

**GANGSTA-RAP GROUP NIGGAZ WITH ATTITUDE'S STRUGGLE  
AGAINST RACISM DEPICTED IN THE FILM  
*STRAIGHT OUTTA COMPTON***

**SCIENTIFIC ARTICLE**

**BY**

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**2017**



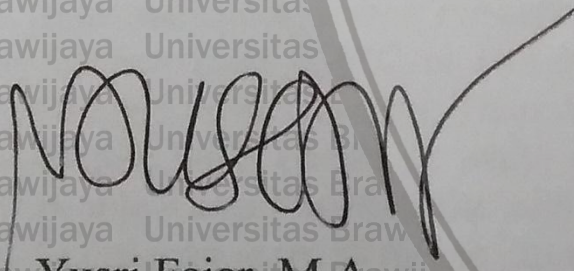
**BOARD OF EXAMINERS' APPROVAL  
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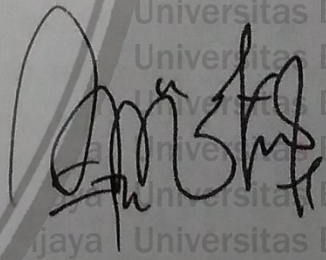
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## ABSTRACT

Gustomo, Ridwan Alfian. 2017. ***Gangsta-rap group Niggaz With Attitude's struggle against racism depicted in the film Straight Outta Compton.*** Study Program of English, Department of Languages and Literatures, Faculty of Cultural Studies, Universitas Brawijaya. Supervisor: Aris Siswanti.

**Keywords:** Gangsta-rap, Racial beliefs, *Straight Outta Compton.*

*Gangsta-rap* is one of the most hardcore genres of music in hip-hop culture. The name is created by the media to label the rap artist who have decisive even explicit lyrics in their songs. *Straight Outta Compton* is a biopic movie that tells us the portrayal of young African-American life back in late 80s until early 90s. There is a presumption that racism became one of the main problems that depicted in the film. Racial discrimination was very popular issue in the United States during 1986 to 1995. Police brutality, which is one of the parts of racism, was truly exercised during that time due to African-American were often suspected as criminals. Thus, the gangsta-rap group, N.W.A. attempted to criticize the authorities through rap music. Hence, the writer intends to analyze whether there is racial discrimination and how N.W.A. struggles against it through their music in the film. The result of this study shows that racism towards African-American is still found in 1986 to 1995 as depicted in the movie. Therefore, N.W.A. shows their attempt of struggle toward racism by writes decisive lyrics depicted in a song entitled "Fuck Tha' Police", and communicate with their audiences in their concert about what police have done. Next, the film shows there is a reaction from PMRC or Parental Music Resource Center who attempt to resist N.W.A.'s struggle against racism. There is also a reaction from the people of United States especially despite black people or white people who realize that racial discrimination still exists and people's anger towards the authority which is a kind of action that accept N.W.A.'s struggle. In conclusion, N.W.A. use rap music as their tool to struggle against racism by criticizes the authority and influence other peoples' perspectives. The writer suggests the next researcher to analyze an attempt of struggle that N.W.A performs based on documentary movie that produced by VH1, one of the famed music channel. So, it will give more perspectives of storytelling that comes outside N.W.A. because the current object of analysis produced by Ice Cube, one of the member of N.W.A.

Human beings are born in various type of ways which spread out in this world. Therefore, they came in variety of ethnicity, race, cultures and many more. However, this variety of race has been exploited in such an excessive way. The differences among them seem to trigger them to dominate others. There is always the one who feel superior and the one who feel inferior. It is inevitable to say that somehow superiority and inferiority could be justified due to the natural behavior of human being itself. In order to behaves, human being will go through some stages. First stages is levels of influences. As Glanz and Rimer (2005, p.11) stated, there are five different aspects that influence human behavior which are individual factors, interpersonal factors, institutional factors, community factors, and public policy. In behaves to others, human will process those five factors before finally act and trigger a respond from others. The way that others response commonly comes from the previous action whether it contains certain point that rise some question or not. The response also comes from the former action whether is powerful or not.

Hip hop is an African-American culture and nowadays becomes one of the most well-known cultures along with its traditions. It all started with an event called The Soundclash, a contest between Coxsone Dodd's "Downbeat" and Duke Reid's "Trojan". That event gives birth to the concept of DJ battling, which later gives a birth of rapping tradition, a part of notorious hip hop culture. This hip hop tradition runs through some generation to gain form of unity among them. There are four basic elements of hip hop which are Breakdancing, DJing, MCing, and Graffiti. Specifically, MCing tradition later transforms through the time and shifts into "rap" where the MC fills in with the rhyme for the beats that DJ already played.



Rap music itself as quoted from Henry Adaso (2016, para. 4), started to develop in 1973 by Kool DJ Herc who deejays his first block party (his sister's birthday) at 1520 Sedgwick Avenue, Bronx, New York by buying two copies of a record and stretch the break parts by using two turntables and mixing in both records before the break ends. Adaso also added that (2016, para.7) in 1975, Herc gets Coke La Rock to utter crowd-pleasing rhymes at parties (e.g. "DJ Riz is in the house and he'll turn it out without a doubt"). Coke La Rock and Clark Kent form the first emcee team known as Kool Herc & The Herculoids. When it comes to the 1980s, the commercialization of rap itself was rapidly increased together with the hip-hop artist who tried to voice their aspiration through the rap music. As a result, many rap artists attempt to make a rap song which describes their condition, environment, and their culture. Furthermore, gangsta-rap is the sub school of rap which deliberately voices their opinion and critics towards the condition that they have been through to the government, due to many aspects that conducting a lot of problems. Later, the gangsta-rap brings the idea of struggling and fights for what they are hoping.

*Straight Outta Compton* is the portrayal of gangsta-rap group N.W.A. the abbreviation for "Niggaz With Attitude" where they have been raised in the rude neighborhood located in Compton, California, United States. Back in 1980s, the authorities attempt to use their force without thinking any further of what they do. Later, they intend to break the barrier between usual people or the inferior, mostly African-American, and the authorities or the superior. In 1987, five young men, using brutally honest rhymes and hardcore beats, put their frustration and anger about life in the most dangerous place in America into the most powerful weapon they had: their music. Taking us back to where it all began, *Straight Outta Compton* tells the true story of how these cultural rebels-armed only with their lyrics, swagger, bravado and raw talent, stood up to the authorities that meant to keep them down and formed the world's most dangerous group, N.W.A. As they spoke the truth that no one had before and exposed life in the hood, their voice ignited a social revolution that is still reverberating today.

*Niggaz With Attitude*, which consists of Eazy-E, Ice Cube, Dr. Dre, MC Ren, DJ Yella, and DOC, is also being known as one of the pioneer of gangsta-rap music which

triggers some changes in terms of voicing their opinions through their songs. Specifically, a song entitled “Fuck tha Police” gives the resilient critics towards the authorities to not doing silly things by acting relentlessly. The group itself thinks that what they have shared is the portrayal of real life and should have not being banned from the public. This movie is an autobiography due to board of the movie producer consists of F. Gary Gray as director, Oshea Jackson who is member of N.W.A., and Tommica Woods Wright which is the widow of Eric Wright as the producers.

Based on the background of the study, the problem in this study is framed as follows: how N.W.A. perform an attempt to struggle against discrimination against African-Americans through rap music and what are the impacts that come from the struggle depicted in *Straight Outta Compton* movie

### **Theoretical Framework**

New Historical Criticism is the way we interpret based on comparison of the actual fact and the depiction on certain things such on the literary work. As cited on Delahoyde (2011, para.2), “new historicist concerns themselves with the political function of literature and with the concept of power, the intricate means by which cultures produce and reproduce themselves. These critics focus on revealing the historically specific model of truth and authority (not a ‘truth’ but a ‘cultural construct’) reflected in a given work.”

Tyson (2006, p.282) also states “Traditional historians ask, ‘What happened?’ and ‘What does the event tell us about history?’ In contrast, new historicists ask, ‘How has the event been interpreted?’ and ‘What do the interpretations tell us about the interpreters?’”

So, New Historicists, asserting that history is depending on who had been interpreted it and what is the motive behind the interpreters who define a history. In this particular research, new historical criticism will help to observe what movie producer attempt to tell us implicitly according to *Straight Outta Compton* movie.

### **Racial Beliefs in America**



To understand the process of struggle conducted by N.W.A, we need to know about the history of slavery that shaped racial beliefs in the United States. Slavery itself is an act of owning others in order to help the owners in terms of doing anything. Steering Committee on Slavery and Justice Brown University (2003, p.7) suggest:

Slaves everywhere were subject to physical and sexual abuse. They typically served for life and often passed that status on to their children. Perhaps most important, slaves were outsiders, not only in the literal sense of coming from outside the societies in which they were held but also in the sense of being excluded from the basic recognition and rights enjoyed by those who were free

When African American was first enslaved, their suppression was not justified in terms of their biological inferiority. Prior to the influences of the Enlightenment, human servitude was taken as a much more unquestioned element in the existing order of economic classes and social estates, since this way of thinking was taken over from feudal and post-feudal Europe. The historical literature on this early period also records that the imported Negroes – and the captured Indians – originally were kept in much the same status as the white indentured servants. When later the Negroes gradually were pushed down into chattel slavery while the white servants were allowed to work off their bond, the need was felt, in this Christian country, for some kind of justification above mere economic practicality and the might of the strong. The arguments called forth for a time need not biological in character, although they later easily merged into the dogma of natural inequality.

Myrdal (2001, p.87) said that the ideas of the American Revolution added their influence to those of some early Christian thinkers and preachers, particularly among the Quakers, in criticizing these arguments. And they gave an entirely new vision of society as it is and as it ought to be. This vision was dominated by a radically equalitarian political morality and could not possibly include slavery as a social institution. The arguments were broadly these; that the Negro was a heathen and a barbarian, an outcast among the peoples of the earth, a descendant of Noah's son Ham, cursed by God himself and doomed to be a servant forever on account of an ancient sin.

Hence, we can conclude that social prejudice has already succeeded in shaping the racial beliefs based on natural inequality that African American has lower position than White. Cultural influences have set up the assumptions about the mind, the body, and the universe with which we begin; pose the questions we ask; influence the facts we seek; determine the interpretation we give these facts; and direct our reaction to these interpretations and conclusions.

Myrdal (2001, p.95) stated that race is a comparatively simple idea which easily becomes applied to certain outward signs of "social visibility," such as physiognomy. Explanations in terms of environment, on the contrary, tax knowledge and imagination heavily. It is difficult for the ordinary man to envisage clearly how such factors as malnutrition, bad housing, and lack of schooling actually deform the body and the soul of people. The ordinary white man seems unable to expect to be aware of such subtle influences as the denial of certain outlets for ambitions, social disparagement, cultural isolation, and the early conditioning of the Negro child's mind by the caste situation, as factors molding the Negro's personality and behavior. The white man is, therefore, speaking in good faith when he says that he sincerely believes that the Negro is racially inferior, not merely because he has an interest in this belief, but simply because he has seen it. He "knows" it. Thus, we cannot simply decide that the racial problem comes from the popular mind. It goes back further to the beginning of enslavement.

### ***Rap and Gangsta-rap***

Rap invention basically comes from the biggest culture of African-American in the United States, hip-hop. There are four elements that establish in hip-hop culture which are DJing, MCing, Breakdancing, and Graffiti. Rap music itself is a combination between MCing and DJing. The artists rap their lines in time to rhythms taken from records. There are boast raps, insult raps, news raps, message raps or party raps, just as there are in reggae.

Devos (2006, p.9) stated that rap started in the South Bronx of New York, which had been a mainly black and Hispanic ghetto for decades. To be exact in 1967 a DJ called Kool



Herc emigrated to the States from Jamaica and came to live in the West Bronx. He developed a style that was so popular that he began buying records for the instrumental breaks rather than for the whole track. The lead guitar or bass riff or sequence of drumming that he wanted might only last fifteen seconds. Rather than play the whole record straight through, he would play that same part several times over, cutting from one record deck to the other as he talked through the microphone. This meant buying several copies of the same record. And it also meant that Herc had to have a very precise sense of timing. He used the headphones that DJs use to cue up their records so that he could cut from one copy of a record to another at exactly the right point.

The technique Herc had invented became known as the 'beats' or the 'breakbeats'. He can also be credited with another invention. As the switching between record decks got faster and more complicated, it required a lot of concentration. Herc couldn't rap and operate the records at the same time. So he employed two MCs to do the rapping for him. The early role of the MC was to introduce the DJ and the music and to keep the audience excited. MCs began by speaking between songs, giving greetings to audience members, jokes and anecdotes. As cited on Devos (2006, p.10), eventually this practice became more stylized and became known as rapping. The MCs would put on a show for the crowd, dancing in front of the decks and bouncing lines off each other.

Gangsta rap, according to Devos (2006, p.14) is a subgenre of rap music that involves a lyrical focus on the lifestyles of inner-city gang members, pimps or drug dealers. There is a presumption that rappers themselves give the name 'gangsta' rap, but the fact is that the media was responsible for this particular name. Devos (2006, p.14) also stated that unlike the moralistic preaching, escapism or sentimentality that defines most popular music, gangsta rappers – also referred to as 'hardcore' rappers – detail the unemployment, miseducation, discrimination, homicides, gang life, class oppression and police brutality that dominate the lives of many black youngsters. The macho boasting, misogyny, violent fantasies and false consciousness exist side by side with an immature, but clear, critique of authority, a loathing

of the oppressive character of wage labour, a hatred of racism and an expose of Reaganism or seeing the government negatively.

### **Cinematography**

Movies, for some people, are just a medium for entertainment as we probably recall from the first aim of its invention. However, in the development of movies, this medium can also be used to educate people to know something more and better than before. The movie maker eventually realizes that at some point, movies will make the people realize and even changed. Brown (2012, p.13) stated that cinema is a language and within it are the specific vocabularies and sub languages of the lens, composition, visual design, lighting, image control, continuity, movement, and point-of-view. So, the movie maker attempts to make the viewer understand what they are presenting in the movies. In order to support the analysis of the data, the writer chooses Brown (2012) to help categorizing the data from cinematography aspects. There are four categories that writer use to analyze the data which are the frame, light and color, establishing and point of view.

### **Research Method**

In conducting the research, first the writer chose *Straight Outta Compton* (2015) as the object. This movie tells us about the life of a gangsta-rap group called N.W.A. (Niggaz With Attitude) in a small city called Compton in California, United States. The movie is portraying the certain event of N.W.A. that performed an attempt of struggle towards racism and what is the impact that comes from their struggle.

Second, the writer chose to use new historical approach to analyze and classify the object of this study. The reason why new historical approach is appropriate for the object is because it will show the comparison between the movie itself and the fact that really happened at that time.



Third, the data were collected by watching the movie several times intensively. After that, the writer sorted out the data based on cinematography elements. The writer analyzed and classified the process of struggle that N.W.A described in the movie. The writer also collected data from an event about Compton, California between 1986-1995.

The discussion in this research fits with racism theory in United States especially N.W.A.'s struggles against racial discrimination in American Society. The writer also analyzed the impact that comes from N.W.A.'s struggles over the discrimination. Then, the writer made conclusion on the key findings of the study

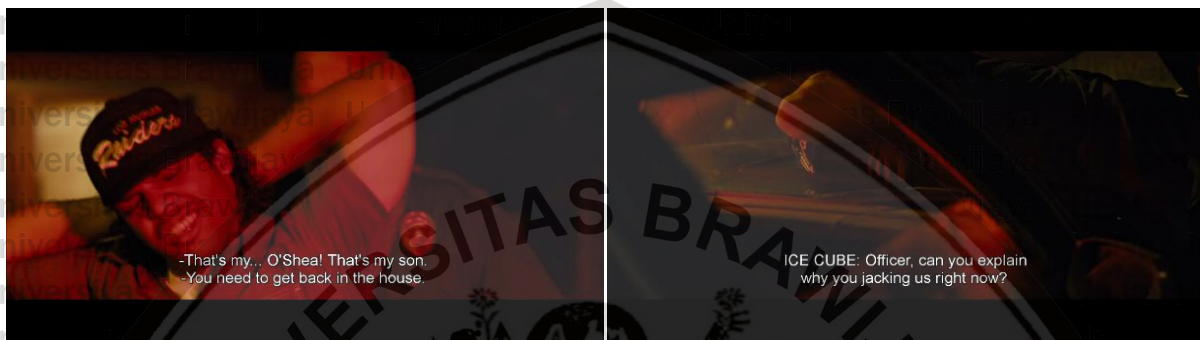
### **Finding and Discussion**

In *Straight Outta Compton* movie, the writer finds that there is process of struggle of *Niggaz With Attitude* to fight against inequality. The acceptance and resistance of American people also become the impact of N.W.A.'s struggle.

#### **1. The Conditions of African Americans in California during 1986 to 1995**

In 1980s, United States Government had a severe recession due to monetary policy failure. As cited on *Slaying the Dragon of Debt*, a Fiscal politics and policy from the 1970s to the present (2011, para.1), "the primary cause of which was the disinflationary monetary policy adopted by the Federal Reserve". This situation makes the government to control the stability of the country by increasing the law enforcement quality. Based on the observation that writer done towards *Straight Outta Compton*, it can be said that the condition of African-Americans around 1986 to 1995 was quite miserable due to the exercise of civil rights act has not been completely applied all over the states. Almost all African-Americans, especially young one, are always being suspected doing crime or using drugs in the neighborhood. There is the fact that young African-American influenced to use drugs and do gun-violence around late 80s until early 90s. Mauer and Huling (1995, p.3) stated that "as of 1994, 30.2%

of African American males in the age group 20-29 were under criminal justice control -- prison, jail, probation, or parole -- on any given day". Hence, police attempt to prevent the potential crime especially when they see young African-American around the neighborhood. In this case, police choose to use physical abuse in order to inspect whether they are proven guilty or not.



**Figure 3.1 Young African-American's Bad Treatments by Police Officers**

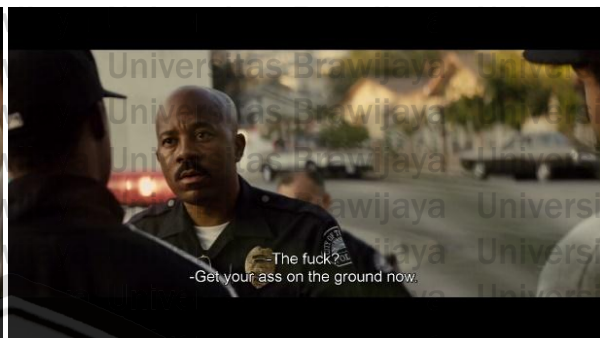
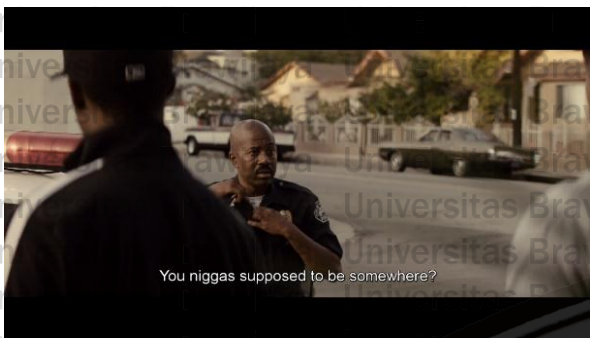
(Source: *Straight Outta Compton*, minutes: 00:16:18-00:16:35)

Figure 3.1 shows young African-American feels insulted by the treat of police who abusing their power. They start to defend themselves by saying "What did I do?" and "Can you explain why you jacking us right now?". They thought they did not do anything wrong and did not bring any drugs or guns. Police are tasked to control situation including inspect the potential crime in order to prevent criminal activities. However, police should not be done such kind of abusing way, at least not every young African-American that hanging around neighborhood because it is not sure whether they are potential criminals or not.

In the development of rap music, the writing of its lyrics gradually transform based on their era. Back in Compton, late 80s were the era of gangster life. They got full support from the neighbor countries like Columbia and Mexico as their supplier of guns and drugs. Hence, they felt confident to do what they wanted to do. This condition makes the law enforcement, especially police; think that they should be aware of African-Americans because it was a threat for national security. Later, police decided to examine every African-American that was hanging around on the street in order to search whether they had drugs and guns or not.

The same case happens to the members of N.W.A. in the film.





**Figure 3.2 Police suspecting N.W.A. Member**

(Source: *Straight Outta Compton*, minutes: 00:50:51-00:53:50)

Police Officer 1 : “You guys lost?”  
Ice Cube : “Nah.”  
Police Officer 1 : “You Niggas supposed to be somewhere?”  
Eazy-E : ”Yeah! Here, we working.”  
Police Officer 2 : “Oh, you working?”  
Police Officer 1 : “Yeah, I bet.”  
Dr. Dre : “What we do?”  
Police Officer 1 : “We’ll find out in a minute what you did”  
Police Officer 2 : “Get on the ground, now!”  
Dr. Dre : “The fuck?”  
Police Officer 1 : “Get your ass on the ground now.”

Figure 3.2 shows a scene where the police officers suspect N.W.A member of bringing guns, although it is not confirmed yet if they are gang members, who usually always bring guns. It starts when N.W.A decides to put their songs on recording studio in the city of Torrance. From the excerpt of the dialogue, police throw a question that undermines N.W.A members by saying they are supposed to be lost and not from here. That is because the city of Torrance was known as the place for mostly white people’s place. Later on, the police officers inspect N.W.A member in order to find something wrong from them. Instead of doing it nicely according to law porceudre, these police officers are forcing them to get to the ground. This is one of the examples of police harassment that African-American always receives.

Similar to the description in the film, real life in California during 1986 to 1995 was also full of discrimination from police officers towards young African-Americans. Police brutality has been an issue since the era of 60's. Police often abuse their power especially to young African-American and other people of color.



**Figure 3.3 Rally protesting to police brutality**

(Source: CivilRightsTeaching.org)

As described in Figure 3.3, there was a rally to Department of Justice protesting about Rodney King's Case, an African-American who drive under influences then was beaten by the police in 1992. The movie attempts to tell us about Rodney King's beating by the police officers. However, the film does not show the whole part of Rodney King's case where he was actually driving under influence. Driving under influence itself is a violation against the law. However, the attention of viewers is being directed only to the beating, not about the background of the beating. The movie focuses on the police violent treatment on African-American.

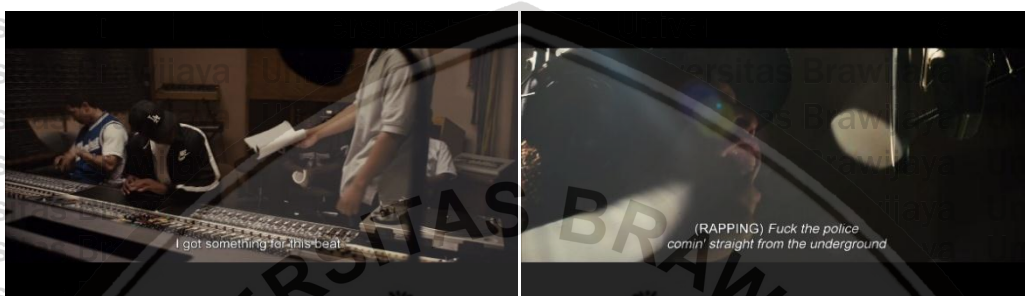
## **2. N.W.A.'s Struggle against Racism**

According to *Straight Outta Compton*, there are several actions that can be categorized as the struggle of N.W.A. against racism. The writer finds that this process of struggle is the process of reaction based on the conditions at the time when The United States



was not friendly for African-American. Their opinion had never been heard by the government or the authority, nor they got in law enforcement. The followings are the evidence depicted in the film about N.W.A.'s struggle.

After being inspected by Police Officers (Figure 3.2), Ice Cube writes his protest in their 'Straight Outta Compton' or 'Straight Out of Compton'.



**Figure 3.4** Cube shows to Dre about his new lyric entitle Fuck Tha' Police

(Source: *Straight Outta Compton*, minutes: 00:53:55-00:55:06)

Figure 3.4 shows that Ice Cube is handing his new lyrics to Dr. Dre that the lyrics show hatred towards the police. Dre and Eazy-E at that time feel surprised, but they feel glad because Cube's lyrics are powerful. That song is "Fuck Tha' Police", along with the album of "Straight Outta Compton" which happens to be the name of the film itself. This song contains about decisive, controversial yet provocative lyrics. Goldstein (2014, para. 5) writes "The song title was so controversial that the word "fuck" did not appear on the album packaging. Instead, the song was listed as 'blank-blank-blank-blank Tha Police' with the instructions to 'fill in the blanks.'" This song tells about their daily life activities, what African-American do in the neighborhood, why they intend to defend themselves from a threat, and why they fight the police.

### "Fuck Tha' Police"

[Intro: The D.O.C., Dr. Dre, and Ice Cube]

Right about now, N.W.A. court is in full effect

Judge Dre presiding

In the case of N.W.A. versus the Police Department

Prosecuting attorneys are MC Ren, Ice Cube

And Eazy-motherfucking-E

Order, order, order!

Ice Cube, take the motherfucking stand

Do you swear to tell the truth, the whole truth

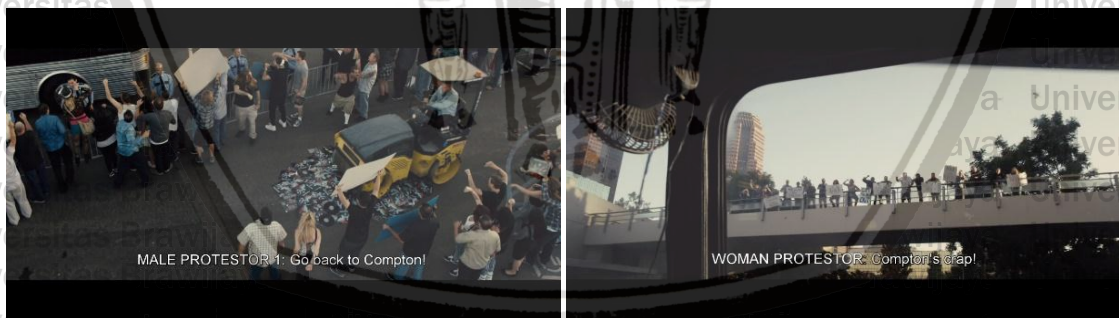
And nothing but the truth to help your black ass?

You goddamn right!

Well, won't you tell everybody what the fuck you gotta say?

N.W.A write this song as if they are in a court where they become the Judge and Prosecuting Attorney. In a case between N.W.A versus the Police Department where they say that the court is made by them. They explain that Ice Cube, MC Ren and Eazy-E as Prosecuting attorneys or they who have to defend the criminal suspect before being sentenced by the judge on a trial. So, it indicates that Cube, Ren and E described as those who defend what so-called "criminal" in this case because African American at that time always being labeled as the one who must be guilty on. N.W.A profile this kind of courtyard to imply that young African-American is also able to create their own way to verdict the one who always treat them bad which is Police Department. Later, Cube is sworn under oath to tell only the truth for whatever happened in this case.

After, N.W.A album is released, they get on a tour to several cities across the states. This is the effect of popularity that N.W.A. gains from their songs. However, there are some protestors who disagree with the album.



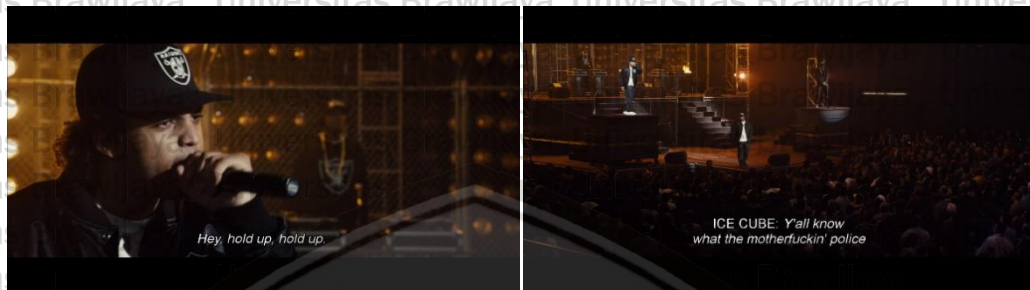
**Figure 3.5 Some Protestors Destroy N.W.A. Album**

(Source: *Straight Outta Compton*, minutes: 01:04:42-01:04:58)

Figure 3.5 shows that the protestors start the to destroy the copies of Straight Outta Compton albums by using a *Steam Roller*, a designated vehicle usually used for compact the soil, concrete, and asphalt. The protestors also tell N.W.A. to go back to Compton. This is an



effect of the release of N.W.A. album that the lyrics of N.W.A mostly contain violence, guns, drugs, and sex.



**Figure 3.7 Communicate with audience**

(Source: *Straight Outta Compton*, minutes: 01:13:21-01:13:26)

Ice Cube: “Hey, hold up hold up!”

Ice Cube: “Y’all know what the motherfuckin’ police tried to tell us backstage?”

Crowd : “What?”

Ice Cube : “They tried to tell us what the fuck we can’t play.”

Ice Cube : “Motherfuckers tried to tell us... what the fuck we can’t say.”

Ice Cube : “This N.W.A. We say what the fuck we wanna say.”

Ice Cube : “So everybody, put your middle finger high in the sky. And to the punk-ass cop in the backstage...”

The attempt to struggle is also implied in scene of Figure 3.7 where Ice Cube tries to communicate with the audience about the reality that has just happened right before the show begin. He tells that the police have already briefed them in the backstage not to sing “Fuck Tha’ Police” song in their show. It triggers the unsympathetic woo from the audience.

Afterwards, Cube also shows his part as the process of N.W.A.’s struggle against racism by saying they are N.W.A. They say what they want to say and they play what they want to play.

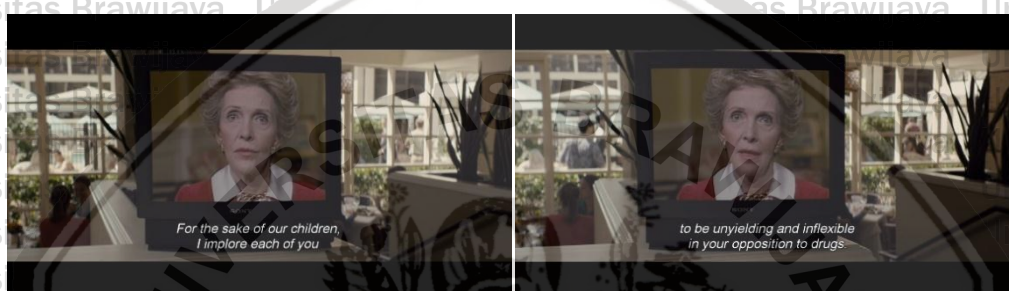
Hereafter, we can conclude that this scene tries to show us that there is an attempt, based on *Straight Outta Compton* movie, to oppose discrimination from the police and some people who disrespect Black People. Making opening speech before they start to sing a song can also be seen as the group’s reacting and persevering criticism against them.

### 3. The Impact of N.W.A.’s Struggle

Become suggested, many protestors, and even politicians put their concern to many songs that contain violence and inappropriate lyrics for children, including N.W.A song. This is the impact of the album's success, 'Straight Outta Compton'.

### 3.1 Resistance

As the popularity of N.W.A. gained, the authorities feel threatened by the existence of this kind of protest from N.W.A.



**Figure 3.10 Television Commercials against Drugs**

(Source: *Straight Outta Compton*, minutes: 01:05:24-01:05:34)

Woman in a TV: "For the sake of our children, I implore to each of you to be unyielding and inflexible in your opposition to drugs."

Figure 3.10 indicates that the woman in the Television Commercial tells the audience not to be flexible and yield to the opposition of drugs. The woman shown in a TVC or Television Commercials is Tipper Gore, the wife of one of US Senator, Al Gore. This kind of statement is released to gain people awareness to the songs that contain inappropriate lyrics for children. Even though the film only flashing its sequence for a few seconds, still the film intend to direct viewers' opinion that there is an attempt to resist the existence of N.W.A.'s struggle over the discrimination.

Tipper Gore herself is one of the pioneers of PMRC or Parents Music Resource Center. Established in 1985, this organization is created that is in charge of classifying musical products into several categories before it can be accessed by people. According to Kory Grow (2015, para. 2) the ratings used are: "X" for profane or sexually explicit lyrics,



"O" for occult references, "D/A" for lyrics about drugs and alcohol and "V" for violent content.



**Figure 3.11 Parental advisory labels**

(Source: NPR Music)

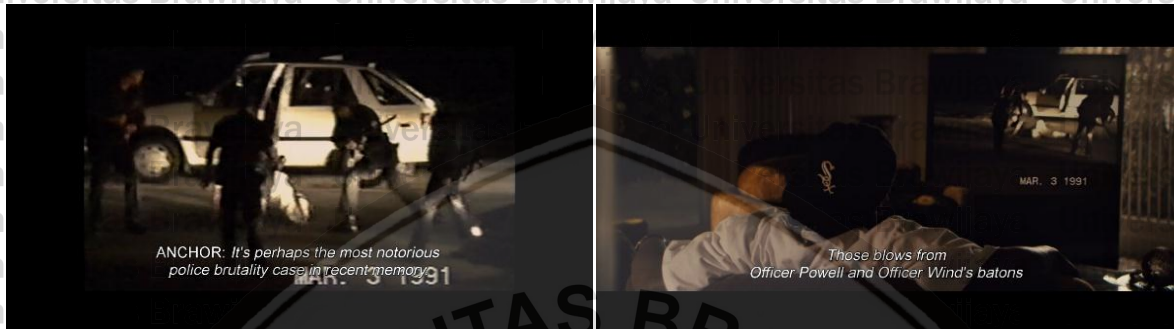
The product of PMRC which is "Parental Advisory Label" sticker still can be seen in nowadays product of Music or Movie that contains above-mentioned categories. Many musical products have been categorized and labelled as *Parental Advisory* only just to make sure the parents to prevent their children from listening this kind of songs.

PMRC directs and influence people's mindset to be inflexible when they hear the songs that contain vulgar lyrics like drugs, violence, sex, or occult references. This attempt also directs public opinion to conclude that music which contains vulgar lyrics like drugs, alcohol, sex, and violence is not appropriate for children. PMRC here is addressing the parents as the one who has to control their children.

#### **4. Acceptance**

The struggle of N.W.A. brings strong influence towards American society especially those who understand the condition of African-American and happens to know the music of N.W.A. The pioneer of this *gangsta-rap* music already made a change in terms of people's perspective. With direct and decisive lyrics of them, N.W.A. stands as the group who bring

the idea that people should exercise freedom of speech. People also being encouraged by the charismatic member of N.W.A. which affect their behavior, conforming ideas that police brutality should be done.



**Figure 3.14 Rodney King's Beating**

(Source: *Straight Outta Compton*, minutes: 01:46:25-01:46:30)

Rodney King trial starts from the case of Rodney King beating by police officers. He starts by drinking and driving when suddenly he is chased by the police. After his car stopped by the officers, King suddenly asked to get down on his knees. However, instead being arrested, King was being beaten by the police officers.

Brown (2012, p.14) states that point of view used to have the camera see something in much the same way as one of the characters would see it: to view the scene from that character's point-of-view. From the figure stated before, the writer analyze that the movie producer intend to direct the audience to look consciously from character's point of view, recalling to the footage of Rodney King beating in 1992, conveying that even Eazy-E Rodney King trial. Hence, people's attention will be guided to the one who is considered being responsible for such kind of action.





**Figure 3.15 King's showing the injured locations of his body**

(Source: New York Daily News)

According to [cnn.com](http://cnn.com), King was struck by police batons more than 50 times. Over 20 officers were present at the scene, most from the LAPD. King suffered 11 fractures and other injuries due to the beating. However, the decision of the judge and the jury was not unbelievable. Judge stated that the four police officers who beat King are not guilty due to exercising the defensive pursuit towards King.

Comparing with the fact that were given in the movie, History Staff (2010, para. 2) suggests that while being intoxicated and uncooperative, King resisted arrest and was brutally beaten by police officers Laurence Powell, Theodore Briseno, and Timothy Wind. Unbeknownst to the police, a citizen with a personal video camera was filming the arrest, and the 89-second video caught the police beating King with their batons and kicking him long after he was capable of resistance. Hereafter, the actual problem was King actually guilty by being intoxicated while driving and resisting to be arrested. Then, police attempt to stop him before he risks other peoples' lives on the street. However, the way police abuse their power to beat King is also not right due to violating civil rights act amendment.



**Figure 3.16 Destroying cars and looting goods in Los Angeles riot**

(Source: *Straight Outta Compton*, minutes: 02:01:50-02:02:02)

One of the output impacts that come from N.W.A is the event of LA Riot. During April 29<sup>th</sup> until May 1<sup>st</sup> 1992, LA riot caused its damage on the South-Central of Los Angeles County. In the aforementioned pictures, it can be seen that people expressing their mad by breaking stuff and looting the store.

According on history.com Staff (2010, para.6), the three days of disorder killed 55 people, injured almost 2,000, led to 7,000 arrests, and caused nearly \$1 billion in property damage, including the burnings of nearly 4,000 buildings. It triggers from the jury decision not to guilt the police officers who beat Rodney King. Many people eventually try to steal the goods from the store in South Central. They also cursing the police everytime they had a chance to. That was the form of disappointment that people express due to the result of Rodney King trial. Police officers. People think that even though Rodney is guilty for breaking the rule of traffic, he still has the right to remain silent first, speak to a lawyer and be treated well like others American.

In the end, this proves that racism is exercised by the authority and there is an attempt of struggle that N.W.A. perform as a *gangsta-rap* group by using their song as the medium.

However, N.W.A. started to do non-violence action to oppose the violence discrimination.

The reactions come in both non-violent and violent forms. The warning about the explicit material in the songs can be categorized as non-violent. The change of people's mindset that later incites the riot can be categorized as violent action.



## Conclusion

The writer finds that there are still forms of Black discrimination that applied in United States society around late 80s according to *Straight Outta Compton*. Subsequently, there is an attempt of struggle towards racism that is exercised by Niggaz With Attitude especially towards police brutality. N.W.A. shows their point of struggle like writing the lyrics and performs it to the audience of their concert in order to tell what they really feel, experienced and how they struggle through it. This kind of action can be categorized as non-violence action even though the cause comes from violence action and their lyrics itself contains violence actions.

The writer also finds that the impact of N.W.A existence in American Society where there is form of resistance which is attempt to show the aspect of power that is exercised by authority to shape public opinion through TVC or Television Commercials suggesting that music which contains vulgar lyrics like drugs, alcohol, sex, and violent is not appropriate to be heard by children. PMRC here is addressing the parents as the one who have control over their children not to listen to those kinds of songs. Afterward, they also create sort of label towards products that are certified to be consumed under the advice of parents only. The writer also finds that L.A Riot comes as an output of people's mindset changing. People accepted the idea of racial discrimination that should be demolished by accepting N.W.A.'s song as non-violent medium and transform it to violent action. People start to realize that the colored-skin rights are being sabotaged by certain group of people.

In the end, the movie tries to tell us that there is an attempt to break, criticize, and change the idea of racism that society applied for many years. However, *Niggaz With Attitude* were also struggled when they were being attacked by those who did want their appearance, especially the authority. This movie also tells us what exactly happened from their early success until the group separated. What unique from this movie product is that the movie was created and released in 2015 which it has been around twenty years since the existence of N.W.A. The reason why it is created and released twenty years later, besides they want to

memorize twenty years the death of Eric Wright or Eazy-E, mostly because to gain the awareness that law enforcement at that time somehow is being racist even until nowadays. It is also used to gain the reputation of band itself due to its notorious reputation that comes from the first year of their success up until now. In conclusion, the movie tries to prove that rap music especially *gangsta-rap* is music that does not only influence their inner circle listeners, but also has an impact surround their outer environment.

The writer suggests to the next researchers who have interests in this topic to dig more, if it possible, about the attempts of struggle that N.W.A do during their career. For example, other researchers can study a documentary of N.W.A. produced by VH1, a music channel that happens to make a lot of documentary movies about music, which was released before *Straight Outta Compton* is released. The VH1 version may provide more perspectives towards N.W.A. and their struggle over the discrimination from other people because unlike *Straight Outta Compton*, the film producer is not the member of N.W.A. itself.

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