

Good essay on norma rae and silkwood comparison

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Norma Rae portrays a story of a woman, Norma Rae, who works in a textile factory with deteriorating working conditions. It is a story of a southern class woman who is trapped between the constraints of deteriorating job, responsibility of her two children, and the mixed hate-love relationship with her father. The situation shaped her life in a way that she joined a worker activist, Reuben Worshovsky, in organizing the fellow workers in the solidarity movement that eventual bared victory. Similarly, the Silkwood provides a story of middle-class workers in a nuclear plant under which their rights are oppressed (Dir. Martin, 1978). The movie provides the story of a passionate woman, Silkwood, who thinks that something effective must be done to achieve enabling working environment for the fellow workers. She felt that the health of the workers was in risk, and the company was ignoring the falsification of safety of the workers. As revealed, the two movies provide identical thought of the main characters who desires to sacrifice their time for the betterment of others.

The main characters in the two movies make ethical decisions based on the principles of utilitarianism. In other words, it is evident that their action can be considered right and ethical because they are attempting to promote the utmost good for the utmost group of individuals. They believed that the happiness, brought by safety, better enumeration, and enabling working condition, of the fellow middle class workers, was the paramount. For instance, at the beginning of the " Silkwood," Karen Silkwood decided to stand out, to become a person who thinks independently to the greatness of the fellow workers (Dir. Mike, 1983). The situation was worse to the extent that she was contaminated by the radioactive material although the situation

is not sufficiently described. As a result, she decides to seek help from the Union to help her, and her colleagues get over the situation. By the time she died, in a road accident, she had already collected enough evidence to show the deteriorating condition for the workers in the plant.

On the other hand, Norma Rae takes the same stand of creating utmost happiness to the utmost people. Although, her background was not pleasing, she identified social and economic challenges as opportunities to shape her life. She joined Reuben, a middle-class union organizer, to engage into a struggle to save the working conditions in the cotton mill. In this case, Norma was not only concerned with union organizing, but also the mechanics of class solidarity and class struggle (Dir. Martin, 1978). From the two scenarios, the three characters, Norma, Silkwood, and Reuben base their decision on the utilitarianism principle to enhance the lives of the people who were oppressed by the two companies. Therefore, this can be seen as the power and ethical decisions of women and men who struggle together to overcome the situations that not only oppress them, but also other individuals around them. From these movies, it is then derived that the power of ethical decision should not be based on personal interest, but the interest of the society at large.

" Silkwood," Directed by Mike Nichols depicts the role of Meryl Streep (Karen Silkwood) in the Oklahoma nuclear facility. Karen and her allies (Kurt Russell and Cher) decide to gather evidence of the dubious wrongdoings of her company. In the process, she finds that the company is faced with deprived safety measures, exploitation of employees and radiation spills. Similarly to " Norman Rae", the company C. E. O makes efforts to prevent the

investigation but Karen's grit, and determination is unstoppable. Both films are exaggeratedly sentimental and are composed of wide-ranging stereotypes (Dir. Martin, 1978). The films comprise of unscrupulous bosses, good oppressed workers, and saintly activists amongst others. Moreover, they encompass low key tones and a realistic acting and intense atmosphere. The tale in both movies are similar and shares a lot, they are regularly resuscitated in different scenes

Contrasting most films in this category, " Silkwood's" protagonist is actively tracked, persecuted and slayed by the sinister corporations she differs with. In reality, the nuclear facility where Karen worked was believed to have strong links to the United States government, the NIA and the CIA. After her investigation, Karen found that the company practiced illegal sale of nuclear grade plutonium (Dir. Martin, 1978). The managers became insecure and decided to assassinate her to avoid the evidence from leaking to the public. Karen could have washed the bosses' dirty linen in public. Both films showcases how women have been in the frontline to spearhead anti-nuclear campaigns, and their efforts have yielded positive results.

On the other hand, Norman Rae highlights the place of ethics in her workplace. She demonstrates values and principle of a real leader; this includes hard work, respect and integrity. In the company, Reuben believes in professional courtesy, we see him greeting other workers in the union in politeness, " Good morning." He goes ahead to suggest that Norman Rae was the right person to introduce the union to the mill (Dir. Mike, 1983). Norman Rae accepts the challenges to join a union with the mill to bring forth the changes in the awful working conditions. In the end, Norman

revolutionizes the union but her actions make her lose her job. Her silence show of rebelliousness is empowering and encourages employees to be ready to stand strong when facing setbacks she says, “ Forget it! I'm stayin' right where I am. It's going to take you and the police department and the fire department and the National Guard to get me out of here!” (Dir. Mike, 1983). Norman Rae is open to her children, she “ comes clean” to explain to them the reason for her arrest. As expounded above, in both films, women stand up to the task in advocating rights of workers despite the harsh conditions.

Works Cited

Norma Rae. Dir. Martin Ritt. Perf. Sally Field, Beau Bridges, and Ron Leibman. 1979. 20th Century Fox, 1978. Film.

Silkwood. Dir. Mike Nichols. Perf. Meryl Streep, Kurt Russell, and Cher. ABC Motion Pictures, 1983. Film.