

# Minorities in film

Sociology



Reaction Paper on the Film 'A Time to Kill' A Time to Kill is a 1996 John Grisham inspired film that tells the story of a Black man whose 10-year-old daughter gets raped by two whites. The subject is justice for the murder of the rapists and their rape crime. In this film, the theme of racism is dominant with white supremacy is depicted against the Blacks. This essay discusses the film in the realm of the minority and majority groups as depicted in the film. The objective is to show how the minority is oppressed the response of the minority to the oppression and the strengths and weaknesses of major characters in both groups.

In the film, the Whites, who have the tendency to abuse the blacks racially, are the dominant group and blacks play the minority role in the Canton set film. The Whites perpetuate white supremacy by degrading and unequal treatment of the Blacks as evidenced by the scene where a black shopkeeper is insulted on the account of being black and associated with poverty. Discrimination falls in the socio-economic domain. Blacks do not have proper avenues of seeking remedies for the injustices meted on them by the Whites. This is thought so and used in the defense of Carl Lee for the murder of his daughter's rapists fearing that the legal system would offer no justice.

Even the legal system is evidently racist as it denies the request to relocate the hearing; a question raised so as Blacks could sit in the jury to enhance the prospects of a fair trial. When a White lawyer, Jake, takes up the defense of Carl, violence is meted on him by the white supremacy group known as Ku Klux Klan (KKK) who burn his house and even try to blow up the house in a bid to kill him. Jakes is compelled to relocate his family for safety. He is determined to see the case to its conclusion and hopes that the legal system

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is not that bad and justice can still be served irrespective of the prejudice against Blacks. Jakes maintains that 'Justice is and will be color blind'.

The response of Blacks to racial prejudice is perseverance and vindictiveness. This informs the killing of the rapists as Carl is nearly certain that the rape of his daughter will go unmitigated. Fortunately, his white lawyer's argument gets him out of jail.

The strength of the racist derives from the fact that the law is reluctant to punish their actions. Secondly, they seem united in racial prejudice and nearly everyone sees nothing wrong with it- they have the same mind set. Power relations determine strength of whites. The jury exercises the onus to decide Carl's fate. The KKK's strength lies in racism itself and support from the majority Whites. They are ready to even kill whoever crosses the divide to present a different view. An example is Jake and Roark who is assaulted and left tied to a tree to perish for attempting to get justice for the black man. Ironically, she is saved by a white KKK follower. Blacks are strong only on the account of perseverance and hope. Carl hope that he will be free not because his actions are moral, but because he acted as everyone else would do, a fact that even a police officer he accidentally shot affirms. Carl and his lawyer, irrespective of their skepticism, only have faith that racism will be put aside and real justice will prevail. Indeed, justice prevails when Carl is declared innocent.

## Reference

Schumacher, J. (Director). (1996). A Time To Kill [Motion Picture].