
Critical Analysis of the Movie Stand by Me and Issues it Explores

“Stand by me” is a film about a group of four twelve year old boys growing up in Oregon in the eighties. The movie is narrated by one of the boys once he has grown into an author, Gordie Lachance. He is the quieter one of the group and likes to read, write and hang out with his three buddies: Chris, Vern, and Teddy. Chris Chambers is Gordie’s best friend, He is a pretty nice and smart kid, but he is also brave and viewed by the fellow town folk as a bad kid. Then there is Vern Tessio, he is the more naïve one of the group. People usually perceive him and his family as not so bright or simply stupid. And last but certainly not least is Teddy Duchamp, he is very eccentric. He wears a hearing aid, and also wears these huge glasses.

The boys one day hear about someone who was accidently killed near their homes. So they set out on an adventure to go view his body. On this adventure the boys discover new places such as a junk yard with a vicious dog that they have to escape from. They also discover a marsh full of leeches on their way. During this adventure, the boys discover lots of different things about themselves and each other. Such as the problems they all have at home, Family.

Gordie has an older brother that recently died, he was a widely liked, respected fellow. Gordie has all the pressure to follow in his footsteps, and become just like him. He has problems with his family because they always compare them saying things such as “why can’t you be more like your brother?” His family also accuses him of not being around with the family because of the death of his older brother. Then there is Chris Chambers, he comes from a family with their fair share of problems. He has an alcoholic and abusive father who he tries to get away from to avoid anything bad happening. He also has an older brother, but he isn’t liked nor respected by others because he didn’t follow the best path. Chris is often viewed as a trouble maker, even though he isn’t one at all, he just stands up for himself and friends.

Vern Tessio is the friendliest one out of the bunch, a bit naïve and very trusting. The town folk view his family as stupid, and he has an older brother as well who is a part of a group of teens that aren’t the nicest, or in other words, bullies. And lastly we have Teddy. He is the most eccentric one of the group with a hearing aid and huge glasses. When he was younger, his father who is a war vet got sent to a mental hospital due to mental illness and ever since then, Teddy has been sensitive to words such as looney or crazy.

This movie has a lot of issues when it comes to family and relationships with one another. They all might love each other but may not show it in a logical way. Such as abusing your child. Chris

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Chambers has a father who is an alcoholic and an abuser. He physically abuses Chris and doesn't realize the effect it has on him and their relationship. According to P.E. Mullen, abuse of any kind will affect the victim's health and mental functioning. Studies show that people who abuse their children were more than likely abused in some way growing up. So it is almost as if they abuse to feel in control or even in some way "get back" at the original abuser. With that being said, the child may even grow up to abuse his loved ones as well. Which in this situation didn't happen.

Another way love wasn't expressed in a good way was when Gordie's parents would constantly tell him that they wish he were more like his late older brother. Gordie wasn't a bad kid, but I believe that his family were so sad and hurt by the death of his brother, that they didn't know how to handle it. According to Astrid Poorthius, Children's self-esteem is usually high but there are certain cases where it isn't on par with other children their age self-esteem. Due to things like Abuse and withholding of love and affection from parents. Which is exactly what's happening in the case of Gordie here. His parents I'm sure love him and all, but they aren't being good parents and giving him the love that he needs because they are bitter and sad about the death of his older brother. Children who have low self-esteem tend to pick on other kids to make themselves feel better. Also children who have low self-esteem tend to be quiet, negative, and insecure according to Saul McLeod.

The most important message from this movie I'd say is the friendship of all four boys. Friendship is very important as it shows through this movie. Without it, these four boys would have had a much harder time getting through all their problems and facing all the obstacles they had to overcome with one another. According to John H Boman, Children with no friends are more likely to slide into depression during their teen years. The reason for this because the child had no support other than parents. That isn't always a bad thing, but some children don't have a well enough relationship with their parents to receive support and such. The boys got closer and learned more about one another on themselves on this journey. They also kept this friendship all the way until the end.

Stand by me is a phenomenal movie with numerous messages that still relate to things today. It is a good coming of age tale about boys dealing with things that are everyday problems and how they get through it with the help of each other. It also highlights the how the boy's relationships strengthen.

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