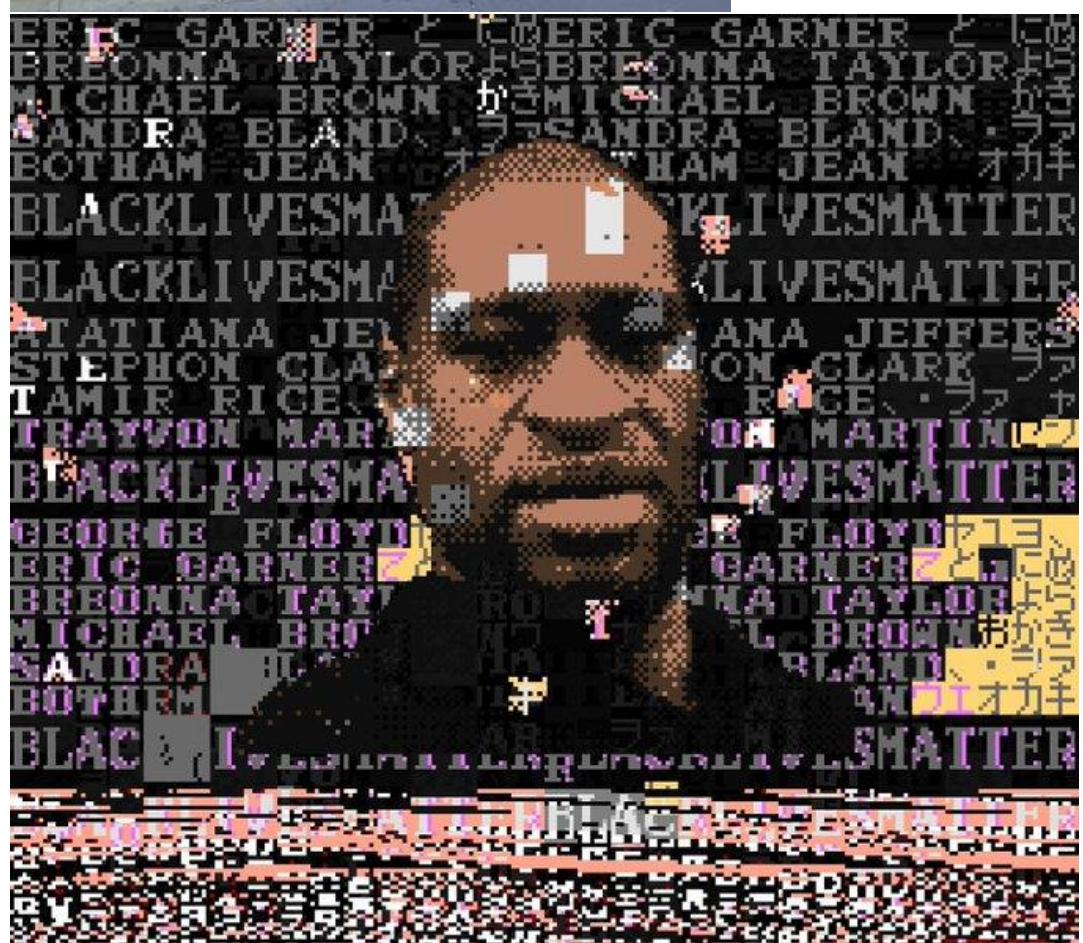
BLACK LIVES MATTER

Breonna Taylor
13-03-2020

BLACK LIVES MATTER

George Floyd
20-05-2020













A screenshot of a YouTube video player interface. The video content is a fundraiser for "PALAYE ROYALE - Abolish Hate, Adopt Love (Live Acoustic...)" with a total raised of US\$4,730. The video has 13K views and is 1 year old. It is labeled as a "Fundraiser". The video player includes standard controls like like, dislike, share, and save buttons. Below the video, the channel "Sumerian..." with 1.92M subscribers is shown, along with a "SUBSCRIBED" button and a notification bell icon. The "Up next" section is visible at the bottom left, and the "Autoplay" toggle is at the bottom right.

PALAYE ROYALE -... **DONATE**
Eliminate racial hatred an...

Total raised: US\$4,730

▼ About this fundraiser

#PalayeRoyale #JusticeForFloyd...

PALAYE ROYALE - Abolish Hate,
Adopt Love (Live Acoustic...)

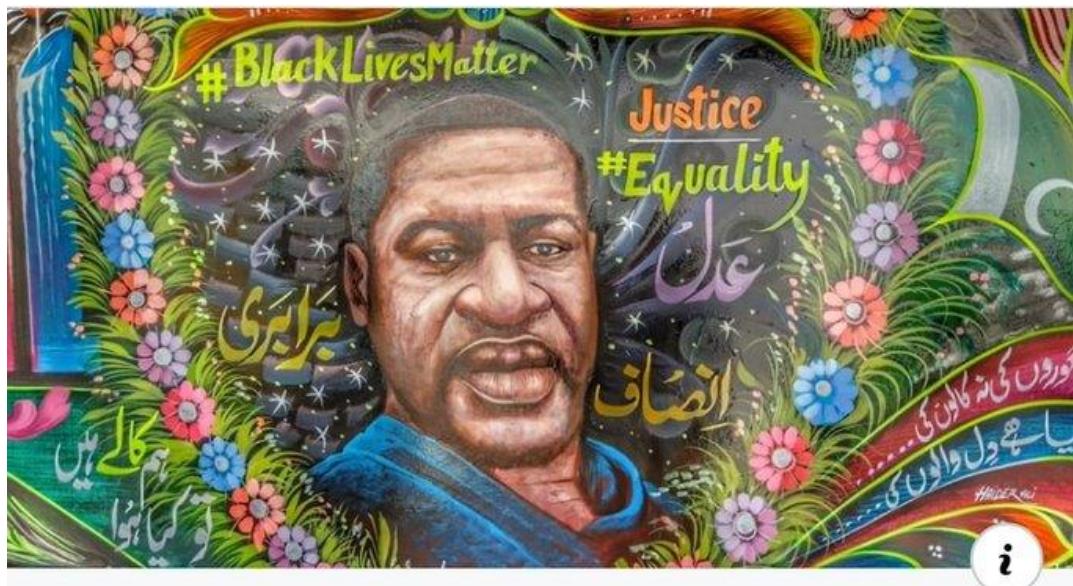
13K views · 1 year ago **Fundraiser**

2.8K 72 Share Save

 Sumerian... 1.92M subscribers **SUBSCRIBED** 

Up next Autoplay 





REGGAE LOVER PODCAST

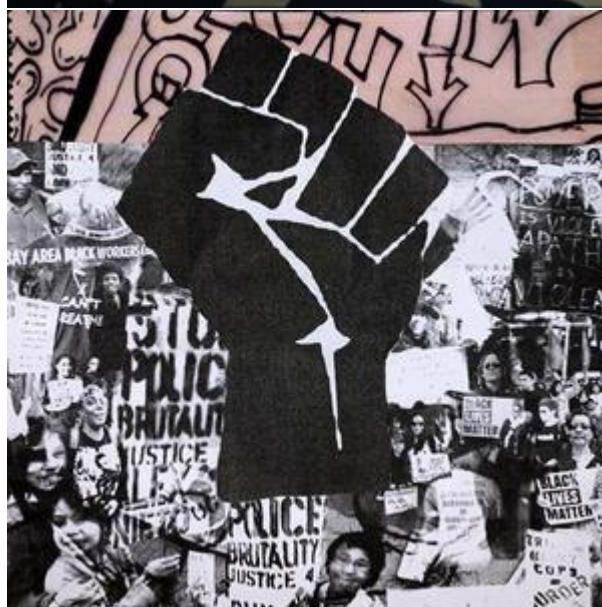


CARIBBEAN BLACK LIVES MATTER

EPISODE 199

WITH NICK FROM "JAMAICAN
STATE OF MIND"

BLACK LIVES MATTER





BLACK LIVES MATTER GLOBAL NETWORK

BLACK LIVES MATTER

Pres Lyndon Baines Johnson-White House

BLACK LIVES MATTER

Mark Zuckerberg

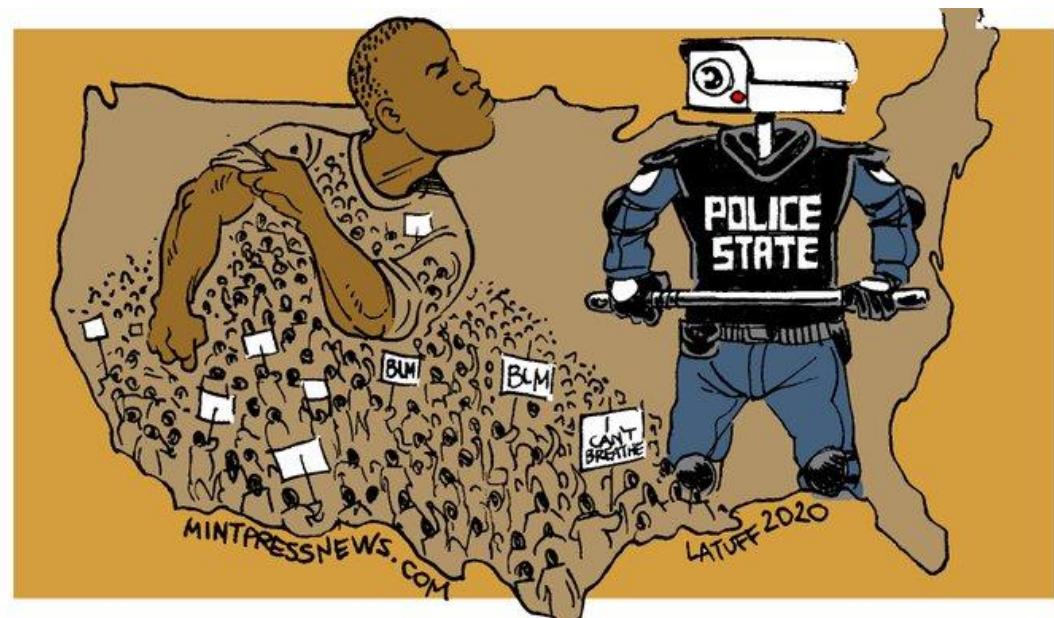
Biggest Givers

Giver	Amount
Bill Gates	\$35.8 billion
Warren Buffett	\$35.1 billion
George Soros	\$32 billion

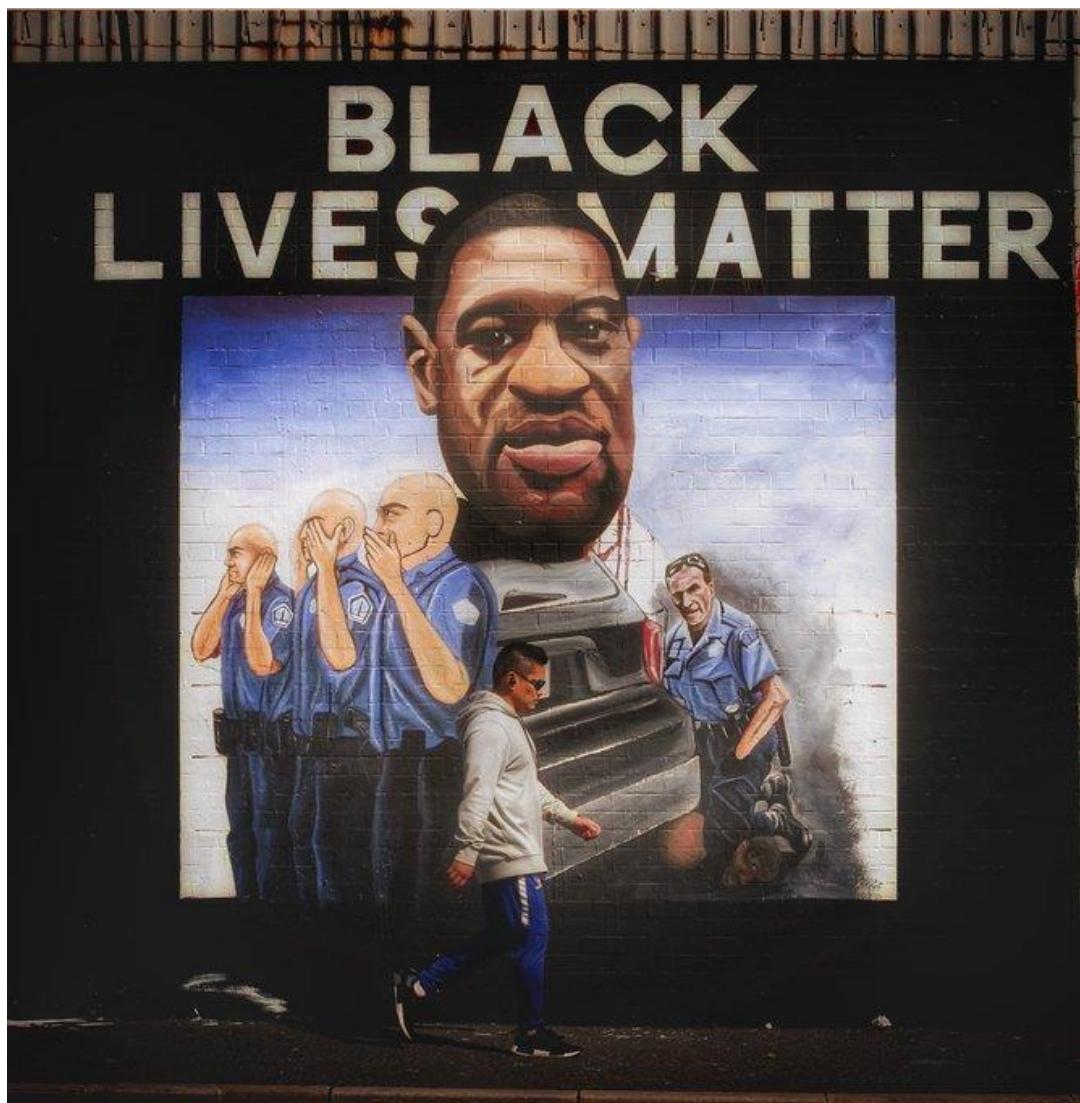


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#숨을쉴수없어
#icantbreathe
#blackouttuesday
#blacklivesmatter

시청역

5번 출구

2020년 6월 6일 토요일

오후 4시

BLACK LIVES MATTER



마스크 착용 필수
가능한 검은색 복장 착용
격자하고 싶은 말이 적힌 손 페인트

문의: 010-4152-3512



THE NEW FRONTIER
(SAY THEIR NAMES)



#BlackLivesMatter

SIEDAH GARRETT











