

William Wilberforce's Attempt To Abolish Slavery

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Biographical dramas are always considered somewhat of a niche genre. The reason for this is that despite the minuscule cost of the whole production and good reviews, these movies are not able to gain massive box office figures (Waterton & Wilson, 2009). There are certain movies though that have the ability to capture the imagination of people and how the classical genre is supposed to be followed. One of these movies is *Amazing Grace*. It is a British American drama that Michael Apted directed and talks about the campaign (Murray & Murray, 2002). The campaign ought to have a great influence on the institution of slavery and the way overall transformation in society is talked about (Waterton & Wilson, 2009). The campaign was led by William Wilberforce, who was responsible for ensuring that anti-slave legislation was passed in the British parliament (Murray & Murray, 2002). This paper will talk about how this movie and the whole hymn depict the subject of the transformation and why the movement carried out by William Wilberforce is considered an important milestone in anti-slavery (Murray & Murray, 2002).

Transformation And How It Is Tackled In The Movie

Going through the movie, one might wonder what the closeness between the Church and the way the slave industry was operated at that point in time. It can be seen that both these institutions were rather connected to each other (Murray & Murray, 2002). The movie through its narrative provides many instances where one can see how the Church has legalized the institution of slavery (Murray & Murray, 2002). As per the Church at that point time, slavery was something that was considered right at that point of time. During the course of the 1500s, it was publicly stated by the Church and its representatives that it is moral slavery that is not acceptable and denounced at every level (Murray & Murray, 2002).

Transformation By William Wilberforce And How He Stood Up To Slavery

It all started when Wilberforce went through a major change in his life, he witnessed that even though the church was taking a stand on populist decisions, there were a lot of things that needed to be done to make sure that the church looked after the immoral activities that are quite popular in that point of time (Waterton & Wilson, 2009). Slavery was one of them (Murray & Murray, 2002). It was more or less implied that the Church had in some ways backed the notion of slavery (Murray & Murray, 2002). Due to this conviction, and meeting with their mentor, John Newton, he thought that slavery was

something that could not be carried out for a long period of time, and there was something that needed to be done to make sure that this institution was abolished or controlled in certain ways (Murray & Murray, 2002). The role of John Newton in the whole transformation cannot be ignored as he was the one who introduced William Wilberforce to understand how this whole ordeal was working at that point in time and what some of the things that needed to be done to make sure that the element of control can be brought towards the institution of the slavery (Murray & Murray, 2002).

Effects of William's Belief on His Public Profile and Life

As is the case with any major societal change, whenever some change is made, there is always going to be the likelihood that people will oppose it. The same thing was witnessed in the case when William Wilberforce talked about how slavery must be challenged. The upper class, who was going to be affected the most after the whole ordeal, did not like the whole thing (Austen & Smith, 1969). As a matter of fact, in the upper circles of London, William Wilberforce and his comrades were being referred to as "Saints". On the other hand, his popularity among the masses increased with time. Many causes were working on and championed at that point in time, but his relevant interest in controlling slavery was something that brought him into prominence (Austen & Smith, 1969). He was making sure that he worked tirelessly but the support that he initially got in his career from the upper strata of society was missing at that point of time (Austen & Smith, 1969).

Impact of His Comrades on the Movement

The role of John Newton in making sure that this cause can be championed cannot be ignored. As a matter of fact, during the movie, he comes across as the guiding council and advises the more impulsive and charged-up William Wilberforce (Waterton & Wilson, 2009). There were some other comrades as well who were making sure that William Wilberforce was not alone during the course of this whole struggle. One of his comrades. Thomas Clarkson was influential when it came to gaining further insight into how this whole institution of slavery used to work (Austen & Smith, 1969). The first time both these men met was when he made him read a copy of Essay on Slavery. As soon as he read the essay and understood the background and the context of the whole issue, he worked towards ensuring that the collaboration turned into a lifelong friendship among both these men (Austen & Smith, 1969). Clarkson is always referred to as the person who turned Williamson into a force to be reckoned with as he gave him an ideological basis upon which he could work at a greater level. In the long run, it was a fruitful meeting between both people (Austen & Smith, 1969).

Setback in the Journey

There are many instances during the course of the movie where it can be seen that Williams seems to have lost his heart (Waterton & Wilson, 2009). This is due to the fact that after repeated failures for many years, he was quite exhausted, to say the least (Waterton & Wilson, 2009). His frustration stemmed from the fact that he could not control the lingering sense of injustice witnessed in society (Waterton & Wilson, 2009). Thus, he became frustrated with time and he left the whole thing midway (Waterton & Wilson, 2009). At the same time, the government was unwilling to change its stance (Waterton & Wilson, 2009). He was under the impression that all of his [life's work](#) had been destroyed (Austen & Smith, 1969). The trauma and depression for him were so much that he became physically exhausted as well. He suffered from colitis and due to that, he became addicted to laudanum as well (Austen & Smith, 1969). The usage of laudanum was prescribed to him due to the fact that he was suffering from chronic pain. During this time, he needed someone for emotional support (Austen & Smith, 1969). His friend Barbara was of great help to him during the whole time period. She became his emotional support and thus he could recover himself (Austen & Smith, 1969).

Overcoming Odds to Defeat Slavery

After his children, he became motivated and started working towards success again. The method that he used this time around was a bit different in manner. Rather than relying on the traditional methods, he opted for the backdoor method (Waterton & Wilson, 2009). The reason he opted for the backdoor method was to make sure that the only way the slave trade could have been controlled to an extent was to make sure that the active but innocuous legislation was carried out (Waterton et al. 2010). Aided by his old comrades Thornton and Clarkson, he was able to reintroduce the bill (Waterton & Wilson, 2009). The main point of the bill was to make sure that control should be brought towards the slave trade. In 1807, he was able to get the bill passed (Wilberforce & Wilberforce, 1839). With the approval of that Bill, it was finally decided that the slave trade that was supposedly carried out in Britain for a very long time would be aborted forever (Austen & Smith, 1969).

Conclusion

One gets to see two key themes in the movie (Wilberforce & Wilberforce, 1839). The first theme is how the overall transformation needs to be brought into society to make sure that old age practices can be abolished (Austen & Smith, 1969). The other thing that it introduced was the fact that determination, single-mindedness, and surrounding yourself with those who share the same agenda go a long way in making sure that people can get rid of their old-age customers. The way William Wilberforce fought slavery was rather inspirational, to say the least, and brought about huge societal change (Austen & Smith, 1969).

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