
A Hunting Ground: A Review Of A Documentary On Sexual Abuses Cases In College Campuses

I chose to watch the documentary *The Hunting Ground*, which is a film that focuses on the staggering rates of sexual assault on college campuses. I chose to watch this film because I was writing my issue analysis paper on this exact problem, and I knew that this film would help give me an insight view into the issue before starting on my paper. *The Hunting Ground* is a heart-wrenching, beautiful film that follows the stories of many young men and women through their sexual assault stories that have occurred while they were enrolled in a college or university. The documentary begins with a collage of videos, filming high school girls opening their college acceptance letters. The point of this was to show that the excitement of getting into your dream school could be tainted during your first year, or your remaining 3, by rape and sexual assault. As the documentary continues, it goes in depth on how colleges are not doing responding effectively to the assaults that are happening on their own campuses. It shares the stories of many courageous women, who have fought against their schools and their offenders to get the justice they deserved. It specifically focuses on the case of Annie E. Clark and Andrea Pino, who were raped at the University of North Carolina-Chapel. The University did not accurately or effectively handle the situation, and did not offer any help or support to the young women, so they filed a Title IX claim against the University. Their claim went through, and they took it to court and won. They were portrayed as two women who started out as women who wanted justice, to change agents that have made a huge impact in increasing awareness of sexual assault on college campuses through this documentary. *The Hunting Ground* shows case after case when universities did not accurately respond to women's sexual assault claim, and it shows how administration is turning their eye when it comes to sexual assault on their campus due to funding and reputation. Universities do not want to lose money focusing on sexual assault, and they do not wait their reputations to be tainted by the statistics.

This film is related to social and economic justice because it highlights the social issue of sexual assault and rape that is happening on college campuses. Women are being oppressed everywhere by their perpetrators, and they are being silenced due to stigma. There are 5 faces to oppression, and many of them are seen within the issue of sexual assault. Sexual assault survivors are exploited through perpetrators exploiting a women's body for their own sexual gain. Survivors are marginalized, and put into the fringe of society due to the stigma that surrounds sexual assault. Rapists crave power and control, and this film highlighted how they are getting away with these crimes because the survivors feel as if they are being pushed into the margins of society. This goes hand in hand with stigma. By being oppressed and pushed to the side, survivors can find it difficult to stand up and speak out in fear of being rejected,

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laughed at, or not believed. Furthermore, survivors are made to feel powerless to their assaulter by being forced into something they have not consented on in the first place. Lastly, violence is a huge part of sexual assault. Survivors were directly victimized and deprived of their freedom and dignity through the sexual violence.

The Hunting Ground focused a lot on how Universities would victim blame by asking them questions such as “how drunk were you” or even asking one rape victim “what she should have done differently in the game” as if rape was comparative to a football game. Furthermore, it is an economic issue because Universities are in search of constant capital, and since a high amount of sexual assaults on their campus could look very bad, it could turn away future students. This loss of students would result in loss money, thus bringing the cycle full circle. If administrations stopped focusing on money and more on the health of their students, there could be a change in the statistics, which would help both sides.

While watching this film, I experienced a range of emotions. I was horrified by some of the statistics and stories given. I was so sad that these horrible events have occurred to women across the nation. Lastly, the women who shared their stories inspired me. I could not imagine having to share something so personal and horrific with so many people, but I could understand why they felt like they needed to share their stories to make a change. By sharing what happened before their rape, during, and after, these women were able to convey how serious the problem was, how it was handled on campus, and if their offender was punished. As I sat there, processing what I was watching, I felt valiant. I knew at that moment that I wanted to become a change agent on this campus. Before watching, I knew that it was an issue, and I have been exposed to it before, but there was something so inspiring about this documentary that I knew it was time to take action.

This experience helped to increase awareness as well as appreciation for the women who have enacted change. I learned so much about sexual assault that I didn't know before watching the film, and I am grateful that I had the opportunity to increase my awareness on this important issue. I felt like by the end of it I had a better understanding of the issues surrounding sexual assault in colleges and universities nationwide. I really began to comprehend the seriousness of the problem, and the information I gained from this experience will surely last me a lifetime. I also felt a great amount of gratitude towards the girls who came forward and toward their stories. It takes so much courage to tell the nation that kind of story, and without them the film would not have been possible. Furthermore, it is important to acknowledge the women who have taken action against their universities. Because of them, there has been so much light shed on how universities are only adding to the negative effects of a sexual assault. Overall, I had a better understanding, appreciation, and a better awareness of sexual assault victims and their stories. After watching the film, I knew I needed to learn more. This film is what prompted me to write my issue paper on sexual assault on college campuses, and it has opened my eyes

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