American History X Essay, Research Paper

Trond Haugen

A: How the movie American history X has influenced me

American history X had a strange effect on me. Usually, movies entertain me as I watch them, but the moment they end, it is over. Everything goes back to the way it is was as I leave the theatre. American history X was not like that. It got stuck in my head, and I kept thinking and evaluating for weeks afterwards. And I still do.

In my home contry, Norway, there is a strong focus on racial issues. Our people was nearly 100% white until 1970. From then and until now a sufficient number has crossed our border and settled among us. The absolute majority thinks this is just fine. But there is also a considerable amount who feel that our new inhabitans bring more trouble than anything else. Because of this our government has worked hard for the last few decades to influence all of its people to be more open minded and help our new compatriots. At school we learn a lot about racism, and why it is wrong.

Until the day I watched American history X my simple vision was the racists (definition: people who hold one race better, and more worth than other races ) were bad people. Their brains just do not function well, and the best thing for everybody would be that they left for a long journey and never came back. Now I know that it is much more complicated than that.

According to the movie mainly two factors create a racist; hatred and unsecurity. I assume 99 percent suffer from the last factor. Still it is the 1% who endure from hatred who are the dangerous ones. If the society can learn to deal with them, there would no longer be any problems with racism. The unsecure people, without any friends or anywhere to go, would then seek other and more healthy environments.

The main character in American history X was one of those who was blinded by hate. From an early age his father taught him that black people should not be trusted. And when he died, by an accident, the black race got all the blame. I am no psycologist, but I assume this could happen to anyone. If you hear a lie several times every day, it is just a matter of time before you start believing it. Your own intelligence has got little to do with it. This is probably why Hitler got as far as he did, and why todays nazi groups are as strong as they are. Their leaders are simply (in a bad way) extremely competent.

I often watch movies who has a message. But until American history X they never affected me strongly. Either I felt: I do not need a movie to tell me this , or this does not make any sense. What made American history X so special, was that I could mix my own experiences and underlying thoughts with what the movie tried to tell me. It was a perfect match, and my greatest film experience ever.