

A.K.
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Black South Africans had their own customs, religions, and beliefs before their continent was invaded by missionaries. When the whites came in and began building homes and cities, they also began building a great tension between the white and black residents of South Africa. Apartheid is an official policy of racial segregation in the past practiced in the Republic of South Africa, involving political, legal, and economic discrimination against nonwhites. Apartheid began violence between the races and corrupt police officers began executing black residents for no reason at all. The historical accuracy of the movie *Cry Freedom* is very precise in explaining Apartheid in South Africa.

In the movie, Steven Biko and Donald Woods both played major roles in the equalization of the black South Africans. This was indeed true, but for us to further understand exactly what went on during these times, the audience must get to know Biko and Woods better. According to the *Truth and Reconciliation Commission of South Africa* report, Steven Biko was born on December 18, 1946 in King Williams Town, Eastern Cape, South Africa. He had many ideas that he explained in his illegal gatherings, all focusing around one major idea, the false proposal of white superiority and black inferiority. He preached that the South African people were angry to have to follow foreign customs without any representation. He also believed that black liberation started with black psychological self-reliance. The whites were telling the South Africans what they could and could not believe in, including forms of government, customs, and even religion. Biko was banned from places and given curfews by the police, and if he was

found outside his boundaries, he would be arrested. Eventually, Biko was found outside his permissible area and was arrested on August 18, 1977, according to the movie. He was found brutally beaten, lying naked on the floor of his jail cell on September 11, 1977. The next day, Steven Biko died in custody in the city of Pretoria. The film's interpretation of Biko's life was almost identical to the information I found, yet it lacked some of the well-known ideas stated above.

Donald Woods appeared to be accurately portrayed in the movie *Cry Freedom*. He was born on December 15th 1933, later becoming the editor for the Daily Dispatch in South Africa from 1965 to 1977. He was a liberal who took a great interest in interviewing Steven Biko for his articles in the paper. He got himself involved into Biko's life, and Biko began telling him things he could never print. Woods found himself and his family getting into trouble with the police, often receiving threats from anonymous callers. After Biko's death, Woods was banned from internal security for 5 years, like Biko, giving him curfews and not allowing him to be present in a room with more than 1 person. Woods then realized he had put himself and his family in jeopardy. He decided he would sneak himself and his family out of South Africa on New Year's Eve, 1977. Woods successfully escaped, dressed as a priest. He then met up with his family and was flown out of South Africa on a tiny airplane. Woods also smuggled his writings about Biko out of the country, eventually writing a Biography labeled Biko, published in 1978. The movie's representation of Donald Woods' life was also very accurate.

This movie's content definitely relates to Black History Month. Although the times and dates of Steven Biko's major events do not directly relate to the month of

February, Biko's ideas and beliefs greatly impacted African-American views. His work with the equalization of black residents in South Africa has ended a harsh and cruel system of government. Without Apartheid, the black residents can now feel like they are the true locals, doing what they please without opposition. Without Steven Biko, South Africa today might not have been liberated from harsh missionary rule. Nelson Mandela was inspired by Steven Biko to finish the job he one started, ending Apartheid. Black History month is a time where blacks can look towards the great leaders of their race and appreciate them for giving their race the freedom they have today. Steven Biko is most definitely included in the list of great black leaders of our time.

Steven Biko's cruel death was mourned and is still being mourned by many. Threatened by Biko's success in winning crowds, the police of South Africa felt that he would eventually end Apartheid. Due to this, an innocent man was brutally murdered. Luckily, Donald Woods was present to show the world what a wonderful person Steven Biko really was. This movie has changed my views on tolerance and acceptance, showing me that there are truly horrible people in this world. After watching the movie, I know that I will never discriminate against another race, having got a glimpse of how life was for the blacks. Overall, the historical accuracy of the movie *Cry Freedom* was precise in showing Apartheid rule in South Africa.

Annotated Bibliography

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