The Critical Race Theory In Remembering The Titans

Racism plays an incredibly large role in sports and has been around ever since other races began to participate in the traditional American sport. In this film term paper, I will discuss, and break down how critical race theory and different social issues compare the great movie “Remember The Titans”. “Remember The Titans” takes place in Alexandria a city in northern Virginia. The school's name in the film is named T.C Williams and is around the time where schools were going through the integration of blacks and whites approximately in 1971. The movie starts off with a crowd of African Americans protesting for a black teenager who was gunned down by a white officer. In the early times of integration tragedies like this happened quite often, and they greatly affect sport. Bill Yoast was the white coach of T.C Williams high school before integration started, however when T.C Williams was integrated the school board came to the conclusion that coach Yoast will no longer be the head coach, and they decided to give the position to Herman Boone an African American coach from North Carolina. Initially, coach Yoast was going to quit from coaching at T.C Williams, and take a head coaching job at Loudon county. This is because at first coach Yoast refused to coach under a black coach. When the white players on the team found the news out about coach Yoast, they also wanted to leave T.C Williams. Coach Yoast didn’t want his players to leave T.C Williams for his decision so he decided he will not leave and assisted coach Boone in running the T.C Williams football program. The first team event was a summer training camp, and all the players were forced to live together for a week to train and bond together. Right off the bat racial tensions were very hostile between players and coaches. there were many arguments and fights simply because of the differences in color between races. Throughout the camp and the season, the players and coaches began to accept each other and they became quite successful in and out of football. The players started to get along and form strong bonds with each other. Due to all of the success the football team getting close rubbed off on the city. This is because when the school attends the game and sees that both the black and white players are thriving together they do the same. The Titans football team ended their season with an undefeated record and went on to win the state championship to prove that race should not be a factor in sports or any part of life.

The Sociological issue in “Remember The Titans” is is racism in sport or the critical race theory. In the film, the whites of the community greatly despised the blacks and vice versa. There were many racial slurs used by the white people in the movie. Early in the movie when Boone was first announced as the T.C Williams head coach the whites immediately tried to isolate themselves from the blacks. The first racial altercation was when a white assistant coach said “why aren't you screaming, and hollering outside with your people”. This particular quote shows that this coach believes that his race is on a high pedestal than coach boone’s. It is also apparent that back at this time whites didn’t see blacks as human beings but rather as animals. Another way racism was displayed is through the slurs used is the film. There were many times that the blacks were called “black animals”, or “coons” by the white players Gerry Bertier in particular. This shows that at this point in time Gerry saw the black players as less than humans and rather an animal. This is because Gerry thought that his race was superior to the African American race rather than equal. These type of racial slurs or views may not be expressed as often, but are still currently present in sports. For example, ex NBA team owner Donald Sterling was publically prosecuted due to his racial remarks to his ex-girlfriend. Sterling was caught on a

recording essentially telling his girlfriend that he didn’t want to see her with black people. Sterling specifically said “ You can sleep with black people… however do not bring them to my games”. I find this recording very offensive as a black male because it's sad that people still think of my race as not being “acceptable”. What further confuses me is that since Donald Sterling's team was nearly 75% black then how could he say such racial remarks.

In approximately the mid-portion of the movie, there is a scene where coach Yoast drops his daughter off at coach Boone's house to play and make friends with each other. Later on that night a car came down Boones street, stopped in front of his house and a man in the car screamed. “Hey coach coon”(2000) and threw a brick in coach the window. Coach Boone quickly got the girls and his wife to safety while he grabbed a shotgun to protect them, but by the time he got outside the car speed off. The following morning when coach Yoast found out about the incident he responded with anger, confusion. He told coach Boone “when your sins endanger my little girl it becomes my priority”. Coach Yoast has the term called colorblind racism. Colorblind racism is when people claim that they do not see or differentiate color (Heden,2017), and they believe that everyone is the same. This is not a resolution to racism because what coach Yoast fails to realize is that the brick being thrown had nothing to do with coach Boone’s sins or anything he did wrong. The reason why the brick was thrown through coach boone’s window is simply because he is black and is facing discrimination strictly because of his color. Coach Yoast

had trouble seeing that and wasn’t used to people doing crude behavior towards him for no logical reasoning. So in the outcome, this opened coach Yoast’s eyes and now he can see that