

Regarding henry essay



**ASSIGN
BUSTER**

In this movie Henry (Harrison Ford) is a hard-driven lawyer whose only aim in life seems to be his professional success.

He is a tough and cold lawyer who walks over people and totally neglects his wife Sarah (Annette Benning) and teenage daughter Rachel (Mikki Allen).

Although idolized by his boss and co-workers, he is selfish and emotionless.

He is a bad father and a loveless husband who is not able to live and give emotions. One night he is in the wrong place at the wrong time and is shot in his head and shoulder by a convenience store robber.

Due to massive bleeding and anoxia he is severely brain-injured and falls in a coma for several days. After his emergence from the coma his memory is almost completely lost, he is unable to walk, talk, read and relate to his family. Basically he lost all his skills from before the injury and has to start his life over. He is a child again and must learn to live from a scratch.

Along its plot the movie portrays a panel of disabilities Henry has to suffer after his accident. These include some physical, but mainly mental disabilities. Aside from the scar on his forehead, Henry is not very much visibly physically impaired. At the beginning of his recovery, just shortly after awakening from the coma, he is unable to walk and control his body movements properly. However, the physical impairments are the ones that are first overcome in a rehabilitation facility, even when he keeps walking in a kind of humble way until the end of the movie. This successful recovery is to a great extent initiated by Bradley (Bill Nunn), a very positive physical therapist whose character demonstrates the importance of friendship and support in the rehabilitation process.

Bradley is in some way the secret hero in the movie, helping people like Henry on their way back into their lives. He is doing that so well because he himself suffers from a disability that destroyed his dreams in the past.

Bradley always wanted to be a football player but had to surrender from this plan due to a bad knee injury years ago. Instead of suffering and wallow in self-pity, he found a new purpose for his life in his job as a therapist who can help other people in need.

Bradley is Henry's biggest help on his long way of recovery. The process of recovery however is portrayed somehow superficial in the movie. Although the story shows the difficulties and enormous effort Henry has to make to learn walking and talking again, this aspect of recovery is portrayed in a very (maybe even too!) optimistic way. The film shows relatively fast progress in regaining almost full physical abilities without considering frustrating backstrokes many people in real life certainly have to deal with.

The scene where Henry does his first steps with the walker for instance, gives the impression that such recovery can be done fast and easily and is followed by immediate feeling of success. I strongly doubt that this is the case in a majority of rehabilitation patients. Beside the physical ones, the major disabilities portrayed in the movie are of mental nature. After his accident Henry suffers from traumatic brain injury with almost complete memory loss, inability to talk and read, and a significant change in personality.

However, the disability is presented in a quite positive way. Henry is in fact a much nicer person after the brain injury than he was before. His complete

change in personality makes him a warm and emotional person who discovers the importance of friendship and family values. While he is learning to live from the scratch again he develops a loving and caring character that is a much better father and husband than he ever was before.

In contrast to being positive for his personality, this change in character has had bad effects on his professional life and finally costs him his job as a lawyer. Here the film leaves open what negative social and financial effects that loss of job eventually could have, even after having found private happiness. Overall the movie portrays several aspects of disabilities in a realistic, but quite optimistic way. Although marginally discussing some negative consequences of such an injury, the plot of the story is generally very optimistic showing a positive recovery and disability development. Hence, even if the story is maybe a bit too optimistic to be totally realistic, showing the helplessness (but also the rehabilitation capacity!) of a previously so tough and successful man can leave the viewers of the film with a good understanding and a better thoughtfulness for disabled people.

One reason for this is the awareness that - as the story demonstrates alarmingly - everybody can become that helpless from one moment to the other.