Inherit The Wind: Movie Review

Inherit The Wind depicts the famous Monkey Trial, the trial where a teacher violated the law by teaching evolution at a public school. Throughout the enlightening trial, the teacher in question, Bertram Cates, is represented by the quick-witted and charming law attorney, Henry Drummond.

Before his arrival to Hillsboro, Mr. Drummond already had a stigma about him. Despite being considered “the most agile legal mind of the twentieth century”, the citizens of Hillsboro did not approve of him because of his successes defending notorious criminals. Defending criminals was not considered just in their eyes. Regardless of their non-approving views, Mr. Drummond was still able to fulfill his duties to the best of his ability and in doing so he saves the community of Hillsboro from their narrow-minded views and enlightens them to question perspective.

According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics, becoming a lawyer usually takes 7 years of full-time study. There are many certificates and licenses a lawyer can achieve depending on their endgame. Some important qualities a lawyer must poses if they would like to become a successful one are as follows: analytical skills, interpersonal skills, problem-solving skills, and speaking skills. All of these qualities were demonstrated by Mr. Drummond in the scene where he called Colonel Brady to the witness stand.

The quick-wittedness of Mr. Drummond is highlighted during the climax of the trial. As he tries to call his witnesses to the stand, they are all quickly shot down due to the narrowmindedness of Hillsboro. For a moment, he was in shock and awe. He was helpless, a feeling he has never felt in the world of law. With the power of his daring tact and resiliency, he deemed the best of course of action would be to call the prosecuting attorney to the witness stand, an action that many would see as “highly unorthodox.” It is considered highly unorthodox because he is doing something a lawyer would not occasionally do. Typically, the unfolding of a trial is the prosecuting party presenting evidence on why the defendant should be found guilty and the attorney for the defendant will state their case on why they should not be found guilty. Evidence can consist of material things or the testimonies of other individuals, related to the case or not. Both parties will build their foundations and the jury will ultimately decide whether the defendant is guilty or not.

Mr. Drummond knew he was in for a challenge when the courtroom denied him all of his original witnesses. One of the witnesses being Dr. Keller, an expert on Zoology. Zoology is defined as the scientific study of the behavior, structure, physiology, classification, and distribution of animals. He was intended to explain to the jury what the evolutionary theory was so the jury could have a better understanding of the actual material Mr. Cates was teaching to his class of students. Once Colonel Brady found out, he objected because he deemed the theory of evolution “irrelevant and inadmissible.” He also states, “The people of [the] state have made it very clear that they [did] not want the zoological hogwash slobbered around the schoolrooms.” Hogwash is another word for nonsense. The strong dislike for such knowledge being taught in the classroom setting strongly illustrates the narrow mindedness of himself along with the narrow mindedness of the community of Hillsboro. Mr. Drummond did not let the roadblock stop him. He persisted.

Once the courtroom shot the idea of zoology down, Mr. Drummond decided to appeal to their interests by calling on Dr. Allen Page, Deacon of the Congregational Church and professor of geology and archeology. As Mr. Drummond introduced his witness, he glared at Colonel brady indicating Mr. Drummond's acceptance of the challenge. A deacon is the lowest rank of the threefold Christian ministry, below the priest and bishop. The doctor being from the world Hillsboro approves of, Mr. Drummond had thought he had a legitimate chance, but he is met with a roadblock yet again. The witness was not accepted because of the fact of the other roles Dr. Page was an expert in. Those roles being geology and archeology and he was not approved because "…they [did] not relate to [the] point of law" in question. Geology is the science that deals with the earth's physical structure and substance, its history, and the processes that act on it. Archeology is the study of human history and prehistory through the excavation of sites and the analysis of artifacts and other physical remains. Because those two fields did not have anything relating to the Bible, the community of Hillsboro shot them down thus revealing another aspect of their ignorance. The great Henry Drummond was in the biggest trial of his life.

After the courtroom has exhausted him of his weapons, he finally did the unthinkable. He called the prosecuting attorney, Colonel Brady, to the witness stand. Regardless of the unusual action, Mr. Brady answered Mr. Drummond's call to the witness stand. Mr. Brady was very eager to step up against the quick-witted lawyer because he believed since he knew the Bible, he knew everything that there was. Mr. Drummond will soon play as Colonel Brady's kryptonite. He first asks Brady simple common questions about the Bible to establish a foundation. Eventually, Mr. Drummond begins to ask open ended questions whose answers are not so easily stated in the Bible. Drummond's patient demeanor and open-minded, progressive way of thinking emphasizes Brady's narrow-minded way of thinking. Once Mr. Drummond begins to ask questions about thinking, Colonel Brady is baffled because the Bible does not state answers related to one's thinking. By hammering away at the inconsistencies and eventually attacking Brady's self-appointed status of prophet, Drummond is able to sway the courtroom's support in his direction, to open their eyes thus enlightening them.

Even though the jury found Cates guilty, it is a moral victory for Mr. Drummond. Cates was shocked and confused questioning the outcome of the case. Mr. Drummond puts him at ease by telling him "that [he] smashed a bad law. [He] made it a joke. He further explained it to Cates by telling him that those kinds of cases will continue to happen. His case was not the last of its kind, but that "he helped the next fella by giving him the guts to stand up" and fight for whatever he believes in. Though the jury decided against Mr. Drummond, he knew that he had created the necessary spark for the townspeople of Hillsboro to think for themselves and to question. Just as the case was coming to a close, Mr. Drummond notices the Bible, the very book that he was defending against, and decided to pair it with Rachel's copy of Darwin thus indicating the acceptance of two colossal mindsets can come together and unite. One is not necessarily wrong or more right than the other. The people of Hillsboro saw Mr. Drummond as an atheist, but he was not that at all. He was simply defending an individual's God-given right to think.

In "Mind Power-The Power of Thoughts" by Remez Sasson, he states the following: "The thoughts that pass through your mind are responsible for everything that happens in your life. Your predominant thoughts influence your behavior and attitude and control your actions and reactions. As your thoughts are, so is your life." Mr. Cates taught forbidden knowledge because he believed it was right though the people of Hillsboro thought otherwise. The community believed in a very extreme system, a black and white system one would say. A mindset is either wrong and in the black or right and is in the white. There is no in between of the two. If things

were not found written in the Bible, those things were considered wrong and therefore in the black side of the spectrum. Mr. Drummond saw the fundamentalism views that Hillsboro had created and noticed they were fighting the power of freedom of simply to think. He could have easily given up on Mr. Cates and be more worried about his record of winning cases in the courtroom.

Instead, he saw the opportunity to enlighten others to think for themselves and to not necessarily accept what is on the surface, to question such things and to seek knowledge. Seeking knowledge is the key to one's growth. Seeking knowledge is the way of life. Not only was he defending an individual's right to think, he also enlightened a public to question knowledge thus proving he really was "the most agile legal mind of the twentieth century"