

An unfair determination essay

Environment, Air



Throughout the 2002 drama, *The Emperor's Club*, director Michael Hoffman and producer Andrew Carech created a plot involving cheating, rebellion, unfairness and in some cases determination which unfolds continuously during the sequence of the movie. Taking place in a very high-class and respected school for boys, known as St. Benedict's Academy, the movie contained numerous surprising and rather disturbing events.

The sophisticated and well mannered atmosphere of the school was brought to the viewer's attention by the introduction of the main character, the teacher, Mr. Hundert. He loved his job and had dedicated every moment of his life to shaping the character of the young men who came under his influence" (Brussat). The movie went on to introduce the Headmaster and further develop the " leader shaping" ambiance of the school.

With the introduction of Sedgewick Bell's first appearance in Mr. Hundert's class room, the acts of cheating and rebellion began to take place. Hoffman shaped the character of Bell to stand out and make an obvious " trouble-making" appearance. From the beginning of Bell's arrival, Mr. Hundert's authority and patience were forcefully tested.

As the plot progressed and Seduich's stay became longer, the other boys who were at one point in time well-behaved and very obedient learners, began to follow in Sedgewick's footsteps. Hoffman continued to slowly reveal Bell's rebellious influence on the others. They began to do as Sedgewick had done, breaking school rules and destroying property. " The boy immediately shows his disdain for Hundert's seriousness about his subject. He becomes the instigator of many pranks on campus and the ringleader of a secret

meeting with some students at a nearby private girl's school. However, further in the movie, a transformation took part in both Mr. Hundert and Sedgewick Bell.

After meeting with Sedgewick's father, Mr. Hundert finally gained control over Sedgewick's rebellious attitude. Bell became one of the top students in Mr. Hundert's class, and began to take doing well in school more seriously. However, Hoffman made it predictable to the viewers what would happen next with the single quote made during the narration by Mr. Hundert at the beginning of the movie, "A man's character is his fate" (Armstrong).

Therefore, with the progress of Sedgewick Bell in his studies, came an expected downfall, bringing him back the very point at which he started from. "We have seen it all before in one form or another, but director Hoffman, with great help from Kevin Kline, makes up care about this latest reincarnation of the world's greatest teacher." (Allen) It was in the climax of the movie, the school's competition Mr. Julius Caesar, that Hoffman seemed to completely reverse the character of Mr. Hundert, bringing out the characteristics of unfairness, cheating, and determination in the movie. During the transformation of Sedgewick Bell, Mr.

Hundert began to gain favoritism towards him. Therefore, when it came time to choose the top three candidates for the school competition, Mr. Julius Caesar, Hundert cheated and unfairly gave Sedgewick the third spot by giving him an A on his test, denying Martin Blythe a chance to be in the competition (Brussat). Hoffman left the viewers in shock of the decision of Mr.

Hundert, and asking why. Hoffman's critic Ross Anthony states " Faced with the challenge of grading a noble effort and wanting to cheer it on as Mr. Hundert, I'm afraid my deliberation between an ' A-'; and a ' B+' yields a ' B+'.

Hundert was determined to win Sedgewick Bell over, and successfully transform Bell into a studious young man and a well mannered and respectful leader. The movie then shifts to the proud Sedgewick standing in front of the school along with the other two finalists, competing for the title of " Mr. Julius Caesar". Hoffman continues to apply the factors of cheating and unfairness with the act of Sedgewick taping the answers of the questions on the inside of his toga. Hoffman also brings back the unfair decision made by Mr.

Hunter, only to remind the viewers of the deceitful plot of the movie. The situation of Bell's cheating strategies thickens as Mr. Hundert requests to call out Bell on his fault but; however, turned down by the Headmaster, asking only to ignore it and continue on with the competition.

It is in this scene that Hoffman once again applies the catching quote made by Mr. Hundert at the beginning of the movie, " A man's character is his fate. " Although Sedgewick appeared to have improved in his studies as well as becoming more obedient, it was his true character that determined the outcome in the conclusion of not only the school competition, but the movie.

The next scene, Hoffman takes the viewers back to present day, showing Mr. Hundert aged and worn by his many years of teaching. Time had passed,

and the inequitable event of Sedgewick Bell was soon forgotten. The movie seemed to have come to somewhat of a conclusion when Hoffman once again brings back the memory of Bell with an invitation requesting a weekend reunion and a rematch of “ Mr. Julius Caesar”, at Bell’s business retreat. Unconscious of the true reasons for Sedgewick Bell’s reunion, Mr. Hundert agreed and began his preparations. It was here that Hoffman begins to bring back the factors of cheating and unfairness. At the competition, the three finalists, who are grown men now, stood in front of what used to be the adolescent class of Mr. Hundert. As the competition begins, Bell steadily gives the answer to every question without a pause, surprising and impressing Mr. Hundert. However, Hoffman brings the competition to a bitter end when Mr. Hundert realizes, once again, that Bell had been cheating.

“ A man’s character is his fate,” Hoffman repeatedly applies this quote by Mr. Hundert to the events in the movie. Mr. Hundert once again gained hope in Bell and his performance, thinking that he had impacted Bell during his time in Hundert’s class.

However, with the Bell’s cheating and unfair characteristics, Hundert’s determination in Bell was destroyed once again, and the thought of Bell becoming a noble man and a true leader was let down. With the discover of a hidden ear piece in Sedgewick’s ear, Mr. Hundert asked Bell a question that only he and the other competitors would know by knowledge. With exposing Bell of cheating, the competition came to an end and Bell once again lost. However, the true reason for the weekend reunion was revealed. Sedgewick wasn’t interested in winning a competition, but winning an

election, and he was willing to cheat, lie, and play unfairly to do so. It was this scene that Hoffman dramatically enforced the influences of cheating, unfairness, and determination.

Mr. Hundert was determined to give Bell another chance to prove that he was capable of winning the competition. Sedgewick not only cheated during the competition to win the title of Mr.

Julius Caesar unfairly, but was determined to win over the votes of his fellow past classmates and their families in an election. However, Bell's unfair cheating ways came back to haunt him when Mr. Hundert confronted him about his ear piece in the men's restroom.

With the response filled with wickedness and unfairness, Bell's son walked out of the backroom stall only to gaze in disappointment and letdown at his father. Hoffman again applies Mr. Hundert's quote " A man's character is his fate. " As the weekend came to an end, Mr. Hundert lost all hope in teaching and the outcome of his students. In his eyes, he had failed at teaching Bell and his unfairness and cheating for him was done so in vain.

The position of Headmaster at the boy's school that Mr. Hundert worked hard to earn, was filled by his closest friend, who had unfairly swindling him out of it through many years of cheating to win the school board over behind Hunter's back. With all these failures and disappointments crashing down on Hundert, Hoffman brought light back into the movie's ending. As Hundert prepared to leave for home, he was met by all his old students with a plaque and memorabilia to express their gratitude and thanks for impacting them

and shaping them in to the grown men and truthful honest leaders that they became. It was in this single scene that Hoffman restored Mr.

Hundert's hopes in teaching and gave him the encouragement to continue on teaching his class, entering a new school year with a new addition, the son of the student that Hundert took out of the Mr. Julius Caesar competition, the student that rightfully earned his place. " A man's character is his fate. " Hoffman concludes the movie, with somewhat of a bitter-sweet end. Hundert paid for his faults of cheating and his unfair determination, but in return was praised for being such a dedicated teacher.