

Miss Representation Documentary Analysis

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The documentary *Miss Representation* was released in 2011 and directed by Jennifer Siebel Newsom. The central theme of the documentary is based on the system of patriarchy in which a male person dominates the family and is considered the head of the family. In this system, women are not allowed to make decisions for the family and are excluded from the decision-making process. The theme of the documentary also includes the negative representation of media about women that exists in societies from the 20th century.

The movie portrayed several facts, including that women in the world are facing gender biases over decades, and in the media, women are used as hypersexualized people. The media is not only representing the images of women negatively but also showing the demeaning images of women that are faced by women and young girls in the media today. The documentary also highlights the media pattern in which it uses women as objects, mainly focusing on their bodies. The media representation of women increases women's anxieties regarding their physical structure. The women who are interviewed in the movie described that the media wants women as sex objects, and for the media, women are objects to attract male viewers.

The documentary also depicted that women are also humiliated by other women. In the perceptions of the women, other women are bitchy, catty, and also manipulated. Mostly, women do not trust other women in most societies of the world. The concept of patriarchy is targeted in the movie and reflects how it positively impacts men and negatively impacts women. In most societies, boys are socialized with the concept that being a man means being in power and the one who can control the women. This behaviour is not only genetic but also learned behaviour in society. The message of the movie, in the end, is that women need to empower themselves as well as encourage other women so that the patriarchal system can be torn down from societies in the world (*Miss Representation*, 2011).

Direct Link to Documentary to Course Concept

Media is an important part of any society, and in the modern world today, it plays a vital role in developing social norms. The different forms of media help society develop its behavioural patterns through advertisements, films, talk shows, documentaries, and other elements. Gender roles are linked with the media, and the media is perpetuating their roles. In the United States of America, more than 90 per cent of American families own TV (Lantagne, 2014). Almost every advertisement shows women available and usually represents their body structure to promote the products. This shows that women's representation matters when it comes to work in media, as their perfect bodies are the reason behind their employment. It leads to dissatisfaction among women who do not have perfect bodies and want to join the media. In the United States, more than 53 per cent of 13-year-old

girls are not satisfied with their bodies because they are attracted towards the bodies of women who are shown in TV commercials. Also, in the United States, almost two-thirds of women and girls are suffering from eating disorders with the fact that they want a perfect shape of their body that leads them towards starvation.

The other aspect that is targeted in the movie is that the patriarchal system is spread around the world in societies in which people consider men as the dominant male part of the family system (Napikoski & Lewis, 2017). The dominant part is linked to power, and it leads towards the concept of privilege. In the patriarchal system, the power is linked with the man and women are excluded from the decision-making processes. In these societies, men are the heads of families, leaders of social groups, employers at the workplaces, and politicians in the government systems. These societies are the ones that rule most of the world but need attention to empower the rules of women as they should also be involved in the decision-making process and should be given a chance to work equally with men.

Personal Reflection on the Documentary

The documentary is based on several ideas that persist in most world societies today regarding the role of women. Media is no doubt using women to attract male viewers. Also, the representation of women is the most important factor in the media today. Women who particularly want to join the media need a perfect body and a glamorous look so that viewers can be attracted to their bodies. It is a true factor, and in my opinion, the women who are a part of the world media mostly have the perfect shape and glamorous look. This will create issues for the ones who are viewing these women, such as teenage girls and adult women, who start considering that they should have a body like the one they had seen in the advertisements. It will lead to distress if they do not have the perfect body, and in the case of teenage girls, they start strict dieting procedures so that they can have a body like the girls shown in the advertisements. Moreover, the patriarchal system should be replaced by a system in which women have equal rights, and the power pattern should be divided into men and women equally.

References

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