

St. Monica Film Club

July 9, 2020

Background



When Bryan Stevenson graduated from Harvard Law School, he wanted to make a difference for people who had inadequate legal representation or who had faced discrimination and injustice in the course of their arrest and prosecutions. *Just Mercy* is the true story of Stevenson's work on the William McMillan capital murder case. The film was widely praised and honored in film festivals. Though it was not a hit at the box office at its initial release, people turned to the film to try to understand the events of 2020 such as the case of George Floyd and The Black Lives Matter movement.



Cast & Crew



Bryan Stevenson...Michael B. Jordan
Walter McMillan...Jamie Foxx
Herbert Richardson...Rob Morgan
Minnie McMillan... Karen Kendrick
John McMillan...C.J. LeBlanc
Ralph Meyers...Tim Blake Nelson
Sheriff Tate...Michael Harding

Producer... Asher Goldstein, Michael B. Jordan, Gil Netter
Director... Daniel Destin Craig
Writers...Daniel Destin Craig, Andrew Lanham, Book by Bryan Stevenson
Cinematographer...Brett Pawlak
Editor... Nat Sanders
Composer- Joel P. West
Production Design... Sharon Seymore

For Reflection

1. What was your response to the story and filmmaking?
2. How did the story and filmmaking techniques (lighting, wardrobe, camera angles, sets...) humanize the characters, make the audience recognize them as people of value and worth, children of God?
3. In the film, Stevenson often references the "rule of law" and the "justice system." What event and experiences made people distrust the system? What gave the hope for the possibilities in the justice system?
4. Community can make all the difference in coping and thriving in any hardship. How did the community and family of Walter McMillan support him, and each other? What were the ways their community remained strong in the face of discrimination and violence?

Trivia



-Bryan Stevenson's organization continues to defend people on death row, people with inadequate legal representation, and children in adult prisons. He expanded the work to study and record stories of slavery and lynching.
-Director, Daniel Destin Craig, has made three films with Brie Larson.
-Warner Brothers offered the film for free in June of 2020 as a response to the George Floyd killing and civil rights protests.

The film is available on YouTube, Vudu, Amazon Prime, I-Tunes and other streaming services also on DVD.

Quote from the film

Through this work, I've learned that each of us is more than the worst thing that we've ever done; that the opposite of poverty isn't wealth, the opposite of poverty is justice; that the character of our nation isn't reflected on how we treat the rich and the privileged, but how we treat the poor, the disfavored, and condemned.

Bryan Stevenson at a U.S. Senate Hearing on the Death Penalty

For More Information: www.imdb.com/title/tt4916630/reference