

The movie "radio" analysis essay

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The dramatic and uplifting movie "Radio" starring Cuba Gooding Jr. and Ed Harris, is based on the true life story of James Robert Kennedy, a.k.a. Radio; a mentally retarded young African-American who spends his days pushing a shopping cart around the streets of Anderson, a small South Carolina town, collecting junk and old radios. The movie starts with the heartbreaking scene of Radio pushing his cart around the town, in his own little world; people are ignoring him, and a lady pulls her daughter out of the way, running towards the opposite sidewalk. Every day Radio walks by the school, watching the football team training.

While lingering by the fence of the high school football field one afternoon, the boy catches the eye of the team's coach, Harold Jones, a well respected coach and teacher, who spends his long days preparing his team for each big game. When the team's ball went over the fence, Radio decides to keep it, adding it to his collection of junk. The next day Jones finds his players mistreating the boy - they tied him up with medical tape and threw him in the equipment shed - so he goes out of his way to give them an appropriate punishment. Then, unsatisfied that he's done all he can, the coach invites the boy to help out with the team.

Radio, who says little during his first meetings with the coach, is given the odd nickname by Jones and his assistant after they notice how fascinated he was about the radio in the office. Soon, Radio becomes the unofficial mascot of both the football and basketball teams. He begins regularly helping out on and off the field folding towels, fetching water and imitating the coaches. As time passes, Radio and Coach Jones grow extremely close. When the coach gets to know Radio's mother, he learns about the hardships of their life;

she's overworked and her husband passed away some years ago. She lovingly describes Radio " the same as everybody else, just a little slower than most". Radio blossoms into this non-stop-talking, fun, lovable person. He's helping out at the school, all the kids know and love him, and from the boy that didn't used to say a word before, now he made announcements on the school's radio.

For Christmas, Radio spends time with Coach Jones' family, and receives presents from people all over the town. The next day after Christmas Radio does what probably not many would do, he took all the presents and put them at people's door, wishing hem " Marry Christmas". The joy that there was on his face while he was doing that was greater than when he received the presents. Through this action Radio teaches an amazing lesson of giving, loving, and selflessness. After his mother dies, Radio is heartbroken and alone. Coach Jones continues to be by his side, and in a moment of honesty, decides to share with his daughter why was he doing what he was doing with Radio. He tells her the story about when he was a young boy and while training through the woods, he saw a boy about his age, kept inside a fenced area.

He did not know what was wrong with him, but though he ran that route for two years, he " never did anything about it". Radio appears to be his second chance to do something, a chance to redeem himself, to make a difference. Though more people become sensible to Radio, the coach's mentoring incites angry opposition from a local banker, Frank Clay whose bullying son, Johnny is the town's star athlete. Frank and his friends think that the football

team is distracted by Radio's cheerleading and that he attracts too much attention. When was tricked by Johnny to go into the girl's locker room, the town's anxieties escalate.

The relationship between Coach Jones and Radio soon begins to cause unease-from the school principal to some narrow-minded parents, all worried that Radio's more solidified position in the community will ultimately cause problems. Coach Jones decides to step down as a coach, but continues to teach and keep an eye on Radio, who decided to stay another year in 11th grade. The movie " Radio" isn't just about its title character and the obstacles he overcomes, but also about how everyone else can benefit. In one uplifting moment, Coach Jones states, " the truth is, we're not the ones that have been teaching Radio - Radio's the one that's been teaching us". The movie ends with scenes from real games where the real Radio , now in his fifties, is still dancing on the high school's football field, people cheering for him. The great gap between the Radio at the beginning of the movie, where people ignored him, or were afraid of him, was slowly filled with love and compassion, to the point where he becomes the town's hero in a way.

Once the town becomes aware of Jones' goal, it too strives to make a difference in Radio's life, only to find that this challenged, yet determined boy will make a far greater difference in the lives of everyone. The story encompasses a profound, stirring realization that anyone can see if they would only open their eyes. This movie is an eye opener to the challenges that people with disabilities face, and it brings awareness and sensibility among those who watch it. It's a wonderful story about discovering our true

purpose as human beings and finding satisfaction through compassion and love for those who struggle.