

Critical Evaluation Of The Depictions Of Human Sexuality In The Movies

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Human sexuality plays a crucial role in an individual's life. Despite one's gender, age, ethnicity, and race, human sexuality is an important part of how people carry on with their lives. Over the decades, frequent research has been carried out to assess human sexuality and the various factors that are involved with it. It can be defined as a way through which people experience and express themselves in sexual terms.

Numerous behaviors constitute human sexuality, such as biological, emotional, social, spiritual, and erotic feelings. Media has been an active participant in highlighting different social issues that have been prevalent in the modern world (Kalai). Issues like rape, kidnapping for ransom, drug trafficking, organ trade, and so on and so forth have been depicted in movies over the years. The motion picture plays a significant role in spreading awareness; however, most often, the depiction is not accurate and results in the stigmatization of the issues, especially issues like sex trafficking, which will be discussed in this paper.

The movie to be analyzed for this paper is "Taken," which came out in 2008 and is a thriller film. The movie focuses on a character named Bryan Mills, who is an ex-CIA agent. His daughter Kim travels Paris with her friend, however, upon reaching her destination, she and her friend are kidnapped. Before she is kidnapped, Kim calls her father, notifying him of the people who broke into her apartment and are dragging her friend away. As it turns out, both Kim and her friend have been kidnapped by the Albanian sex traffickers. Throughout the movie, Bryan traces the people who hurt his daughter and ultimately finds them all, bringing an end to the mafia. It is a fact that movies love depicting a good guy with superhuman strength. While to most of the reviewers, the movie seems to be throwing light on the issue of human trafficking. However, it should be noted that the motion picture does not discuss the mentioned topic accurately. Most of the movie is based on depicting Bryan as a man with extraordinary skills. Bryan's profession fits the picture perfectly, as he has the training that allows him to track the mafia's every move and reach Kim. From the moment Kim is kidnapped, Bryan's tone and attitude are portrayed as that of a man who will rid the place of its evil. Being a CIA agent, Bryan knows powerful people who help him on his journey throughout the movie. The aspect of male sexuality has been accurately portrayed in this movie as Bryan is shown to be a man "with a set of particular skills" that help him hunt down bad people.

However, it is important to note that while the movie does take the initiative in bringing forth an important issue, its depiction has been inaccurately created, creating misconceptions among the viewers (Baker). In addition to this, there is a flaw in the movie, which is the stereotypical depiction of the other race that has been shown to be involved in sex trafficking. The mafia belongs to Albanians

who are actively involved in abducting women and girls for prostitution. The victim is always shown to be a white teen or adult female, while the villain is a non-white male (Baker). It should be noted that sex traffickers do not only kidnap white females and sell them into prostitution, rather there is a vast majority of non-white female victims who suffer the same fate (Baker). Focusing on white victims only leads to overlooking the people of color who are also faced with the same issue, and their vulnerability is ignored. The producers should keep in mind that when a motion picture gives an inaccurate depiction of human sexuality, it results in creating negative attitudes in people and misinforms them about sexuality (Baker). This, in turn, leads people to be vulnerable to neglecting and understanding their needs while being critical of other people around them. Cinematic portrayals should consider the implications of such a depiction where one race is prioritized over the other and in which people of color are only shown with negative connotations.

Aside from this, the perpetrators of sex trafficking are people of color, which creates a stereotypical image of the other races and makes the viewers believe that non-white people are the reason behind such a social evil (Todres). However, that is not the case, as white people cannot be considered innocent, as surveys show that sex trafficking is carried out by Americans as well. The United States plays an active role when it comes to importing and exploiting immigrants as well as U.S. citizens in the domain of global sex trafficking (Todres). The depiction of white victims brainwashes the white audience into believing that the onslaught of this evil has been done by people of color. In addition to this, the producers of movies believe that by portraying a white female as the victim, they will get more viewers in the United States, and the ratings will increase (Todres). While the main purpose of depicting sex trafficking is neglected, the audience instead further spreads the stereotypes that non-whites are to be blamed for the ongoing issue of sex trafficking in the United States. Such a depiction also makes the audience believe that only a select few people can become victims while others are not vulnerable (Todres). A cultural stereotype is created by using people of color as perpetrators of sex trafficking while the attention is moved away from the American society that is also involved in this issue.

The current movie should shift its focus from depicting people of color as the only perpetrators and instead highlight the fact that these kinds of evils have been prevalent in American society for years now and have been carried out by both white males and females. To show one race as villainous and the other as the savior leaves space for stereotypes to arise, which in turn hinders the possibility of solutions and instead instigates the audience to blame the minority for being the harbingers of such a social evil as sex trafficking. Aside from this, the depiction of the female as being the only victim of abduction for the sake of prostitution is inaccurate, as young boys also suffer the same fate. The misconception that only white female girls and women are vulnerable to such an issue brainwashes the audience into believing that people of color do not go through the same issue. In addition, white males should also be used for the part of villains because they, too, are involved in abducting women and selling them into prostitution. Making white males saviors creates a misconception that they should be left alone while they are a major contributor to sex trafficking.

From the above discussion, it becomes evident that while the depiction of sex trafficking is being

widely shown in motion pictures, the main purpose is neglected, and stereotypes are created instead. Society becomes involved in the blame game where immigrants and people of color are blamed for being the inducers of a social evil such as human trafficking. Cinematic pictures should be accurate in their depictions of social evils so that people are made aware, and the problem is sought out. Though it might not be the intention of the producers to mislead the audience, inaccurate portrayal becomes a source of stigmatization and misconceptions that wrongly accuse the minority instead of making the majority aware of their actions. However, when the same issues are presented with accurate information, then it helps in correcting the fears that have been created by few people, and it also helps in eradicating the myths and stereotypes that the majority has about the diversity that is present in the current society such as the depiction of sex traffickers in the movie 'Taken' in which the villains are shown as non-white characters and the hero who is shown to be a white male.

Works Cited

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