12 Years a Slave

Director: Steve McQueen

Writers: John Ridley (screenplay) , Solomon Northup

Stars: Chiwetel Ejiofor, Michael Kenneth Williams, Michael Fassbender

The Film won 3 Oscars.

Plot:

12 Years a Slave is a 2013 period drama film and is an adaptation of 1853 slave narrative memoir by Solomon Northup. In the Film, Chiwetel Ejiofor plays a freed man, who is a violin player and resides in New York State. In 1841 he was drugged and kidnapped, brought to the south and sold into slavery under his new slave name “Platt” after being lured by the opportunity of a music gig. he is drugged and kidnapped and sold to multiple slave owners in Louisiana. During his 12 years as a slave he endured lashings and was forced to lash another slave. Being forced to do such a cruel degrading thing deteriorated Solomon even more than he already was. He is enslaved for 12 years before he meets Samuel Bass, a Canadian labor who does not agree with slavery. Samuel agrees to send a letter to New york on behalf of Solomon. Solomon is rescued by Mr.Parker who is a shopkeeper that Solomon had met earlier in the film. The director’s use of cinematography throughout the film was very gripping. Using techniques like soundboards for the whip, and camera angles to give a first person perspective on what was happening. In conclusion, 12 years a slave was a well directed, and excellent reiteration of Solomon Northup’s story.

Human Rights Abuses in the Film:

Article 1: all human beings are born free and equal. There is mention in the film that most of the Slaves were born into slavery this has an effect on many of the slaves as they do not rebel against the Plantation owners when solomon and two others are planning an escape.

Article 2: Everyone is entitled to all the rights and freedoms set forth in this Declaration, without distinction of any kind, such as race, colour, sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, national or social origin, property, birth or other status. During the film most of the black slaves are whipped if they pick less than 200 pounds of cotton, But when a white plantation worker picks 64 pounds of cotton he is not whipped. This shows that the black slaves are not entitled the rights in the declaration

Article 4: No one shall be held in slavery or servitude; slavery and the slave trade shall be prohibited in all their forms. Solomon Northup is a free man who is kidnapped and sold into slavery thus resulting in him missing his kids childhood and the birth of his grandson. Also Many of the slaves die from disease due to being in unsanitary conditions during the movie.

Article 5: No one shall be subjected to torture or to cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment. Solomon Northup and the other slaves are whipped often in the movie. Also Patsey one of the slaves is sexually abused and harassed by Edwin Epps and Physically and mentally abused by Mrs.Epps driving her to the point in which she asks Solomon to kill her.