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Racial injustice in the USA

A company perspective



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Resumé

USA er et land der i mange årtier har været præget af race forskelle og er i dag et samfund der er delt i sort og hvid. Raceadskillelse finder oftest sted i det amerikanske uddannelsessystem samt i de økonomiske systemer. Ydermere er der også stor ulighed i amerikanske politik og deres trossystemer, da dette er meget varierende. De amerikanske politikker går fra at være meget diskriminerende imod personer med en anden hudfarve end lys, til politikker der er mindre diskriminerende (Solly 2020). Denne ulighed i det amerikanske samfund ligger til grunde i de gamle politikker som Jim Crow og the New Deal, men slaveriets arv bidrager også til den nuværende ulighed i det amerikanske samfund (Solomon et.al. 2019). I lang tid har sorte mennesker i det amerikanske samfund følt sig truet og uretfærdigt behandlet. Denne uretfærdighed som mange sorte mennesker føler, at de er blevet udsat for, har medført mange demonstrationer og protester, hvor deltagerne har krævet lighed blandt folket. Bevægelser som Black Lives Matter og Racial Justice NOW er nogle af de amerikanske antiracistiske bevægelser der er opstået efter en lang årrække med racekampe i USA (Solly 2020).

De amerikanske virksomheder har i mange år ikke aktivt deltaget i politiske problemer, men efter drabet på den amerikanske sorte mand, George Floyd, er der kommet en tendens med, at virksomheder offentligt støtter kampen for social retfærdighed. Førhen tøvede de amerikanske virksomheder med aktivt at støtte protesterne og de organisationerne der går ind i kampen mod racisme (Friedman 2020).

Denne nye trend er også motivationen til denne opgave, og har fået titlen ”Racial injustice in the USA – a brand perspective”. Problemstilling i denne opgave er hvordan fire forskellige kendte amerikanske virksomheder forsøger at bekæmpe denne ulighed der er mellem de sorte og de hvide i USA, gennem deres kampagner. Opgaven indeholder en analyse af hvordan den given virksomheds generelle CSR-præstationer er, hvor den vil blive udarbejdet ved at anvende Carroll’s pyramide og Elkington’s TBL- metoden. Der er blevet anvendt to forskellige metoder for at undersøge om disse giver to forskellige resultater eller om disse giver ens resultater. Ydermere, er der blevet lavet en semiotisk analyse af de fire forskellige kampagner ved at anvende Saussure’s ”signifier” og ”signified” og Peirce’s ”icon” ”index” og ”symbol”, ved det visuelle. Resultatet ved denne analyse er, at alle fire virksomheder har gode præstationer i deres CSR og alle virksomheder bruger også forholdsvis de samme metoder til at ytre deres meninger omkring race debatten.

Introduction

“We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights, that among these are Life, Liberty and the pursuit of Happiness” (National Archives 2021). This statement is the preamble to the Declaration of Independence, so one might assume that these words apply equally to all people in the USA. However, issues concerning racial injustice have persisted for decades (Solly 2020).

In 2018, the Milton Eisenhower Foundation released a report called “Healing our Divided Society: Investing in America Fifty Years After the Kerner Report” (The Eisenhower Foundation 2021), which is a continuation of the 1968 Kerner report, called “The America of Racism”, that explores racism and how far the USA has come with ensuring equality for all. Unfortunately, the 2018 report offers few signs of progress for racial equality. In some areas, racism seems to be entrenched at the institutional level, for example, persistent issues regarding police brutality and “Zero tolerance” policies aimed toward people of color, especially Blacks (The Eisenhower Foundation 2021). Increasingly, racially concerned movements such as the Black Lives Matter Movement (BLM) have grown in response to unchecked violence against people of color. BLM initially gained ground after George Zimmerman was acquitted for killing the 17-year-old Afro-American Trayvon Martin (Black Lives Matter 2021, a). In addition, the American filmmaker, speaker, and creator Prince EA has created a documentary in collaboration with YouTube Originals’ “#BearWitnessTake Action 2: Continuing The Movement” that is about racism in courtrooms (Ea, 2021). This documentary has more than 600.000 views and over 4000 comments on YouTube (Ea, 2021). On Facebook, the same documentary has garnered 13.1 million views, and over 15 thousand likes (Facebook 2021). The above examples confirm how essential and consequential the topic of racial equality is.

Usually, American companies keep their distance regarding making a public stance on political issues, especially when society is in an uproar. Understanding the potential risk of alienating customers, many companies hesitate to align themselves with social issues. However, in the aftermath of recent high-profile racially-charged that have occurred in the USA, some companies are taking a political stance and openly expressing their opinions about racial injustice, and signaling their support of the protests, with some companies even going so far as to encouraging people to openly support such movements. In addition, companies are starting to broadcast awareness to this topic through their marketing (Friedman 2020).

One relevant example is Will Smith's collaboration with Netflix to make a minidocumentary that explores the 14th amendment and investigates different cases relating to the amendment (Ferme 2021). That a company as large as Netflix has chosen to make this documentary underscores the prevalence of racial injustice in the USA. This phenomenon is not restricted to the USA, Recently, the Danish TV channel TV2 recently made a campaign called "All that we share". The campaign explores different backgrounds among the Danish population. Its overarching message is that all Danes have more in common than not.

Arguably, if large corporations did not involve themselves in these issues, perhaps society would not either. Brands must show that they are not just blind followers to a trend. To prove their sincerity, corporations' actions should back up their racial justice stance.

This possible connection has led me to produce a problem statement:

How do US brands combat racial injustice through their campaigns, and what are their CSR performances in general?

Empirical material

This chapter will present the empirical material I have chosen for this study about brands and racial justice in the USA. I have selected four different campaigns, all from 2020, and all four campaigns are from different US brands. The campaigns I have chosen are from the National Football League (NFL), Procter & Gamble, NIKE, and the National Basketball Association (NBA). I have selected these campaigns based on their content, given that all campaigns address current, racially charged events.

National Football League

In 2019, the NFL announced that, along with players and owners in the league, they had started a new platform called Inspire Change with the purpose "[...] of creating positive change in communities across the country [...]" (NFL 2021, a). This initiative focuses on addressing racial inequality within institutions in the US, including the education and finance sectors, law enforcement, and criminal justice. One example is that in 2020, the NFL created an Inspire Change Super Bowl campaign with the slogan "It takes all of us" that included the hashtag #InspireChange (NFL 2021, b). The campaign addressed systemic institutional racism and illustrated its devastating effects. The NFL wanted to show that, even though the season for football was over, the NFL would not be bystanders to what is going on in the USA concerning racism and aimed to inspire all US

citizens to include themselves in making a positive change. For there to be any significant societal changes that can effectively combat racial inequality, the NFL takes the stance that all citizens must be active participants in the fight.

This campaign from the NFL received backlash, specifically because while the campaign message is about inspiring change, in 2016, the 49ers allegedly opted out of renewing quarterback Colin Kaepernick's contract because Kaepernick kneeled during the national anthem as an act of protest. His action sparked a kneeling movement among Black athletes and celebrities in the USA (Chakraborty 2021). Therefore, some people found the NFL's Inspire Change campaign hypocritical, given its actions against Kaepernick (Berkowitz 2021).

The campaign spot is one minute long and starts with a voiceover from the former NFL player LaDainian Tomlinson with Alicia Keys' song Love Looks Better playing in the background. While Tomlinson speaks, footage of players, coaches, and games from the NFL are shown, along with images of people from diverse backgrounds and scenes from Black Lives Matter protests. The campaign ends with the message that people need to act together to end racism (NFL 2021, b).

Procter & Gamble

In 2017, Procter and Gamble (P&G) started a conversation about racial bias in the USA when they released a short video called "The Talk", which turned out to be one of the first thought-provoking films out of many from P&G that touches on the issue with racism in the USA. In 2019, P&G followed the initiative by releasing a second video called "The Look" and again, in 2020, they released "The Choice". The first two videos were shot from a Black person's point of view, depicting what it is to be a black person in the USA. However, in the third video, P&G took a different approach. "The Choice" addresses white people and how they can use their power to make a change and stand against racial injustice in the USA (Adams 2020). The CCO of P&G, Damon Jones, stated that the campaign was created to "[...] bring people into action and [...] need to be actively anti-racist [...]" (D S Simon Media, "PR's Top Pros Talk").

This campaign spot has no voiceover, only soundtrack, and is 1,16 minutes long. Throughout the entire video, different skin tones are presented, along with a sentence or phrase. Additionally, you see either a female or a male face in some frames instead of only skin. The campaign spot ends with a call to action where P&G encourages people, especially white people, to follow the link and start their own "[...] take on race." actions. In the campaign spot, P&G does not directly advertise their brand products (P&G 2020).

NIKE

In May 2020, NIKE released a socially conscious campaign called “For Once, Don’t Do It” that addresses racism in the USA. “For Once, Don’t Do It” is not NIKE’s first socially conscious campaign. In 1988, in collaboration with the Wieden+Kennedy agency, NIKE created its famous campaigns with the tagline “Just Do It” and since has released a series of controversial campaigns (Tyler 2018). In 2018, NIKE released a campaign along with former NFL football player Colin Kaepernick with the message that you must “Believe in something. Even if it means sacrificing everything”, which sparked both praise and criticism (Pasquarelli 2020). This campaign was launched in the wake of the murder of George Floyd and is NIKE’s response to where they stand on this specific social issue as a company (Cohen 2020).

As with the campaign from P&G, NIKE’s campaign spot has no voiceover, only soundtrack, and is one minute long. There is a simple black background and a statement throughout the campaign, and for each new frame, there is a new statement. The campaign ends with the statement “Let’s all be part of the change” and the famous NIKE logo (NIKE 2020).

National Basketball Association

Before the NBA resumed its season in July 2020, the NBA commissioner, Adam Silver, announced that he and the entire NBA had agreed to display social justice messages on the players’ jerseys (NBA 2021, a). In the wake of this announcement and all their initiatives, the NBA released a campaign called “The truth is #BlackLivesMatter” (NBA 2020).

The campaign spot is one minute long and has no voiceover, only a soundtrack. Throughout the campaign, footage of Black Lives Matter protests and clips of different people speaking to these events appear. The campaign also shows people stating that Black lives do matter and that all people need to stand together and fight for the cause. Along with the different footage, different phrases appear and start with the phrase “The truth” followed by a statement that the NBA believes is true in the USA. At the end of the campaign, the phrase “Black Lives Matter” appears (NBA 2020).

The genre of the empirical material is commercial. The purpose of commercials is to persuade consumers to buy the company’s products and services. However, commercials are also sometimes

used to impact and influence consumers or other companies to change their behavior and actions. (Green 2011, 6).

The peculiarity with the campaign spots that I have included in this study is that the companies do not present their products, just their brand logo, so if some consumers do not know the specific company, they will not know what the company has to offer. Arguably, the purpose of these campaign spots is that the company intends not to persuade their consumers to buy their products but instead wants the audience to act or think in a certain way. This supposition can be supported by how the companies encourage people to either follow a link to receive more information or directly tell the audience that they have to act now to have any possibility to change society.

Literature review

This chapter will examine the concept and definition of Corporate social responsibility (CSR). Moreover, this chapter also examines some of the key contributors involved in examining CSR and understanding the tremendous amount of information there is about CSR. Furthermore, three of the most well-known frameworks and models of CSR will be explained and visualize the different ways companies can work with CSR.

Corporate social responsibility

The interest in society and how a company can influence and make a positive contribution to society has become more and more popular over the years, but has actually been around for centuries. In the twenty-first century, companies began to be more interested in making a positive impact in society and interested in what it means for their company to include themselves in social issues and make a footprint in society as a public figure. Many scholars had worked with CSR throughout time and can be traced back to when the concept of CSR was only an idea and not a well-known approach to business management. Many years ago, some of the first research and practices of CSR were seen in the developed and industrialized countries such as Britain, the USA, and some European countries (Isa 2012, 328). Robert Owen, William Hesketh Lever, and Benjamin Seebhom Rowntree (Blowfield and Murry 2019, 6) were just some of the well-known industrialists in the nineteenth century that had an interest in making the world a better place for everybody and exercised this vision, and, in return, received significant recognition for their contributions to society. Their actions led to improved conditions for the workers in the nineteenth century, even before the concept of CSR became a well-known approach to business management. In current

times, it has become more commonplace to improve a company's transparency by releasing a CSR report. However, globally, there is not a mandate that requires all companies to report their CSR performances (youmatter 2021). Nevertheless, in 2014, the European Union made a Directive that states that all companies have to report their non-financial performances (European Union Lex 2021).

As mentioned, CSR is a concept with various definitions. However, it also has different frameworks for how to implement CSR into business management, and some of the key contributors to the evolution of CSR are, among others: Archie Carroll, John Elkington, Milton Friedman, Edward Freeman, and Howard Bowen. Many believe that it was Howard Bowen's publication of his 1953 book *Social responsibilities of the Businessman* that marked the modern era of CSR. Bowen's attempt to define the concept of CSR in his book some believed played a part in the later development of CSR theories and practices (Carroll 1979, 497). Bowen believed that the company, or the businessman, has all the power and decisions to influence people in society. Therefore, it stands to reason that a company's actions towards society will have a tremendous impact on every person in society (Bowen 2013, 3). Bowen believed that it was all about the *decision* that every businessman takes that determined progress in society, and it was not about doing something for society directly, but the decision they take will implicitly influence society (Bowen 2013, 4-5). Following Bowen's definition, as indicated before, more authors tried to offer their definition of CSR based on Bowen's definition. In 1962, Milton Friedman, in his book *Capitalism and Freedom*, argued that CSR and social issues were not about the decisions businessmen take but was instead about how social issues should be solved by the free market system (Milton 1962). The reason for all the discussions and redefinitions of the concept Archie Carroll, one of the key contributors to the topic, believed that it was because of "[...] the lack of a consensus on what the concept really meant." (Carroll 1979, 497).

As many companies focusses more on Corporate social responsibility, it has led to more or less a cohesive topic and a topic with many different scholars. However, the topic has also obtained numerous labels throughout time, such as: "corporate social responsibility", "corporate sustainability", "corporate citizenship", "corporate philanthropy" and "business ethics" (Scherer et.al. 2007, 2). Furthermore, these labels and meanings can vary from country to country, and new labels related to CSR are rising, such as "social entrepreneurship", "green enterprise", and "benefit corporation" (Blowfield and Murry 2019, 7), which has become popular in business management, especially concerning which business type the company is. Moreover, there are numerous labels for

CSR, but there are also various definitions of what corporate social responsibility means and the idea of what it means for companies to incorporate this approach in their business management. The growing, but varied interest in this topic has led to a persistent lack of a definitive definition of what CSR means.

Furthermore, this development of the concept of CSR is also seen in how, e.g., the European Commission has changed its definition of what CSR is through time. In 2001 they defined CSR as: “[...] a concept whereby companies integrate social and environmental concerns in their business operations and in their interaction with their stakeholders on a voluntary basis.” (European Commission, 2001), and in 2011 the European Commission revised the definition on CSR to “[...] the responsibility of enterprises for their impact on society and, therefore, it should be company led.” (European Commission 2021). These two definitions from the same company show that there has been a shift in the concept and understanding of what CSR is. In their 2001 definition, there is a concern about the social and environmental operations in the business. In 2011, it was about that a company has a responsibility for its impact on society. In other words, CSR has developed to be about that all action companies perform will have an impact on society, and companies need to take responsibility for their actions. However, in recent years companies and individuals define CSR as something else and present yet another understanding of the concept. Some see CSR as a concept about “instrumental value” and how these values can bring responsibility to society (Blowfield and Murry 2019, 9). Professor in strategy and environment, Duane Windsor, says that a company’s responsibility towards society can be measured by how wealthy and powerful the individual company is. Therefore, each company has different types of responsibility depending on the size of the company (Windsor 2001, 49).

Moreover, there are also different expectations towards social and environmental impacts from different companies and industries, e.g., when a large company shows great CSR initiatives in sustainability, it can look different from a smaller company because they may not have the same impact on the environment as the larger companies have (Blowfield and Murry 2019, 9). Similarly, David Chandler also says that it depends on the company and its size to determine the mix of different responsibilities a given company has. Some companies are more directly involved in a case than others, hence different responsibilities. However, Chandler also mentions that even though the responsibilities are different for each company, the connection to a case is shared between all involved companies (Chandler 2017, 2).

The different responsibilities are not just related to the company, but there are also different responsibilities from country to country. The purpose of a company's CSR strategy is parallel with the country's CSR strategy, e.g., in Australia, protecting the environment is very prioritized, and in South Africa, improving social welfare within the country is a higher priority (Blowfield and Murry 2019, 126). Thus, a company's CSR strategy correlates with social events occurring within the country.

In 2005, *the Economist* published a survey conducted by *The Economist Intelligence Unit*, which investigated the importance of CSR to businesses worldwide. Their findings showed that 85% of the respondents said that having a CSR strategy is "central" in their investment decisions, almost doubling from 2000 (Doebele, 2005). Again, in 2008, *The Economist Intelligence Unit* conducted a survey about sustainability on business today and asked over 1,200 senior executives around the world about the importance of sustainability on business. The findings showed that having a CSR strategy in their business management is very important, but only 29% of the companies worldwide claim that they have a coherent CSR strategy covering the entire business (EIU, 2008). This shows that while CSR plays a more significant role in business management over the years, many companies worldwide still struggle with implementing their CSR strategies in business and practice. *The Economist* has done various of surveys related to CSR and the concept of it. These surveys show that all the contributions that companies give to society have been labeled as corporate sustainability, that once was considered as CSR. The survey also shows that more and more companies find the environment as a significant part of their business management. This show how enormous CSR is and how the concept and definitions can evolve over time.

In the past decade, businesses worldwide have started to implement different CSR strategies into company practices, and some new businesses claim that they have a specific social purpose. These kinds of strategies are often written in the company's codes of conduct which outlines how the company's standards affect different areas both inside the company and in the society. For example, some of these standards could govern a company's environmental and humanitarian operational practices, such as preventing child labor or, e.g., how the company plans to reduce air pollution emissions from their factories (Scherer et.al. 2007, 2-3). On the other hand, CSR is also something as simple as donating money to local hospitals or ensuring employees' well-being.

CSR has various scholars, theories, and models, but there are also various standards and guidelines for CSR. To name a few of these guidelines, there are OECS Guidelines for Multinational

Enterprises, ISO 26000 Guidance on Social Responsibility, UN Global Compact, UN Guidance Principles on Business and Human Rights, and EMAS. As a result of the various standards of CSR, the standards have led to information overload for companies and consumers, and some find all of this information challenging to make sense of what CSR is and guide their company in the right direction to succeed with a CSR strategy. Authors from three different Universities in the USA conducted a study that showed how companies and consumers are missing some form of authenticity of all the different CSR initiatives, to help with determine the importance of CSR for a company is (Alhouti, Johnson and Holloway 2016, 1242-1243).

Frameworks and models

In this section, I have selected what I believe are the three most utilized approaches to analyze a company's CSR performances.

Carroll's pyramid of Corporate Social Responsibility

In 1979, Carroll argued that CSR was more about different categories to fully define what CSR means, which he called economic, legal, ethical, and discretionary responsibilities (Carroll 1979, 499). He believed that these four different categories reflected "[...] A view of social responsibility that is related to some of the definitions offered earlier but that categorizes the social responsibilities of businesses in a more exhaustive manner." (Carroll 1979, 499). This statement shows that Carroll did not come with a definition of CSR, so instead, he developed four different components that could indicate business responsibilities. Figure 1 shows Carroll's pyramid from 1991 and explains the different components he evolved from his four-part definition. As also seen in figure 1, Carroll re-named a responsibility from discretionary to philanthropic.



Figure 1: (Source: Carroll 1991, 42)

Carroll's pyramid should be seen as a representation of a long-term system or obligations that companies could use as a framework for their CSR strategy (Carroll 1991, 42).

In 2003, Carroll and Mark Schwartz developed a three-domain model based on Carroll's CSR pyramid (Schwartz and Carroll 2003) to propose an alternative approach to CSR because of the misunderstandings inherent in the 1991 pyramid. Some suggested that the pyramid had a hierarchical perspective of the CSR categorizations. Therefore, some would believe that the philanthropy responsibilities were the most important and most valued categorization, which was never the intended perspective of Carroll's pyramid as Carroll states that all the categorizations are equally important (Schwartz and Carroll 2003, 505). Another misunderstanding that Carroll himself recognized was that some responsibilities were "overlapping" each other and did not account for some of the tensions these responsibilities created, and others found the philanthropy responsibilities unnecessary (Schwartz and Carroll 2003, 505). Therefore, Schwartz and Carroll's new model subsumed philanthropy responsibilities under ethical/economic responsibilities (Schwartz and Carroll 2003, 506). However, in this study, I will be using one of these frameworks, which I will explain more in-depth later in this chapter. Figure 2 shows the three-domain model of CSR.

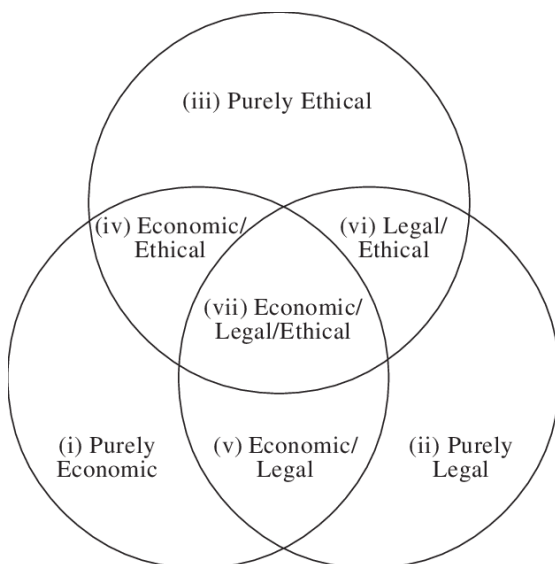


Figure 2: (Source: Schwartz and Carroll (2003))

Carroll's pyramid of Corporate social responsibility is one of the most utilized and well-known CSR models. Many companies, theorists, and empirical researchers have incorporated Carroll's

CSR pyramid in their business management or utilized the model in their work (Schwartz and Carroll 2003, 504).

Triple Bottom Line Theory

Triple Bottom Line theory (TBL) is a CSR framework founded by John Elkington and occurs in his 1997 book *Cannibals with Forks: The Triple Bottom Line of 21st Century Business* (Elkington 1997). However, the term can be dated back to the 1990s, but only with a few references, and Elkington claims that he was the founder of the term (Norman and MacDonald 2004, 244). The idea with this framework was to ensure companies not only secure their bottom line but at the same time also ensure sustainability on the planet. The TBL framework is about how companies best can obtain sustainability and includes three bottom lines: economic, environmental, and society, and if your company achieves success in all three bottom lines, you have obtained sustainability (Elkington 1997, 72). Moreover, Elkington says that companies must focus on the social and environmental bottom lines as much as they do on with the economic bottom line because if a company does not focus on all bottom lines, it will be impossible to report the total cost of running a business with success. As shown in figure 3, the bottom lines in the TBL framework can have different names: People (society), Planet (environmental), and Profit (economic).



Figure 3: (Source: BonCor 2021)

In recent years, the TBL model is one of the most utilized frameworks for corporate reports and how companies are more transparent in accounting practices (Sridhar and Jones 2013, 93).

However, the TBL framework has not been without critique. One of the critiques is that TBL indicates a company's worth can be measured by economic, social, and environmental responsibilities (Norman and MacDonald 2004, 245). Another critique is about the stakeholders and their right to information about the company. When a company is required to report information to their stakeholders, the TBL framework does not include any guidance on which kind of information the company should deliver to the stakeholders (Norman and MacDonald 2004, 246-247). Wayne Norman and Chris MacDonald state that for companies to uphold all the different standards that comes with sustainability, the company needs to have "clear and meaningful principles" to succeed, which Norman and MacDonald believe is not what the TBL framework includes (Norman and MacDonald 2004, 257).

The Stakeholder theory

Since Edward Freeman published his book, *Strategic Management: a stakeholder approach* in 1984, he has been one of the first authors to describe the concept of a stakeholder, particularly concerning corporate management (Donaldson and Preston 1995, 65). Freeman defines stakeholders as: "[...] groups and individuals who can affect, or are affected by, the achievement of a company's mission". (Freeman 2010, 52). Moreover, Freeman states that the theory is about "company management and ethics." (Phillips et al. 2003, 480). In the definition, he states that a stakeholder can either be an individual or a group, and every activity in a company can affect the company's stakeholders and that stakeholders' actions can affect the company. "Stakeholders include employees, customers, suppliers, stockholders, banks, environmentalists, government and other groups who can help or hurt the Corporation." (Freeman 2010, VI (preface)).

Furthermore, Freeman also describes how stakeholders can benefit from the company's actions (Freeman 2010, 44). Freeman states that all stakeholders can affect the company in terms of which way the company should take, even if the company thinks that the stakeholders do not have a voice in the company and their demands are inappropriate. Freeman believes that stakeholders imply legitimacy and states "[...] that it is "legitimate to spend time and resources" on stakeholders, regardless of the appropriateness of their demands." (Freeman 2010, 44-45).

The idea of utilizing the stakeholder theory is that companies must take their stakeholders into consideration to succeed in the present and the future because the stakeholders can prevent any of the company's accomplishments (Freeman 2010, 52). Furthermore, Freeman states that companies benefit from acting concretely and adapting their actions toward specific stakeholders because

companies can have very different relationships with each of their stakeholders (Freeman 2010, 53). In other words, stakeholder theory is about understanding the company's stakeholder map and the stakes that each stakeholder holds.

Like many other theories, the Stakeholder theory has also received critique. In an article, Freeman states that defending the stakeholder concept is "a bit like shadow boxing" and a lot of the criticism that the theory has received has never been thoroughly examined and elaborated in the literature (Phillips et al. 2003, 480). Some of the critiques are when researching in the field of stakeholder many will notice that the term stakeholder has been utilized and explained by many different authors. However, stakeholder theory has also been utilized in many ways (Donaldson and Preston 1995, 66), so the concept of stakeholder theory can often get misunderstood, and some often criticize the theory based on their understanding of the concept (Phillips et al. 2003, 481). Another critique is that stakeholder theory is about equality and treating every stakeholder the same, but Freeman et al. argue that stakeholder theory is about meritocracy and what the individual has to contribute (Phillips et al. 2003, 488). Transparency is also a critique of the stakeholder theory. If the company does not provide full transparency to its stakeholders, some believe that business managers can exploit stakeholder influence for own gain and only show transparency to the stakeholders that provide profits (Brin and Nehme 2019, 27).

This study will use the pyramid from Carroll and the TBL framework from Elkington when I analyze the four different companies' CSR performances. I believe choosing these two frameworks will give me a more validated image of the company's CSR performances as both frameworks supplement each other as each framework have different key determinants of how to have the best CSR performances. I have also chosen to use these two frameworks to analyze if there are any differences in the company's performances if using two different frameworks. Furthermore, I have chosen these two frameworks as they both have the same view of knowledge, subjectivism. Both frameworks have the same view of knowledge as their methods are observations of the company's performances to understand the relations that a company has with society (Sonne-Ragans 2019, 211-212). Moreover, these two frameworks also comprehend each other as using them together for one company's CSR performances, as they give more information about the CSR performances as the two frameworks do not have the same criteria in each of the responsibilities. Therefore, I believe using these frameworks together will give a more fulfilling image of the company's CSR performances.

Theoretical framework

This chapter will introduce the frameworks that I have used to analyze the four different campaigns and how I intend to use the different frameworks. First off, I will introduce the two frameworks I use when I analyze the company's CSR performances, and afterward, I will introduce the frameworks I will be using for my semiotic analysis.

Carroll's pyramid

As also mentioned in the literature review, in 1991, Archie Carroll developed a pyramid based on his four-part definition of CSR and consists of economic, legal, ethical, and philanthropic responsibilities (see figure 1 in the previous chapter). In Carroll's four-part definition, he implies that a company's economic and legal responsibilities should also be a part of the company's management to be fully socially oriented. Therefore, Carroll linked the two responsibilities to ethical and philanthropic responsibilities (Carroll et.al. 2018, 35-36).

Economic responsibility is the fundamental part of a company, and these responsibilities are required by society. First, the company needs to be profitable to ensure its survival and growth. Second, economic responsibilities are when the company can provide services and products to society and sell them in a price range that the society believes is right and fair and in a price range that will provide the company and investors with maximum profits. Carroll believes that the other three responsibilities depend on the company's economic responsibilities, and in the event the company is not profitable, the other responsibilities will become only considerations (Carroll 1991, 40-41). Furthermore, a company's economy is considered as being a part of a company's CSR performances, as the society requires that the company makes a profit and can be sustainable themselves, which will motivate investors and other shareholders to invest in the company and then the company will have the resources to grow and continue their existing operations (Carroll 2016).

All these financial results relate to CSR as the company can show their investors and shareholders that they can provide services and goods to society and make a profit on it. Also, the economic results can show if a company can survive sudden setbacks, such as the COVID-19 pandemic that has had a massive impact on companies worldwide. Therefore, the companies have the opportunity to show their investors and shareholders that they can still make a profit and have efficiency in their operations during setbacks, but also show their investors and shareholders that they should still be on board.

Legal responsibility is the component where the business must obey the law of the society and is required by the society. For this component, Carroll says, “[...] business is expected to comply with the laws and regulations promulgated by federal, state, and local governments as the ground rules under which business must operate.” (Carroll 1991, 41). This quote means that Carroll believes a company’s legal responsibilities reflect a specific view of “codified ethics”. Moreover, legal responsibilities are also fundamental conceptions of proper and fair operations created by the government (Carroll 1991, 41). Carroll also states that a company’s economic and legal responsibilities are coexisting as fundamental parts of a company’s CSR performance because society expects companies to work according to the law when the company is pursuing their economic missions.

Ethical responsibility is what the society expects a company to be, Carroll explains ethical responsibilities as they “[...] embrace those activities and practices that are expected or prohibited by societal members even though they are not codified into law”. (Carroll 1991, 41). Here he says that ethical responsibilities are about the stakeholders’ beliefs and what the stakeholders believe is right and wrong. In addition, ethical choices must be taken in respect for the stakeholders’ moral rights as well. The company should follow the norms, standards, values, and expectations and to always embrace their stakeholders’ expectations to what is ethically and morally right. Therefore, the company must always know the society’s concept of ethics and values to uphold their ethical responsibilities (Carroll et.al. 2018, 37). Examples of ethical responsibilities is a company’s code of conduct. Of course, companies are not required by law to have a code of conduct or code of leadership (Business.com 2021), but these codes can help improve the company culture, therefore, it is seen as ethically correct to have different codes for how to operate inside a business. In other words, ethical responsibilities are codes and guidelines for how to operate correctly and without violating any laws.

Philanthropy responsibility is desirable of society and is about how the company can contribute to society positively (Carroll 1991, 42). Carroll says that even though philanthropic activities are not a responsibility, they can still perceive as a responsibility because such actions reflect what society expects, how companies operate their businesses and how they can be good corporate citizens. Philanthropic responsibilities include when companies are actively involved in social activities like goodwill or promoting human welfare. In other words, philanthropic responsibilities are how society expects companies are “giving back” to the community (Carroll et al. 2018, 38).

Furthermore, it is essential to remember that Carroll’s pyramid should not see economic responsibilities as the most crucial responsibility a company has, as all four responsibilities are equally necessary for a company to have great CSR performances (Carroll 1991, 43). Some of the strengths of Carroll’s pyramid are that it is elementary to understand and implement in a company’s strategy. However, the pyramid also has a simple message that CSR has multiple elements included, not just one, and emphasizes that profit in a company is significant and fundamental in how a company can survive. The pyramid also contains some weaknesses, one being that if the ethical element in the pyramid should be on top, can one then rely blindly on the company when they show their CSR results. Therefore, Carroll’s pyramid can be used as a framework for when companies want to investigate their social responsibilities and how and why they can do this.

Figure 4 summarizes Carroll’s five components and their different explanations.

| Type of Responsibility | Societal Expectation | Explanations |
|------------------------------|---|---|
| Economic responsibility | REQUIRED of business by society | Be profitable. Maximize sales, minimize costs. Make sound strategic decisions. Be attentive to dividend policy. Provide investors with adequate and attractive returns on their investments. |
| Legal responsibility | REQUIRED of business by society | Obey all laws, adhere to all regulations. Environmental and consumer laws. Laws protecting employees. Fulfill all contractual obligations. Honor warranties and guarantees. |
| Ethical responsibility | EXPECTED of business by society | Avoid questionable practices. Respond to spirit as well as to letter of law. Assume law is a floor on behavior, operate above minimum required. Do what is right, fair, and just. Assert ethical leadership. |
| Philanthropic responsibility | DESIRED/EXPECTED of business by society | Be a good corporate citizen. Give back. Make corporate contributions. Provide programs supporting community—education, health or human services, culture and arts, and civic. Provide for community betterment. Engage in volunteerism. |

Figure 4: (Source: Carroll et.al. 2018)

Triple Bottom Line

In 1997, John Elkington presented a new way of measuring companies’ CSR performances where he presented a framework that companies should also focus on the social and environmental aspect of the company to gain profit and growth (Elkington 1997, 72). Moreover, Elkington state that the social and environmental aspect has been around for years as he says that concerning the social aspect it can be dated back to the controversies around slavery, child labor, and working conditions, and in the 1970s companies around the world started to recognize the advantages about focusing on the environment (Elkington 1997, 79). Hence, Elkington says companies must focus on the social and environmental aspects as much as they focus on their economic missions.

Elkington's TBL framework consists of three parts that he calls "social", "economic", and "environmental" bottom lines (Elkington 1997, 73), and is all about sustainability in the company by keeping all three parts in a straight line.

Social measures a company's social responsibility and how responsible they have been since the company was founded (Norman and MacDonald 2004, 246). Some of these responsibilities could be training and education initiatives, product safety, community relations, and charitable donations of money and time (Elkington 1997, 87-88). This bottom line is about addressing broader political, social, and ethical issues in society, and if companies cannot confront these issues, it can impact the company's environmental area (Elkington 1997, 84).

Environment is measured by how responsible the company has been to the environment (Norman and MacDonald 2004, 246). The fact that businessmen and women are more willing and happier to be challenged on their company's environmental aspect has led to a more definitive way of defying a company's environmental performances (Elkington 1997,79). In this bottom line, Elkington talks about natural capital, which is about touching the surface and working from what you see in the environment. Companies do well to look at the underlying natural wealth where Elkington gives an example with a forest that it is not just about counting the trees. One must analyze the entire ecosystem of the forest and take the whole into consideration before starting operations in an environment (Elkington 1997,79). Examples of this are that in the USA there is a Toxics Release Inventory where companies are required to report the emission they release if the company's production uses over 600 chemicals. Another example is when Volvo announced that they would include environmental aspects in their regular supplier audits (Elkington 1997, 80).

Economics is measured, as traditionally, by looking at the company's profit and losses. For this bottom line, Elkington state that economics is about economic capital and comes in two primary forms: physical capital and financial capital, and two forms that have come later: human capital that is about measuring the individual's experience, skills, and other knowledge-based assets that all are the fundamental part in building the company and intellectual capital (Elkington 1997, 74). One example of how to identify a company's financial results is how the company can create more jobs and reduce the number of unemployed people.

The company is measuring their social and environmental performances and use these results to improve their performances in the two bottom lines, but with these results, the company should also

report and use the results to improve their economic performances as well, so the company will reach their internal goals (Norman and MacDonald 2004, 246).

Semiology

Semiology is the science of signs, and the studies within this are enormous. Semiology is about the study of communicative (language) behavior and the meaning behind these communicative behaviors found in verbal and non-verbal communication (Hawke 2003, 124-125). What is meant by non-verbal communicative behaviors is that people communicate non-verbally, e.g., through their gestures, posture, hairstyle, choice of clothes and perfume, accent, and even non-verbal communication when showing which social context people are in. Language also occurs when we are not spoken to as, e.g., light flash and different tastes (Hawke 2003, 125). Within semiology, there are various branches as language is conceived differently by different authors (Harris, Harris, and Taylor 1997, 210). In this study, I will be using the branch from Ferdinand de Saussure, also called Saussurean, and the work of Charles Sanders Peirce.

Saussure

Ferdinand de Saussure was a Swiss linguist, and he is still considered one of the founding fathers of modern linguistics (Hawke 2003, 19). Saussure studied language and believed that language was “a system of signs that express ideas” and that language is constructed by social conventions (Saussure 2011, 16). He further stated that these signs could only exist and make sense when they are a part of that language’s sign system. Therefore, language and the meaning behind the words in that language are individual and cultural bound (Saussure 2011, 8). In other words, Saussure believed that a specific language and its words’ meanings could only be fully understood in the culture the language comes from. Therefore, a non-native might understand a word from a specific culture, but they might not fully understand the associations and meanings of the word. However, if a person is born into that specific culture or has studied the culture’s history, they will understand the associations and meanings related to specific words as we learn from birth the associations to words and their meanings (Bouissac 2010, 95-96).

An example of this is the Danish dish “rødgrød med fløde” and its Danish associations. Danes know that “rødgrød med fløde” is not just a Danish dish but also serves as a tongue twister that Danes tend to give foreigners when they come to Denmark. However, non-native people might not know this unless they have studied the Danish culture.

According to Saussure, linguistic signs are a “two-sided psychological entity” (Saussure 2011, 66) that can be characterized by looking at the relationship between these two entities, which he calls “concept” and sound-image” (see figure 5), and in combination, Saussure calls this a sign (Saussure 2011, 66). Moreover, he really emphasizes that “The linguistic sign unites, not a thing and a name, but a concept and a sound-image.” (Saussure 2011, 66). Later, Saussure replaced “concept” with signified and “sound-image” with signifier (Saussure 2011, 67).

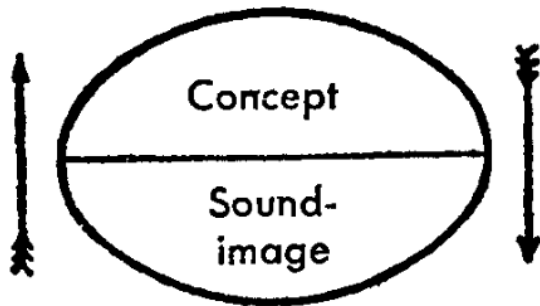


Figure 5 (source: Saussure 2011)

Saussure also argues that the signified and signifier has an arbitrary relationship as the signifier has no natural connection with the signified (Saussure 2011, 69). If taking the example with “rødgrød med fløde” again, then the Danish and foreigners have a different relation to this dish, the foreigners only relate to this as a dish where Danes also relate “rødgrød med fløde” as a tongue twister as well. However, Saussure also believed that signs are not wholly arbitrary as there is a natural bond between the signified and signifier. For example, you cannot replace the sign of justice with another sign, as Saussure states that an individual cannot change the sign when it is already in the linguistic community (Saussure 2011, 69).

Pierce

Charles Sanders Peirce derived his study on signs and their arbitrary relationship between each other from Saussure’s work on semiology, but Peirce’s theory is based on thought instead of the language, as Saussure’s work is, and by thought, Peirce means the narrow, verbal sense (Peirce 1991, 11). Peirce’s work on semiology is often referred to as Peircean semiotic or pragmatic. Peirce’s work on semiotics is referred to as pragmatic as he argues “[...] for the reality of the sign relation, or thirdness, by insisting that our ability to form the hypothesis of its reality is also its proof.” (Peirce 1991, 241). Here he states that our thoughts are a tool for prediction and that these thoughts are a part of our reality and how we interpret the sign is based on our thought.

“Anything which determines something else (its interpretant) to refer to an object to which itself refers (its object) in the same way, the interpretant becoming, in turn, a sign, and so on ad infinitum.” (Peirce 1991, 239).

This quote is one of Charles Peirce’s many definitions of a sign, and he believed that a sign structure consisted of more than only a signifier and a signified. A sign structure consisted of three parts: a sign (represents), an object (semiotic subject), and an interpretant (interpret meaning), which all relate to each other (see figure 6). These three parts are all present in one sign, and according to Peirce, it is about the relationship between all three parts (Johansen and Larsen 2002, 27). Peirce also believed that “[...] the triadic nature of thinking is exemplified in the process through which the concept of the self is, itself, created.” (Peirce 1991, 8).

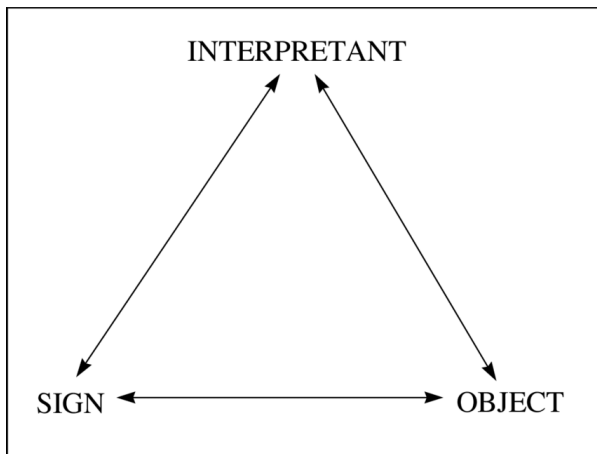


Figure 6 (source: Mickhail and Wilson 1998)

Peirces further believed that a sign has different types of relations to its object and can either be an icon, an index, or a symbol.

He defines an icon as having a real connection between what is being represented as an object and the meaning behind the sign (Peirce 1991, 239), or to use Saussure’s terms, there is a connection between the signifier and signified. In other words, an icon is present when the sign is a direct imitation of the object, and you are not in doubt about the meaning of the sign. An example of an icon could be a picture of a tree or a picture on the computer representing a specific function. Here you know the meaning of these icons.

An index is when the object influences the sign, and if you remove the object, there cannot be a sign, but there will still be the object’s character (Peirce 1991, 239). There is no direct imitation in an index, and an index is present when there is suggested something else than what the object shows. When

showing an index, it is essential to ensure that the object's relationship and the sign are fully understood by all who see the index. A famous example of an index is a smoke that is an index for fire or an example Peirce himself uses, a bullet-hole as a sign for a shot, and if the shot would not be there, then there would not be a hole, but the hole will still be there regardless of the shot was fired or not (Peirce 1991, 240).

A symbol is a sign where there are no similarities between the signifier and the signified, and the only way to know the meaning of the symbol and their connections to each other is if it is culturally learned (Peirce 1991, 240). Examples of symbols are the number 8 and the color red and their meaning in China. In China, the number 8 associates with wealth, and the red color associates with luck, joy, and happiness, and if you do not know about the Chinese culture, then as a foreigner, you cannot know this, and it is why symbols are culturally learned.

In this study, these two theories can entail pitfalls as according to Saussure and Peirce, signs are arbitrary, and language is in social conventions and therefore, I cannot fully comprehend the relations citizens of the USA have for the four different campaigns, so I have selected the 30 comments to combat this possible issue. Moreover, as a Dane and not living in the culture of the USA., I cannot comprehensively analyze the meanings behind the campaigns, and I can only analyze these from my knowledge and research of the American society.

Method

This chapter will present my methodological approach for this study about brands and racial injustice in the USA. First, I will start by introducing my theory of science in this study and how my choices in epistemology and ontology are based upon my theory of science. Furthermore, I will introduce my methodological choices and present my research design for this study as well.

As illustrated in my problem statement and my introduction about brands and racial injustice in the USA, the theory of science in this study is social constructivism. Moreover, my choice in using CSR and semiology also indicates that my theory of science in this study is social constructivism. The concept of social constructivism is that the world is created and performed by the people, and there is not only one truth (Presskorn-Thygesen 2013, 37). However, using semiology and CSR has no direct relation to each other as the first derives from structuralism and the latter derives from social constructivism. I will be more specific about this relation between social constructivism and structuralism and why I am using this in my study later in this chapter.

It is assumed by social constructivists that there is no absolute “truth”, the reality is not an object but something that people have agreed to be the truth in their community, that is to say, the reality is socially constructed and is a subjective reality (Presskorn-Thygesen 2013, 36). Furthermore, the ideas in social constructivism are derived from constructivism, and the theoretical foundation is intersubjective, linguistically, and collective. Therefore, all the investigations are a product of all social processes (Sonne-Ragans 2019- 130-131). One of the founding fathers of social constructivism is the post-revolutionary Soviet psychologist Lev Vygotsky, argued that even people’s most fundamental skills have derived from the society and the environment where people grew up. Thus, people’s knowledge to develop and use tools is created through social interactions and cultural development (Vygotsky 1978, 7). This concept of social constructivism resembles my study to investigate and understand the society in the USA concerning how and why USA brands use their marketing to support a social issue. Although this study is about a social issue in the USA, you can also say that social constructivism is present here as social issues in a country are created by the people living in this country.

In science and as a researcher, you are compelled to choose where you stand according to epistemology and ontology because the choice you make has an essential influence on the frame of your methodology (Nygaard 2013, 10). Furthermore, taking a stance in your epistemology and your ontology helps create clarity over your chosen theories and explains your knowledge process. Epistemology and ontology create clarity as both stances illustrate the utilization of knowledge in a specific area of science and which approach you as a researcher has to the world and what you study (Sonne-Ragans 2019, 209).

Alan Bryman defines epistemology as “[...] the question of what is (or should be) regarded as acceptable knowledge in a discipline.” (Bryman 2016, 24), which means you have to answer the question about what knowledge is in your chosen discipline and how the reality is constructed and what you hereafter can retrieve from this reality. Epistemology is about a theory’s view on knowledge and acknowledgment (Sonne-Ragans 2019, 210). In this study, I have taken a subjective epistemological stance and what that means is that knowledge is subjective, and all that we know is reason, logic, performances, concepts, and calculations and therefore to understand the world in full is simply impossible, as we do not have the necessary knowledge to do this. To create a reality from a subjective perspective, you must do this through acknowledgment, language, and subjective assessment (Sonne-Ragans 2019, 211). As my theory of science is social constructivism, all knowledge is created socially, which means that knowledge is created subjectively, and for a social

constructivist to have objective knowledge is simply impossible (Presskorn-Thygesen 2013, 29). This subjective knowledge can also be seen when I analyze the four campaigns as I can only analyze them through my knowledge and research about the USA, and therefore, I cannot have an objective view on the four campaigns.

Moving on to ontology is defined by Bryman as “the nature of social entities” (Bryman 2016, 28), which means that to decide your ontological stance, one must consider what is confirmed in the world and which and how objects exist. Thus, ontology is all about seeing reality and how the objects in that reality exist (Sonne-Ragans 2019, 231). For this study, my ontological stance is with a relativistic perspective of the world as it is assumed in social constructivism that scientific observations often create the objects in the world and the reality is primarily created by social constructions and do not have an objective view on the reality (Presskorn-Thygesen 2013, 29). In other words, it means that the idea of what the reality is and what is truth in the world depends on the circumstances between the society, culture, and the language and how you see these three elements in relation to each other (Presskorn-Thygesen 2013, 36).

As mentioned before, I have taken a stance in social constructivism because of my theories and the subject in this study. However, semiology does not distinctly relate to my theory of science, as the origin and evolution of semiotic come from structuralism and do not support the same assumptions about the world as social constructivist does. Authors from structuralism believed that what represents reality is structures and tools created by the individuals, and the reality is all about relationships, instead of things that the world is made up of that is the only thing that can be observed. In structuralism, there is no independent object in the world that can be perceived individually, but only the only thing that can be perceived is the relationships that people have created (Hawke 2003, 17). Structuralists claim that every element in any given situation can only be determined by its relationships and has no significance by itself. Therefore, to have the full significance of elements can only be perceived if they are integrated into the structure that is being created, but cannot be perceived objectively as the only way to perceive the element you are bound to your observations of what is being observed (Hawke 2003, 17- 18). This stands in contrast to my chosen theory of science as in social constructivism, the world consists of socially constructed objects by scientific observations, and all is a product of social processes. However, it can be argued that mixing the theoretical frameworks in this study can still be used as a cohesive framework as all frameworks have similar features. All theoretical frameworks have e.g., the same knowledge interest, which is in human science (Sonne-Ragans 2019, 130), and social

constructivism and semiology have the way of thinking that objects or elements cannot be perceived objectively, only subjectively. Saussure also mentioned that in linguistics, you do not work with an object beforehand and that from a different viewpoint, the interpretation will not be the same. In linguistics, you work with the viewpoint that creates the object and that no answer takes precedence over the other (Saussure 2011, 8). Hence, you can therefore say that semiology has the same features as CSR as both approaches investigate the objects created by the individual and that the reality is not created objectively. Moreover, semiology can also help me understand how American brands use their marketing to combat social issues.

Research design

In this study, all four campaigns are from four different USA brands and show a snapshot of how these brands saw racial injustice in the American society in 2020. To analyze these campaigns and helps answer my problem statement, I have used qualitative research with an inductive approach. I have conducted a multi-case study with a comparative design approach (Bryman 2016, 64), where I made a purposive sampling of the four different campaigns (Bryman 2016, 410).

Qualitative research entails fundamental differences in how a study unfold when choosing this research strategy where Bryman explains that the

[...] qualitative research can be construed as a research strategy the usually emphasizes words rather than quantification in the collection and analysis of data, and [...] embodies a view of social reality as a constantly shifting emergent property of individual's creation. (Bryman 2016, 32-33).

This explanation of qualitative research and what the research strategy emphasizes lines up with this study as it is about investigating how brands use their marketing, more specifically their campaigns that include words, to support racial justice in the USA. As this study's area of problem is about a societal issue within the USA, you can argue that this also indicates a qualitative research strategy that embodies an issue constructed by society and becomes the social reality of the American society. Choosing qualitative research for this study, I also reject that the social reality in the USA is an objective reality and is instead from the view of the individuals' creation. Qualitative research is about the rich, deep data that you can analyze instead of the hard, reliable data that numbers are, and the point of view is from the participants of the research and not the researcher's point of view. It is about understanding the context and create meaning for the peoples' actions (Bryman 2016, 401).

As mentioned, I have chosen an inductive approach, one of the fundamental elements in the qualitative research strategy (Bryman 2016, 32). I have had a specific approach for my research. I started with the findings of my empirical materials and hereafter selected frameworks, and I analyzed the empirical materials from the selected frameworks. Hence, the inductive approach is indicated in how I have selected my empirical materials as the first thing, and hereafter I found my theoretical frameworks for analyzing my data. Furthermore, I also made purposive sampling, which is a technique where I rely on my judgment when I collect data for my research that I believe is reliable and matches the purpose of the study. I had used this technique when I selected the different campaigns, and what this means to my study is that the campaigns are all relevant to this study, as the purpose of this kind of data sampling is that the material you select is relevant, representative, and not selected randomly (Bryman 2016, 410). When selecting data based on purposive sampling, you can have different approaches (Bryman 2016, 409), and in this study, I have chosen to use the typical case sampling, as the selected campaigns all exemplify an interest for this study.

For my data analysis, I will divide each campaign into two sections: the company's CSR performances and a semiotic analysis of the campaign. For the first section, CSR, I will use Carroll's pyramid and Elkington's TBL framework when I am analyzing the company's CSR performances. I have chosen to include two different CSR frameworks in my analysis because I want to analyze the outcome of each theory and see if the outcome is the same or if there are any differences in using Carroll's pyramid or Elkington's TBL framework. It should be noted that when I am analyzing the company's CSR performances based on Elkington's TBL framework, I have related the different responsibilities to Carroll's pyramid as there are similarities between the two frameworks in how you identify the different responsibilities. Moreover, I will neither include an explanation in the analysis for how the results are CSR related. I have made these choices, so I will not repeat myself in the analysis. In the next section, semiotic analysis, I will conduct a semiotic analysis of the four campaigns frame for frame where I will use two different semiotic theories, Saussure's signifier and signified together with Peirce's theory of signs. I will use Peirce's theory of signs when I analyze the campaigns that have to do with voiceover, images, and footage. Moreover, when I analyze a campaign with a voiceover and images and footage that do not include texts or phrases like the other campaigns do, I will transcribe the parts of the voiceover I will be using for my analysis. Furthermore, as seen in my data analysis, I have not included the reactions and opinions of the different campaigns as I believe opinions are not relevant for this study and to

answer my problem statement, as the focus is not how the four campaigns was received, but how the four companies combat racial injustice through their campaigns.

Analysis

In this chapter, I will analyze and interpret the four different campaigns. First, I will analyze the company's CSR performances by using Carroll's pyramid and Elkington's TBL framework and compare these findings. As mentioned before, in my analysis, I have related the different responsibilities in Elkington's TBL to Carroll's pyramid as both frameworks have similarities in how you identify the different responsibilities. Moreover, I will neither include an explanation in the analysis for how the results are CSR related, as exemplified in my theoretical framework. These two choices are made in this study, as I will repeat myself in all the four companies' CSR performances if I explain why these results are CSR related. Next, I will make a semiotic analysis of the four campaigns by using Saussure and Pierce.

NFL

NFL's CSR performances

Sustainable CSR performances have become more prevalent in sports (Baena 2018), which can also be seen in the NFL as they are not afraid of showing their CSR performances. In addition, the NFL is very transparent on their website about their social responsibilities and what they have done for their country and community. However, it should be noted for the economic responsibilities in both Carroll's pyramid and Elkington's TBL framework that it was impossible to obtain an overview of the NFL's economics responsibilities; therefore, the economic information there are presented in the analysis are retrieved from secondary sources.

The phrases used in the semiotic analysis is taken from appendix 1

Carroll's pyramid

Economic responsibility

NFL has several activities that have resulted in profit. The NFL is considered as a trade association, which is a company that consists of independent units, which in this case are the 32 teams in the NFL, and all have the same interests at heart and/or work in the same industry (Britannica 2021). This can be seen when the NFL shares its national revenue with 32 teams (Novy-Williams 2020).

Even though some NFL teams are having a hard time making money and fewer high schools are playing football, the NFL's national revenue rose nearly 5% from 2016 and 2017 (CNBC 2018). NFL's average operating income went from \$31 mil in 2010, and in 2019 they already earned \$109 in 2019 (Ozanian and Badenhausen 2020), and this is one of the clear indicators to why the NFL is seen as one of the most profitable sports company in the USA (Badenhausen 2020). Most of the NFL's profit comes from TV broadcasting that includes TV deals, merchandising and licensing deals, and the NFL's several different partnerships and each NFL team sponsorship deals (CNBC 2018).

Moreover, the NFL has provided streaming plans for the citizens to stream all the NFL games and the NFL drafts live and on-demand, from TV and streaming to mobile apps and radio and all of the NFL's content online and various NFL programs (NFL 2021, c). Hence, the NFL creates value to their stakeholders when they provide all these services that will not only benefit the NFL with a positive revenue but also benefit their stakeholders as they can stream the sports that so many Americans love. NFL also influences many industries through their partnerships, such as the telecommunication industry, with Verizon and the hospitality industry with the partnership with Caesars Entertainment (NFL 2021, d). However, attending an NFL game is getting more expensive as the NFL teams are raising their income. For example, after the Green Bay Packers renovated their stadium, Lambeau Field, their ticket price rose from \$48 million to \$71 million (CNBC 2021). Therefore, while the revenue for the NFL and their teams rises, then the expenses for the NFL participants are rising as well. Another income that can contribute to the NFL's revenue is fantasy football, which is a virtual game where the participants can be managers to different USA football teams and participate in the NFL Draft (NFL fantasy 2021), where some of the NFL's revenue comes from the advertisements that air when there is a fantasy game. Undoubtedly, the NFL is a company that generally has revenue rise and has the right amount of skills to make a profit.

Legal responsibility

The NFL follows a human right to bargain with their Collective Bargaining Agreement (CBA), where they have written what an employee can expect when working with the NFL and which laws they must adhere to (NFL 2021, e). Where the NFL has adhered to the law is with the salary cap regulations and that they are obligated to pay a certain amount of money to their players or Player Affiliates. Another law that the NFL has adhered to is that about health and how the NFL has adhered to the HIPAA regulations and provided their players with a right to medical care and

insurance. For example, players have the right to injury protection. Moreover, the NFL has also included a section about Gambling and that each player has an obligation to speak up about this. The NFL emphasizes in their CBA how players and all other employees shall adhere to federal and state laws and that they will also be protected by these laws as well (NFL 2021, e).

However, in late 2020 the NFL had an antitrust lawsuit against it as their rights to telecast NFL games was questioned. Fans of the NFL can buy a package deal from DirecTV, which the NFL has an agreement with. This agreement, which the NFL has had in over 25 years, is what is being questioned as the NFL might violate the federal laws about limiting competition (AP News 2021).

Ethical responsibility

“NFL Football Operations’ mission is to establish a culture of clarity, consistency, and credibility in all aspects of the greatest game” (NFL 2021, f). When players sign contract with an NFL team, they are obliged to adhere to the NFL’s code of conduct, established by the NFL and the NFL Players Associations.

This code of conduct is a personal conduct policy that includes all personnel in the NFL, and the policy lists different expectations and standards of behavior that all personnel must uphold (NFL 2021, g). NFL Football Operations compliance officers within the NFL exist to ensure that these different codes and policies are respected and that all personnel adhere to the codes. Moreover, each player also receives a fine schedule before the season starts, outlining behavioral guidelines for each individual player, with the purpose of honoring the sport and respecting the game. If a player violates these guidelines, the NFL provides each player the opportunity to defend themselves (NFL 2021, g) and avoid paying fines.

The NFL has also developed different rules and ethical guidelines intended to make the game fair, safer for players, and more entertaining for the audience to watch a game. These rules and guidelines are often created and changed in response to emerging research on how to reduce player injuries. While some new rules, or changes to existing ones, are agreed upon and implemented quickly, instituting new rules, however, can take years from a proposal to the field. Therefore, the rules and guideline process in the NFL is systematic and consensus-oriented (NFL 2021, h).

Another ethical responsibility that the NFL has undertaken regards player’s health and safety. The NFL has developed policies and protocols that ensure that players can receive medical care and inputs from medical experts (NFL 2021, i). Also, each year the NFL and its players are presented

the latest developments in equipment innovation and collectively decide what equipment to adopt (NFL 2021, j).

Moreover, the NFL has formed departments in medical committees where each committee has its perspective and focuses on some of the most challenging health issues among the players. Although the NFL does not employ these committees, the members of each committee still receive a small honorarium. One of the recent committees that the NFL has formed is the Pain Management Committee that develops standards on how each team should handle pain management and how to control prescription medications by NFL players. Another newly-formed committee is the mental health committee that develops educational programs for the players about mental health and how it can help each player and the entire NFL personnel (NFL 2021, k). The NFL has also gained a new technology that studies playing surfaces and equipment that helps trainers to spot injuries such as concussions during games. In addition, other new technology also helps a team with getting access to a player's medical records and allows the team to know how to treat the individual player (NFL 2021, l).

Philanthropic responsibility

In the area of philanthropy, the NFL has taken on several initiatives to improve their social responsibility. The NFL has a mission to “Inspire and unify players, fans, and communities to leave a positive, meaningful impact” (NFL 2021, m), where the NFL focuses on social issues and social justice. Some of these initiatives that the NFL has taken to create a unifying community are their Inspire Change campaign, where the NFL wants to create positive changes in communities all over the USA. Inspire Change focuses on four areas: Education, Economic advancement, Police and community relations, and Criminal Justice Reform (NFL 2021, m). For this initiative, the NFL has made several different videos related to their Inspire Change campaign, including their “Say their story” videos (NFL 2021, n). Another new initiative is the Huddle for Home campaign that seeks to form partnerships between fans and NFL partners, players, and teams to choose a specific charity that they would like to support (NFL 2021, o). NFL Green is also one of the NFL's initiatives to create a better and stronger community and a cleaner planet. The NFL wants to influence fans and communities and their members to do their part in keeping the community and planet clean. Moreover, the NFL partnered up with different projects that used the earth's natural resources (NFL 2021, p). The NFL's non-profit organization, NFL foundations, is also one of NFL's initiatives to create a better and stronger community. The foundation and the 32 NFL teams are together,

supporting athletes at all health, safety, and wellness levels. Furthermore, the foundation also supports over 45 grants, including youth football development and the U.S. Olympic and Paralympic Committee. The NFL really give the appearance of a company that really embraces and supports their community and their players in every way they can.

Elkington's TBL

Social

To name other initiatives that NFL has taken to address their social responsibilities are their "Salute to Services" initiative, where the NFL, together with non-profits and companies, honor, empower, and connect with the USA's service members, veterans, and their families (NFL 2021, q).

Furthermore, the NFL has also created the "Play 60" campaign, with the intention of encouraging and empowering young people to be more active in their everyday lives, and make more healthy choices overall. The NFL encourages youth to be active for at least 60 minutes per day (NFL 2021, r).

The NFL has created a "My Cause, My Cleats" where NFL players have the opportunity to choose a cause or a passion that they believe should be brought awareness around and represent this on their custom-designed cleats (NFL 2021, s).

Environment

According to NFL, they are "a responsible steward of the environment in all areas of its business" (NFL 2021, p) and have taken several initiatives to be as green as possible wherever they can. For example, for more than 15 years, the NFL has had an award-winning environmental program called NFL Green, which has five main initiatives: solid waste management, material reuse, food recovery, sports equipment, book donations, and greenhouse gas reduction. Moreover, the NFL is also very committed to being environmentally responsible in their office spaces. The NFL has made different initiatives to make them greener by for example achieving a LEED certificate in NFL's headquarter office space in Manhattan, that gives the NFL a symbol of sustainability (NFL 2021, p).

Furthermore, many of the NFL teams are also embracing these same environmental initiatives. For example, the NFL team, the Philadelphia Eagles, created Eagles Forest in Neshaminy State Park with an area of 6.5 acres and have purchased over 4,000 trees and shrubs, and have recycled tons of waste. Moreover, the Eagles are committed to used renewable energy to power their stadium. Other teams in the NFL have also taken these environmental initiatives, such as with the construction of

the New Meadowlands Stadium in collaboration with the EPA, and the Cardinals on game days only use 100 percent of energy at their stadium (NFL 2021, p).

The NFL also has a Green Team that creates awareness of how the NFL impacts the environment with their different activities and wants to create a strong sustainability culture. One of these initiatives is that the NFL Green has partnered with Verizon and brings awareness to E-Waste and how to recycle these items. In addition, before the Super Bowl each year, the NFL and local zoo hold events about E-Waste and show the public the advantages of recycling E-Waste (NFL 2021, t).

Economics

As stated before, the NFL has always had positive revenue (Statista 2021, a), even during the pandemic (CBSN 2021). In 2019, the NFL team's income was wide apart as the team with the smallest income earned \$33 million and team with the highest income earned \$425 million. However, there is a considerable gap between each team's wealth (Statista 2021, b). Moreover, each team in the NFL also has a certain amount of annual salary they can spend per player to ensure teams do not overspend on a single player, also called a hard salary cap (Statista 2021, c).

The NFL has different career programs for students that will ensure their talent in future leadership, both working with the NFL and in their further work. NFL has established three different career programs: The NFL Summer Internship Program, The NFL FILMS Internship Program, and The Junior Rotational Program. In establishing these programs, the NFL believes that they will ensure students are prepared for entry-level positions and given the opportunity to discover new career opportunities (NFL 2021, u).

Each year the NFL also releases a diversity and inclusion report that provides the public with how diverse the NFL is in all of its areas. This report also provides an analysis of occupational mobility patterns in the NFL (NFL 2021, v).

Since 2016, the NFL has also held an annual innovation competition, which is called 1st and Future, where people can make pitches on how they believe they can develop or improve the safety and performances of athletes (NFL 2021, j).

The NFL also affects the local economy on game days. On game day, local bars, restaurants, and hotel workers prepare for a busy day with good income as many citizens will gather in bars and restaurants to watch the show and subsequently spend money. The NFL supports over 110,000 jobs

in NFL cities, which also includes hotel workers and bar owners. These game days mean a lot for the citizens in the NFL cities and are what most people care about (Gibson 2011).

Semiotic analysis

As mentioned, the voiceover in the Super Bowl campaign “It takes all of us “ is the former NFL player LaDainian Tomlinson, and the words are from his 2017 Hall of fame speech (NFL 2021, w). However, all phrases in this campaign seem to be carefully selected from Tomlinson’s speech as the phrases are only a fraction of Tomlinson’s emotional speech, and the phrases are also not in the same order as when Tomlinson says them in his speech. Therefore, this could signify that the NFL has carefully selected and placed the phrases in a specific order so the campaign audience will receive and interpret the message the intended way. The EVP and chief marketing officer, Tim Ellis, say that “We are honored to leverage LaDainian Tomlinson’s powerful message, [...] His words provide a message of unity and hope that will carry the league through an extraordinary 2020 season.” (NFL 2021, w). This is also a signifier for the reason why the NFL has chosen Tomlinson’s speech as the campaign's voiceover because the NFL believes Tomlinson’s words also Inspire Change to achieve a society without any racism, which arguably, is the sole purpose of the campaign. The NFL also mentions that throughout the 2020 football season, they will integrate and are committed to standing up for important causes, such as social justice, as they are essential to the players and the fans. The NFL is committed to uniting the country by creating and showing these kinds of campaigns that stand for important causes (NFL 2021, w).

At first glance, the campaign’s message is easy to understand, and there is a relationship between the visuals and the phrases in this campaign. However, some of the phrases can have hidden symbolism, and some may need to analyze the intention with these phrases. For example, when the NFL has chosen to include the phrase “Football is a microcosm of USA”, then arguably, this phrase could signify that the NFL wants people to see the USA society as a diverse unity, just as all people of color see NFL games. In the NFL, all people are embraced and are working side by side and are not being judged based on their race, religion, or beliefs (NFL 2021, x). NFL may want all Americans to realize that everyone does matter and that all people should be united and celebrate diversity. Another example of this symbolism is the phrase “the best team we can be”. In this context, “team” can signify how the NFL wants citizens to behave. The NFL may have chosen to include this phrase in their campaign as the NFL believe that the people in the USA need to be a team and united before there can be a change in the USA society. The NFL wants the people in the USA to be a team and work together, just as the teams in the NFL do, as a unity. The NFL also included the

phrase “To fulfill the promise of one nation.” in their campaign, which could refer to The Pledge of Allegiance, and the fact that many people in the USA are very patriotic (Amadeo 2019) the NFL might want to remind US citizens of what they all believe in, that the USA is “one nation”. However, where the relationship between the visual and image is most clear is when “Competing side by side” images appear where football players are standing side by side in a chain at what seems to be a protest, where people are also walking in a chain and “competing side by side”. This example here could indicate that the NFL put their money where their mouth is, as the campaign shows live footage of people in the NFL standing and competing side by side and showing live footage of protesters doing the same.

Moving to the images in “It takes all of us” campaign, there are different symbols included. In the campaign, there appears an image that signifies a man sitting in what it looks like to be a conference room in Philadelphia police station and talking together. One of the men sitting in the room is the NFL player Malcom Jenkins (Dodson 2017). When analyzing this image and the campaign and its messages, one could say that the men in the room are talking about the social issue of racial injustice. This image could be a symbol of hope as there has been a lot of police brutality in Philadelphia, especially against black people (Saint et.al. 2020), and this image signifies that there are people, like Malcom Jenkins, that do talk with the police and are trying to find a solution to ending police brutality and preventing wrongful police shootings in Philadelphia. Hence, this image could be a symbolic, given that the men are talking about racial injustice, thus creating hope for people that do not have a voice or the opportunity to do take similar action. Moreover, this image also appears when the voiceover says, “be part of the solution” and the fact that it is Malcom Jenkins in the image and he has mentioned finding a solution for the issue could indicate that the NFL is trying to do something about this issue and are trying to find a solution, but the NFL wants all people to “be a part of the solution”. Another example where the image and the voiceover have similarities is when an image appears where it says vote and is followed by another image that shows a sign that says voting entrance and underneath says your vote counts the exact time as the voiceover say, “show up”. This signifies that the NFL wants people to show up when they can make a difference.

Towards the end of the campaign, there appears an image of what it seems to be an NFL player that raises his fist in the air. A raised fist has become a symbol of fighting oppression (Stout 2020) and raising your first in this sense has been around for many years (Spata 2020). In this image, the raised fist appears together with the phrase, “While the season is over, our fight for social justice is

not". This statement signifies the NFL's purpose of doing this campaign and the seriousness of the NFL present in this campaign. When people think of the word "fight", they often think of people being in physical contact with each other, but in this case, where the NFL states that they are ready to "fight for social justice" it could signify that the NFL is ready to defend people's right for social justices, not just doing football season but every day. The NFL will be engaged in this fight for social justice. Arguably, the image, together with the phrase, could symbolize how the NFL is actively standing up for social justice and bringing awareness to this issue. More examples of how the NFL is showing that they want to fight the issue is when they show a wall where Martin Luther King is painted, and below the painting, the word "hero" stands. Martin Luther King is a symbol of an American hero and a person that fought for equality for all American people and therefore, in this campaign, the image of Martin Luther King signifies the NFL's message to make a change and stand up for equality, just as Dr. King did it. Moreover, throughout the campaign, there are more signifiers for what the purpose is with this campaign. For example, there is an image with a woman wearing a hat that says, "end racism" or when there is an image with many people, young and adult, that have different skin colors, or the image of three people, two women, one white and one black, and one white man standing closely beside each other and smiling. All these images show the campaign's purpose, and that the NFL wants people to accept one another and live side by side. NFL is also showing their support to equality and honor victims of police brutality when different NFL players have victims of police brutality written on their helmets. Furthermore, two images with the phrase "We won't be silent!! One pride", signify that maybe the NFL will not be silent and be bystanders for this issue and wants all people in the USA to do the same.

The last image in the campaign says "Inspire Change" "It takes all of us" which signifies the NFL's overall message with this campaign, that there cannot be any change in society if only some people do it. When the NFL uses the personal pronoun "us" it also signifies that the NFL includes itself in this change and is also doing something to inspire a change.

Sub conclusion

To conclude this analysis, the NFL seems to be a sustainable company if looking at the analysis based on TBL as the NFL is fulfilling all the criteria for how to have sustainability in the company. The analysis based on Carrol's pyramid shows similar results that the NFL also does their part to be socially responsible.

Concluding the semiotic analysis is that the NFL has created a campaign that does not keep the lid on its message with this campaign. However, when analyzing the images and phrases, there is evidence of symbols and reference to previous events, such as the Civil Rights Movement with Martin Luther King, the social issue with police brutality, and how the NFL wants to be a part of the fight to end the brutality, but also references to The Pledge of Allegiance when they included the phrase “To fulfill the promise of one nation.”

Procter & Gamble

P&G’s CSR performances

Analyzing Procter and Gamble’s website and business encompasses how passionate and determined P&G upholds good corporate social responsibility. P&G has taken different initiatives and activities to show their stakeholders that they care about society and are doing their part to be socially responsible (P&G 2021, a).

The phrases used in the semiotic analysis is taken from appendix 2

Carroll’s pyramid

Economic responsibility

Procter and Gamble is a corporation that has existed for more than 180 years and now operates in more than 180 countries (P&G 2021, a). P&G is also seen as one of the most reputable companies in the world (RepTrak 2021). This can also be seen in P&G’s economy as their global net sales were \$70.95 billion U.S. dollars in 2020, and when it comes to advertising campaign P&G is a company that spends a tremendous amount of money on this, in 2017 P&G spent approximately \$7.12 billion U.S. dollars on advertisement and is using newspaper advertisements, radio, and soap operas to advertise for brands (Statista 2021, d). However, in 2014 P&G streamlined the company, which meant that they sold around 100 brands. P&G wanted to revive sales and focus on the remaining 80 brands, which P&G allude to be their most core brands, such as Pampers, Tide, and Gillette, and were producing 95 percent of P&G’s profits (Brunsmann 2015). P&G’s products are sold directly to big retailers, grocery stores, membership club stores, drug stores, and high-frequency stores (Statista 2021, d). P&G’s markets in Northern America would contribute to most of their net sales (Statista 2021, d). Furthermore, in 2019, P&G spent \$215 million in promotional efforts and was ranked fifth place companies that invested most in media spending (Statista 2021,

e). Figure 7 is P&G’s financial highlights from their annual report from 2020 and shows how P&G has increased its earnings in four years, especially from 2019 to 2020.

| | 2020 | 2019 | 2018 | 2017 | 2016 |
|---|---------------|--------|--------|--------|--------|
| Net Sales | \$71.0 | \$67.7 | \$66.8 | \$65.1 | \$65.3 |
| Operating Income | \$15.7 | \$5.5 | \$13.4 | \$13.8 | \$13.3 |
| Net Earnings Attributable to P&G | \$13.0 | \$3.9 | \$9.8 | \$15.3 | \$10.5 |
| Net Earnings Margin from Continuing Operations | 18.5% | 5.9% | 14.8% | 15.7% | 15.4% |
| Diluted Net Earnings per Common Share from Continuing Operations¹ | \$4.96 | \$1.43 | \$3.67 | \$3.69 | \$3.49 |
| Diluted Net Earnings per Common Share¹ | \$4.96 | \$1.43 | \$3.67 | \$5.59 | \$3.69 |
| Core Earnings per Share² | \$5.12 | \$4.52 | \$4.22 | \$3.92 | \$3.67 |
| Operating Cash Flow | \$17.4 | \$15.2 | \$14.9 | \$12.8 | \$15.4 |
| Dividends per Common Share | \$3.03 | \$2.90 | \$2.79 | \$2.70 | \$2.66 |

Figure 7: (Source: P&G 2021, b)

These increased earnings from 2019 to 2020 include that P&G has increased their organic sales from 6% to 11%, and on P&G’s bottom line, they have increased their earnings per share growth by 13%. Moreover, P&G’s adjusted free cash flow productivity grew to 114% and grew their markets and household penetration, which meant that P&G had positive results, as shown with driving top-line growth, bottom-line growth, and market share. Furthermore, P&G also returned over \$15 billion of value to their shareowners, which P&G did in share repurchases and dividends. Before and throughout the COVID-19 pandemic, P&G believes that they had built strong momentum and would bring this momentum further in P&G’s investments (P&G 2021, c). P&G’s CEO states:

Fiscal year 2020 will go down as one of the most challenging years for P&G in our 183-year history. Despite numerous issues presented by the global COVID-19 pandemic, P&G people delivered strong results, meeting or exceeding our financial goals for the year with 6% organic sales growth and 13% core earnings per share growth. (P&G 2021, c)

Legal responsibility

P&G feel strongly and emphasizes that to work in P&G, one must always do right thing, and that it is essential always to follow the law and to always be up to date with a country’s laws, but also the laws that P&G upholds. P&G expects their employees to report if any violations of the law. P&G also expects their employees to voice the importance of these laws and understand and identify correct actions, while emphasizing the importance of creating a safe place and good work environment for people to communicate if people have any questions and concerns about the laws

in P&G (P&G 2021, d). P&G has different policies and practices their employees are required to adhere to that are based on P&G's purpose, values, and principles that are also stated as laws. P&G has developed 14 different policies and practices to meet major issues and society's expectations and withhold P&G's own expectations on how they will achieve the results. As P&G says themselves, "We will never condone nor tolerate efforts or activities to achieve results through illegal or unethical dealings anywhere in the world." (P&G 2021, e). Some of these policies and practices that P&G is trying to uphold in their work are Product Safety & Compliance, Fair Pay, Employees Policies, California Transparency Act, Speaking Up, social media, Environmental Policies & Practices, and Worldwide Business Conduct Manual. In addition, P&G has various specific practices and policies that all people working for P&G shall work within (P&G 2021, e).

Ethical responsibility

P&G has developed different policies and practices to uphold their ethical responsibilities. P&G has a reputation that they put their people first no matter what, and this support for P&G people has P&G really shown during the COVID-19 pandemic. P&G has, for example, tried to protect all P&G people, including P&G employees, consumers, communities around the USA, which P&G also called Lead with Love. P&G believes, not only during the pandemic, that it is essential to step up and serve others when they need it, just as a force of good. During the pandemic, one of P&G's top priorities is to protect P&G people and to create a work environment that is safe to work in. P&G learned from the events in China at the beginning of the pandemic that P&G had to move quickly to protect their P&G employees. P&G included personal protective equipment such as temperature scans, increased disinfection, shift rotations, distancing, and masks to protect and minimize the spread of COVID-19 among the employees (P&G 2021, f).

As mentioned, P&G has developed some policies and practices relating to ethical responsibilities, and one of these policies is their employee policies that are developed to improve their employees' lives and to bring value and purpose for them to work in P&G. This specific policy has industry-leading benefits. P&G provides benefits to their employees so they can balance their everyday life and take care of their family. These employee policies are parental leave policy, flexible work policy, employee civic engagement, and recruiting policy. These policies show that P&G will always stand by them every day (P&G 2021, g).

Product safety is also one of P&G's ethical responsibilities. P&G states that "safety" is the absolute first ingredient in all their products, and P&G wants to ensure that everybody receives the highest

quality product possible. Therefore, P&G has hired over 500 scientists to analyze and determine if the ingredient is safe to use in the products. Furthermore, P&G has created a 4-step process that goes through each ingredient's safety and is a science-based process (P&G 2021, h). Moreover, P&G also wants to provide information on ingredients on each product that is clear, reliable, and accessible (P&G 2021, i).

Philanthropic responsibility

In this responsibility, P&G has taken different initiatives and efforts to create a better community for all to live in. Some of these initiatives are P&G's diversity program about training and supporting future leaders and help them to grow regardless of sex, race, or religion. In 1905, the founder of Procter and Gamble, James N. Gamble, established the Bethune-Cookman University and has since then continued to support the historically black colleges and universities (P&G 2021, a). P&G has impacted different communities, such as in the LGBTQ+ community as a supporter both in P&G's policies with LGBTQ+ inclusion and in the community supporting the internal grassroots company GABLE (P&G 2021, a). Furthermore, P&G has made impacts by creating global programs such as the Children's Safe Drinking Water (CSDW) Program that ensure clean drinking water to those who need it in more than 90 countries and with P&G's water purification can give a family of five clean drinking water the entire day in just 30 minutes. After natural disasters, P&G deliver reliefs to those in need, which P&G calls Disaster Response, and P&G has made a partnership with more than eight international and regional Relief companies such as the International Federation of Red Cross and USA and Direct Relief and Feeding USA and the China Youth Development Foundation (P&G 2021, j).

In regional efforts, P&G has partnered up with different companies in different countries, where P&G believes that they can impact and create a better life for each person. In Panama, for example, P&G has partnered up with the Panamanian Ministry of Health and created a safer and better work environment for women with high-risk pregnancies and offering professional care when needed. In Kenya, P&G has partnered up with Habitat for Humanity to build a shelter for girls in rural Kenya affected by gender-based violence (P&G 2021, j). Furthermore, P&G has created an initiative called Lead with Love about P&G commitment to doing good. More specifically, P&G has committed to 2,021 "acts of good", and some of these "acts of good" include partnering up with Feeding USA that provides free meals and everyday essentials to those in need, and with Operation Homefront P&G provide home products to U.S. military families.

The P&G brand, Always, has a #EndPeriodPoverty program that helps educate young girls about puberty and how to handle and navigate a period with confidence and not shame (P&G 2021, k). Another initiative that the brand Always has done is the #Like a girl campaign. The campaign's intention is to create a conversation about girls about sport and how the society has made this derogatory phrase and this initiative started to change this derogatory phrase to a phrase with a more positive message, and that is not so derogatory for a girl to be said to. After this campaign was launched, 76% of the USA population did not see the phrase with the same meaning as before the campaign was launched (P&G 2021, a).

Elkington's TBL

Social

P&G is helping society in every area they possible can. As mentioned before, P&G has taken many different initiatives to transform the communities and the world for the better. One of these initiatives is the commitment and effort that P&G has towards the United Nation's Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) (P&G 2021, j). P&G is trying to support all 17 goals, and some of these goals are aimed toward transforming the society for the better, for example, goal number one, no poverty, where P&G has created different programs such as Children's Safe Drinking Water Program and Hope Schools that both aims at helping and reduce people in poverty. Another goal P&G is supporting is number four about quality education where P&G has built and renovated schools in China in rural and underdeveloped areas, so all children can attend school and have a quality education. Goal number five, gender quality, and P&G's core principles are also where P&G has impacted. P&G is committed to building a better world for everyone and where every people are equally valued and with no gender bias. For creating a world without any gender bias, P&G has voiced their support in advertising and media such as Always #LikeAGirl and Ariel #ShareTheLoad campaigns (P&G 2021, l). In addition, P&G has stepped up and supported the community during the pandemic as they have produced hand sanitizers and shared them with hospitals, health care facilities, and relief companies.

Moreover, over 50 P&G brands have made donations and partnered up with more than 200 different relief companies, and with these donations and partnerships, P&G reached more than 55 counties and helped people in nursing homes, shelters, community groups, food banks, and more. P&G had three areas in focus relating to COVID-19, which are: keeping employees safe, serving consumers, and supporting the community. (P&G 2021, j).

Environmental

To protect and create environmental sustainability is something P&G is committed to, as in 2010, P&G stated their work with protecting the environment by declaring 16 goals and commitments to reduce P&G's footprint on the planet. P&G has goals in climate, water, and waste, and 14 out of the 16 goals that P&G declared in 2010 have already been achieved. Since P&G declared these environmental goals, P&G's teams put in their effort to develop more innovative ways to be more environmentally responsible and how to operate more efficiently than P&G already do (P&G 2021, m). In 2018, P&G declared a new set of goals and practices and added a new purpose than just reducing P&G's footprint and conservation of precious resources. This new purpose is that P&G wants to restore the world, and with the help of new and more innovative ways to use natural resources, P&G wants to restore the world in that manner. Thus, the world will change for the better and have sustainability.

One of P&G's new goals is to develop a new reusable bottle system and new pouches that are 100% recyclable to minimize the production of virgin plastic bottles. Another new goal is that P&G is working to utilize circular solutions in all businesses. Related to the UN's Sustainable Development Goals, P&G has also fulfilled environmental goal number seven concerning energy acquisition, where P&G has achieved to purchase 100% renewable electricity in the USA, Canada, and Europe, with all P&G facilities running on at least 30% renewable energy. Goal number 13 has P&G committing to being carbon neutral in all operations by cutting greenhouse gasses and funding projects worldwide that seek to protect, improve, and restore critical ecosystems where carbon is stored (P&G 2021, j).

P&G has for many decades been interested in protecting the environment, and one of the first initiatives was in 1953 when P&G published environmental safety publication which was research on surfactants in rivers. This publication continued to be a crucial topic to P&G and their commitment to protecting the environment (P&G 2021, a). One of P&G's newest environmental initiatives is the world's first shampoo bottle made from found plastic, where up to 25% is sourced from waste found on beaches, thus creating a supply chain that involved thousands of volunteers and hundreds of NGOs (P&G 2021, a).

Economics

Besides P&G's net sales of \$70.95 billion U.S. dollars in 2020 and spending much money on advertising, P&G also focuses on innovation to reinvent their company and indirectly increase

P&G's economy. Some of these innovations are P&G's Growth Works initiative, which enables P&G's teams to increase and raise their research and development processes. Another initiative is P&G's "Connect, and Develop" program that is about collaboration go hand in hand with innovation where P&G teams search for a trailblazer and then create a partnership and end in new solutions that can be used in P&G (P&G 2021, n). Globally, P&G has over 99,000 employees where P&G makes it one of their most essential focuses on providing their employees and the entire P&G workforce with economic stability to support employees' families and support the local communities. This amount of employment has created economic growth in almost all the countries that P&G has operations in, and therefore P&G also creates a stable economy and supports the society in that country. Furthermore, P&G has also created thousands of jobs in many different communities as P&G globally works with more than 45,000 suppliers.

In 1976, P&G established the Supplier Diversity program in the U.S, which is about urging more prominent companies to use underrepresented businesses such as minority-owned, women-owned, LGBTQ+, veterans, and people with disabilities. This initiative that P&G took in 1976 has resulted in economic opportunities for these types of businesses, and P&G's program has also expanded globally and helped many businesses, primarily owned by women (P&G 2021, j). In addition, many of P&G's economic initiatives has also resulted in them achieving the UN's Sustainable Development Goals relating to economic impacts in the world.

Semiotic analysis

As mentioned before, "The Choice" campaign from P&G has no voiceover, only a soundtrack and different phrases and sentences, and what seems to be low-key images. The message that P&G is trying to send with this campaign is clear and targeted against a specific group of people. P&G is relying on only their low-key images and different phrases and sentences for the audience to decode the message. The campaign consists of images of what seems to be people with two different skin colors, black and white, which does not at first thought give any indication of the message.

However, knowing which brand the campaign comes from knowing about the events that happen in the USA with racism, these images could be precisely selected for those reasons. These images with two different skin colors could signify the message that P&G wants to send to their audience and remind society of the tensions between white and black people in the USA.

The first 22 seconds of the campaign signify black skin and a black man's face with the sentences "Where are we to go? How are we to respond? When we are shown over and over and over that our

lives do not matter?”. This image and sentences could be a signifier for P&G saying that there is an issue in the USA. Moreover, it also signifies that there needs to be awareness on this issue and that black people may feel hopeless, as P&G also says “over and over and over again” that Black lives do not matter. This hopelessness also shows when P&G ask questions like “Where are we to go?” and “How are we to respond?” as it seems like black people cannot see the light at the end of the tunnel and that this racial issue there is in the USA will be a never-ending issue in the society. In the campaign, an image of a black face appears together with the phrase “that our lives do not matter?” After a few seconds, the words *that*, *our* and *not* disappears and the phrase “lives do matter” remain standing. This phrase is a signifier for the message of this campaign that all lives do matter, and even though this is not a significant image that appears together with the phrase, it gives something to think about as it feels like a black person ask the audience directly, as if the person stands in front of them, if his life does not matter to them. Moreover, P&G has also referred to the Black Lives Matter movement in the exact two phrases as P&G uses the phrase “lives matter”, which also shows that P&G supports their work to change society positively.

Moreover, P&G is creating a “we” vs. “them” situation and indirectly choosing a side in this issue, as P&G is using the pronoun “we” when the focus is on black people, and they use the pronoun “you” when they speak to white people. For example, P&G is saying, “When we are shown over and over and over that our lives do not matter?“, here P&G is clearly saying that they unite with black people and taking their side as they use the pronoun “we” whereas in this example: “Being white in the USA is not needing to state your life matters”, here P&G create segregation and a “we” vs. “them” situation as they used the possessive pronoun “your”. Arguably, with this campaign, P&G could make white people feel guilty about their role in this issue as they say, “And when your life matters, you have power. Now is the time to use it.”. Here P&G indirectly indicates that white people have never used their power and privilege to take a stand against racism. After only 22 seconds in the campaign, the focus also switches to white people as the image changes to white skin, and P&G states that being white in the USA is a privilege and that white people do not have to state all the time that their lives matter, like people of color, especially Black people, must and how this privilege means power for white people. P&G states, “Being white in America is not needing to state your life matters. And when your life matters, you have power”. P&G further states in the campaign how white people have not used this power they have and how little effort and inactive white people have been to make a change and support the fight against racism. P&G, for example, states, “Not being racist is not enough. Now is the time to be anti-racist. Words and feelings are not

enough. Now is the time to take action.” All phrases are signifiers of how P&G wants white people to act now.

Furthermore, with this campaign, P&G is inviting society to take action be a part of the fight against racial inequality and create real change in the USA society. P&G wants people to do more than sit around and speak and think about the issue and what can and cannot be done. P&G wants people, especially white people, to use their power and help those who do not themselves have that kind of power. As P&G also states at the end of the campaign, people need to “Read. Listen. Donate. Plan. March. Vote. Speak out. Step in. Step up.”. Therefore, P&G wants to bring awareness to this issue and emphasizes that people need to change their behavior when it comes to people of color and not just be bystanders. P&G is also saying that racism is a choice, and it is a choice if white people choose to use their power for the greater good and standing up for a fundamental right as racial justice. This mention of how white people choose to make is also a signifier to why the campaign is called “The Choice” and why it addresses white people.

Sub conclusion

To sum up, this analysis of Procter and Gamble’s CSR performance and their campaign from 2020 is that P&G is, what it looks like to be, a sustainable company that takes all initiatives to create sustainability in all areas. P&G has done many practices and taken many initiatives worldwide to create a better life for all people both with support communities with products and not only during the pandemic and provide clean water to those in need to create economic opportunities to underrepresented business in the world.

With this campaign, P&G has tried to make an important message for the USA’s white population. In addition, P&G has used different signifiers to emphasize their message, such as different phrases in the campaign related to events in the USA that P&G did not support.

NIKE

NIKE’s CSR performances

NIKE is a company that is not afraid of showing their social responsibilities to society as their internal reports are freely available. Moreover, all the initiatives NIKE has taken over the years and how invested and compassionate NIKE is trying to make the world a better place for everyone to live on also show how socially responsible NIKE is. NIKE's CEO also says, “NIKE’s purpose is to unite the world through sport to create a healthy planet, active communities, and an equal playing field for all. These are more than aspirations – they are foundational priorities that shape decisions

across every aspect of our business.” (NIKE 2021, a). Furthermore, NIKE has also identified 6 out of UN’s 17 sustainable development goals, showing how invested they are, as a company, to create a better future for the generations to come (NIKE 2021, b).

The phrases used in the semiotic analysis is taken from appendix 3.

Carroll’s pyramid

Economic responsibility

NIKE is a company leading in their field around sportswear and sports equipment states that their company and the entire business is a growth company (NIKE 2021, c). This can also be seen in NIKE’s economics as NIKE’s global revenue in 2020 was \$37.4 billion representing only a 2 percent drop from 2019, despite the global pandemic. In the last ten years, NIKE’s global revenue has also been increasing year by year (Statista 2021, f), showing that NIKE’s strategy in running its business has been cost-effective. Also, NIKE’s revenue was 11 percent higher before the COVID-19 pandemic, which shows how strong NIKE is as a company and how broad their consumer demand is, together with a realization of higher full-price sales. Moreover, NIKE’s digital sales had also increased by 47 percent in 2020. Therefore, NIKE has had growth with double-digit in six consecutive years (NIKE 2021, d). NIKE’s expenses in selling and administration have also increased in 2020 by three percent and are now on 13.1 billion. However, NIKE’s revenue pipeline, also called demand creation, dropped by four percent as an effect of the COVID-19 pandemic as many things were postponed or canceled and the global lockdown. NIKE continued to support their investments during the pandemic, increasing by operating overhead by seven percent. Moreover, NIKE’s net income was \$2.5 billion in 2020, which decreased from 2019 as it was \$4 billion (Statista 2021, g), which was caused by the impact from COVID-19 (NIKE 2021, d). However, in 2020 NIKE also had an unexpected net loss of \$790 million due to COVID-19 as it affected NIKE’s operations.

NIKE is also a company that wants to share their success with their shareholders. This is showed when NIKE in 2020 returned \$4.5 billion to their shareholders through dividends and share repurchases. NIKE’s dividends were \$1.5 billion, whereas, in 2019, they were \$1.3 billion, and NIKE repurchased shares for \$3.0 billion. NIKE shares its revenue with its shareholders also shows the flexibility NIKE has when it comes to returning money and making the shareholders a part of NIKE’s success (NIKE 2021, d).

Legal responsibility

“At Nike, we hold ourselves to the highest standards and we take our local and global responsibilities seriously. Nike’s policies are a formal, accepted standard or approach to the way Nike conducts business, relating to social and environmental issues.” (NIKE 2021, e). This statement shows how committed NIKE is to adhere to the laws related to social and environmental issues. NIKE has written a Code of Conduct and Code of Leadership to their employees and suppliers that explicitly show NIKE’s minimum standards and guidelines for operating within NIKE. NIKE’s most important value is that NIKE expects all employees and suppliers to commit themselves to do the best for their workers and their welfare and committing to respect the planet and the environment that we all live in (NIKE 2021, f). Therefore, NIKE’s Code of Conduct and Code of Leadership has the minimum standards that require all to follow and implement a country’s laws and regulations into their business. In addition, NIKE is very committed to adhering to the internal human rights and labor laws as through their many policies, NIKE has different standards for how suppliers and employees shall respect and treat each other. NIKE has, for example, a policy that states core labor rights and how employees do not have to comply to work overtime unless it is consensual.

Moreover, NIKE’s suppliers forbid child labor, and employees must be 16 years old or older (NIKE 2021, f). Another topic relating to fundamental human rights NIKE is committed not to discriminate and to gender equity. NIKE explicit emphasizes that their suppliers shall not discriminate their work or employment, NIKE for this say that they do not discriminate based on “gender, race, religion, age, disability, sexual orientation, pregnancy, marital status, nationality, political opinion, trade union affiliation, social or ethnic origin, or other status protected by local law” (NIKE 2021, f). All employees that affiliate with NIKE is protected by law.

Environmental laws are also something that NIKE is committed to following. NIKE also says, “When it comes to the health of our environment, we need to care for the planet we have now. We believe that sport should always have a future”. (NIKE 2021, g). NIKE, for example, wants to reduce their carbon footprint, as it is one of their most significant environmental impacts, by reducing their greenhouse gas emissions by 70 percent, and NIKE also wants to minimize their waste and want to handle the waste properly safely way. NIKE has also created policies for handling chemicals properly to protect the environment and the employees (NIKE 2021, f).

Ethical responsibility

NIKE is a company that cares about their employees and suppliers and wants what is best for them (NIKE 2021, f). NIKE also states, “We invest in the power of people to move the world forward.” (NIKE 2021, g). This can be seen in how NIKE has created different codes for how to operate in NIKE and how all people involved in NIKE can make day-to-day decisions without violating the company standards. It can also be seen in NIKE’s corporate governance as NIKE is committed to monitoring that all policies are adhered to and creating long-term shareholder value (NIKE 2021, h).

As mentioned before, NIKE is committed to achieving the UN’s sustainable development goals. For example, goal number eight and NIKE has made a 2025 goal to achieve this by ensuring that in all NIKE’s extended supply chains, all the employees’ rights to operate under NIKE’s official operating standards relating to labor, health, safety, and environmental are met. In addition, all workspaces where NIKE’s products are being made are all living up to the standards for how to work in a safe environment (NIKE 2021, i). Furthermore, relating to UN’s goal number eight, NIKE is also committed to adhering to the different slavery act stateside and in UK and Australia and to the different labor initiative, such as USA Apparel and Footwear Association and Fair Labor Association’s Apparel & Footwear Commitment to Responsible Recruitment (NIKE 2021, i).

Another ethical responsibility that NIKE is committed to being as diverse, inclusive, and equitable as possible in their business (NIKE 2021, j). NIKE has created a global program meant to assist NIKE’s employees to make healthy choices in their everyday life outside work, and during the COVID-19 pandemic, NIKE offered free counselling for the those in need (NIKE 2021, c). Also, NIKE wants to protect and support the entire NIKE team as NIKE provides in the USA benefits in family care, that for example, includes eight weeks of paid time off when taking care of a relative and benefits relating to fertility and adoption. In NIKE’s European headquarters, they have extended their family care benefits to match the laws in Europe. NIKE also values their employees’ time and hard work, so NIKE has ensured that all employees will receive equal pay for equal work, and in 2016 NIKE signed the White House Equal Pay Pledge (NIKE 2021, c).

NIKE also has a bonus plan called “Performance Sharing Plan” to ensure eligible employees receive different rewards and benefits for their hard work and create a better work environment with collaboration and teamwork. In addition, NIKE also has a “Total Rewards program” that ensures all

employees feel “included” and “empowered, and in which NIKE delivers different benefits and competitive pay (NIKE 2021, c).

Philanthropic responsibility

NIKE is a company that is committed to give something back to their community and to help wherever NIKE can and states, “When crisis strikes, we’re ready to help lift up our communities. Whether manufacturing protective equipment for healthcare workers or providing financial relief after devastating wildfires, we’re there to support our employees and the communities they call home” (NIKE 2021, c).

NIKE wants to inspire kids and people worldwide to love sports as much as NIKE does. NIKE has created the program “Made to Play” which is a program that wants to educate kids about sports and improve their health if they are active. NIKE’s program primarily focuses on girls and the relationship between a girl and a coach and how coaches can be a part of why kids want to participate and, especially girls, staying in sports. This program also invests time in training coaches and including more female coaches in sports. The purpose of this program is for NIKE to invest in kids and people's lives and wants them to see that sports can lead to a healthier, happier, and more successful life (NIKE 2021, c). NIKE also has a specific “Coaching Girls” program that only focuses on girls and how to coach girls to feel inclusive (NIKE 2021, c). Furthermore, NIKE has inspired schools worldwide for many years to get kids to be more active through play and sports and has invested over \$23 million in doing so. NIKE has inspired schools in China, England, Mexico, and South Africa to create an active environment where all kids want to play sport.

Equality is also something NIKE is invested in, as NIKE wants a world where all people feel they are included. NIKE stands up for equality in how they invest in the community with millions of dollars to make a positive impact and, as NIKE themselves say, “level the playing field for all.” (NIKE 2021, k). Together with the former NBA player Michael Jordan, NIKE has for four years committed themselves to donate \$40 million to support the Black community. Moreover, with this commitment, NIKE also supports and partners up with companies that address social justice, education, and racial inequality (NIKE 2021, l).

NIKE has invested over \$89 million in the community to show people that they can break barriers, influence people to believe in themselves, and show that people can make societal changes where the community needs it the most (NIKE 2021, m).

Social

As mentioned before, NIKE is a company that takes pride in supporting their community which NIKE especially has done during the COVID-19 pandemic. NIKE has donated \$30 million to COVID-19 responses and has supported many local companies worldwide that work with helping people in need and has donated, for example, food and medical care. For example, in China, NIKE has donated supplies, equipment, and relief efforts for over \$2 million, and in Europe, NIKE donated \$1.1 million to sports companies (NIKE 2021, c). In addition, in the USA, NIKE has also donated over 360,000 units of personal protective equipment (PPE) to hospitals and healthcare providers and donated over 32,000 shoes to the health system, which are specially designed for healthcare professionals in both U.S. and Europe. Moreover, NIKE has globally donated clothes and footwear to healthcare workers (NIKE 2021, c).

In addition to supporting the community, NIKE has also supported their employees by helping them be healthy during the COVID-19 pandemic. For example, if any of NIKE's employees became sick, NIKE paid their sick leave besides the employee's paid time off benefits, and if any of the employees had emotional and mental issues, then NIKE supported them through professional counseling (NIKE 2021, c).

During the COVID-19 pandemic, NIKE also supported their suppliers by placing orders with the marketplace dynamics in mind and honoring the agreements regarding payment that NIKE has agreed with their suppliers before the pandemic. If any orders were canceled, NIKE would still pay their suppliers under NIKE's policies and agreements (NIKE 2021, c).

Environment

For many years, NIKE has been a company that has committed themselves to solve critical environmental issues and invest in the planet. NIKE states, "To protect the planet, we don't wait for solutions, we create them. In order to protect the future of sport, our Planet work is focused on carbon, waste, water and chemistry." (NIKE 2021, n). NIKE has shown their commitments to protecting the environment throughout the years as NIKE has signed different initiatives and agreements with different companies about minimizing NIKE's environmental footprint. One of NIKE's first signed agreements was with AFIRM Group in 2004, where NIKE must inform their suppliers with restricted substances. NIKE's newest signed agreements are with The Fashion Industry Charter, where NIKE committed themselves to net-zero emission in 2050, and in 2030

NIKE has committed to reducing their GHG emission by 30 percent (NIKE 2021, o). In 2014, NIKE signed and became a member of the coalition “We Mean business” where, globally, 1788 companies have committed to having a zero-carbon economy which is the only way to have sustainable economic growth and success. As mentioned, NIKE is committed to the UN’s sustainable development goals, and NIKE has identified that they have an impact on goal number 13, Climate Action (NIKE 2021, p), where NIKE has created the “Move to zero” initiative, which is where NIKE wants a future without carbon and any waste (NIKE 2021, q) and has partnered with Climate Impact Lab to achieve their goals. One of the initiatives in “Move to zero” is that NIKE wants to avoid shipping their products on vessels that sail through the Arctic Sea route and do not allow their suppliers to do either (NIKE 2021, r). In addition to the “Move to zero” initiative, NIKE has also committed them to Paris Climate Agreement, RE100, G7 Fashion Pact, and Science Based Targets (NIKE 2021, q). Furthermore, in 2020 NIKE was globally powered by 48 percent renewable energy, and in the U.S. and Canada, NIKE used 100 percent renewable energy in their owned and operated sites (NIKE 2021, q).

Economics

As stated before, NIKE is a company that can make profits, even when there is a global pandemic, and has impacted the world's business. One reason NIKE has a business that gives profit could be how they are committed to creating decent work for their employees and suppliers and how invested NIKE is in the workforce (NIKE 2021, g). In five years, NIKE has committed to emphasizing to their employees and suppliers how vital their work is and its value. NIKE has developed an approach that NIKE calls “one size fits all” that show standards in how NIKE’s suppliers shall behave towards their workers and how they can engage with and value their work. NIKE wants to create a workforce where all people are engaged and valued, and NIKE wants to share “best practices” with their workers to create the best workplace possible (NIKE 2021, g). NIKE has also established partnerships with companies who worship and engages in their workers and the workers off time (NIKE 2021, g). Some of these relationships that NIKE has partnered up with are Fair Labor Association (FLA) and Better Work, Issara Institute, International Center for Research on Women, and International Finance Corporation (IFC) (NIKE 2021, g).

Semiotic analysis

This campaign from NIKE is straightforward as its signifier is different phrases and a simple black background.

One of these signifiers is the phrase “For Once, Don’t Do It”, which is also the first phrase in the campaign. This signifier may stand out for some people, as in 1987, NIKE took the slogan “Just Do It” to heart and became NIKE’s most memorable, iconic, and motivating slogan up to date (Wieden 2021). Therefore, this phrase can be signified to create attention from the audience as this phrase contradicts NIKE’s slogan “Just Do It”, but also that now NIKE says, “Don’t do it”, which also say that it is something serious that NIKE wants to tell. Another signifier that could signify this is that eight frames out of nine have a signifier repeated several times, which is the word “don’t”. This could be signified as a form of entreaty from NIKE’s side and addresses the audiences of the campaign. This can be seen as a form of entreaty, as when using the word “don’t”, it can be seen a someone not wanting to do something specific (Merriam-Webster 2021). Therefore, NIKE wants people to “don’t” do specific things. One of these signifiers is the phrase “Don’t sit back and be silent.” which can signify how NIKE sees the People in the USA behaving towards this racial problem in the USA. NIKE may want the People in the USA to intervene when they see something wrong happen to other people, and NIKE wants the People in the USA to do more and speak up about this issue than just sitting at home and do nothing.

Furthermore, the signifier on frames two and three is two different statements “Don’t pretend there’s not a problem in America” and “Don’t turn your back on racism”. These two signifiers could be signified as NIKE believes there is a severe problem in the USA and that the serious problem is racism. This can also be signified to the subject and meaning behind this campaign and that it gives the audience an idea of what NIKE wants to tell with this campaign. Moreover, when analyzing the phrases in the campaign, it could be signified as NIKE also encouraging all People in the USA to face the racial issue there is in the USA and not turn their back on the issue and that all people in the society should make a change together, as NIKE also say themselves: “Let’s all be part of the change”.

In the last frame, the signifier is the phrase “be part of the change”. This could be signified to as NIKE only talking to specific people, but then the phrase “Let’s all” is inserted before the first phrase, and then NIKE includes all people in their hope for all people contributing and being a part of the change for making it better for people of color in the USA.

As the last, pain and hope can also be signified in this campaign. Pain is signified as NIKE starts with saying all the negative behavior that NIKE believes the people in the USA are doing, such as NIKE believes that people are not speaking up when they see something wrongfully happen or that

people feel like it is not their concerns and just accepting all the wrongfully things that are happening. Then there is signified hope when NIKE chose to include the phrase “Let’s all be part of the change” as NIKE here states that if all people are committed to this change regarding racism, and then NIKE believes the change will happen.

Sub conclusion

Based on this analysis, NIKE has created sustainability in the company as NIKE has achieved success in all parameters in their CSR performances. Furthermore, even though NIKE has had a loss in their revenue, NIKE still had a profit, and as for NIKE’s impact on the community and environment, they have taken many initiatives to create a better place for all people.

Concluding on the NIKE campaign then the company has a clear message making this campaign, and that is that all USA should take a look inward and see if they are a part of the change for creating a society where all citizens in the USA feels included and valued or if they are just bystanders. So, choosing these specific phrases outlined in the analysis, NIKE shows where they stand in this issue, and the purpose is an encouragement to all people in the USA to do better and open their eyes to the social issue that is racism in the USA.

NBA

NBA’s CSR performances

The NBA is a sports league that seems to have a sustainable company. The NBA, as well as the NFL, is very transparent on their website about all their different initiatives for good CSR performances and their social responsibilities to the community.

As with the NFL, it should be noted that NBA’s financial results are retrieved from other sources than NBA’s website.

The phrases used in the semiotic analysis is taken from appendix 4.

Carroll’s pyramid

Economic responsibility

Basketball is one of the world’s most popular sport and has approximately 2-3 billion fans worldwide, where most of the fans are in the USA, Canada, China, Japan, and the Philippines (Sports Show 2021). This popularity in basketball can also be seen in the NBA’s financial results as

it has contributed to NBA's revenue growth, and for the last 20 years, the NBA's total revenue has increased every year (Statista 2021, h). When calculating the majority of revenue in the NBA, it is classified as Basketball Related Income (BRI). In the 19/20 season, the NBA generated almost \$8 billion U.S. dollars, which was a slight decrease from the previous season, and the NBA's average revenue per franchise was 263.87 million U.S. dollars in 2019/20, which was a slight decrease from the previous season (Statista 2021, i). Most of the NBA's BRI generates from their TV deals valued at \$24 billion, NBA tickets, concessions, and merchandising rights (Nath 2020).

Moreover, NBA's average operating income is where it has varied results if looking at 20 years duration, however in the last eight years, there has been a drastic increase in NBA's income (Statista 2021, j), and for just one team in the NBA their average operating income was \$61.63 million dollars, which also shows how popular basketball in general is. As the NBA's income contributes to the salary cap and some of the more popular NBA teams, such as the Lakers and the Knicks, have higher revenue than the smaller teams, it can result in an unstable system and an unbalanced economy. When smaller teams want to retain their players, the team may have to spend an unreasonable amount of money to do so, which will (Nath 2020).

Furthermore, this popularity in basketball has also made the NBA focus on expansion with new tv deals that enable fans in Europe and China to follow the NBA. Another reason for the NBA wanting to expand their viewership to other parts of the world is that more international players and countries are represented on the NBA court and NBA rosters. There were 108 international players from 38 countries represented (Nath 2020).

Legal responsibility

NBA is a sports league that wants to adhere to the country's laws. In the NBA's Code of Conduct, they have written a section called "Compliance with the law" and state that "All employees must comply with the law at all times." (NBA 2021, b). In this code of conduct, the NBA has, for example, emphasizes the rule about bribery where they state that "[...] employees, agents, and representatives may never give, offer, or accept anything of value that is intended or could appear to be a bribe" and how to deal with the Government not only in the USA but all around the world that is related to the NBA. Another law that the NBA emphasizes is the "antitrust" laws about free competition and how to foster this. The NBA also tries to adhere to the different labor unions that they deal with, such as "The National Basketball Players Association", "The Women's National

Basketball Players Association”, and “The National Association of Broadcast Employees and Technicians”.

The NBA also follows a human right to bargaining with the NBA’s “Collective Bargaining Agreement” (CBA), where the NBA and the National Basketball Players Association have set out different rules and regulations that every employee in the NBA must follow. In this CBA, there is, for example, outlined how the salary cap system works in the NBA and how the “anti-drug” program works if any consumes any illegal drugs that are banned in the NBA (NBA 2021, c).

During the COVID-19 pandemic, the NBA also tried to adhere to the guidelines of health and safety protocols that the Department of Labor has set out, and the NBA sent out the regulations that outlined how each of the teams shall handle the Health and Safety protocols and procedures. When you have a relation to the NBA, these regulations included different restrictions about how to handle COVID-19 at home and when you are on the road. Further, the restrictions included safety precautions and the result if these regulations are being violated, affecting the entire NBA (Aschburner 2020).

Ethical responsibility

Just as other companies have a moral obligation to secure their employees' safety, so has the NBA. This can be seen in the NBA’s Code of Conduct, as the NBA has outlined several conducts on how to operate inside the NBA and operations related to the NBA (NBA 2021, d). NBA’s code of conduct, for example, involves the NBA’s commitment to creating a healthy work environment and how to achieve this goal, and how to build a respectful team. Moreover, NBA also strives to “[...] be the best company it can be” (NBA 2021, d) so therefore NBA has also included policies on how employees can report their ethical concerns in a safe place and that all employees feel that they can speak up and being taken seriously. One of the essential policies and one of the NBA’s core values is the NBA’s commitment to upholding the integrity and how the NBA emphasizes that all employees in the NBA have the responsibility to maintain this integrity throughout the entire organization. Some of these integrities are that employees are not allowed to gamble on NBA games and that anything related to the NBA cannot be used when engaging in politics (NBA 2021, d). Furthermore, NBA wants to “[...] foster a safe, comfortable, and enjoyable sports and entertainment experience [...] (NBA 2021, e) therefore the NBA has also created a “NBA Fan Code of Conduct” which outlines different expectations that the NBA has to guests that attend something NBA related (NBA 2021, e).

Furthermore, the NBA has also created a rulebook that outlines 14 different rules related to NBA games and which rules apply in different situations. This rulebook also has a video rulebook attached that explains the Rules of the NBA game and is intended to help the whole society: media, fans, and others that have an interest in NBA (NBA 2021, f).

The NBA has also created its own constitution and by-laws, which outline the NBA's fundamental principles and practices on how NBA employees should operate and guidelines on how to operate according to the NBA's set of rules (NBA 2021, g).

In addition, the NBA has four core values that all employees are expected to adhere to: integrity, teamwork, respect, and innovation. These four values are referred to as "The four corners of our court" and it is not only NBA's mission to adhere to these values, but they believe that it is their "calling" (NBA 2021, h) to do so. Moreover, as a way of fulfilling this "calling" NBA has created different benefits for NBA employees as the NBA believes that "employment is a partnership" (NBA 2021, i).

Philanthropic responsibility

As mentioned before, the NBA is committed to doing better for their employees, but the NBA is also committed to improving society. The NBA show this with one of their many initiatives. The "NBA Cares" initiative is the NBA's global social responsibility program designed to support and address social issues (NBA 2021, j). This program support communities around the world with the influence of play and NBA's values, and by 2025, the NBA wants to influence more than 15 million young people through basketball and to have built 1,000 more safe places to live in for vulnerable groups. Moreover, the NBA Cares has partnered up with different programs and causes, such as the youth-serving programs that support education and that are recognized all around the world and health-related causes to be even more engaged in the community and not just NBA's own community but all around the world (NBA 2021, j). In addition, the NBA encourages their employees to be engaged in their local community and be volunteers, and the NBA even rewards their employees with a unique program called "24 for 24" that gives the employee 24 hours extra time off.

Another initiative that the NBA has taken is called "NBA Voices", which is about "[...] address social injustice, promote inclusion, uplift voices and bridge divides in our communities" (NBA 2021, k). The NBA has created "NBA Voices" to "bring people together" and show people and society, through basketball, how important it is to be diverse, inclusive, and have equality in

society. In addition, to creating a solid and safe community for all people, the NBA has worked with multiple community-based companies and has supported over 800 programs in 38 cities, and added over 50,000 new mentors to their program. Moreover, this initiative has brought together people from law enforcement and young people in a joint conversation (NBA 2021, k).

“NBA FIT” is also one of the NBA’s initiatives to encourage people to take care of their health and make healthy choices in their everyday lives. In addition, the NBA has created “NBA Fit Week” where the NBA has dedicated a whole week to help with enhancing and encourage people to have a healthy lifestyle through a healthy mind where the NBA has outlined different tips for how to live a healthy lifestyle (NBA 2021, l).

“Hoops for Troops” is another NBA initiative where the NBA and teams and their players honor people serving in the military and people who are now retired and their families (NBA 2021, m).

Elkington’s TBL

Social

As mentioned, the NBA is a company that calls to help the community be better and lead with integrity (NBA 2021, j). Other initiatives and programs that the NBA has created are “The NBA Undergraduate Advisory Committee” which is a program for college underclassmen and those who are thinking about being a professional basketball player and can receive an independent evaluation from NBA professionals about their chances in the NBA Draft (NBA 2021, n).

As mentioned before, the NBA also want to create a diverse and inclusive society where everyone can show their difference and feel safe at the same time (NBA 2021, k). The NBA also wants this to show their commitment to diversity and inclusion inside the NBA and have a global presence with offices in 13 different markets worldwide (NBA 2021, o). Moreover, the NBA also strives to create an inclusive culture for their employees. The NBA has created different teams, called “employee resource teams” where employees express having something in common or a similar background. For example, some of these teams are “Asian Professional Exchange”, CONEXIÓN ÉNE-BÉ-A, NBA- PRIDE, NBA WOMEN’S NETWORK, or DREAM IN COLOR (NBA 2021, p). The NBA also wants to create inclusion in their partnerships with other companies and companies as the NBA want to have “broader diversity and inclusion efforts” and their goal is “to maximize participation by diverse suppliers through the development of mutually beneficial business relationships.” (NBA 2021, q). These business relationships that the NBA wants to have a partnership with are, for example, business that is diverse in the sense that the business identifies as a minority group, such

as the National Minority Supplier Development Council, the Women's Business Enterprise National Council, and the National Gay and Lesbian Chamber of Commerce, which the NBA do business with (NBA 2021, q).

Another initiative that the NBA has taken is the Jr. NBA program, which intends to share the NBA's love for basketball and teach young basketball players, parents, coaches, and anyone who wants to know more about the game. On their website, Jr. NBA has released different videos, rules, and tips about basketball and how to practice basketball from home (NBA 2021, r). Moreover, Jr. NBA in Cameroon is also committed to achieving three of the UN's sustainability goals, where they believe they have the most impact: goals number 5, 4, and 16 that focus on gender equality, quality education, and effecting institutions (Brice 2019).

Environmental

The NBA also cares about the environment and has therefore created the initiative "NBA Green". The NBA has partnered with different foundations, such as Green Sports Alliance and Arbor Day Foundation, and different companies, such as South Pole and Sport and Sustainability International, that all seek to ensure that there will be global sustainability and protect the environment for generations to come (NBA 2021, s). NBA Green's mission is "to be more environmentally friendly and will continue to explore ways of reducing its impact on the environment through community outreach programs, generating awareness among fans and greening its operations" (NBA 2021, t). NBA Green's focus is on reduce, reuse, and recycle and has made different tips on how to be "greener" at home and in school. Moreover, the NBA has also encouraged their players to run, take their bicycle, or public transportation to practice than their car. When fans need to be transported to All-Star events, the NBA uses hybrid busses and electric vehicles and encourages people to carpool with friends and family to events and games. The NBA also encourages fans to use appliances and electronics with an Energy Star label, saving people up to \$400 each year. NBA Green also wants people to join them in reducing good waste by donating prepared, unsold food and buy food with a USDA Organic label food as it can help over 25 million Americans who cannot afford food themselves (NBA 2021, u).

Furthermore, 10 out of 29 NBA arenas have received the LEED certification by the U.S. Green Building Council as the NBA wants to "improve the efficiency of NBA arenas, reduce waste, save money and strengthen teams' relationships with their communities" (NBA 2021, v).

Moreover, the NBA has also chosen to use water efficient fixtures to save water and install solar panels in most NBA arenas.

Economics

As analyzed before, the NBA can create profit in their economy. Just as the NBA's revenue has increased in over a decade, so has the NBA's league and team's sponsorship revenue, as for the last ten years, the revenue has increased by approximately 100 thousand each year (Statista 2021, k). As alluded to, the NBA makes it profit and are increasing their revenue from sponsorships, but the NBA also makes a profit from their licensing agreements (Nath 2020).

During the pandemic, the NBA has reported a revenue drop of approximately \$4 billion in the latest season, which corresponds to an overall revenue loss of 40% and an \$800 million loss in gate receipts. As the NBA season was shut down, the NBA also loss over \$400 million in merchandise and sponsorships. Moreover, after Daryl Morey, who is a sports executive for basketball operation in Philadelphia 76'ers, tweeted about Hong Kong and the Chinese people's fight for freedom, the NBA lost more than \$200 million in "net negative impact" because of the tweet, and it has now damaged relationship with China (Wojnarowski and Lowe 2020). The NBA also waits for the outcome of the new season 20/21 if the COVID-19 pandemic still impacts NBA operation as the NBA is one of the most vulnerable sports leagues in the world (Nath 2020).

Semiotic analysis

The first signifier in this campaign is the title "The truth is #BlackLivesMatter". This is being signified as the topic of the NBA's campaign, which is about black lives in the USA. It is being interpreted to being about black lives in the USA as the NBA had used a hashtag before the phrase "BlackLivesMatter" that first started in the USA (Black Lives Matter 2021, b). Moreover, the signifier "truth" in the campaign's title can be interpreted as a topic that the NBA believes people do not know the whole truth about, and the NBA wants to tell this "truth" to everyone.

If analyzing the phrases in this campaign, there are seven different phrases in this campaign that appears between footage of people speaking to others. The first phrase that appears is in the first frame and says, "The truth is racism is everywhere". This can be signified as a statement from the

NBA and that the NBA does not believe that all people know that there is racism everywhere you go. Hence, the NBA might want to inform and make it clear to all people that it is happening all around us. Moreover, this is also another signifier for the topic in this campaign, but it is also an introduction to what people can expect from this campaign.

The second phrase that appears is in frame six, where it says, “The truth is silence is not an option”. This can be signified as a statement from the NBA that they are tired of people in the USA society not speaking up when they see something wrong. The phrase “silence is not an option” has become an iconic phrase to use when speaking of racism, and when searching on Google, you will get 87.700.000 hits in only 0,55 seconds, which also shows how many times this phrase has been used (Google 2021).

The third phrase appears in frame eight and says, “The truth is we need to do better and be better”. This is an obvious signifier for what the NBA believes about people in the USA and how they act and can therefore be interpreted to the NBA wanting people to realize that whatever they are doing concerning the topic of racism is not enough and that the NBA believes that people need to change their behavior towards racism and “do better” than what they already have done. The NBA also wants people to “be better” where the NBA might mean that the People in the USA need to change their mindset around racism, and their current mindset is not correct as racism is still a problem. However, when this phrase appears, it has been split into two where “The truth is we need to do better” appears first, and a few seconds later, the phrase “and be better” appears. This can be interpreted as the NBA might want people to focus on the first phrase with people need to do better as it might be in those areas where the NBA thinks the most change is needed. Moreover, in this phrase, the NBA also uses the personal pronoun “we”, which can be signified as the NBA is also to blame for this social issue with racism, and that the NBA also has to do better and not just the audience for this campaign.

The following two phrases appear in frame 23 and 24 and say, “We will promote equality” and “We will push for change”. This is clear signifiers for what the NBA intends to do forward after this campaign, and in the next two frames, the NBA gives the purpose for why they will do it as they state, “Because the truth is. BLACK LIVES MATTER.”.

As mentioned in my empirical material, there is different footage of people talking to other people and images of people with different signs and t-shirts with different words on them. The NBA has included different footage of what it seems like to be Black Lives Matter protests as one of the signifiers is the campaign's title. However, there are also signifiers, such as the image of Black people raising both of their hands which, as mentioned before, is a symbol for fighting for equality. Another signifier is the image of a Black person with the phrase "I can't breathe" written on their t-shirt, which became a slogan that you associate with the Black Lives Matter movement after the death of Eric Garner in 2014. Another signifier that indicates Black Lives Matter protests in the campaign is when images of people holding signs and raising their hands while wearing t-shirts that say Black Lives Matter. In addition, all that is said in the campaign can be another signifier for the message of this campaign. However, the statements can also be a signifier for what the NBA wants people to think about and act on. For example, the NBA includes a video that seems to be taken with a phone and shows a Black man saying, "Some of that injustice we've been seeing that is not okay". This can be signified as something the NBA wants everyone to think the same, that all the injustice that seems to be taken place in the society is not right and okay at all.

In the campaign, the NBA has also included videos of two white men who, what it looks like to be working for the NBA, says, "Let us be perfectly clear. Black lives matter". These two phrases from people working in the NBA show that the NBA does support and fights for black lives, but these phrases also stress that the NBA wants to make it clear to everyone that "Black Lives Matter" and that it is not just something that the NBA is saying in the campaign, the NBA also means it in real life.

All these signifiers can be signified to the NBA's support for the Black Lives Matter movement and the NBA's fight for justice for all people. With this campaign, the NBA wants to bring awareness and make it clear to all people in the USA that racism is unacceptable and that all people need to do more and not be silent, so racism will never happen again.

Sub conclusion

Based on the analysis, it seems like the NBA tries to maintain and be a sustainable company and positively impact the community. Even though there has been a pandemic for over a year now and the NBA has lost a massive amount of money, then the NBA has still found a way to make a profit. The NBA wants to take good care of their employees and wants them to be safe, and therefore the NBA has created other policies that each employer in the NBA must follow to take good care of

their employees. Moreover, the NBA not only want to do something good for the community and all around the world with their NBA Cares initiative, but the NBA also wants to protect the environment and the world that we live in with their NBA Green program that encourages people to be “greener” and to think about the environment the next time people take a vehicle or buying a new appliance for their homes.

For the campaign, the NBA has an obvious message with it and uses different phrases, footages, and images to support their message, which is that black lives matter and that people in the USA need to do better not only in their actions but also personally and that the NBA wants people to change their mindset.

Similarities and differences in the analysis

This study shows that there are differences and similarities between the two CSR frameworks. A clear difference is that Elkington states that a company must include the environmental aspect as one of their critical determinants of sustainability. On the other hand, Carroll has not an environmental aspect as one of its key determinants but only part of how a company can operate philanthropically. Moreover, Elkington has no legal aspect in his framework, which may imply that all companies must work within the country’s laws and regulations as required. However, there are most similarities between Carroll’s pyramid and Elkington’s TBL when identifying a company’s financial results and identifying how socially responsible a company is.

Furthermore, these two CSR frameworks can give different outcomes as each framework has different ways of thinking about analyzing a company's CSR performance that results in successful sustainability. As also stated in my literature review, Carroll’s pyramid is one of the most utilized CSR frameworks, and I believe that you must choose the framework that you believe will be compatible with your company as both frameworks have more or less the same key determinants for having successful CSR performances. In this study, using these two frameworks also shows a more in-depth analysis of the company’s CSR performances and depicts that all companies seem to have great CSR performances.

The four campaigns also have different approaches to combat racism. Some companies have chosen a very simple and comprehensible approach to communicate their message and stance on racism, such as NIKE, as they have chosen a simple black background and a few different phrases and sentences with different statements. Other companies have chosen to include footage and images to communicate their message, such as the NFL, they have included footage and images that depict

different statements that are from the NFL, for example, the image depicting an NFL player raising his fist, which is signified as the NFL also fighting for justice.

Conclusion

To sum up, each brand uses similar methods to show their support and combat racial injustice throughout their campaigns. Some of these methods involve the use of different phrases and sentences, such as “Be part of the change”, “The truth is silence is not an option” or “Being white in America is not needing to state your life matters”, that depict the brand’s thoughts on the topic and what they believe people should do to create a society free from racial injustice. Moreover, companies also use different footage and images, such as footage from a Black Lives Matter protest, and images that depict different statements relating to the fight for equality and justice for all people. Furthermore, in each campaign, the message is obvious: let’s make society a better place for all people, Black as well as white. The overarching call to action and ultimate goal setting is likewise similar: depict a way for people to be a part of a change that will result in society where all members will feel included and appreciated.

All companies seem to promote the value of sustainability in their business, as all show great performances in all determinants in the two frameworks. For example, all companies have different initiatives to make a positive change and influence their community. All companies also tries influence the community with different initiatives to be better as a society. For example, some of the companies have also committed themselves to achieve some of the UN’s Sustainable Development Goals where they believe, as a company, they have the most significant impact in the world, such as Procter and Gamble achieving goal number 8 about economic growth and number 7 concerning clean energy.

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Appendix

1. NFL campaign

“Football is a microcosm of USA. All races, religions, living, playing, competing side by side. I pray we dedicate ourselves to be the best team we can be. Let's choose to be for one another. To fulfill the promise of one nation. To be part of the solution. Be part of the change. To try harder. Show up. Dive in and stay at it.” (NFL)

2. Procter and Gamble campaign

“Where are we to go? How are we to respond. When we are shown over and over and over that our lives do not matter? Being white in USA is not needing to state your life matters. And when your life matters, you have power. Now is the time to use it. Not being racist is not enough. Now is the time to be anti-racist. Words and feelings are not enough. Now is the time to take action. Read. Listen. Donate. Plan. March. Vote. Speak out. Step in. Step up. How you use your power is a choice. Choose action over observation. Choose progress over perfection. “.

3. Nike campaign

For once, Don't Do It. Don't pretend there's not a problem in USA. Don't turn your back on racism. Don't accept innocent lives being taken from us. Don't make any more excuses. Don't think this doesn't affect you. Don't sit back and be silent. Don't think you can't be part of the change. Let's all be part of the change.

4. NBA campaign

The truth is racism is everywhere. “There's a moment we gotta keep pushing forward”. “We want change, we want justice.” The truth is silence is not an option. The truth is we need to do better and be better. “We take the time to come here and work. We take the time to vote. That's our power”. “Some of that injustice we've been seeing that is not okay”. “What do we want justice, when do we want now” “Let us be perfectly clear” “Black lives matter”. We will promote equality. We will push for change. Because the truth is. **BLACK LIVES MATTER.**