

WHY WARRIORS AT STANDING ROCK WEAR MASKS

“I wear a mask because when we come together collectively to stand for sacred water, to protect sacred sites and sacred lands, my name, my identity, my face don't matter. My body is here, my spirit is here, and my beating heart is here, joining the collective heart on the front of struggle”.

“I wear a mask because it protects my identity”.

“I wear a mask so my family and friends don't get harassed for something I believe in, and what I believe in is to protect our ways of life”.

“I wear a mask so that they don't remember our names or our faces but they remember our actions and the way we live.”

“I wear a mask because this is my war paint”.

“In our history our warriors used to paint their faces. If say, a life was taken during a war, they would paint their faces, that way the spirit of the life that was taken could not follow”.

“I wear a mask for the disappeared and the for-

“If you don't cover yourself, you're doing the cops jobs for them... Our elders instruct us to let the enemy see your face, because then you'll see the fear in their eyes, because of what your represent and the power of your ancestors who are standing with you, because we don't need to cover that up. But then, we recognize that if we are doing targeted actions, that there are certain tactics that are extremely criminalized. We have lessons from various radical movements and liberation fronts where people post actions, typically, will be identified and they will be targeted for arrest.

gotten, so that we remember that we are all one and the same”.

“I wear a mask because it shows that we are all one. There is no hierarchy; each of us are leaders and play an active role in this movement and in supporting one another”.

“You know, for me, it's not about me, I don't want to be the face of anything, I'm not. I'm not above anybody here, I'm not below anybody here, I feel like we are all the same here, you know, that's why I wear a mask”.

“In today's society, if Facebook can do face recognition and tag you and your family and your children for you, than so can the pigs. I wear a mask because I don't want pigs up in my face.”

- *WE ARE ALL ONE WARRIOR- WHY WE WEAR A MASK from the NoDAPL frontlines*

It's not just an individual standing, here we are as a force that looks anonymous but we recognize our power, and that's a power that they don't know how to deal with. Because it's coming to terms with the fact that this land is stolen, that it's paid for with the blood of our ancestors that have been genocided and built on the backs of slaves, so that's what we represent in covering our faces.”

- *WHY WEAR A MASK 101, Red Warrior Camp, Standing Rock*



DISPROVING THE ACCUSATIONS AGAINST THOSE WHO WEAR MASKS

Is the Black Bloc a police tool? From the Arab Spring to the student protests in Montreal to the Plaza occupation movement in Spain to the Occupy movement in the US, people are giving up on pacifism.

Now that more people are participating in protests and social movements and seeing for their own eyes that nonviolence doesn't work, that sitting down and raising your hands doesn't change anything, and that there's no dignity in letting yourself get beaten by cops, those who want to hold us down have come up with a new lie to keep us from getting stronger.

The lie is this: that the Black Bloc is full of police infiltrators, even led by cops, and that those who mask up and riot in the streets are state agents, “provocateurs.”

If people give up on pacifism, what's the next best option, from the perspective of the government?

If they're going to be doing illegal things in the streets, at least they should be unmasked, so they can all be arrested later on the basis of photos and video evidence. They should be suspicious and distrustful of their fellow protestors, especially those who fight back the hardest. And they should be divided from those who have more experience defending themselves from the cops and taking over the streets.

In the last few years, there have been more and more rumors and false accusations that the Black Bloc, or masked anarchists in general, are police provocateurs. These rumors have been spread by Hollywood and the mainstream media, they have gotten fellow protestors arrested, they leave us defenseless when we decide to take the streets, and they ignore a history of struggle in

which people have commonly masked up to protect themselves.

But the fact is, the powerful want us to remain peaceful. They don't need excuses to repress us, they are perfectly capable of inventing excuses or attacking us without any excuse. What was Columbus' excuse for invading the Americas and starting centuries of genocide? What was the excuse of European merchants for kidnapping hundreds of thousands of Africans as slaves? What was the US government's excuse for invading Iraq?

The difference between government encouragement of violence and the use of rioting, sabotage, or self-defense within a social movement is that the government only encourages violence when it controls the situation and can then immediately arrest their targets, or they encourage violence against civilians, like indiscriminate bombings, so that people will be afraid of the social movement.

In all other instances, the government encourages us to be peaceful. What it is most afraid of is that we stop being obedient and passive en masse.

Sometimes, it is necessary to go against what the mainstream considers “acceptable”, to break the law in order to do the right thing. Those who mask up and smash corporate property or riot in the streets have decided that the system needs to be abolished, that the laws are oppressive, or that those who make the laws are responsible for a serious and urgent problem, whether that's the destruction of our planet, the hundreds of thousands of home foreclosures, murders carried out every day by police with impunity, etc.

taken from violentanarchists.wordpress.com

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