

What I Learned from Watching Selma

Written by William Jackson

Thursday, 19 February 2015 01:45



There are movies that inspire, there are movies that excite, there are movies that create an effect on multiple levels of human psychology, sociology and passions. *Selma* takes the viewer on a journey of emotional mixtures, psychological enlightenment and rationalization to the realities of how important voting rights are.

The realities of societal civil rights and the connection between the criminal justice system and juries are rife with inequality and racism. Having a jury of your peers in many cases is not possible because peers have lost voting rights and serving on a jury is not possible because many are not registered or have felony convictions that keep them from earning their rights.

[*Selma*](#) touched people in a way that encouraged and demanded discussion on many levels beyond emotional turmoil and conflict that many experienced from viewing movies that address Civil Rights issues, the institution of slavery that Blacks have experienced during their captivity to the Americas hundreds of years before is still evident. There isn't a conclusion to this story because the descendants in generations carry the emotional and psychological baggage from slavery to freedom, from institutional bondage to the denial of societal rights and privileges that are denied based on skin pigmentation.

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The movie *Selma* offers an opportunity not just for Blacks, but the diversity of culture in America to see and experience a small portion of the Civil Rights movement, the importance of voting rights, serving on juries and having a knowledge of the justice system. Historically Blacks are disproportionately denied fair trials, they are historically given harder and longer prison sentences, and Blacks lack the opportunity of fair and impartial juries of their peers because too many “peers” have criminal backgrounds that deny them from serving on juries.

Too many Blacks lack the willingness to even register to vote because they do not see the importance of doing so, they do not realize the historic and current value of being an active and educated voter.

Selma dealt with these issues that needed to be shouted to Blacks while showing them that here are those that sacrificed and died for the opportunity to vote. In order to bring justice to those that kill Black men, women and children, Blacks must be registered voters and participate on juries. As stated in *Selma* that whites kill and rape Blacks, but go free because a jury of “their” peers sets them free.

Blacks need to understand if you don't vote the laws will stay the same and the same people that make those laws will always stay in power allowing their power to grow. Blacks will remain diminished and emasculated of voting power and political influence. Blacks continue to be their own worst enemy in too many cases.

Before the physical altercations of *Selma*, the mind was served with the words that inspired millions to place their lives and the lives of women and even children on the line of physical abuse from attacks. This is how important the right to vote is, the right to have equality and to be treated equitably. Today many Black men are portrayed as weak, because of the lack of voting strength and high levels of unemployment. This will continue if Black men, Black women and Black families do not unify and work together to change the status quo.

Factors like not registering to vote, not voting even if registered and other behaviors that are not positive are passed from one generation to another. Simplistically, the value of fatherhood is transferred to the family. Men must accept the responsibility to be a father and act accordingly.

If you keep mothers distracted by having no husband, no father, uneducated, on welfare, happy to receive their EBT cards, keep them complacent and needy, they will be distracted by the challenges of life. In addition, they will not care about voting or politics and eventually they will

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lose the desire to educate themselves and to seek self-improvement.

Blacks as seen in *Selma* must stop being comfortable in their “hoods” physically, economically, socially, educationally, financially and politically. *Selma* told the story to improve the lifestyles of and for Blacks through education, unity and cultural pride. Blacks do not for the majority want to be White, they want an equal playing field to provide for their families.

The author, K. Harris of "Prince, The Future King" series states, “fathers are critically important to their children’s well-being and are a role model for their sons.” It is widely known how important fathers are in the lives of their children; look at the lives of Malcolm X and other men whose fathers were involved in Black Nationalism, but also how racism, stereotypical thinking, and discrimination shaped their lives as well.

Coinciding with writings in Proverbs 4:1 which states, “Hear ye children the instruction of a father and attend to know understanding”. Black men must teach each other and teach their children, guide them and nurture them, but not lead them down the wrong paths that will destroy their futures or conducting another generation to destruction and being lost with no educational opportunities or chances for employment to change their socio-economic situations.

Ephesians 4:25, “wherefore putting away lying, speak every man truth with his neighbor: for we are members one of another”. Men unite in a common quest to raise children whether in the home or not and accept the responsibilities that are contributors of life. To speak truth to your children and to each other, in Ephesians 4:29 states, “let no corrupt communication proceed out of your mouth, but that which is good to the use of edifying, that may minister grace unto the hearers.”

The Civil Rights movement not moment was organized by students and ministers. Through their works together and organized unity they made great changes in society. They organized individuals into a movement to effect change in their neighborhoods, in homes, and in the hearts of their people first. Nothing will change if fathers and men do not unify to make sure their families are provided for, their children see them (fathers) fighting for equal rights in all of society and the value of education.

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Selma will just be another Black movie if Blacks do not move forward to effect the changes that need to be made in American society. *Selma* demonstrated the reasons for the fight for justice that still rings true today. Blacks are still in conflict with themselves and society, before we can demand change from the government, the justice system and even come to terms with our diverse religious denominations that struggle in unity, Blacks must come to terms with themselves.



Selma (2014)

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www.blogtalkradio.com/blackhistory/2013/12/20/malcolm-xs-daughter-author-activist-ilyasah-s-habazz-little-malcolm

to listen to his great interview with

[Malcolm X](#)

's daughter.