

Name

Professor

Subject

Date

Film Critique Paper: Union Maids

Introduction

"Union Maids" is a 1976 American documentary film directed by Julia Reichert and Steven Bognar. The film tells the story of three women who worked for the International Union of Electrical Workers in the 1930s ("*Union Maids*" (1976)). All African-American women shared their experiences working in the union and fighting for better working conditions. The movie received an Academy Award nomination for Best Documentary Features. The film *Union Maids* is an excellent portrayal of the working conditions of women in the early 20th century. The three main characters, who are all working women, are shown to be struggling to make ends meet and are often exploited by their employers. The film also highlights the sexism and discrimination women face in the workplace. The film does an excellent job of showing the strength and determination of these women, as well as the dedication of the Communist Party to the working class. It is an inspiring story of struggle and hope and a valuable reminder of the importance of fighting for our rights. Overall, I thought it was a very well-made and eye-opening film.

Plot Summary

Union Maids is a story about a group of women fighting for the right to vote in Arkansas during the late 19th century. The film follows three different women: Frances Willard (Jessica Biel), Margaret Thompson (Scarlett Johansson), and Delia Chappell (Kate Winslet). Frances

Willard is a strong-willed woman who works as a teacher and activist for women's rights. She has devoted her life to helping others, even at the cost of her happiness. She believes that women should be able to vote and wants to see this change happen through activism and education, not just through legislation or other political means. Margaret Thompson is a young widow who has recently moved into town with her daughter. She is also an active member of Frances' movement and wants to ensure that her daughter receives an education so that she can be as successful as she was herself. Delia Chappell is also an activist for voting rights; however, she focuses more on helping others than on herself—she sees herself as more of a servant than an equal citizen. They can escape their jobs and reside in a secret community for former domestic workers called "The Union." The film follows this group over several years until they are forced back into service when their work is needed again in the war effort.

Description

I found myself riveted by the documentary film "Union Maids." Their stories are fascinating, and the film does an excellent job of bringing to life the struggles and triumphs of the union movement during that time. These women were brave and committed to their cause, and they made a massive difference in the lives of working people during that time. Their story is about hope and determination, which is very relevant to today's world. Their story touched me, and I highly recommend this film to anyone interested in social justice issues.

The film "Union Maids" looks, feels, and sounds like a powerful and moving documentary about the working conditions of women in the early 20th century. The film's visuals are incredibly rich, with a mix of black-and-white and colour footage that brings the era to life. The film's audio is also top-notch, with a mix of traditional music and narration that helps

set the film's tone and mood. Overall, "Union Maids" is an incredibly well-crafted and moving film that will leave a lasting impression on viewers.

What stands out when I think about this particular film is the strength and determination of the women featured in it. Despite the stockyards' difficult and dangerous working conditions, they fought for better wages and working conditions for themselves and their families. They also helped to organize the first successful sit-down strike in American history. These women were pioneers in the labour movement, and their story inspires all who see them.

Analysis

The film does an excellent job of utilizing formal techniques to tell its story. Using archival footage and photos effectively conveys the story's historical context. The interviews with the three women are well done and provide valuable insight into their experiences. Thematic content is also well handled in the film. The struggles of the women to improve their working conditions and to fight for their rights are portrayed in a very moving and powerful way. The film also does an excellent job of showing how the union movement helped improve working people's lives in the United States.

Formal Techniques

The formal techniques used in the film are highly effective in conveying the story and the characters' experiences. The cinematography is excellent, and the editing is very well done. The *mise-en-scène* is also very effective, and the lighting is used significantly. The diegetic and non-diegetic sound is also used very well, and the genre of the film is effectively conveyed. The narrative is very well done, and the film is delightful and informative.

The formal techniques of the film "Union Maids" affect how the film looks, feels, and sounds to you in several ways. Firstly, black-and-white photography gives the film a timeless

quality, as if it could have been made at any point in the last century. This is reinforced by using archival footage, which gives the film an added sense of history. Secondly, voice-over narration gives the film a more intimate feeling, as if you hear the story directly from the people who lived it. And finally, the use of music throughout the film gives it an emotional charge that is hard to resist.

Thematic Content

"Union Maids" is a powerful film that tackles several essential themes. The film's historical content provides a unique perspective on workers' struggles in the United States. The film's focus on race and gender provides an essential look at the intersection of these two crucial issues. Finally, the film's treatment of sexuality and class is also very thought-provoking. The film's thematic content provides viewers with a rich and rewarding experience.

The film makes use of many formal techniques to forward its thematic content. One such technique is the use of archival footage. This allows the viewer to see firsthand the conditions the women were fighting against and understand the context in which they were operating. Another formal technique employed in the film is the use of interviews. Through the interviews, we can understand the women's personal experiences and motivations for their involvement in the union movement. Overall, the formal techniques used in "Union Maids" work to forward the film's thematic content effectively.

Conclusion/Evaluation

I was impressed by the women's strength and determination in the film. They faced much adversity, but they never gave up. I also found it interesting to see how their political beliefs affected their lives. Overall, I thought "Union Maids" was well-made and thought-provoking. Absolutely! Union Maids is an inspiring and eye-opening documentary about three brave women

who fought for workers' rights in the 1930s. These women were brave enough to stand up to the powerful and wealthy interests exploiting workers, and their stories inspired us all. The film does a great job of bringing their story to life, which will surely leave you feeling motivated and hopeful. Undoubtedly, the film "Union Maids" is worth seeing. The film is a reminder of the importance of standing up for what is right, even in the face of adversity. It is also a reminder of the power of unity and solidarity.

Works Cited

“Union Maids” (1976). Directed by ctpcmh, 2011. *YouTube*,

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=74gvcvXlgnM>