

Intercultural analysis of "crash" essay



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Crash This movie Directed by Paul Haggis who also directed Academy Award Winning " Million Dollar Baby" and had also won an Academy Award for this movie as well puts a twisted story in this film. This movie symbolizes what goes on in the world today in regards to racism and stereotypes. He tries to make a point on how societies view themselves and others in the world based on their ethnicities.

This movie intertwines several different people's lives, all different races, with different types of beliefs. Such ethnicities include Caucasians, African Americans, Hispanics, Asians and Middle Eastern. This movie includes conflicts on both sides of the picture from cops and criminals as well from being rich or poor. You become aware of everyone being ignorant and paranoid of the opposite race, creating many clashes in culture and identity. Throughout the movie you view how different races " Crash" and react with other races.

In certain scenes you see how each person thinks of other races as portrayed realistically similar to what someone would expect in real life. Their reasons for why they beliefs are structured the way they are coming from either history or the present time of today. Throughout the movie, Crash, there are many separate instances of examples of aspects of intercultural communication. Some of the many relevant themes are prejudice, scapegoating, culture shock, racial identity, and culture identity, among others.

One instance in the movie where prejudice occurs is when the district attorney's wife assumed that the Latino locksmith is a "gang banger" because of the way he dressed, had his hair shaved and had "prison tattoos" on his body. This indicates prejudice because even though someone may look a certain way, it pertains indirectly to how that individual may actually behave regardless of looks. I personally have met someone where they act according to the stereotype given by their clothes appearance, at least people that aren't just trying to act cool. This leads me to another intercultural communication issue, that of stereotyping. Stereotyping can be positive or negative. It is information that a person has gathered about a certain group of people and takes that knowledge and over generalizes it and often makes a negative evaluation about that group. In the beginning of the movie when the Asian lady says to the female detective that the accident was her fault because "Mexican's don't know how to drive". Another example of negative stereotyping is when the gun shop owner says to the Persian shop owner who is trying to buy a gun "Hey Osama, play Jihad on your own time, what do you want? assuming he was a terrorist and Muslim and from Iraq. These examples depict just how easily blatant ignorance can engulf a person into a flame of racism, using any and every resource to put the blame on someone else to free themselves of the negativity of a situation and transferring it to their targeted race/ethnicity. Another intercultural communication concept that occurs in the movie is scapegoating, Scapegoating is when a particular group of people (minority) is singled out and blamed for certain events or instances.

It is a form of prejudice behavior. When Officer John pulled over the African American couple because he was frustrated about the conversation he had with Schanika Johnson about his father medical coverage. His abuse of his authority as a police officer was obviously creating a scapegoat when he "made them pay" for his frustration and because they were "black". This is scapegoating because even though there wasn't a good reason to pull that black family over, he did so anyway to vent his anger via racism and by abusing his power.

Another example of creating a scapegoat is when the Persian shop owner found out where the Hispanic locksmith lived and went there with the intention of getting him to pay for his shop or killing him, because he firmly believed that the destruction of his shop was the locksmiths' fault. In this regard it does not matter for who was actually at fault for the actions, it is apparent that each person in the movie who created a scapegoat, did so because it was the most convenient and easiest way to find a solution to their problems, another example of what ignorance creates.

In the movie an important concept is that of Culture Shock, this brings a lot of the characters to the motives in which makes them act the way they do. It's what happens when someone is thrown into an unfamiliar environment from a familiar one. An example is how the Persian shop owner felt like that everyone he came in contact with was trying to rob him or was trying to "rip him off". After his shop was vandalized he was disillusioned and wanted someone to "pay". He felt rejected by his environment and after the destruction of the shop felt like he "lost everything" because the shop was his life and livelihood.

This is a great example of how culture shock occurred in his mind and changed his state of mind to be more reactionary, and increased the likeliness to do something drastic, like kill the Latino Locksmith. Above all others, this movie depicts how intercultural ethics are conducted in a modern society based on modern stereotypes. Intercultural ethics can help a person to determine how to act, what to do or not to do, and how to interact with people. For example, the young police officer who witnessed the unethical behavior of his partner when he brutalized the African American couple and did not stop him.

In effects of the earlier happening he later saved the African American man from getting shot by other police officers, however, ended up killing detective Graham's young brother and covered it up. The district attorney's wife that blames all minorities for her anger, and in the end realizes that her only " true friend" is Maria her Hispanic housekeeper. Officer John ends up saving the African American woman from a car wreck and her certain death, when he, just hours prior molested her and treated her like a lessor human being because of her color.

This movie bases a lot of its characters actions on what is morally and ethically wrong because of stereotyping, and it demonstrates just what people will do under these circumstances, good and bad. Over this entire Movie did a great job at demonstrating not just a few, but many aspects of intercultural communication very realistically. It puts real life events in perspective of the first person, allowing me to understand from a better angle, just how skewed people are and helped me realize that all of these

issues are caused by ignorance, how an better education of different cultures could have prevented all these ailments and misfortunes.