

# Songs with political or social events essay

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There are many rock songs that portray a social or political event. One of those songs is from my favorite rock band Sublime. The title of the song is April 29, 1992.

It is a song talks about the riots that broke out in Los Angeles on April 29th. 1992. after four white police officers were acquitted by a largely white jury for beating an African American named Rodney King. It became one of the biggest riots in U. S history. On March 3, 1991 an African American by the name of Rodney King was driving at excessive speeds on the 210 freeway. He was chased for about 20 minutes by a California Highway Patrol car. When he finally stopped and pulled over he was confronted by four white LAPD officers.

Three of the officers brutally beat him with metal batons as the fourth officer just watched. George Holliday, a resident of that neighborhood videotaped the incident. He was recording as the officers struck Rodney King over fifty times. On April 29, 1992, about a year after Rodney King beating.

The LAPD officers who were involved in that incident were acquitted in a Simi Valley court room by an all white jury. This sparked many tensions against the police and racism against whites. Within hours of the jury's verdict, the streets of Los Angeles erupted into chaos.

Many people gathered on street corners around Los Angeles enraged at the jury's verdict. A riot began on that night, many people looted the streets. Many businesses were broken into or burned down.

Many people were also beaten and killed as the riot went on. Three days later, when the riot finally stopped, 54 people had lost their lives, over 7,000 were arrested, and hundreds of millions of dollars worth of property had been destroyed. (Linder, 2001). In the song April 29, 1992 by Sublime, the singer, Bradley Nowell talks in first person in a literal style about being a looter in the riot. The song starts with an actual police radio recording of an officer reporting a looting happening in a liquor store. There are a few more actual police recordings of the riot reports throughout the song. The singer's first words in the song are " April 26 1992, there was a riot on the streets, tell me where were you? ".

Although he does not mention the correct date that the riots began, the title of the song is April 29, 1992, which is the actual date that the riots began. He makes the listener believe that he was a participant in the riot when he says, " you were sittin' home watchin' you TV, while I was participatin' in some anarchy". He also proceeds to talk about three different places that he looted while that riot was going on, a liquor store, a music shop and a furniture store. I am not sure if he was an actual participant of the riots, but to make the listener believe that he really was a participant he mentions that he stole a guitar that he uses for a band, " Where do you think I got this guitar that you're hearing today? Bradley Nowell's point of view of this event was that it wasn't about what race you were, or even about Rodney King, but it was about unjust police and civil unfairness. He sounds mad at the police when he says, "...it wasn't about Rodney King, it's about this fucked up situation and these fucked up police". I believe he personally has hatred for

the police when he says, " screamin' 1-8-7 on a mother fuckin' cop. " 187 is the California Penal Code for homicide.

At the end of the song he mentions many cities and imposes that there are riots occuring in those cities at the same time that the riots were happening in Los Angeles. I'm not sure if there were actual riots happening in all of those cities, but he mentions all of those cities because the band toured in all of those cities that year. (Mike) I personally agree with the motive for people to start the riots in Los Angeles after the Rodney King verdict.

Therefore, I definitely agree with the attitude the singer has while singing this song. An anti-police movement was the motive of this song, to let people know how unjust the LAPD is.

I also believe that the way the instruments are played support the message of the song. The way that the guitar is played as the song begins, sounds like a part in a movie when something bad is about to happen. This song has a powerful message about police unfairness. I think it was a great idea to write this song in a first person point of view.

It almost puts the listener in the looters position in an understanding way, and not a violent or ignorant way. Works Cited Linder, D. (2001). An account of the police officers' trials. Retrieved from <http://www.law.umkc.edu/faculty/projects/ftrials/lapd/lapdaccount.html>.

Mike, L. E. (n. d.).

April 29, 1992 by Sublime Songfacts. Retrieved from [www.songfacts.com](http://www.songfacts.com).