



THE ROBERT VAZQUEZ SCHOLARSHIP
2017 WINNING ESSAYS

The Robert Vazquez scholarship provides \$4,000 to a member, member's spouse, son, daughter, grandchild or any child for which the member may be deemed to act as legal guardian. Candidates are challenged to write an essay on a topic, with a jury of selected readers.

*Winners of the 2017
Robert Vazquez Scholarship*

Mariah Price

*Daughter of member Simeon Henderson**

Jamal Copeland

Son of member Reginald Copeland

Carissa Oldknow

Daughter of members Patrick and Michelle Oldknow

Luke Semones

Son of member Ellen Semones

Mariah Price

30 November 2017

“What is the social impact of films and what do you feel is the main social/societal responsibility of the producing studio in all films it releases?”

Sit back, relax and open your mind. Prepare yourself as you enter into a world of fantasy, drama, comedy, mystery, and even horror. Films shed light on the darkness of the world we live in, or give us hope when we feel alone. Both positive and negative effects can be results of movie watching. Films play an influential role in society by acting as a voice to societal issues, a catalyst to the dreamer who lacks motivation and feels inadequate, and by diminishing ignorance. The main responsibility of production studios is to deliver compelling films that fully articulate a positive message.

Films play an important role in society by painting a picture of events that shaped and are shaping the world we live in. In 2014, director Ava DuVernay released a movie that captured the hearts of people of every color: *Selma*. *Selma* portrayed the passion surrounding the marches and boycotts of the 1960s, and the long suffering of African American people. Led by Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., society experienced these difficult encounters on the “Big Screen”. Viewers are made aware of the progression of equal rights and the fact that society has much more work to do. Not only was this movie a strong representation of the 1960s Civil Rights Movement, but it was released in the wake of 21st century’s “Black Lives Matter” movement. In response to police brutality cases that seemed to target African American lives, people of color gathered together and protested. Those protests nearly mimic the same protests portrayed in the film *Selma*. *Selma* gave a voice to the ongoing issue of racial tension by executing an example of how society can

overcome and embrace adversity in the face of diversity. Unmerited hope and motivation to live to our fullest potential result from watching films like *Selma* and infinite others.

According to *Frontiers in Human Neuroscience*, “Inspiration is a motivational state that compels individuals to bring ideas into fruition.” Society is filled with naysayers and statistical shackles that tell the dreamer in us that we can’t achieve our dreams. In the movie *Forrest Gump*, actor Tom Hanks portrays mentally disadvantaged Forrest Gump who is told as a child that he would need to be in a special school. Forrest embarks on several monumental, political endeavors throughout his adult life. This film teaches society to address the value of people who are mentally or physically handicapped. Forrest had an IQ of 75 and was unable to make a perspicuous decision on his own, but he traveled the nation, became a heroic veteran, met legendary artists and was present in several political events that shaped the country we live. In addition to that he encountered love and created a family. This film, although fictional, adequately gives permission to people who feel too inadequate to pursue their dreams. Whether someone is mentally disadvantaged like Forrest or not, films provide the inspiration to overcome statistics.

Films give insight about issues that society does not pay attention to. *Supersize Me* is a documentary profiling a man, Morgan Spurlock, who engages in an unhealthy diet consisting solely of McDonald’s food for a month. He sheds light on the unhealthy effects McDonald’s food has on the body. He transforms before our very eyes as he gains 24.5 lbs. in a month. Since the film was produced, McDonald’s cracked down on portion control, and introduced healthy alternatives. *Day After Tomorrow* is a movie that heavily illustrates the results of global warming. This film was released in 2004 following a shockwave of natural disasters occurring in New York, Los Angeles, and Tokyo. According to Yale University researchers, viewers became

more cautious about their actions pertaining to eliminating climate change. In fact, nearly 68% of viewers vowed to discuss how to reduce the effects of climate change. (A. Leiserowitz, 2004)

These films and films alike have a way of bringing about change in our community, environment and untouchable Corporate America.

The main responsibility of production studios is to produce superb films that illustrate a positive message. Horror, Drama, Comedy, Romance, etc. should have a life lesson attached to the storyline. Film producers need to ensure that the viewers are not just entertained, but they are taught something. Major life lessons or simple bits of knowledge should permeate the scripts of actors and actresses. Unfortunately, movies can influence people for worst. For example, Nightmare on Elm Street was the inspiration behind Daniel Gonzalez's murder spree. Also, when Straight Outta Compton was released there was uproar of violence aimed directly toward police. Every movie should not be daisies and butterflies. Creating a storyline that is dynamic is vital to pique the interest of the viewer. However, creating lead way to a form of virtue, or life lesson is even more important. Films are influential to people's lives and impact society in a major way, so creating a movie that viewers will learn from is what production should aim for.

In Conclusion, films play an extraordinary role in society. Films influence society by acknowledging societal flaws, inspiring a person with little to no confidence to achieve the impossible, and debunk societal misconceptions. While movies are influential to society, it is most important for filmmakers and production to integrate a lesson or tidbit of constructive knowledge alongside the storyline of a film. People will develop perspectives that differ from one another, which is why it is important for a movie to be dynamic. Movies are all around entertaining, they bring families together, and open people's eyes, mind and heart to life's bigger picture. The world around us is flawed and has been that way since the beginning of time. The

film industry does a remarkable job portraying the lives of icons that tarried life before us. Films capture flaws and joys of the greatest movie called life.

Social Impact of Films and Societal Responsibility of the Producing Studio

It is no doubt that films have become an essential part of the modern world. The film industry has grown tremendously over the years. This has been expedited by the growing demand for different types of movies. Indeed, like many other sectors, films have gone through a series of evolution. Every person can relate to a particular film type, be it for educational or entertainment purposes. The types can be classified into various fields such as motivational, action films, contemporary films, comedy, drama and romantic films among others. Films have had, and still have a great impact on the society today. The social impact of films on the society is numerous, if not innumerable.

The social impact of films on the society was well expressed by Richard Williams, an animation director and writer. Richard described the cultural trend, Social Impact Entertainment as the use of entertainment to impact positively on communities and societies. William further suggested that Social Impact Entertainment meant the intentional use of entertainment to deliver social changes. The impact of movies in the society today includes both positive and negative ones. These positive impacts include but are not limited to facilitation of cultural diffusion across the globe, imparting certain ethical values on the society, promoting socialization among the people, behavioral change, as well as inspirational and educational effects. However, films also have negative impacts such as promotion of violence among the youth, increase in number of sexually active teenagers, and promotion of some negative values in the society.

Films facilitate cultural diffusion across the globe. The growth of media has led to an increase in the speed and ease of communication in the world today. Modern technology in communication such as the internet has enabled easy and faster transmission of movies in a way that is much more convenient compared to earlier years. As a result, movies produced in one

country quickly find their way into foreign countries. Such films usually carry with them information on the cultural backgrounds of the parent country. The scripters and actors, in most cases, incorporate various aspects of their cultures such as language, cuisine, religion, and entertainment. These films often have short term as well as long lasting effects on the cultural practices in the countries in which they are watched. The various audiences adopt one or more aspects of the culture of the country, therefore leading to exchange and diffusion of different cultures throughout the world.

Films impart ethical values to individuals in the society. Movies are usually scripted in such a way that there is a dominant ethical or moral lesson throughout the film. At the end of the movie, there is almost always an ethical value to be received from it. In addition to entertainment, most films incorporate the values of courage, honesty, hard work, patriotism and loyalty. As is the case in a majority of the films, there is a protagonist and the antagonist. The main character, usually the protagonist is in most cases portrayed as strong, audacious, patient, hardworking, and generally of high moral standards. The viewers, therefore, learn the importance of these moral and ethical qualities which they later apply in their lives and their daily relations with other people. On the other hand, the antagonists usually possess qualities considered to be below standard in the society. They're mostly depicted as weak, rash in decision making, and corrupt and deceitful individuals who end up paying for their mistakes. The audience, therefore, learns to avoid such unethical behaviors to avert similar repercussions.

Promoting socialization and interactions among the members of the society is an important impact of films. Films are commonly watched in a theatre where people pay to watch their movie of choice. This trend has existed since time immemorial. In such facilities, many people from diverse backgrounds come together to watch the films. In the process, there are

continuous interactions between people, who in some cases, may have never met. These viewers socialize and get to know each other; therefore, bridging the social gap existing between them. Major developments in the film industry, such as the use of three-dimensional, 3D technology, have also increased the number of people going to theatres. This in turn increases interactions and socialization among the people in attendance.

Behavioral change among many people has been facilitated by films. Although some cases have been towards the negative, most of the changes in behavior have been positive. Films integrate a learning experience whereby the audience gets to know the ethics and morals of the movie such as peaceful coexistence as well as their benefits. This leads to changes in behavior for the better, which in turn promotes positive social interactions in the society.

I strongly believe that socialization in society is not complete without the mentioning education. In recent times, films have been used as teaching implements in many schools and other learning institutions. This facilitates social interactions between the learners and instructors in real time. This in turn improves the social aspect of education.

Just like a coin has two sides, films have also had negative social effects on the society. For instance, the protagonists believe that the ever-increasing trend of incorporating sexual scenes in films has increased the number of sexually active teenagers in the world. In addition to this, some movies incorporate violent scenes in their screenplay which some believe has led to an increase in violence in the society, especially among the youth and children who either try to emulate their favorite actors or try to identify with the films.

In the wake of major developments in the film industry, films have an impact on society, and film-producing studios have a major responsibility to ensure that the films produced impact

positively on the society. This would involve taking measures to make sure that the movies are socially and ethically acceptable to the many audiences which usually come from different societal backgrounds.

It is undeniably unfortunate that most film producers, have not taken into consideration their social responsibilities when making films. These include having a sense of duty of imparting the right kind of education on the audiences. This should be done to ensure that the audience is not misled in any way that could result in negative social development.

I am of the opinion that film production studios have a duty to ensure that the films they produce have the right ethical message which is morally acceptable to the audience types. The producers should edit the movie scenes to remove parts which promote violence to younger audiences who are still forming their personalities. They should also avoid transmitting the messages of hatred, anger, and other vices such as corruption to their younger audience.

Moreover, the film producers have a responsibility to regulate sexual content in the films depending on their target audience. It is a growing trend to find sexually explicit content in films targeting even teenagers as its audience. This is a serious issue, as it touches on the future generation and so should be solved promptly. Therefore, film producers have a duty to regulate the sexual scenes in various movies to avoid the problem of exposing children to sexual content and in turn promote morality in the society.

I consider film production studios to have the responsibility to demarcate the world of fiction from that of reality. As much as the movies, whether fictional or not, should be made to be as realistic as possible to the audience. The producers have the responsibility to ensure that the fictional scenes remain in the realm of fiction even to the audience. This in turn facilitates

avoiding superstitions among the audience; therefore, enabling the members of the society to distinguish fiction from reality.

In conclusion, it is irrefutable that films have great social impact on the society, ranging from instilling ethical values, cultural diffusion, and facilitating socialization among others. The main societal responsibility of film-production studios is to ensure that the films they produce are ethically right and morally acceptable in the society. This in turn promotes the right interactions and behavior among the members of the society.

Carissa Oldknow

2017 Robert Vazquez Scholarship

November 20th, 2017

The Impact of the Film Industry

The film industry was created during the early 1900s, and since the birth of film, the art has grown exponentially. The job of creating these films is joined with multiple important responsibilities because of the impact this business has on society. Movies hold a great amount of power when impacting the community because of the way it takes the audience through an experience that is embodied by the story being told. Studios producing and releasing films have a significant duty to society because they are in control of people's potential emotions, views, and experiences.

A visual tale allows people to escape from their reality to a place or idea they did not think was possible. Films act as a distraction for people who wish to forget about all their worries, frustrations, and tensions. While being entertained by a film, people's focus for their issues and personal lives tend decrease. When watching a movie, people become submerged in the plot and make connections or even emotional bonds with characters. Films allow people to dream their biggest dreams and to be entertained by characters' lives and or scenarios an average person could never achieve. Movies enhance one's imagination because it lets them create their own version of how they would respond to the plot being told. The journey a film can take one on can be a time of peace and relaxation for the viewer. For the common person, the film industry's art is a getaway from the usual demands of society.

Everything one watches and listens to influences them one way or another. People are constantly learning from the experiences life brings. Movies can significantly affect one's moral

beliefs. For instance, films play a major factor in navigating their audience through a lesson to be learned such as relationship problems, fears, world conflicts, and even how one perceives the world. The content that cinema contains can start discussions of hot topics that the community needs to address. Films like *Cyberbully* and *13 Reasons Why* opened up the topics of bullying and suicide in our society. These films have caught the attention of many adults and has led to the idea of passing new laws against bullying and they have also raised awareness for the current teen suicide rates in America. Also, the movie *Amber Alert* highlights the dangers this world has and also teaches people to always be aware of their surroundings. Cinema is a key role in the community for sharing messages and promoting recognition where it is due. Films also introduce different cultures that people would never have had the chance to come across. Movies grab people by their seats to give them behind the scene access to places they never knew existed. These films can take an audience member across all seven continents, under the sea, or even space which is the reason why these films can have such an impact. Also, the people casted for the film's roles can shape the ideas of the audience. In this society that obsesses over entertainment and celebrity culture, celebrities have a powerful impact on a person's life. By having heavy influencers, famous celebrities, star in these films, people begin to trust and idolize them. For example, ever since the 1920's, many movie stars have been seen smoking cigarettes during their screen time performances and this influenced many viewers to start smoking as well. Seeing celebrities smoke popularized the idea of it to the average individuals. These famous people can affect anything from fashion trends to political views, the popularity level of a celebrity and their lifestyle can influence people's beliefs, interests and behaviors. It is part of film makers duties to remember they have the ability to change the world by influencing the common people's views.

After releasing a film, it is in the hands of the people. While watching a movie, on a date or with the family, it is creating a memory for the viewer. Movies have a special connection with people because they are brought into their homes, a private place, and is shared for entertainment. For everyone, movies create an event that can bring a rollercoaster of emotions. A sad scene is the opportunity to cry and hold one's partner a little tighter. Happy scenes are moments that bring tears of laughter and inside jokes that can last a lifetime. A relatable moment of yelling at the television while wearing popcorn greased pajamas can be created by scenes of anger. With the help of film, people are able to share their emotions with their friends and family. Cinema creates an atmosphere full of feelings that leaves people wanting more which creates the idea of the common weekly movie night in households. These visual stories bring people closer to their love ones by sending them all on a journey that the plot has to offer. Nothing is more special than cuddling up to a love one on the couch to watch a shared favorite movie; those are memories one will cherish forever. Films give opportunities to make memories that leave lasting impressions on one's life. People learn and live through the tales of film and it is the job of the makers to produce quality content for the viewers to connect with.

Film plays a major role in today's society because it is all around us. The storyline of a movie is able to bring out every single emotion that one could possibly think to have. Not only does a person's emotions fluctuate throughout a film, but also their perspective on certain issues addressed in the cinema. Movies have the potential to sway people to believe in certain values and to think in an unquestionable way. These moving pictures are works of art that are made up of persuasive actors and actresses who influence the average human to follow their type of lifestyle. Through movies the audience is able to travel freely to any stress-free location their mind wants to wander to. While watching a movie, the viewer's imagination has not limits or

boundaries. Films allow the watcher to be as creative as their mind will let them and that is why movies act as a creative release for many individuals. The makers of these visual stories have total control on the effects of society due to their role in being creators of a format of influential material. The industry that is creating and publishing films has a crucial responsibility to the community because they determine individuals' future feelings, beliefs, and memories through their completed crafts.

Luke Semones

Wednesday, November 29 2017

IATSE LOCAL 479

2017 Robert Vasquez Scholarship essay

The social impact of films and the responsibility of those that make them. My personal opinion on films are simple. I love them! I'll take the first chance I get to sit back with a strawberry lemonade and watch the newest Riverdale or Hunger games. The impact of films on our social society is something I think positively on. They bring people together and stretch our imaginations to the limit. They push us into real life and fictional realities that the watchers around the world love. Yet, there are people that see that the films and the production of movies, and tv shows as having a negative effect on our generation and society. Its sex scenes, foul language, drug use, and the usual bad guy attitude is showing people that the wrong thing is justified. Kids and teens want to be the on screen characters they love or even loath. In some ways this is good and bad . Even the worst, and most despicable characters originated in a studio. The idea came from some brilliant mind and traveled all the way to a screen in front of you. The good parts of film making and the bad all made their way through thousands of hands that you see in the credits. When a teen fantasizes about the sex scenes in 50 shades of grey, those that were obligated to make that film, those in the credits are responsible. I believe it should be the charge of those responsible for making these films to uphold the first amendment and produce what they want. Yet also to see the effect of what they are releasing and be conscious and rational about what they continue to create.

I jump on the Elephant standing one hundred feet tall. Weaving and making my way all the way to the head. I harness my bow and fire shot after shot to clear the 2 story saddle of enemies. The two hundred ton elephant plunges toward the ground after I shoot 5 of my arrows right between its ginormous tusks. Oh wait, thats not me... its Legolas. He traveled all the way from J. R. R. Tolkeins book to the big screen. The director of The Lord Of The Rings, Peter Jackson transformed Tolkeins brilliant pages into one of the best motion picture series ever. This is a great example of the positivity the creation of films has made on our generation. I wanted to be

Legolas, kids want to be Legolas. The social responsibility of film makers is to connect people to their fictions. Lord Of The Rings being just one example of thousands. This brings people together which makes the films such a positive part of our society.

A positive impact of films or tv shows is the message they try to get across. The hit summer show 13 reasons why follows a girls story of why she killed herself. The main male character goes through the entire first season listening to tapes she leaves behind. He tries to figure out why she did what she did. The show brings awareness to many unfaced issues in our society, such as depression, rape, and bullying. Shows like these portrayed by people behind the scenes are a great example of a positive impacting show. Networks like Hallmark and CBS family, geared towards positive christian based households are also another reason why stretching out imaginations on the big screen is great with me. The producing studios of these networks and shows such as 13 reasons why are really helping the positive argument on this topic. My mom being a costumer can vouch that being on a good wholesome show brings its good wholesome people. in turn, good wholesome people preside good wholesome films for us to enjoy. The fictions of these shows bring us together and provide entertainment. The entertainment industries job is to do just that isn't it?

The Negative impact films have on our society is pretty significant because it rationalizes irrational things into being justifiable. Freedom of speech gives you the right to release whatever you want, which in turn leads to some pretty dark stuff on the big screen. Fifty shades of grey, a show based on sex, lust, and male dominance. What more could a teenage kid ask for in a movie. The responsibility of what this kid is seeing is on the hands of the people who created this show. Don't even get me started on how much this kid will now want to be that guy. This show now has all of the sudden made a kid want to have sex at a younger age, be forceful to women, and even be impure with more than one woman. Things that are not ok in our society are now becoming ok because what we watch is how we act. Now I'm not saying that by watching a The Walking Dead you will become a crazy bat slinging maniac but things you watch will influence how you act and talk. One of my favorite movies of all time is Lone Survivor. While the film brings light to a Phenomenal war story of our nations veterans it also comes with its fare share of F bombs. I watched this movie and for the next week while at school i couldn't rid the word from my vocabulary. Even the greatest of movies can have a negative impact on us as a society. something the the film makers are responsible for.

The astounding list of pros and cons for the impact of films on our generation goes on and on. Stories of midivil elephants the size of roller coasters come to life with the help of people. people who strive to see more of the pros than cons and release the best films possible. They make these films not only as a job but as a passion. My mom loves her costuming job. She works endless hours to help produce content worthy of endless awards. My mom along with thousands of others take on the responsibility of the motion picture content. They strive to release entertainment that entertains and harness their responsibility to do that. At the end of the day, the entertainment industry will continue to entertain and that is their responsibility. What you watch is up to you and I hope that you choose to watch something with meaning so our society can be shaped into something worth watching.

