

Disability film essay

[Health & Medicine](#), [Disability](#)



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Introduction

Wald, J. & Negulesco, J. (1948). Johnny Belinda. {Motion Picture] United States, Warner Brothers.

The movie that I will discuss about in my essay is entitled, “ Jonny Belinda.”

The movie director was Jean Negulesco and Jerry Wald produced it. Jonny Belinda was produced in September 14, 1948. The screenplay writers of the movie are Allan Vincent and Irma von cube. The movie is based on a play written by an American, Elmer Harris. The movie is in the category of American drama film . The writer had lived long in Prince Edward Island where he came across the story of a deaf woman, Lydia Dingwell, who was a rape victim and later she dies in poverty. Dr. Robert Richardson senses the innate intelligence of Lydia and decides to teach her sign language and lip writing (Wald & Negulesco, 1948).

Identification of the Disability Character

The disability character in the movie is Lydia Dingwell. The woman is suffering from deafness and at the same time she cannot communicate, she is deaf and dumb. The woman is a subject of skepticism and she offers great criticism from her own family members. The strength of the disability character is that she steps firm to ignore the resistance that comes from her father and aunt. She decides to allow Dr. Richardson to teach her the ways to fix her problems (NY Times, 2008). The woman has another strength in that she learns on how to communicate within a short while and this marks the start of a wonderful and new life. This makes the Doctor to fall in love with her.

Role of the disability character

The disability character role is that she is an impact character. This means she significantly alters the protagonist course of action. She brings out the themes of transformation and normalization to light, as they are very clear in the movie. The doctor is the protagonist in the movie and alteration in his course of action starts when he fall in love with Lydia, the deaf woman. The doctor decides to live with her in the same house at this time when she was fluent in communication and she could use the sign language perfectly (Harris, 1967). A controversial course of action presents itself after the woman is attacked when at the doctors' home and raped by Locky McCormick. The film dramatizes how the rumors and lies spread accusing the Doctor as the one behind the pregnancy that develops after the woman is raped. This is another example that explains how the disability character alters the Doctor's course of action as the local gossips blames him and it

reaches an extent where it is difficult for him to earn a living within the society.

Message of the Film

In my opinion, the film is bringing out two major messages. First, the movie is enlightening the society that, Disability is not inability. This is because Lydia father and her aunt offered resistance to her since she was deaf-mute and they believed that she tainted the image of the family. Despite much criticism, Dr. Richardson senses that the woman was very intelligent and after teaching her both the sign language and lip reading, she quickly adapts and she can communicate freely. This teaches that it is not good to look down upon the disabled and it is always important to accept them in the society and respect their rights and freedom (Vincent & Cube 2004).

Secondly, the film sends out a message that rapes do not mean the end of life. After Locky rapes Lydia, she gets pregnant. After the terrible incidence, she is traumatized in a way that she cannot disclose it to her family members. The woman finally accepts the bitter truth that she was raped after realizing that she will give birth to a kid. She decides to put things clear by exposing the rape incidence to her husband and this acts as evidence in a court of law and it ensures that she is set free.

Use of Disability

Lydia Dingwell, the disability character, is very vital in promoting and communicating the message that disability is not inability; the character also plays a major role in giving hope to raped victims that there is always a second chance in life and the rape action should not mean the end of life

(Thomas & Arquette, 1984).

The actions and events revolving around the disabled character shows that a disabled person is not a burden to the society as long as he or she is accepted and given a chance to live happily amongst people. This is clearly seen when the woman decides to protect her family as well as her property by taking out a gun and shoots McCormick who had pushed her husband down a cliff to the sea. After she is arrested for murder, she wins the case since she confesses that she did that as a form of defense mechanism towards his family and property. The woman loves her child despite that he is a result of rape.

References

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