

## Representation of Racism Issue in Emergency Movie

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### Abstract

This research analyzes the representation of racism in the film "Emergency," highlighting the racial discrimination faced by the main characters, Sean and Kunle. Roland Barthes' semiotic theory is used to identify and interpret signs in the context of racism. This research uses a qualitative approach and constructivist paradigm approach to examine the reality of racism depicted in the movie scenes. Data was collected through documentation of scenes related to racism. Data analysis was conducted using semiotic methods, dissecting connotations, denotations, and myths as well as Stuart Hall's concept of representation. Purposive sampling was used to select scenes that best represented racism the researcher using observation in digital stream application. Data validity was ensured through triangulation techniques. The research findings revealed two forms of racism depicted in the film, namely individual racism and institutional racism. This research explores the myths and stereotypes associated with the black race in society, including being considered inferior, stupid and criminal. It also examines how institutions contribute to perpetuating racism, with schools inadvertently contributing to racial discrimination and police, despite their legal authority, often reinforcing white supremacy.

**Keywords :** Representation, Racism, Film, Semiotics

### Introduction

Film is a record of how humans interact with each other. Films can portray the reality of a community as it exists in society. Both the reality under the guidance of imagination and the reality as it is. In its development, films not only contain topics that attract certain attention, such as politics, socialism, capitalism, human rights, and people's lifestyles, but also try to show the "video" of society (Effendi & Surjaman, 1986). There is a phenomenon in this digital era of communication, namely films on streaming applications such as amazon prime etc., where films can be used to spread propaganda or certain messages to the public. Film is a form of literature that combines audio and visual elements to help the audience gain meaning from the work. In this digital era, film is an art form that uses digital technology for its production, distribution, and exhibition. Compared to other forms of literature, film is very popular. The vocabulary used in film is the same as that used in literary works in general, and reflects social reality both aesthetically and audibly. Apart from its visual characteristics, films also contain narrative, figurative language, and cinematic language. Films are more difficult to analyze than other literary works because they cannot be analyzed on paper. Instead, films rely heavily on nonverbal cues that are difficult to convey in writing (Petrie & Boggs, 2012).

Film Emergency 2022 is a comedy-drama thriller film that explores issues of race, economic status, and police profiling. The film was written by K.D. Dávila and directed by Carey Williams which is aired on digital streaming applications. The film is a remake of Williams and Dávila's 2018 short film of the same name. The film stars Donald Elise Watkins, RJ Cyler, Sebastian Chacon, Maddie Nichols, and Sabrina Carpenter. The film follows two black students, Kunle Nurudeen (Watkins) and Sean Keh (Cyler), who discover an unconscious white girl, Emma Thompson (Carpenter), at a party they are attending. Fearing that they will be racially profiled by the police if they call for help, Kunle and Sean decide to take Emma to the hospital themselves, through it all, Kunle and Sean learn to rely on each other and to confront their own biases about race and class. Based on IMDb, This film has a good rating of more than 70% because it raises social issues regarding racial discrimination wrapped in an entertaining comedy so that this film makes the author choose to research it.

Film Emergency explores a number of important themes including, The film is set in a society where black people are often victims of police brutality. Kunle and Sean's fear of being racially profiled is a reflection of this

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reality, the film also highlights the gap between the rich and the poor. Emma comes from a wealthy family, while Kunle and Sean come from working-class backgrounds. This class difference leads to a number of misunderstandings and tensions between the characters. The film's main conflict is driven by the characters' fear of being racially profiled by the police. This fear is a reflection of the real-life experiences of many black people, who are disproportionately stopped and searched by the police. Film *Emergency* is a thought-provoking and socially relevant film that explores important issues of race, class and police profiling. As we know, in 2020 we were shocked by a massive wave of turmoil in digital media. Regarding how racial discrimination occurs, it enlivens the universe of digital news media. Namely Black Heart Matters, where there was police violence against the black race. This is the background to the making of this film which tries to frame and show the reality of racial discrimination that occurs.

Racism is a widespread and enduring issue that manifests in various forms, including verbal, nonverbal, implicit, and explicit. It arises from daily interactions to regional regulations, often stemming from differences in skin color or race (Febriani et al., 2020). Messages about social problems such as racism can not only be conveyed through various news in print and electronic media, but can also be conveyed through films and Film is a form of media that has a significant impact because the message conveyed has a clear purpose (Herdini, 2013; Syamela, 2015). Racism is a centuries-old entrenched and pervasive form of social inequality, which manifests in different forms across cultures and societies. Racism is rooted in the historical exploitation, persecution and discrimination of black people around the world, most notably through the abhorrent practice of slavery. The brutality and inhumanity inflicted upon Black people during this period has left an indelible mark on history, and the repercussions of this racial catastrophe continue to be felt today (Asukile, 2008). Looking at the tragedy of "Black Heart Matter" is important because in America, the tragedy of violence committed by white people against black people is quite high. Racism from an American perspective is used in this study because the film *Emergency* serves as a platform to examine issues of racism in America, specifically the pervasive nature of white supremacy and the impact of social discrimination and authority figures. The researcher is interested in exploring how the film portrays these issues in relation to the wider context of racism occurring in the world today.

Based on Barack Obama's statement in some digital media information news, in response to the recent shooting of black citizens, that America has not fully recovered from the cancer of racism, as quoted from Reuters on 23 June 2015. This case shows that racism still exists today, even though America has been independent since 1774, the American civil rights amendment was enacted in 1865 to combat all forms of racism, and a black man has served as president of the United States. The practice of treating certain people or groups in society unequally to other groups is called discrimination (Hornby, 1991). Racism is an act of discrimination against a particular ethnicity defined as a biologically distinct ethnicity (Tito Edy Priandono, 1982). According to research conducted by Grosfoguel, high-ranking people who create hierarchies of dominance and superiority around the world exhibit racism. People in high positions will have easy access to whatever they need, while people in low positions are not considered human (Grosfoguel, 2016). The Negroid race is one of the races that is considered below average. Victims of racism experience unfair treatment, including deprivation of some of their civil rights, physical and mental violence, and social inequality Racialised societies even openly discriminate, intimidating certain groups they consider inferior Racialised societies even openly discriminate, intimidating certain groups they consider inferior (Kwate & Goodman, 2015).

This research seeks to understand how racism is viewed in America and how black people are subjected to prejudice by white Americans." Therefore, how racism is represented in the film *Emergency* is the problem statement in this "Roland Barthes" research. Semiotic analysis was used in the writing and directing of this Carey Williams-produced film. This fact encourages researchers to consider the film "Emergency" for research. Therefore, the researcher will try to explain how racism is represented in this film with the research title *Film Representation of Racism Issues in Emergency Movie with Semiotic Studies*. Based on the introduction, the researcher believes that the semiotic study of *The Emergency* film can reveal the deeper meaning of racism based on the director as a communicator. The meaning can be implied and revealed through the combination of various film elements arranged to strengthen the ideology of the director involved. How is the Representation of Racism in the Film *Emergency* Using Roland Barthes Semiotic Analysis ?

## Theory Literature

### ***Semiotics Theory Roland Barthes***

The science or method of analysis used to investigate signs is called semiotics. We use signs as tools to help us navigate this environment when surrounded and interacting with people. At its core, semiotics or semiology in Barthes' language seeks to understand how humans perceive the world (Barthes, 1972). According to Barthes, every sign used in the sign system must depend on the structural semiotic structure of the language system. Barthes today still adheres to structuralism, but is less focused on Saussure's dyadic signifier. According to him, significance is the result of the combination of signifier and signified to produce a sign (Sobur, 2006). Since signifier and signified are terms that have a relationship, meaning does not just combine two terms or one-sided ethnicity. He then developed the concept of connotative meaning and did not stop at denotative meaning (Rusmana, 2014). Signs and symbols convey meaning, making them communicative. Semiotics, the study of signs and symbols, used to be very important for interpreting song lyrics. This research uses Roland Barthes' semiotic theory to examine the representation of racism in the film *Emergency*.

According to Sobur, in semiotics Denotation is the literal or "true" meaning of a sign, but can sometimes be mistaken for a reference. It is the first level of the signaling system in Roland Barthes' semiology and is often associated with closed meaning. Denotation is more often associated with closed meaning in this context (Sobur, 2006). In Barthes' framework, connotation is synonymous with ideological operations, which he calls myths and serves to reveal and justify the dominant values prevailing in a particular period (Kris B dan Nasrudin, 2011). Barthes calls the second phase of the signaling system connotation. The term "connotation" refers to a cultural meaning that is distinct or different from the meaning associated with words or other means of communication. The word comes from the Latin *connotare* which means "to signify". Connotative meaning combines the denotative meaning with all the thoughts, feelings and memories that arise when the signifier comes into contact with our senses (Rusmana, 2014).

According to Barthes, myth is a language, which makes it a system of communication as well as a message. In his explanation, he states that myth in this particular meaning is the growth of connotations. Myths have been used to create enduring meanings in society. In addition, according to Barthes, myth is a semiological system, or a collection of signs that are interpreted by humans (Vera, 2014). The language used to convey myths must fulfill certain requirements so that in the end it can be accepted by the wider community. Myths are not random talk. Myth is a form of communication that contains a message. Barthes argues that myth is a type of speech or speech that is etymologically (Barthes, 1972; Vera, 2014). Semiotics can be used to express the purpose of communicating every thought, feeling or expression conveyed by the artist to the viewer through the composition of signs. Yes, semiotics is the discipline that studies signs, including the meaning of symbols, indices, icons, and symbols (Mudjiyanto et al., 2013). Based on previous research that addresses the representation of race in Hollywood ninja films (Pua & Hiramoto, 2020). Using an integrated theoretical perspective from sociolinguistics, masculinity studies, and film semiotics, we pay particular attention to cinematic conceptions of masculinity and sexuality to illustrate how semiotics transforms the visual into language in film.

### ***Representation Theory Stuart Hall***

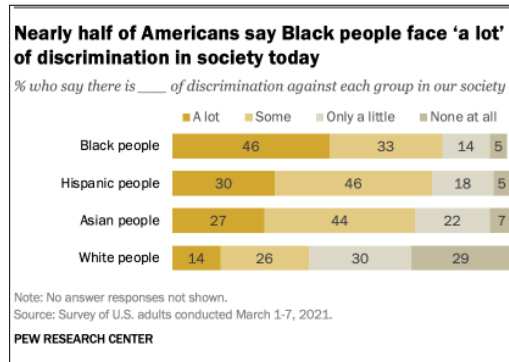
Based on Stuart Hall's theory, representation is the linguistic production of mental concepts of meaning. It is the relationship between ideas and language that describes something or even transforms real or imagined events into something (Hall, 1997). Representation is the use of signs to convey meaning. It is a social activity that involves the production of signs and the interpretation of signs. Representation can be used to express ideas, communicate information, and persuade others. This process can lead to ideological shifts that are both abstract and tangible. The ideas used can generate meaning through language using the available signaling systems. However, problems can get in the way of the meaning of signs. A sign can refer to an object or a group of objects that have been clearly defined (Noviani, 2002).

Cultural signs and images can be used to explain reality through representation. Signs, such as sounds, images and videos, can be used to create a more precise representation of what is seen and felt in a given environment. This can help us to better understand the world around us. The film *Emergency* examines the representation of racism in America. The film shows how black people are treated differently to white people in America. This is an important issue that needs to be addressed. Based on previous research on the representation of racism in the film *Cadillac Records* (Surya et al., 2016). Which uses the constructionist representation approach of Stuart Hall's to see meaning reconstructed 'in' and 'through' language. Shows how racism is implicitly represented regarding black people as

commodities, white people who dominate all aspects of life and discrimination based on physical characteristics displayed in this film. This research also sees Representation as the depiction or portrayal of something or someone in a certain way. representation is the act of representing, the state of being represented, or what is represented. In short, representation is representation. representation is the act, state, or anything that represents.

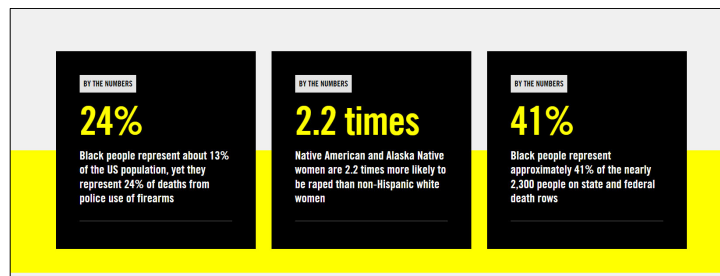
### Racism In America

This emergency film explores the stereotypes that have shaped individual and state violence, American racism, and centuries of racial injustice. Issues of racism, especially in relation to black people, are more common in America than in Indonesia or even in Asian countries. The problem of racism between whites and blacks has been going on for centuries and has become a global issue (German, 2015).



**Figure 1.** The Pew Research Center American study on American society's opinion on the most prevalent racial discrimination against race.

According to Pew Research Center American data as of March 2021, Nearly half of Americans (46%) say there is "a lot" of discrimination against black people. About three in ten experience a lot of discrimination against Hispanics (30%) and Asians (27%). Including the 80% who say there is a lot or a little discrimination against black people, according to the following chart, discrimination experienced by black people is the highest. 40% said white people face at least some discrimination, and only 14% said white people face a lot of discrimination.



**Figure 2.** Amnesty International USA's research on cases of discrimination, violence and harassment against blacks by police and communities in America as of November 2023.

According to research data by Amensty International USA as of November 2023, 24% of Black persons in the US reflect incidents of death from police violence, compared to 13% of Black Americans overall. It is evident that there is little difference between the comparison and the statistics on violence and the overall number of people on the field. Women of color are 2.2 times more likely to experience sexual harassment and violence. Then, we can observe that 41% of the data indicates that compared to other racial groups, black people are more likely to receive death sentences in criminal instances. Based on this data, it is evident that racial discrimination is a common occurrence for the majority of Black people in American culture. The purpose of this study is to examine how racial discrimination is portrayed in the American black community as it is shown in the movie Emergency. This emergency film depicts real-world examples of discrimination, including facts from current data, specifically the film's focus on black racial

discrimination. The study will look at the discriminatory aspects of reality that are created in a scene and summarized in a statement that explains how reality happens and keeps changing in society.

The history of slavery in America left an indelible mark of racism that still exists today. The film *Emergency* highlights this persistent problem. Despite America's image as a beacon of social equality, its past is rife with racial injustice. The enslavement of African Americans by whites, which began in 1619, instilled deep racist prejudices and beliefs that continue to permeate American society, especially among the white elite. Robert Blauner's definition of racism aptly captures the essence of this phenomenon, which is the idea of social domination in which a perceived inferior group is then exploited, manipulated and physically and socially oppressed by a superior group. (Neubeck et al., 1997). This research focuses on racism in America through the lens of the film *Emergency*. The prevalence of racism in American society extends beyond real-life experiences and into the medium of film, which is often depicted through symbolic representations. In Hollywood-produced films, white male characters are usually portrayed as strong and intelligent, while black African-American characters are often portrayed as violent, hardworking, and lacking independence.

Racism can generally be categorized into two forms, namely personal and institutional. Personal racism is a form of racial action, behavior or belief that privileges one group over another, and manifests in the form of acts of violence and threats, derogatory language and discriminatory treatment in various interpersonal interactions (McConahay, 1986; Sears et al., 2000). Meanwhile, Neubeck explains that institutional racism focuses on the demeaning of a community or group perpetrated by certain social institutions such as schools, companies, hospitals, or the criminal justice system (Police, courts). This can lead to disparities in access to opportunities, resources and fair treatment. Social or physical intimidation directed against individuals or racial groups This can lead to disparities in access to opportunities, resources, and fair treatment. Social or physical intimidation directed at specific racial individuals or groups (Liliweri, 2003; Samovar, 2015), Based on previous research on discrimination committed by white people against black people in the film *Antebellum* (Sakina Shepia Maharani et al., 2022). Racism is still common in many countries, especially countries that have many majority and minority groups with very distinctive characteristics, such as in the United States or other European countries.

## Methodology

This research methodology uses qualitative research. Due to the inherent subjectivity of semiotics, which examines the interpretation of signs, which can vary based on cultural background. Therefore, qualitative analysis is more suitable for research about films as it allows for subjective interpretation of signs in film, which can vary based on cultural background, ideology and individual experience (Bogdan Robert & Steven J. Taylor, 1990). Therefore, qualitative analysis is more suitable for this research as it allows for a subjective interpretation of the film through the researcher's own perspective.

Semiotics was used to analyze the research data. Roland Barthes' two-stage analysis system, consisting of denotation and connotation, was used for this purpose. Denotation analysis examined film footage that conveyed the concept of racism, while connotation analysis explored footage that contained evidence of societal myths. These myths represent the established and unquestioned meanings of society (Sobur, 2006). The paradigm of Stuart Hall's representation approach used in this research is constructionist with a special approach to semiotics, namely the meaning that Hall constructs into a language and scenes (as semiotics) are constructed into language or sentences (Mulyana & Eriyanto, 2002). So that because of the subjective nature of this research, the truth of a social reality represented in film scenes can be seen as the result of social construction, and the truth of a social reality is relative.

The entire film *Emergency* became the population for this study, while the sample consisted of specific scenes selected to examine the representation of racism. Purposive sampling was used, where scenes were purposively selected based on predetermined criteria related to the research objectives (Sugiyono, 2008). This non-random sampling technique allowed the researchers to focus on scenes that prominently featured racism in the film *Emergency*.

The unit of analysis is the research subject on which the researcher records phenomena or objects to collect precise data (Masri & Effendi, 2006; Yin & Djauzi, 2014). Therefore, the film *Emergency* serves as the unit of observation of the research, and the film's depiction of racism against black people serves as the unit of analysis of the research. The unit of data analysis was collected using documentation, specifically the film *Emergency*.

Data collection was done by watching the movie *Emergency* to identify scenes and dialogues that contain indications of racism in American culture. Furthermore, semiotic analysis was applied to interpret the meaning conveyed by the signs. Primary Data, Data collection in the form of signs, scene documentation, dialogue from the film *Emergency* which includes screenshots of film scenes and some information about the production of the film. Secondary Data, using library research to review and analyze relevant literature to validate the assumptions that form the theoretical basis of the problem under study.

To test the validity of the data, data triangulation is used which combines various existing data and sources. All data validity checks are based on The validation test with triangulation in this film was carried out as follows. Data collection techniques, analyzing scene screenshots and reviewing similar literature with different techniques. Data sources, reviewing dialogue, scenes or actions that represent racism. Results of Data Interpretation, Author's interpretation, and review of existing theories and experts.

## Research And Discussion

This research analyzes scenes from the film *Emergency* to examine the depiction of racism. This research studies the denotations and connotations of specific scenes, using tables for clear presentation. The discussion centers on 12 scenes that effectively portray racism through language, actions, and unspoken implications from these 12 scenes will be combined into 6 scenes that best portray racism.

### Research Result



**Figure 3.** The first scene of Lecturer Teaching in Lecture Class. the scene when the lecturer presented "Nigger" and the black students' feelings towards the lecturer.

**Table 1.** The Denotation and Conotation Meaning of Teaching Scenes in Class.

Observation of Scene and Dialogue Elements	Discussion
<b>Denotation</b>	A lecturer teaches taboo and blasphemous material. Later, Kunlee and Sean were a little surprised by the discussion about Negroes by displaying the word "NIGGER" very large and clear in front of the class. Kunlee and Sean felt offended by the discussion. Because in the class only the two of them are black.
<b>Conotation</b>	This scene implies a form of verbal racial humiliation and harassment towards the negro race. "Nigger" is a very sensitive word and is considered a rude or insulting word for black people. The mention of the word "Nigger" makes black people feel insulted if the word is mentioned by white people, usually it is considered an act of racism.

Analysis, The professor is seen in this clip pointing out the term "Nigger" in very large and clear letters. This scene clearly shows how the professor insults the two black students in his class by mentioning the name Negro several times. This may allude to the historical practice of referring to African-Americans by their given names, rather than by the name Negro. During the time of slavery, the term "nigger/negro" was originally used to denigrate black people (Kennedy, 2003). Black people in American society usually feel hurt when the term "black" or "nigger" is mentioned, and this is often masked as N-World because of the word's long history of sensitivity. The term "nigger" has been used as a derogatory term for black people for over 200 years. The word "nigger" has been banned since the enactment of Jim Crow laws in the Southern United States between 1876 and 1965, making it particularly sensitive to the black community (Endo, 2012).

Lecturers should be careful when using potentially offensive language, such as the n-word, as it can be considered disrespectful and harmful to black students. The term has significant historical baggage and should not be normalized in academic circles. Instead, educators should promote a learning environment that embraces diversity and cultural

sensitivity. Education should be a place where everyone feels welcome and valued. Lecturers should promote a learning environment that embraces diversity and cultural sensitivity (Banks, 1993).



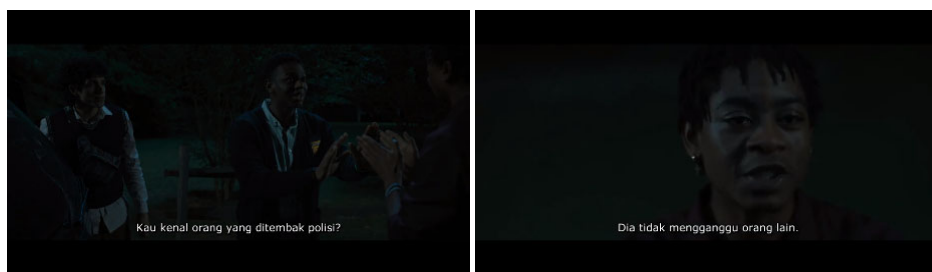
**Figure 4.** Analyze the second scene of a girl fainting at Sean, Kunlee and Carlos’ rented house. Represents Emma fainting at Sean’s house, and shows how Sean and Kunlee are arguing about the risk of being accused by the police.

**Table 2.** The Denotation and Conotation meaning of the scene where a girl faints in Sean, Kunlee and Carlos’ rented house.

Observation of Scene and Dialogue Elements	Discussion
<b>Denotation</b>	Kunlee finds an unconscious girl in a party dress with white leather in a rented living room. Kunlee tries to contact the authorities, but Sean forbids it. They argued about whether to contact the authorities as Sean believed that the white girl would be a risk to black people as they would be accused of a crime by the police. Later, Carlos suggests taking the girl to the ER.
<b>Conotation</b>	Implying the trauma, distrust and reluctance Sean felt as a member of the black community to voice concerns, seek help or make complaints to the white community or authorities, especially the police.

Analysis, The denotation meaning of this scene is that acts of discrimination and violence against the black race, especially discrimination by authorities and accusations often directed at the black race, create a phenomenon of intergenerational trauma. Systemic racism, racial profiling, and historical or ongoing violence against black individuals have shaped an environment where members of the black community feel oppressed, choosing to remain silent for fear of being labelled as criminals or facing unfair punishment solely because of their race (Gandhi, 2019). This scene highlights issues related to racial inequality and the fear of retaliation or persecution for voicing resistance to injustice. Sean, as the main character, belongs to the black group, depicted as having experienced significant trauma due to the discriminatory actions of the authorities against his race.

Positive actions and intentions can be hindered by negative stigma created by society, resulting in traumatic feelings and prompting individuals or groups to limit themselves from becoming unsympathetic. The black race has suffered mental attacks due to intergenerational trauma, coupled with negative stigma (accusations) directed at their race. The negative perceptions formed in the mindset of the black race towards those in authority often prevent them from engaging in acts of benevolence.

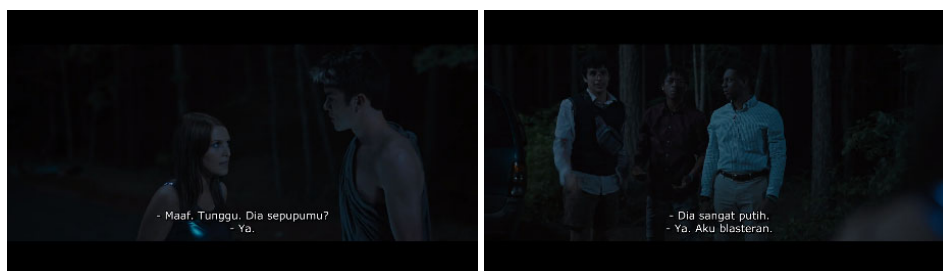


**Figure 5.** Analyze the third scene of Sean and Kunlee arguing in front of the housing complex. Represents how traumatized black people are and represents society's justification of black people.

**Table 3.** Denotation and connotation meaning of the scene where Sean and Kunlee fight in front of the house

<b>Observation of Scene and Dialogue Elements</b>	<b>Discussion</b>
<b>Denotation</b>	There was an argument between Sean and Kunlee when their car stopped at a housing complex due to Sean's headlights going out after being hit by a stone. While they were arguing, a couple peeked through the window and observed their actions. Soon after, the couple came out of the house, made a video of them, and threatened to report them to the authorities. After that, Sean, Kunlee, and Carlos left for fear of being reported.
<b>Conotation</b>	Implying that these individuals face accusations or judgement from the wider society based on their race, which is often considered unfair and discriminatory. They are considered to be involved in criminal activities or riots simply because they are black.

Analysis, The denotation meaning of this scene shows that black people are consistently placed at a disadvantage, with even well-meaning actions often having negative outcomes. Being black and often in the wrong place at the wrong time, they often experience negative stigma and dehumanization. There is a clear tendency in society to discriminate against African Americans (Jewell, 1993). Black communities have long faced systemic racism, racial profiling, and historical or ongoing violence, creating an environment where silence often seems like the only safe option. Fear of retaliation or persecution for speaking out against injustice has far-reaching consequences, perpetuating negative stereotypes and impeding progress towards racial equality. It is critical to recognise the deep-rooted causes of this silence and work to dismantle the systems that perpetuate it. Fostering open dialogue, promoting empathy and understanding, and addressing underlying biases are important steps in creating a more just and equal society for all. The police always view them as criminals, making minority groups feel angry and suspicious of the police and their attitudes (Fadjarianto et al., 2020).



**Figure 6.** Analyze the fourth scene in the forest when Sean's car goes into the ditch and meets Emma's sister and her friends. represents how white people justify black people as criminals and represents how white people stereotype black people.

**Table 4.** The Denotation and Conotation meaning of the scene where Sean, Kunlee and Carlos meet Emma's sister and her friend.

<b>Observation of Scene and Dialogue Elements</b>	<b>Discussion</b>
<b>Denotation</b>	When Sean, Kunlee, and Carlos' car entered the forest and stopped, Alice, Maddy, and Frat arrived not long after. They accuse Kunlee and his friends of being kidnappers because of their suspicious actions in the middle of the forest. Alice also claimed that it was impossible for black people to be brothers with white people when Carlos explained that he was Frat's cousin. Maddy even hit Kunlee and Sean, thinking they were criminals, and insisted on reporting them to 911 for kidnapping and harassment. In fact, when Kunlee tried to help Emma, she started to become critical. Maddy continued to insist that she didn't need Kunlee's help, despite Kunlee's proven innocence.



**Conotation**

It implies racial prejudice, discrimination, and stereotyping. It shows that white women pass judgement on black men based solely on their race, assuming that they are criminals without evidence.

Analysis, The denotation meaning of this scene shows that skin discrimination plays a role in the formation of social constructs by humans. Regardless of achievements, possessions, or additional resources, every human being has the right to freedom and rights. The construct of racism itself instils fear in black individuals, preventing them from taking positive action. White supremacy encompasses behaviors, ideologies, and policies relating to the dominance or power of white European ancestors who outnumbered and outclassed other races (Fredrickson, 1981). This perpetuates a sense of dominance among whites, leading to recriminations where, in the past, blacks were unfairly labelled as "brutish" slaves.

Longstanding white dominance has led to self-imposed isolation among black individuals, creating a deep racial divide. White people often consider themselves superior, perpetuating unfounded accusations and negative stereotypes that instil fear and prevent black people from fully enjoying their freedom. Racism goes beyond prejudice, stereotyping, discrimination and antisemitism, manifesting in practices, institutions and structures that perpetuate racial inequality under the guidance of perceived difference (Rhizky, 2020). Racial prejudices and stereotypes perpetuate unfair judgements and hinder the pursuit of justice for black individuals. White racial perceptions of black people as inherently inferior often lead to unfair treatment and reinforce existing social inequalities.



**Figure 7.** Analyze the fifth scene when Sean is arrested by the police and detained. Represents how the police commit violence against black people and the difference in police behavior towards black and white people.

**Table 5.** Table of Denotation and Connotation Meanings of Scenes: Sean Arrested by the Police and Detained.

<b>Observation of Scene and Dialogue Elements</b>	<b>Discussion</b>
<b>Denotation</b>	When they arrived at the hospital, the police surrounded their car. Afterwards, all passengers were safely removed from the car, and the other four children sat on the pavement. However, Kunlee was forced to the ground, and a gun was pointed at his head. Although Kunlee had tried to explain, pleaded for leniency, and asked for forgiveness, emphasising that he was innocent as his other friends, the police did not listen and kept the gun pointed at Kunlee's head. The police even differentiated their treatment, putting Kunle, a black man, on the ground, while Carlos and Frat, both white men, sat on the pavement with Maddy and Alice without pressure.
<b>Conotation</b>	Implying that the police officer acted with unwarranted prejudice and demeaned him by forcing him to the ground, automatically assumes that the man is guilty based on his race and does not give him a chance to explain or defend himself

Analysis, The denotation meaning of this scene shows that the police often use violence without evidence and do not want to listen to explanations from black individuals because of the negative stigma attached to the black race in society. This is supported by United States data documenting several cases of racial offences committed by police officers. Cases of racism continue to occur, leading to disparities in the economic, educational and health sectors

in the US, especially in discriminatory treatment between blacks and whites (Banda, 2020). In this scene, the disparate treatment of blacks and whites by the police is evident. The police put a gun to Kunlee's head and force him to get down, while the two white girls and two other white men just stay on the pavement.

Law enforcement officials must ensure protection for every individual regardless of racial differences. Discriminatory actions in the form of violence and police brutality based on race will only reinforce racism and further erode the self-confidence of the oppressed race. Forms of police brutality also include exposure (such as wrongful arrest), intimidation, and verbal abuse, among other presentations (Moore, 2020). Police officers are responsible for upholding justice as a moral and legal duty. Violence, intimidation and racial discrimination in law enforcement can increase interracial distrust of the protection provided by law enforcement, ultimately leading to interracial legal inequality.



**Figure 8.** Analyse Scene Six playing together and having fun at Sean, Kunlee and Carlos' rented house. Represent the traumatised feelings of black people due to police brutality. Scene 6 Analyses of playing together and having fun at Sean, Kunlee and Carlos' rented house.

**Table 6.** The Denotation and Conotation Table of Meanings: Kunlee Silenced by the Sound of Police Sirens.

Observation of Scene and Dialogue Elements	Discussion
<b>Denotation</b>	At the end of the film, Kunlee is having fun with his rented friends. They are joking and laughing together. Suddenly, however, Kunlee's cheerful expression changes. He immediately put on a flat expression, his eyes blank and tense. Shortly after, he heard the sound of police sirens, even though there were no police vehicles passing around them. The sirens seemed to echo in Kunlee's head over and over again. Sean noticed Kunlee's sudden change in demeanour, with the tension and emptiness in his expression. Before long, Kunlee began to shed tears.
<b>Conotation</b>	This implies that Kunlee is psychologically traumatised by police officers, traumatised by the racially discriminatory and violent treatment by officers. This repeatedly replays in Kunlee's mind and brings out the traumatic side, anxiety and fear in Kunlee towards police treatment.

Analysis, The denotation of the scene is the trauma experienced by the black race due to the actions of police who enforce the law by using excessive force. Such experiences can lead to post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) and mental health problems (Franco, 2020). Observing this phenomenon in Sean's scene, we are reminded of the "Black Lives Matter" event, specifically the tragedy of police violence against the black race, an unforgettable event in the world in 2020. In other words, police militarisation and excessive use of force are contributing factors driven by historical precedents and the labelling of people of colour, especially black people, as an inferior group. Moreover, this behaviour is rooted in the belief that they are inherently inferior (DiAngelo, 2018).

In this scene, it becomes apparent that there is no intention on the part of law enforcers to behave neutrally by offering apologies or making efforts to address the psychological impact on the victim, despite Kunlee's traumatic experience resulting from the use of excessive force by the police. Even though equality is the absolute right of every individual, the black race will continue to face discrimination if the white race persists in prioritizing their race above all else. This discrimination takes various forms, extending beyond overt discriminatory treatment by whites towards

non-white groups; white supremacy has evolved into an ideology, paradigm, institutional system, and even a worldview (Saad, 2019).

### ***Stereotype Myths And The Existence Of Black People In America***

The results of this study show that the scenes analyzed in the film *Emergency* perpetuate harmful stereotypes about black people. One such stereotype is the notion that black people are inherently associated with negative perceptions and accusations. The third and fourth scenes connotation denotation of the film reinforce this stereotype, portraying Sean and Kunlee as black people who are constantly subjected to society's prejudices. The film also highlights the pervasiveness of racial discrimination in contemporary society, emphasising the damaging effects of labelling black individuals as criminals, troublemakers and inferiors (Septiadi R., 2016; West et al., 2008). In addition, the film perpetuates negative stereotypes about black personalities, portraying them as inferior, stupid, immoral and dishonest. Rheeda Walker, a licensed clinical psychologist, says that the reason why black people are always accused of being criminals is because of their skin colour (Fadjarianto et al., 2020; Sutaner et al., 2018).

The film also perpetuates the myth of hierarchical racism, a concept often associated with Western elites, which involves the reproduction of racist practices against individuals who are considered inferior based on their race, ethnicity, religion, or skin colour. This notion of inferiority places these individuals below the line of humanity, further reinforcing societal prejudice and discrimination (Frederickson, 2005). According to various studies and historical accounts, Black people have been historically and systematically marginalised, often relegated to a lower social status compared to other racial, ethnic, or white citizen groups in America (Grosfoguel, 2016; Marger & Martin N., 1994). We can see this from how the representation of racial discrimination in this film occurs in the fields of education, society, and institutions.

Stereotyping in terms of education, based on the example of the first scene, one of the denotations of the lecturer's behaviour when calling niggers, cornering Kunlee and Sean as well as the depiction of the feelings felt by the main character and how low the appreciation of Kunlee's achievements by black students on campus. The stereotyping that occurs refers to the level of retention between white and black Americans that continues to occur in American society in the field of education, for example, the decline in standardised school test scores for blacks is lower than that of whites because of the traditional stereotypes where blacks are considered stupid and not greater than whites (Nettles, 1988; Steele, 1992; Wilds & Wilson, 1998). In the end, what happens is an interracial conflict that leads to racism between fellow humans and when there is a dominant group, the understanding of the dominant group will be partial and detrimental because of the white hereditary attitude towards Africans-Americans in the United States (US) is negative (Yufandar, 2016).

Stereotypes in the social side of society, based on the third scene, the connotation when Kunlee and Sean argue about the experience of racial discrimination experienced by Sean's cousin, shows the difficult position of the black group where the black group must create achievements and have value to be considered equal to whites. The social construction of society is that white people are considered to have a higher intellectual level and the black race is lower. This makes the black race tend to value their achievements more (Guerrero, 1993) In fact, according to UNESCO, no scientific evidence has been found to suggest that there is a correlation between intellectual and biological racial differences. This is the basis that there is no scientific evidence that can place a hierarchy of certain races superior to others (Al-Hafizh, 2016).

Stereotyping in terms of institutions, based on the connotation of the fourth scene of the film which displays the myth of black stereotypes when Kunlee is accused of being a criminal and is not trusted by the institution because he is black and is considered a criminal by the Neighbourhood Community. Based on the stigma of the community, prejudices and assumptions arise that black people are a troubling group because in the past many black people acted criminally and committed violence and black people have a lower social status (lowly slaves) so that the views of white people believe that black people are destined to be rough and tough slaves with inherent characters (Huda & Wahidar, 2021; Perkins, 2019).

If we examine the film, there are two types of racism, namely individual racism and institutional racism. Individual Racism occurs when a person from a certain race or group makes a rule and acts violently towards groups from other races, this happens because groups from other races (Inferior) have power or territory or superiority (Better, 2008). Institutional Racism, on the other hand, is the institutionalised action of the majority group against the minority group. This happens in government institutions and social institutions. This often happens when an institution, such as a state institution, legal institution, etc. makes certain regulations that limit the space for certain racial groups or groups (Agustinus et al., 2023).

However, the myth of stereotypes and the existence of black people in America that persists to this day is a social construction that places certain races (white groups) superior to other races (black groups). These stereotypes

are formed in the constructs of inferiority and superiority discourses that have always been hereditary prejudices (Ulum, 2022). The research findings reveal that the film *Emergency 2022* highlights the spread of racism in social interactions involving black individuals. Using the concepts of social constructionism and interpersonal communication, this research effectively summarises the film's narrative through these two important frameworks.

### ***Racial Discrimination by Police Officers and Individuals in Educational Institutions***

This research shows the existence of racial discrimination perpetuated by educational institutions and police officers based on the scenes that the author has analysed in the film *Emergency*. In first scene connotation denotation, it shows how educational institutions are not friendly to black people and in Fifth scene connotation denotation, it shows how the authorities behave differently towards the black race. Racism continues to occur because there are always those who preserve it, just like a culture, if there are always individuals who try to preserve and develop it, then the culture will remain sustainable (Al Ghifari, 2021).

According to the data, nearly 88,000 racist incidents were recorded in schools between 2007-2012 and nearly a third of children have heard racist comments and accusations of racism at school by teachers and fellow students (Gayle, 2020; Talwar, 2012). Black students are three times more likely to be suspended or expelled than their white peers, according to the US Department of Education, 95% of black children have witnessed racist language at school and even black students have been traumatised by racist incidents (Marchant, 2020; Samuel, 2020). The unfairness with which educators treat their students is a major reason for the failure of the process of decolonising education. In fact, white educators tend to represent the dominant group in schools, and black students tend to have complex experiences of discrimination (Rosenbloom & Way, 2004). In fact, the role of educators as guides and facilitators for all students regardless of race has an important role in stopping racism.

The film shows how educational institutions play a role in perpetuating racism. Based on the first scene, the connotation shown is of an educator behaving racistly in the classroom. However, education in schools is not just a place where educators convey knowledge through various subjects. It is also an institution that strives for efforts and learning processes that are oriented towards character building and moral education (Fraenkel, 1977). Critics argue that this behavior reflects systemic problems in law enforcement with a tendency to discriminate in law enforcement that negatively impacts minority communities in America who often experience acts of racism from Native Americans (Kholik, 2017; Restiyani & Rusdiarti, 2023). Educators serve as agents for spreading anti-racist behaviour and multicultural education in their classrooms and encouraging students to regard different cultures as equal. For example, in Africa, educators can mediate the negative impact of racism by initiating conversations with students, emphasising tolerance, cultural and religious differences, the dangers of discrimination, human rights, etc and using creative teaching strategies to break down rigid narratives about race (Banks, 1993; Joorst, 2019).

The film highlights the role of the police in perpetuating racial discrimination. The fifth scene connotation exemplify this, showing differential treatment based on race. Data shows that law enforcement tends not to favour black people. This, coupled with historical factors such as economic upheaval in the 1960s and high crime rates, has contributed to the strained relationship between the black community and the police (Serbulo & Gibson K. J, 2016). While the police are law enforcers, justice is a form of moral and legal responsibility. There have been acts of violence, intimidation and discrimination in law enforcement against racial and ethnic minority groups, as well as disparities in police arrests and convictions. Critics argue that this behavior reflects systemic problems in law enforcement with a tendency to discriminate in law enforcement that negatively impacts minority communities in America who often experience acts of racism from Native Americans (Wiratraman, 2021). Several studies have found that white American police officers and other members of law enforcement, including judges, are more likely to be negative and violent towards African Americans. Moreover, they are more likely to believe that African Americans "get what they deserve" in their interactions with the legal system (Dulaney, 1996; Juan J. Barthelemy & Chaney, 2016; Smith & Hattery, 2009; Walker et al., 2004).

According to Rawls, racial discrimination by law enforcement officials such as the police can manifest in a variety of ways. Including Racial Profiling, police disproportionately target black individuals for stop, search or interrogation, without specific evidence of wrongdoing. Excessive Use of Force, Police use lethal force disproportionately against Black people, resulting in injury or death. Biased Arrests, There are racial disparities in arrests and convictions, with the perception that Black people may be arrested or punished more harshly than people of other racial backgrounds for the same offences (Rawls, 1999).

How police brutality against a race became an urgent matter in America and even the world finally peaked in 2020 when a case of police brutality in America killed George Floyd, a black man who was wrongly accused without evidence and smothered to death. From this case came the wave of Black Lives Matter which became an international movement. The movement was first formed online using the hashtag #BlackLivesMatter (Britannica,

2023). The movement is dedicated to addressing, confronting and fighting anti-Black racism and violence, especially in the form of cruelty and brutal violence perpetrated by police officers. Black Heart Matters is a condemnation of the unjust killing of Black people by police officers (Mahisa & Munir, 2021).

Psychologically traumatic representations and low levels of trust in the authorities leave a tremendous impression on the minds of black people. As in the second scene connotation denotation analysis, the connotation that emerges is when Sean repeatedly avoids the police or minimises dealing with the police because of the traumatic feelings he feels. Therefore, why does the state apparatus play an important role in stopping or continuing racism in a country so that it does not become more prevalent, even though its role as an enforcer and protector should be neutral because of the authority it has in terms of ideological influence and repressive action (Geier et al., 2023; Rusmawan & Angga, 2023). Based on previous studies, there is a statistically significant relationship between negative police interactions and mental health symptoms such as psychological stress, depression, PTSD, and anxiety among Black Americans. Black Americans have greater exposure to interactions with the police compared to other racial/ethnic groups. This phenomenon is due to racial injustice in policing in the US which is a result of the history of institutionalised racism against Black Americans by modern policing today (DeVylder et al., 2017; Hirschtick et al., 2019; Landers et al., 2011; McLeod et al., 2020; Meade et al., 2017).

According to Louis Althusser, the state apparatus can be divided into two, namely the repressive state apparatus (RSA) and the ideological state apparatus (ISA). The RSA functions repressively to maintain the stability of the state and the dominance of the ruling class. The RSA includes the police, army, and prisons that function for the state as 'engines of oppression' to ensure the dominance of the ruling class over the lower class. The ISA functions to instil state ideology in society. It includes schools, families, mass media and religion. Processes such as state domination of society occur through the state's ideological apparatus that creates false consciousness in society, and fortifies society from the formation of knowledge about exploitation and oppression (Althusser, 2001).

Racial discrimination can be maintained due to the domination of the ruling class. This domination is realised through RSA and ISA according to Althusser. RSA is used to repressively crack down on anti-racial discrimination activists. ISA is used to instil the ideology that racial discrimination is normal and natural. To fight racial discrimination, there needs to be repressive action against the RSA and ideological action against the ISA. Repressive actions can include demonstrations, boycotts and strikes. Ideological actions can include anti-racial discrimination education, mass media campaigns, and cultural movements (Althusser, 2001). The ISA and RSA exert influence in perpetuating racism through ideological and repressive forces by utilising aspects of the mindset and representing it through action (Rodin, 2020). Therefore, state neutrality is necessary to achieve distributive justice for basic human rights. In addition, the neutrality of government institutions must be able to build an anti-discrimination constitution (Habermas, 1996).

## Conclusion

Racism occurs in many aspects of society and institutions, including education and policing. This research analyses how the representation of black racial discrimination using Roland Barthes semiotics by looking at connotation and denotation meanings and Myths. Like scene one, denotation shows a lecturer teaching and displaying the word Nigger in front of the class and discussing the word, connotation means that the lecturer offends the black race and discriminates with the word nigger which is very sensitive based on history, Myth is shown that black people are lowly slaves, stupid and mindless according to the meaning of the word nigger. Black people are often portrayed as having no value in themselves. They will only be considered valuable if they are able to realise something big and achieve. In fact, the black community has been traumatised by racial discrimination, both personally and institutionally. This research also discusses the role of the ISA and RSA in perpetuating racism against black people, where the ISA propagates racist ideologies to justify discriminatory practices in the education, social and criminal justice systems, while the RSA repressively enforces racial hierarchies through the police, military and correctional systems. This research has limitations in that it only focuses on one film. Future research is expected to present a more detailed representation of racism issues in other racism-themed films. Research on the film *Emergency* is important because it raises the issue of racial discrimination which is still a real problem in today's society. This film shows racial discrimination in various aspects, so that it can provide a more comprehensive picture of the problem. This can be an educational tool for the community to understand and fight racial discrimination.

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