13th movie

by Kkkkkk Ffffffff

Submission date: 20-Oct-2021 10:12PM (UTC-0400)
Submission ID: 1679671880
File name: research.docx (22.9K)
Word count: 2354
Character count: 12668

13th Documentary

Name

Institutional Affiliation

Instructor

Course Title

Date

13th Documentary

Ava DuVernay directed the documentary 13th. She titled the documentary following the thirteenth constitutional amendment that was meant to free slaves and prohibit slavery in the United States. According to the documentary, the American justice system is considered unfair as it is driven by racism. This has been the experience since the days of slavery, and many African Americans have faced the roughness of American justice through immense incarceration and punishment for crimes. Their incrimination rate is extremely high compared to that of their counterparts, the whites who faced fairer judgment for similar offences. From the documentary, in 2014, more than 2 million U.S citizens were incarcerated, and of those, 40% were African American men (Terry, 2017). The main arguments raised in Ava DuVernay's documentary film include African Americans being seen as criminals, police brutality, mass incarceration, racism, and dehumanization of the African Americans in the U.S.

African Americans have been seen as criminals since the slavery period. This is one of the arguments depicted by the film. Besides being considered criminals, the African Americans were seen as drug peddlers, rapists and murders because of their skin colour. A black person on the streets has for a long time been perceived to be harmful and a potential threat to society. The film provides the case of Trayvon Martin, 17 years old teenager shot by someone as he was walking in his family's neighborhood. The incident happened because he looked like he was not up to any good.

Mass incarceration in the United States is highly exposed in the film. At the beginning of the film, Ava DuVernay provides statistics showing that the United States is considered home to 5% of the world's population. However, approximately 25% of the world's prisoners are in this nation (Twidell, 2017). It adds to explain that over half of the prisoners' population comprises African Americans. Many African Americans in U.S prisons are likely not to have committed any crime to be incarcerated. African Americans have been facing longer sentences as they would rather be in jail than on the streets.

The dehumanization of African Americans has been a big issue in the United States since the time of slavery. The whites had owned the blacks, made them their slaves, and denied them their rights. They were under the rule of their masters or mistresses without questioning whatsoever. They could not be allowed to cast votes and got punished for disobedience or anything their masters considered wrong (Terry, 2017). African American women were beaten and raped by their masters. Slavery had turned the African Americans into objects the White people used as they pleased, and this has been the experience with discrimination and segregation case towards the blacks.

Police brutality has been a common experience in the U.S. During the slavery times, states with legal slavery did have slave patrols. The patrols focused on enforcing discipline and state laws and policies to African American slaves. They played the role of capturing and returning fugitive slaves, terrorizing them, and quashing slave rebellions. This has continued to today's life, with police terrorizing the African Americans and beating them up because they are seen as criminals. According to the film, being black is a ticket to getting harassed by the police, especially along the streets in the United States.

Racism is another thing being addressed in the documentary. Racism carries almost everything as being an African America is an identity associated with slavery in the U.S. Slaves had no rights to education, health, and good life compared to their White counterparts. They faced segregation and discrimination, which has been a dominating issue for many years forcing the African Americans to organize civil wars fighting for their rights (Juarez, 2018). Racial discrimination has made it impossible for many African Americans to get quality education, healthcare, jobs, and life. That is why Ava DuVernay's documentary film is about setting African Americans free and giving them back their rights like American citizens.

It was unfortunate that the U.S. criminal justice has been perceived as criminals, drug peddlers, and murders. According to statistics, more African Americans are arrested for being engaged in drug abuse than white Americans. For example, in 2015, the African Americans arrested in possession of marijuana were 3.7 times the whites' population (Twidell, 2017). This means that the law does not have not been treating the black and whites equally by favoring the whites and considering the blacks as lesser beings and obviously criminals. This has led to the number of African Americans going to jail for crime cases being extremely high.

The African American population imprisoned is five times that of the White Americans and approximately twice that of the Hispanic-Americans. The majority of the African Americans have been facing imprisonment for crimes they never did. If not that, they face a prolonged imprisonment term compared to their white counterparts (Twidell, 2017). Take the example of Kalief Browder, a guy who was in prison for three years after being convicted for a crime he did not commit. Eventually, he committed suicide after completing his jail term. I consider the criminal justice to be unfair to people of color as it is seen to operate when more black people are imprisoned.

For a long time, being an African American in the United States has been a problem. Dehumanization has affected this population in a big way, making them live a life of humiliation. The reason is, the law has not been favoring the lives and rights of American citizens. It has been an unfortunate incident that the "black lives matters" movement has forced changes upon the constitution and laws (Terry, 2017). However, it could not be easy considering that most of the decisions were made by whites who had been in power. Therefore, the criminal justice system has been delivering judgments based on racial grounds.

Peace and order is the role of the police. The police department needs to ensure every citizen is safe and protected. But, for decades, the police department has been treating African Americans harshly, describing themselves as the law. Most blacks have died at the hands of the police either during protests and demonstrations. Others have been killed along the streets, and no actions taken against the officers (Juarez, 2018). In other instances, some African Americans have been arrested and alleged to commit a crime and jailed. The law has not been protecting the African American populations by all means.

Racial discrimination is the root of the terrible experiences the African Americans have been facing on American soil, it seems that the law has been against them. But, I believe those in power make the law. Considering that the majority are whites, the laws will be in their favor but not for other ethnic groups. This has made it difficult for African Americans to fight racial discrimination and segregation in different sectors. However, I believe, once America unites and becomes one, realizing even black lives matter, racism will be considered a crime.

The Canary Effect (2006)

The “Canary Effect” examines the effects of policies by the United States government on the Native Americans. The 2006 documentary directed by Robin Davey and Yellow Thunder offers a horrifying perspective on the abuses meted against Native Americans. From the documentary, Native Americans have been abused both in the past and in the present.

One of the arguments from the documentary is that Christopher Columbus is not an American hero; rather, he is to be considered a man who started the desecration of the Native American people. While he is referred to by many as the man who discovered America, Christopher Columbus' arrival meant a lot to the indigenous people of America. The arrival of Columbus saw a drastic decrease in the population of the Native Americans. When he arrived, the population of Native Americans was around 12-15 million. In the 1890s, the population had reduced to under 250,000 people. Around 98% of the population was gone. This is another argument from the film; that the population of Native Americans has reduced drastically to this age. The sudden decrease in the population of Native Americans tainted the image of Christopher Columbus from being a hero to a villain. Although Americans celebrate Columbus Day every 10th October to commemorate the day the Italian explorer first set foot in the Americas, this day is a dark day for the Native Americans. The movie depicts the arrival of this Italian explorer as the beginning of the troubles facing Native Americans to date. Native Americans have lost their land, enslaved, slaughtered, children and women raped, their resources plundered and looted. This documentary follows the footsteps of many philosophers who have opined that America's founding fathers Like Jefferson and Hamilton, should not be considered American heroes. For example, Howard Zinn, in his book "A People's History of the United States", points out the selfishness of the Founding Fathers, which makes him think they should not be celebrated as heroes.

Another argument is that the arrival of Colonialists negatively affected the Native Americans. The colonialists forced the Native Americans to move from their land from their original settlements. They were finally pushed to reservations which disturbed and changed their way of life and culture. During this migration and transition process, many Native Americans die due to diseases, hunger, cold, and fatigue when travelling. Diseases included smallpox, influenza and syphilis, which were previously unknown to the Native Americans. Furthermore, the colonialists demanded assimilation.

The third argument is that colonialists had a superiority complex feeling. They thought their culture was superior and the best and thus wanted to assimilate the Native Americans. Therefore, the movie depicts the colonialists as being superior to the Native Americans. The colonialists had ethnocentrism of color. The colonialists converted the Native American's ways of life, including converting them to Christians and western education.

Another perspective from the movie is that the United States is guilty of perpetrating genocide against its people. The directors take the perspective that the US government has deliberately exterminated its indigenous people, which amounts to genocide. The country is thus guilty of its actions going by its attitude and treatment of its indigenous people over the past 300 years. There is footage detailing the economic marginalization of American Indians and the

neglect of Indian reservations from the film. There is brutalization and segregation of Native Americans in schools. There are government-sanctioned killings, and sterilization of women and children forced into identity-cleansing boarding schools amounts to genocide. Furthermore, inadequate funding of reservations has demoralized the Native Americans. Reservations still rank at the bottom of the nation in suicide rates, the quality of life, depression and drug abuse.

Lastly, the film gives the perspective of how the media downplays the harassment and discrimination of Native Americans. This is depicted when a Columbine-style school shooting went virtually unnoticed by the media. Media can play an essential role in bringing to light the plight that Native Americans undergo today. However, these plights have been downplayed, and the media does not expose them. The Native Americans continue to suffer in silence as the media continues to downplay it.

The first argument has made me believe that colonial laws were meant to humiliate the Indigenous communities. These laws are not fair to the Native Americans. Celebrating a man who led to the population decrease of Native Americans is not fair to these people. The nation should consider scrapping this holiday that has been celebrated since 1937. I believe the Native Americans feel bad about this day when the rest of the country is celebrating it. In my view, Christopher Columbus should not be celebrated by Americans because of the devastating effect that he brought to the natives, effects that are still evident today. Their population continues to shrink day by day.

The second argument has changed my perspective to believe that colonial laws and policies were unfair to the indigenous people. The US government has not enacted laws that protect the interests of the natives. The Native Americans continue to suffer in the full glare of the government. The colonial laws were meant to humiliate and discriminate against the natives. Forcing Native Americans from their ancestral land was brutal and uncouth. Many of them died because of hunger and diseases.

From the third argument, I learned that the policies do not promote equality; rather, they encourage colonialists to continue humiliating the indigenous people. The colonialists have a superiority complex over the natives. The polices saw the colonialists feel more powerful and civilized than the natives. This plays out today as most colonialists' ways of life have been incorporated into American culture. For example, many Americans followed Christianity which the Colonialists brought.

The fourth argument shows that the American government does not have policies to protect its indigenous people. The country perpetrates Native American genocide by not protecting this population. The government has actually taken deliberate measures to exterminate its indigenous people. This means that the colonial laws are not fair; instead, they are discriminatory. These people lead a low quality of life and suffer from depression because they are marginalized and neglected.

The last argument, just like the others, has made me believe that the colonial laws and policies are discriminatory towards the Native Americans. When white people are maltreated in any circumstance, the issue blows out of proportion courtesy of the media. However, native Americans suffer every day, but none of their cases comes into the limelight. This means the laws are not applied fairly.

References

Juarez, S. E. (2018). The Power of the Documentary: Examining the Effectiveness of Ava DuVernay's 13th. *Cinesthesia*, *8*(1), 2.

Lopez-Littleton, V., & Woodley, A. (2018). Movie Review of 13th by Ava Duvernay: Administrative Evil and the Prison Industrial Complex. *Public Integrity*, *20*(4), 415-418.

Terry, E. (2017). Review of 13th: Narratives of the Current United States. *Tapestries: Interwoven voices of local and global identities*, *6*(1), 20.

Twidell, T. (2017). 13th: Ava Duvernay's Stark Exploration of the Mass Incarceration Crisis Facing Black Men. *Tapestries: Interwoven voices of local and global identities*, *6*(1), 21.

13th movie

ORIGINALITY REPORT

3%	2%	1%	1%
SIMILARITY INDEX	INTERNET SOURCES	PUBLICATIONS	STUDENT PAPERS

PRIMARY SOURCES

1	Submitted to University of Essex Student Paper	1%
2	tribecafilm.com Internet Source	1%
3	scholarworks.gvsu.edu Internet Source	<1%
4	Submitted to CSU, Long Beach Student Paper	<1%
5	ushap201516.blogspot.com Internet Source	<1%

Exclude quotes	On	Exclude matches	Off
Exclude bibliography	On		