**Abstract**

“Don’t use media to impress people; use it to impact people.” Dave Willis.

It has been almost three decades since the hit movie “Philadelphia,” which sought to address the HIV epidemic and the general sentiment of society towards it, was released. In that time period, general advancements in medicine have made the disease treatable and we have become more accepting as a society towards the victims of this disease. However, after such a long time, is the movie still making an impact? People can definitely still reflect and learn from this movie since it provides a bigger message of unity among people despite our underlying differences, and many parallels can and have been drawn to modern issues in our society such as the crisis of opioid addiction.

**Bibliography**

**Bahagiawati, Nur Anik. *STRUGGLE FOR EQUALITY IN JONATHAN DEMME’S PHILADELPHIA MOVIE: AN INDIVIDUAL PSYCHOLOGICAL APPROACH*. Universitas Muhammadiyah Surakarta, 2009. *eprints.ums.ac.id*, http://eprints.ums.ac.id/5520/1/A320050230.pdf**

This is a research paper proposal by a student at Muhammadiyah University of Surakarta who is pursuing his Bachelor’s Degree of Education in the English Department. This whole research project actually turned out to be a joined effort by several students to document Andrew Beckett (the protagonist of the film) throughout the movie Philadelphia. The whole paper can be found here: <http://eprints.ums.ac.id/31773/>, but specifically read this part since it talks about the extent to which the protagonist faces discrimination and the extent to which that violates the basic human rights that every American citizen has. This is then generalized to the general population’s struggle for equality and peoples’ psychological need to fit in.

**Demme, Jonathan, director. Philadelphia.**

This is just the actual Philadelphia movie which I haven’t seen yet. This is done as an effort to limit the presence of my own opinions in the actual research paper and to base my writing mainly off of the scholarly research that has been done on the movie. For the moment being, I only know that the movie talks about a lawyer (played by Tom Hanks) who is fired based on the basis of his disease and his sexual orientation, and that he asks another lawyer (played by Denzel Washington) for help. However, after the majority of the paper has been written, I will then see the movie to verify the already done research and get a better idea for the whole picture.

**Demme, Jonathan, and Robert Elliot. Kapsis. Jonathan Demme: Interviews. University Press of Mississippi, 2009, pp. 82-85.**

This book is a compilation of interviews with Jonathan Demme, the director of the film, and is edited by Robert E. Kapsis. This particular section of the book talks about the irony within the title of the movie and the message that it was meant to convey. To quote John Demme himself: “I like the ironic undercuts to it. As we say in the script, ‘Here we are in the birthplace of the Declaration of Independence, but look at the discrimination present here, as in all American cities and towns. Here we are in the City of Brotherly Love, and yet there’s tremendous prejudice here, as in all other American cities.’”

**Gordon, Elana. WHYY, WHYY, 20 Dec. 2013, whyy.org/segments/20th-anniversary-of-philadelphia/.**

This online article by Elana Gordon talks about the effects that the movie had on society since it released back in 1993. It talks about how the stigma that the disease carries with it as well as the stereotype that the disease is a “gay man’s” disease has been greatly lessened. In addition, she backs this up with the opinions of Alan Epstein, a lawyer who defended a man in a very similar position as the one in the movie, and how he has also seen a shift in opinions and the perception of AIDS as a whole since the movie released. She also goes into detail about the disease itself and talks about how despite the fact that the disease is still spreading (mainly over poorer communities), the mortality rate has greatly decreased since the 90s.

**Millea, Holly. “Looking Back at ‘Philadelphia,’ 25 Years Later.” *Smithsonian Magazine*, https://www.smithsonianmag.com/arts-culture/looking-back-philadelphia-25-years-later-180971011/. Accessed 17 Mar. 2020.**

In this article for the Smithsonian magazine, columnist Holly Millea asks the question “What would the breakthrough movie [Philadelphia] look like if it were made today? She provides a lot of background information about the movie and talks about how the directors wanted to make the lead a gay man and his partner a homophobic straight man so that audiences could have a character to relate to, how the film included so many actual AIDS victims as extras and how so many of them died by the end of the film’s production, and how the directors perceive the current issue of opioid addiction in the United States as eerily similar to the AIDS epidemic. She ends the article by telling us about an interview she had with some of the film’s team and how when asked her driving question, they responded with: “It ‘would be about people with HIV who are transgender, who are forced into sex work to survive. Who are arrested and abused by the police and criminal justice system’” and how the main character “would be a gay man of color, coming from a poorer background … with an addiction.”