

The last graduation (film)



Order 611309 Topic: The Last Graduation (film)

Introduction:

The one who is lodged within the prison is not always guilty. In majority of the cases, one lands there caught in the web of the legal provisions. Also, a good number of crimes are committed at the spur of the moment, without any deep planning for such crimes. When an individual is constantly harassed by the administering authorities of the society, he turns bitter and revengeful. For such an individual prison turns out to be the training ground for committing crimes of a higher magnitude, once he is released from the prison, on completion of the sentence. To stall this eventuality in the life of a prisoner, education is the best answer. It helps his reformation and rehabilitation processes.

The movie, “The Last Graduation,” directed by Barbara Zahm, makes the viewer ponder deeply about some serious issues confronting the prison administration. The 1971 uprising of the prisoners at Attica, hastened the reforms process in USA prisons, the results of which proved to be crucial in the future management of the prisons. The downward march of a prisoner in the path of criminality can be reversed to take him to the upward march and ultimately make him a worthy individual and a citizen who would contribute to the progress and prosperity of the nation.

Barbara Zahm worked as an instructor in a prison college program in the early 1990s and her practical experience in the prison environment inspired her to get involved in the movie project. The graduation program in the prisons, progressed well until the 1995 National Crime Bill, gave a telling blow to the initiative and this set the right-thinking people to do something tangible to challenge the government. The movie explores the relevant

issues from the introduction of higher education to the prison population to the last graduation from the Marist College program at New York's Greenhaven Prison in 1995.

The issues dealt with in the movie may not be to the liking of the general audience, which mainly seeks adventures and entertainment. Basically, prisoners do not evoke sympathy and understanding from the society; rather they are disliked, as people have a feeling that they get in the prison, what they deserve for their crimes. This is a lopsided view and indicates poor understanding about the root cause of the problem. By reforming an individual, you are reforming a generation! With the entry in to the four walls of the prison, the psychologically shaken prisoners get completely shattered and the hard core ones turn more vengeful and become stone-hearted. With hardened attitudes, such people, upon release from jail, turn into more violent perpetrators of crime. Thus, the movie shows that it is necessary that the prisoners be afforded an opportunity to change themselves through education.

Conclusion:

"The Last Graduation," is critical of the rescinded college programs in the prison and advocates for their active continuance. Prison managements all over the globe have realized that punishment, though called for, for heinous crimes, does not afford an opportunity for redemption and inner transformation. It rather leads to more damage to the personality of the prisoners. I feel reformation through education is the best bet in the rehabilitation process of an individual. Once out of the prison, the communities will be proud to own such an educated individual.

Works Cited

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Zahm, Barbara (Director) The Last Graduation: The Rise and Fall of College Programs in Prison (Movie) 2005