
Main Issues Arised In 100 Yen Love

100 Yen Love is a movie about self redemption, feminist empowerment and the reality of a Japanese dollar store. Directed by the Japanese director, Masaharu Take, we are introduced to Ichiko, played by Japanese female actress Sakura Ando. After being thrown out of her home, Ichiko faces reality at its brutalest. With the added damage of having to go through a traumatic experience, she goes on a difficult journey to win back her pride and self worth. Along the way, Ichiko meets several characters such as loud mouth coworker Noma, played by Tadashi Sakata, and her romantic interest Kano the amature boxer, played by Hirofumi Arai.

The first aspect that I will be discussing in this analysis is intersectionality. According to Huffington Post (2017), intersectional feminism is the discrimination of women based on layers of characteristics such as age, income, race, religion, sexual orientation and more more. Throughout the movie, there were little to no signs of any intersectional discrimination. However in the film, the only time Ichiko wasn't given the same opportunity as any other individual was when her boxing coach felt reluctant to allow her to compete. It could be said that the boxing coach felt that as a middle aged woman, her age proved to be a disability, thus leaving her neither good nor strong enough to enter the competition. Nonetheless, through blood and sweat, she proved herself to her coach that she was indeed worthy of competing. Ichiko is later presented as the underdog hero of our film, preparing to battle it out with former champion of the female lightweight boxing, much like the plot to international boxing film favourite: Rocky.

Secondly, the gender ratios of heroes were unbalanced but they were in favour of Ichiko. Ichiko's hero journey began at one of her lowest points in the film. After being sexually assaulted by her co-worker Noma, she managed to muster enough courage and strength necessary to inform the authorities about what had happened. This particular scene can be seen as an empowerment message to other sexually assaulted victims encouraging them to come forward about their experiences and bring their perpetrators to justice, similar to the Me Too movement. It could be argued that Kano played a hero role too, however I felt that there were too many cases of Kano bluntly leaving Ichiko often without a word when she needed him most. Only when she had regained her pride and entered the competition did Kano return.

In the film the roles that Ichiko's household women played can be consisted slightly opposite to the traditional expectations of family roles. The household consisted of a female authoritative figure, a walking representative for failure and our own Ichiko, a slothy shut in. Ichiko's mother plays both breadwinner and authoritative figure simultaneously as she remains the family business owner. Ichiko's sister plays the role of a angsty chilli pepper as she constantly harasses Ichiko about her lifestyle. Ichiko's role can be described as your typical college dropout or the family's burden as she rarely contributes to the livelihood of the family. On the other hand, the "man-of-the-house", Ichiko's father shows absolutely no control over the explosive brawl between Ichiko and her recently divorced sister, however, the authority is derived from Ichiko's mother who sets her foot down and informs Ichiko that she has to leave the home. Ichiko's nephew plays a miniscule role as he represents Ichiko's only friend at the time. Gender roles in film can be powerful influencers especially for young women. According to The Odyssey Online (2016), reverse gender roles in film presents the possibility whereby any gender can achieve their dream regardless of the social barriers.

Next, in terms of sexual desires and attraction, both parties (Ichiko and Kano) appear submissive at first, both extremely shy during their encounters. As time slowly progresses throughout the film, Ichiko slowly begins to develop a sense of assertiveness and questions Kano about whether they were in a relationship. Even after Kano abandoning Ichiko after they had relations, Ichiko made the move to confront Kano about the situation whereas her love interest was uninterested and afraid of commitment at best. Thus, this is a portrayal of twisting the common stereotype of men courting women.

Moving on comes the question of women and power. The film introduces Ichiko as useless as well powerless. This is made prevalent during the scene whereby Ichiko is forced to leave her own home and when she is beaten down by her own sister. Only after her traumatic rape experience does she seek out a means to develop her own sense of power. According to The Women and Gender Advocacy Center (n.d), taking part in sports and hobbies that a victim would enjoy is a step forward in the direction of healing. In the same way, Ichiko used boxing as a means to get control back in her life.

For the sixth point, I will be combining stereotypes and positive role models. Women are often portrayed as looking attractive and passive whereas men are mostly seen as active and dominant. 100 Yen Love steps away from that common stereotype and showcases Ichiko in all her glory - beginning with her hair in a mess, smoking cigarettes while playing video games with her nephew to a amateur boxer unwilling to quit. For this very reason I believe that Ichiko proves to be a great role model. She doesn't squander her time feeling sorry for herself but seeks out means to channel out her despair. If more people were to follow in Ichiko's footsteps and pour all their negative energy into something positive, greater things can happen.

To conclude I would like to bring to light the question, how does the feminist film theory affect the future of cinema? Thanks to amazing films such as 100 Yen Love, we are able to take a step forward in truly abolishing several outraging practices that are prevalent in current cinema, starting with eroticization of women. Eroticization of women, as described by Maggie Humm, the author of several books regarding feminism, most famously *Feminism and Film*, is the act of assuming that the viewer of the film is a white male while simultaneously encouraging voyeurism through certain camera and narrative techniques.(1997, pp. 39) Masaharu Take presented viewers of his film with a true depiction of how a beaten down woman will appear. As said through an article by The Prime Directive (2016), there is nothing innately erotic about woman's body parts, the problem lies in the premise of the Male Gaze.

Correspondingly, feminist and movie goers alike are able to start having more conversations about the possibility of more female's takings on protagonist roles, even the likes of action based films. Although the film may not consist of an abundance of action, 100 Yen Love proves to be a prime example of women persevering through a fight. I myself as a woman, rarely view myself as a damsel in distress. Having watched Ichiko go punch after punch I found myself supporting her internally, hoping that she'll win. According to Business Insider (2017) it's meaningful for women, especially young girls, to be exposed to films that showcases woman being capable of taking care of themselves.

Lastly, I would like to discuss about the severe lack of diversity in the filmmaking industry. As quoted by The Guardian (2018), several large media companies globally are continuing to underperform regarding hiring diverse directors with inequality being the root of issue. Through their research, attendees of cinema are beginning to differ from standard cinema to other

means of consuming entertainment that fulfills their needs. If the film industry remains reluctant to change their ways, the future of cinema may be viewed from a subscription service in most households.

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