White supremacy stereotype in feature films

Sociology

White Supremacy Stereotype in Feature Films

The white race is portrayed in cinema as superior to all other races. This superiority of the white people is apparent in the different genre of films. The concept white race is socially constructed (since many theorists say that race does not exists) in order perpetuate the idea of superiority of the white people. In the aspect of beauty, white skin or complexion is often promoted as the ideal beauty.

Whiteness of the skin is fabricated in films by the application of thick make-up causing the actress to sweat profusely and feel uncomfortable (Performing Whiteness 4). The white beauty is accentuated by wearing of white dress by the main female character as in the movie King Kong (1993), and also by the expert manipulation of lighting (Performing Whiteness 8). Projection of whiteness as the ideal beauty has influenced other non-white cultural groups that many Asians, both male and female, willingly submit themselves to cosmetic doctors in an attempt to make their skin whiter. No less than the pop music icon Michael Jackson underwent a series of procedures to transform his physical looks into the ideal " white beauty" promoted by the white race. Jackson's facial features and nose were altered to approximate those of the white people.

The white people are also stereotyped as the savior of humanity, whether in science fiction or fantasy films. The films Spiderman or Superman series portray the white American as the hero to save mankind from the malicious and evil elements on earth and from other planets. In movies that show colonization of other lands, it is insinuated that they colonize the black or colored people to uplift their plight or modernize their " primitive" way of life. The way of life of the white race is far superior to other races. Colonization

then is justified as a tool to educate the colonized people and control them in the end. It is also portrayed that the lifestyle of the upper class white people is the proper norm (Johnson and Roediger 209 cited in Brayton 63). This notion has been inculcated upon the minds of many people from other countries who made it their quest to pursue the American dream and lifestyle as seen in movies.

The supremacy of the white race has been continually projected in the movies, either in the aspect of ideal beauty, appropriate way of life, or as savior of humanity. This has affected the consumer habits of people from other countries. They would buy whitening creams and medications to make their skin whiter just like the white actresses or actors they see in movies. It is ironic that many white people would expose their skin in long hours under the sun to get a tan skin. Also, many white people do not have the white complexion as portrayed in movies since the projected image on the screen is already masked by make-up, lighting and other cinematic effects.

The stereotype of the white race being show in movies does not reflect the totality of physical characteristics or social traits of the white people. But the strong influence of feature films affect the mindset of the many people (especially the non-white) to the point that they emulate the white lifestyle. They even try to speak in the same way the white people speak in order to appear sophisticated or be categorized as belonging to the group. Stereotyping of the white race in movies has indeed affected the minds and way of life of many people, and it has also influenced their values and beliefs.

Works Cited

Brayton S. " Malibu's Most Undercover Guru": Deconstructing Race thru a

Comical Pedagogy of Whiteness. TOPIA 14, 57-72. n. d. 10 June 2011. .

Performing Whiteness. n. d. 10 June 2011. .