MLO 5 Silvia Arevalo

1. Theme: Femicide: and Domestic Violence against the Mexican women

Documentary Senorita EXTRAVIADA, Desert Blood, and the song “Dia 730”

1. Documentary Senorita X provides us with the real stories of mothers in search of their daughters who have gone missing in the border town of Juarez. It was published in the year of 2001, where the start of this tragedy was around 1993.The author of this film is Lourdes Portillo who was the investigator and worked hard to get the answers or at least try to solve these crimes against women. She also has worked to create the documentary of “Mothers of the Plaza de Mayo”, which is another moment in history we do not know about. The fact that Portillo wanted to do this film was because of the way the Mexican government doesn’t do its work for the justice of the missing women.
2. I also read the summary of Desert Blood to three of my interviewers and with this I was going to analyze their feedback and compare it to what I thought was very influential in for the cultural value.
3. Ages of my interviewers: Teacher at El Sausal middle school age 29(Mr. T), President of the 8th grade class with permission of her parent 13(student), and Librarian of ESMS age 54.
4. Questions of the interview
5. What did you think of the word Femicide?
6. Did it make you want to do something about the problem?
7. What part of the music video of “Dia 730” was the part that spoke out to you most?
8. Did you ever know about the “femicide”?
9. Do you think it happens anywhere?
10. Do you think machismo and the hate of women exists now and do you ever see it in families of Hispanic decent?
11. What do you think each author or music writer is trying to tell us?
12. Would you tell people about this if they asked?
13. What is your overall thought about this Femicide in Juarez?
14. Do you think it should be advertised or taught in schools?

**Analysis of interviewers**

The age difference of my interviewers was very wide from 13 to 54 I think I at least touched on a different generation. It was very interesting how I got some similar answers from each. For example, on question #2 of “Did hearing about this make you want to do something about it”? most of the 3 answers were positive. Student of 13 years of age stated how she would definitely want to do something about it but she wouldn’t know where exactly to start. The librarian even recognized that there not many books that they offer at school about these tragedies and maybe Desert Blood could be a great addition to the shelves of ESMS. The student who I interviewed is president of the 8th grade class and she is very knowledgeable about politics, one of her first questions was “how come the police doesn’t stop it?”, and that’s because she didn’t think there was corruption back then, especially because she was born in the year 2004 she hasn’t seen that Mexico is known for their police corruption. The Librarian who has lived in this community for most of her life she has noticed that there is machismo referring back to my #6 question. She explained to me that sometimes when they had open house for the students and parents to visit, she would see where a dad would tell the mom to be quiet or in a different case where the dad only cared for the son and not the daughter. That was a tough story because the girl student had told her librarian that her dad didn’t believe she would be anything because she was a girl, but on the other hand her brother would be a great and important engineer. The men who are machistas don’t believe women should have the right to succeed and be successful.

I really valued and appreciated first that they would accept for me to interview them about a not so happy topic, something only the news should cover. But for them it was something new that they had learned. Even for the librarian who had never heard of this, but her grandparents grew up near El, Paso Texas and never had told her anything about the border being bad. Or herself when she would visit them during the summers they would let her out late at night with her friends. She liked how I chose Intocable’s song “Dia 730” to talk about because when she watched the video she did get teary eyes and it made her feel “compasión por las victimas”. The reaction I got from Mr. T from the music video was surprising because as a male they shouldn’t get emotional but when he talked about it after he got a weird feeling because in his family all he is surrounded by is women. His four sisters his mother and grandma and of course his dad. But he felt compelled because he said “I would die looking for any of my sisters if this happened”. I meant to me that this video got to him and made him want to do something about it.

When I told them about the author of Desert Blood all three of my interviewers were surprised it was a female who had written about this tragedy. The librarian didn’t even think it was a true story until I told her it was a fiction novel based on a true event. The student thought that she was a good writer because it has mystery and other genres/ topics we might find now a days in books when back then there wasn’t really a lot of books that involved the lesbian community. They really enjoyed watching the music video of Intocable, the 13-year-old student was surprised that a group like Intocable would interpret this song especially since their known for their romantic love songs. My other two interviewers don’t listen to Spanish music so they couldn’t really like it but I gave them the lyrics to the song as well and they understood what the songs message was. The message that was being sent for the mothers of the victims who are the ones that are suffering because they can’t find their little girls who were tricked by some promise of being models and earning big money.

I think being Hispanic we get the image of the man overrunning the family and taking power of the women. We were born and raised to think that the man was the bread winner, but things have changed and women have rights too. Women should not be afraid to speak up against machistas, especially men in their families. Women are the same human kind as a man and therefore should be valued more than just homemakers. The purpose of this interview was to think about our own values that we have as human beings, women represent the power to keep encouraging those who have lost someone to the Femicide. The support the organizations that are helping the mothers of the victims get justice since the government would not do anything. Men in all cultures should value the women and not raise their hands against them, after all the women was the one giving birth to the man.

As I listened to each of my interviews I clearly knew who they were in the community, but I never got to be close to them or ask them these type of questions especially when they opened up emotionally and told me stories I would have never guessed about them. Having one male in this interview who was influenced by women gave me an outlook of that not all men are like this and we should appreciate the men too. In listening I learned three different aspects of my research. Different aspects that all point towards one keyword: justice, justice for the victims who vanished who were never found, and justice for the women that was found dead, in pieces brutally murdered.

Mexico lacks the opportunity for women to be successful and I think that is a value that should change in society. The norm should not be just about the man being the bigger person, because he is seen as a coward in most of the Femicides that are happening in Juarez, and all Latin America. Coming from a family where both my parents worked made me understand and think that times are changing and women too are giving their representation of hardworking women and not letting themselves fall down. Both my parents are strong and I’m glad my dad was never overbearing of my mother like the stereotype falls. At the end of the interviews I explained to my interviewees that this was not a great happy discovery but, it has happened in history and for them to share the story of Femicide it would create more consciousness not only against femicide but also about machistas, and domestic violence. Each of them gave me a better outlook especially since all them were different in ages. How we live is a way to show our values, if we live good and happy it shows we value our morals our parents and culture gave us. The Mexican culture of valuing and caring for one another and believing the truth of yourself and not of others. You are yourself by where you come from and from who you come from as well.

References

* Gaspar, de A. A. *Desert Blood: The Juárez Murders*. Houston, Tex: Arte Publico Press, 2005. Print.
* Portillo, Lourdes. *Señorita Extraviada: Missing Young Woman*. New York, NY: Women make movies, 2001.

Three Interviewers

Student at ESMS

Teacher at ESMS

Librarian at ESMS

Thank You!