

# Critical film review critical thinking example

[Health & Medicine](#), [Body](#)



Rabbit Proof Fence, a film that moves the souls of human beings is a real life heartbreaking story of three little girls set in the 1930's that shows how the aborigine children were taken against their will from Jigalong and made to work for white families as servants or maids. Rabbit-Proof Fence provides a fundamental illustration of Australian aboriginal children and women as victims, and the government viewing them as passive with no individuality or culture. The concept of empowerment in culture is well defined by Banet-Weiser (Reading Popular Culture through Feminism, May 28 2013) where they argue that the emphasis is on the individual development rather than any necessary change in society. It is hard to accept that race has become a product that finds no takers in politics and economics. The movie displays many gender issues and many of these issues are connected with sociological concepts such as race.

The girls from the mixed race were shifted to detention centers to be trained to work as maids and get integrated in the Australian society. The great escape of the three little girls from the detention center and their quest for reunion with their family is presented in the movie. The aborigine population followed a feature of Normalization. Foucault argued that in Normalization the increased population is defined in relation to models and standards that work together with the set internal norms (qtd. in Heyes 19). According to Heyes, Normalization creates conformity and individuality (Bodies in Production Reproducing Bodies cont, June 11 2013); however aborigines were restricted to display their individuality as per the Australian Policy.

Every

culture and individual is unique and it must be respected for its values and

norms.

The aborigine race did not try to modify their culture to match with a superior culture as they had been following the same tradition since generations. Culture is also displayed by bodies, which Brodo describes as medium of culture (Bodies in Production Reproducing Bodies, June 4 2013). They displayed their culture by smearing animal fat or clay on their bodies, decorated themselves with jewelry or charcoal paint and wore minimum clothes.

The movie begins in an unspecified location that shows women's downward gaze as the camera moves across the location where the Warlpirri, Amajere and Wangajunka women chant at an increasing pitch. In the later scenes Mr. Neville, the person in-charge for eradicating aborigines is seen lecturing a group of white women on the threats of the aborigines to the society. He has a belief that women better understand the issues of children and family. As a government servant he followed the federal orders and displayed "disciplinary powers" to classify and control the aboriginal population (Bodies in Production Reproducing Bodies cont, June 11 2013). Australian government wanted to educate the half-castes, and train them the skills suited for the western society. In other words I understand that the government wanted the aborigines to be "civilized". The Australian government did not give more prominence to Structuralism for aborigines. Structuralism recommends that any culture and cultural practices have regulatory patterns (Gedalof, Allan, 6). It is very disheartening to see how the three girls Molly, Gracie and Daisy are forcibly taken away from their mother in a jeep and driven till the resettlement camp where they are not

even allowed to speak their language.

Colonialism, which is almost always a consequence of imperialism, is the implanting of settlements on distant territory (Said, 9). At some very basic level, colonialism means thinking about, settling on, controlling land that you do not possess that is distant and is lived on and owned by others (Said, 7).

The Australian government wanted to remove these aborigines and take possession of their land. It can be considered as social spatialization in that decade as spatialization would mean to fix cultural values and providing collective meanings; however this concept can change over time (Protest Movement Building and Surveillance at the Mall June 20 2013). The white workers in the manufacturing industry or the government staff enjoyed sex with native aboriginal women and then moved on using the women as a material for their sexual needs. The concept of Intersectionality emerged as postmodern feminist criticisms as women were earlier considered as a category rather than a living being (Introduction to Popular Culture and Cultural Studies, May 16 2013). The postmodern culture relied on focus on the past to exclude the current situations.

The film shows multiple examples of the activities and philosophies of the groups of genders of whites and blacks. The theme of the film speaks about the racism and how the whites wanted to abolish the black color. The relationship between the colonized and the colonizer is a mystery as Molly's father left his family and went on to work on the rabbit fence for the whites. As rightly said by (Gedalof et al, 28), the colonial projects of the 18th & 19th centuries divided up the world in ways that intensely transformed the collective identities and common formations globally. To save the national

identity I believe the Australian government wanted to eradicate aborigines as a part of Postcolonial projects to build a better nation, identity and belonging beyond the colonial mapping (Introduction to Popular Culture and Cultural Studies, May 16 2013). In the movie both the genders are shown to be working for the whites; the men to support the family financially and the women were forced to sleep with the whites.

There are some interesting facts in the film when Mr. Neville calls Molly to check if she has any traces of white color by looking at her back. He believes that if a girl has any traces of white color on her skin, then that girl is a good source to mate with the whites. Molly's mother has faith in the eagle that keeps flying in their village and she believes that the eagle will look after her and the family and will not cast any negative spell on their family. As mentioned by (Gedalof et al, 7) in the theory of cultural studies, Semiotics, the eagle - spirited bird is considered as the Signifier. In the Semiotic approach structure of meaning in an object is identified or cultural text and the signs are recognized (Introduction to Popular Culture and Cultural Studies, May 16 2013).

The determination and will-power of the 14 year old Molly to be with her family, 1600 kilometers away from the settlement camp is appealing. True women power is displayed by Molly who fights all the odds and never loses hopes even after encountering multiple hurdles like fear of being caught again, in her journey along the lines of Rabbit-Proof Fence. It is disheartening to see that these girls are being tracked by a man of their own community, an aboriginal, named Modoo, whose duty is to keep an eye on the girls in the settlement camp. The daring act of Molly, a form of feminist objectivity

follows the concept of situated knowledge as Molly is aware about the community, and not about any isolated individuals. Situated knowledge is about communities, not about isolated individuals, and the only way to find a larger vision is to be somewhere in particular (Haraway, 292). Molly had experienced oppression and she was better able to recognize the ways of the world. Molly displays the example of situated knowledge perfectly by reaching the Rabbit Proof Fence initially and then following it till the Jibalong village on the Australian desert.

Molly's sister Gracie easily falls prey to a local native who asks her to board a train and Gracie follows that guy only to be trapped and sent back to the detention center. This is quite unsettling as that native person does not have any humanity towards these little girls though he knows their struggle. In one scene an aboriginal maid tries to help these girls by allowing them to stay with her at night, and the house owner enters her room to have sex with her.

It is left to the audience to imagine the dominance of these white owners on the aboriginal women who have been working there since years. Sociology departments have shown interest in exploring men and masculinity. Early studies focused on behaviors of men, the positive and negative consequences in the social realm of "heroic" and "hyper masculine" iconic models (Wright, 243). Women experience sexual abuse in circumstances when the human rights are dishonored sometimes as political prisoners or in the ill-treated racial groups. Looking back, we can see how heavily utilized this femininity and feminism was, and also how particular it was to gender arrangements for largely white and relatively affluent women (McRobbie, 5).

I find it very disturbing that the so called white educators could not understand the pain of these three girls. In a scene at the end an aboriginal girl who ran away with her boyfriend from the detention center is caught and punished by locking her in a shed, and her long hair is cut. The whites cut her hair thinking that she will be less attractive to boys. It is a shame in many societies for the women to have her hair cut.

The climax of the film made me glad to see the reunion of Molly and Daisy with her mother. Molly was re-captured after a few years as per the aboriginal law and she escaped again following the rabbit-proof fence. Both the genders in the aboriginal community continue to suffer even today from destruction of identity, family life, and culture. They are called stolen generation.

All the three little actors in the movie are real aborigines and completely amateur actors. The last scene of the movie is a bit relaxing to the audience momentarily as the aged Molly and Daisy come on screen, but it is really tough to realize the agony they underwent when victimized by Australian policy that supported only the whites. Banet-Weiser states that currently race is more of a postracial and urbanized representation of the culture (Reading Popular Culture through Feminism, May 28 2013), and with people settling globally I understand there is an increase in the differences among people rather than the group differences. I see these shifts in gender and race representation as located within the struggles between generations so that representation itself becomes an arsenal in a kind of cultural territory war (Sarah, 205).

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