

M.P.

Per.5 World History

Mrs. Fine 2-24-03

Cry Freedom

"I have a dream, that my four little children will one day live in a nation where they will not be judged by the color of their skin but by the content of their character. I have a dream today!" -Martin Luther King, Jr.

http://quoteland.com/topic.asp?CATEGORY_ID=54. Fortunately, Martin Luther King Jr.'s dream did become a reality but it took more suffering, and misery than I or any other person could imagine. Movies, such as *Cry Freedom*, illustrates Apartheid in South Africa, giving us an idea of how painful it was for the blacks in that time. We've come a long way, and now realize, that segregation is morally wrong. Within the year of 1652, Afrikaners (Dutch, Boers) arrived in South Africa, and immediately dominated it. The population of the whites in South Africa was only 10 % but they still owned 80 % of the land. In 1948 Apartheid begun making it seem that black's were inferior to white's; whites having more opportunities. Blacks had to have passes to be allowed to walk through white areas in their own country! Luckily, Stephen Biko, gave the blacks of South Africa hope-hope to live, to become equal, and to become free of Apartheid. Donald Woods, a writer, tries to help Steven Biko with the struggle to create an equal Africa. *Cry Freedom* is overall consistent with the real facts and events, and I believe it relates to Black History Month by giving respect to the blacks and what they and their heroes have gone through; how far they have come; rejoicing their freedom and equality.

"They need to defeat the one main element in politics which is working against

them, and that is the psychological feeling of inferiority.” - Steven Biko

<http://www.azapo.org.za/biko.htm>, one of the most remembered black heroes in his battle to change South Africa. He was a South African nationalist leader who tried to show blacks that they were not inferior to whites. He was also the leader of the Black Consciousness movement. Stephen Biko started a black community center run by blacks with only one doctor; it was trashed by the London government in the 1970's. On November 24th, 1975 the Crossroads Squatters Camp raid, the police killed the blacks and destroyed where they were living. In the movie Cry Freedom Stephen Biko (while he was banned) held an illegal riot at a soccer game explaining that blacks are just as good as whites. He went to court on May 3rd, 1976 and it was his first appearance since he was banned. Biko testified for 9 black students and spoke to the government about black consciousness (how they feel inferior to whites and how the whites are making them feel that way). The Soweto uprising was on June 16th, 1976; 700 were killed and 400 were injured. The Soweto uprising was a protesting riot starting out with blacks chanting and ending in disaster. The protest was about black's not wanting to learn the Afrikaners language. The police had no mercy at all, killing all people in sight, even children. 700 people killed was just an estimate of how many really died; the police wanted to cover themselves up because they weren't suppose to be shooting. On October 19th, 1977 most Black consciences were banned in the role of resistance and the June 16th 1976 uprising. Stephen Biko was banned on 1973 for being against the government. The ban was suppose to keep him in his hometown King William's Town but that didn't prevent him from going to Cape Town to continue his fight for equality in South Africa. Stephen Biko was arrested on August of 1977 on his way to Cape town. While he was in jail they

gave him no clothes. While he was imprisoned they beat him and brought a doctor in that claimed he had brain damage. The police took Biko to the “police doctor” which was several hundreds of miles away. Biko died on the long bumpy way there, unclothed, suffering from brain damage on September 12th, 1977. The police claimed that he died because he was on a hunger strike. After Stephen Biko died, Donald Woods shared his beliefs to the world through his many books.

Donald Woods tried to help Stephen Biko in his battle to make an Apartheid-free South Africa. He was a liberal and a news reporter for the Daily Dispatch. He was an anti-Apartheid, married to his wife, Wendy, and had five children. In the movie he became acquainted with Stephen Biko through a doctor who was close to Stephen Biko. Donald Woods was banned on October 19th, 1977, for being against Apartheid. He made the government look bad when he was taking pictures of Stephen Biko’s dead body to show the people of South Africa what really happened, and how he really died. His family and him fled to England. Woods disguised himself as a priest and crossed into Lesotho by riding in a post office. He also swam across the Telle river because he was determined to tell the world of Biko’s ideas. In separation from his homeland he wrote several books and continued to campaign. Donald Woods died of cancer. We will all remember his bravery and how he sacrificed his life, along with his families lives in order to get one idea out to the world; black’s are not inferior to whites.

Cry Freedom is overall consistent with the way It presents the Apartheid in South Africa. For instance when Steven Biko was arrested again in August, 1977 and imprisoned on his way to Cape town. Biko was severely beaten by the police while in custody. He slipped into an unconscious state and died within a month of his arrest.

Steven Biko died on September 12th, 1977 while on the way to a hospital which was several hundred miles away. They said he died because of a “hunger strike”. He died naked with wounds all over his body; and they call that a hunger strike? Also. the way they showed the Soweto uprising was all correct; they showed no mercy, even killing children. Some differences is that the actual speech that he made at the soccer game did not really happen but he did make many speeches at public places. There is no record of how close Stephen Biko and Donald Woods really were but they did not meet through Dr. Ramphela they met after the Soweto uprising. There is inconsiderable amounts of difference in the movie then in what really happened but it accurately illustrates the idea of the hardships of the blacks in South Africa and the battle they had to fight for their independence.

Cry Freedom’s content relates intensely to Black History Month, showing their legacy and how far they have come for equality. Stephen Biko and Donald Woods fought for the independence of black people. The black’s have suffered and gone through so much. They sacrificed their own lives and lost ones due to violent massacres. So many children, and innocent people have died because one group thought they were superior then another and made them believe they were inferior; you determine who you are; if you feel you are more inferior then someone else that’s what you’ll become; If you believe otherwise visa versa. In America we have many things saluting the black hero’s. For example we have the whole month a February dedicated to Black History Month. We also have a day off for Martin Luther King Jr.’s Birthday in remembrance of him. The movie urges you to think about how hard it was and about the courage they had to stand up for themselves, even if it meant getting killed for it.

Cry Freedom has not changed my views on tolerance and acceptance of other people's differences throughout history but I am now more conscious about what has really happened. I have come to a conclusion that being prejudiced and bigoted can lead to death and cruelty to others; but everyone must be given an equal right. Prejudice is morally wrong. "To make beautiful music we need both the white and black notes."- Anonymous http://quoteland.com/topic.asp?CATEGORY_ID=54. There are many different kinds of movies who portray the same message as Cry Freedom, but unlike most others, Cry Freedom mentions the correct events places and dates. Some movies illustrate how blacks were treated but is not a true story. Cry Freedom is a very mental movie that urges people to think about the pain and suffering blacks have gone through. They sacrificed and lost their lives, family, maybe even their children and parents and they kept on going to get what they believe in, a clear and lucid thing both me and everyone could understand, their independence and their cry for equality; their cry for freedom.

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This site gave me information about Donald Woods and Stephen Biko and their lives.

