

Free life and debt: an analysis essay sample

[Business](#), [Industries](#)



This documentary highlighted a number of industries in Jamaica affected by globalization which, at its core, is a form of neocolonialism. Agriculture, especially bananas, potatoes, and dairy production, was examined, as well as tourism, the garment industry, and the effects of the International Monetary Fund (IMF) upon the ability of Jamaica to guide its own destiny. Jamaica, a so-called third-world nation, suffers from poverty, massive unemployment, and an inequality between exported goods and imported goods, as well as currency devaluation. The film focused on interviews with past leaders (such as Michael Manley, former Jamaican President) and current scholars, as well as an interview with an IMF public relations employee.

The economic exploitation of Jamaica by colonial powers such as the United States was the main theme that the film addressed. The filmmakers argued that Jamaica was better off under its own sovereignty than it was before attempting to gain capital for its local industries and infrastructure through loans from the IMF. The World Trade Organization (WTO) has also treated Jamaica unfairly by imposing trade restrictions on the small island nation. Several examples of these injustices were highlighted in the film. For example, garment workers spoke about the fact that they made, on average, about 30 US dollars per week, a staggeringly-low income with which to survive.

Clearly, Jamaica is not, by definition, an independent country. It is highly-reliant upon loaned money at exorbitant interest rates. Jamaican employees are underpaid, and over-worked. Many jobs have been lost due to the importation of foreign goods at a lower price than domestically-priced goods made in Jamaican-owned industry. Neocolonialism has a dire effect on the

culture and economy of the nation. Tourism, one of its leading industries, caters to wealthy foreigners.

Jamaica is still not a sovereign nation due to the fact that many of its industries are foreign-owned, and can produce goods at lower costs with the Jamaican labor market. As a result of massive unemployment and the low amounts of Jamaican money in circulation, the crime rate in Jamaica has dramatically increased. The results of civil discontent could have negative effects on other industries, as transnational corporations will leave and find cheap labor elsewhere, such as Mexico or Central America. These corporations have also manipulated their exports to compete with domestically-produced goods in order to corner the marketplace, as well as avoid taxes and tariffs, thereby further damaging Jamaica's locally-owned and -run industries.

Because of the negative influence of globalization, and Jamaica's desperate need to feed and clothe its people, it has been forced to do business with the IMF, and the Inter-American Development Bank, borrowing money at high interest rates. The country of Jamaica is in dire circumstances, which have already led to civil unrest, as well as massive discontent with its lack of self-sovereignty. While Jamaica is generally considered an independent nation, the film depicts a reality that is altogether different. Life and Debt portrays a Jamaica where real slavery has been replaced by " economic slavery."