
The Show 13 Reasons Why By Brian Yorkey: Harmful And Helpful Effects

Imagine this. Walking the hallways of school every morning knowing for a fact that you will get bullied, you will be made fun of, and you don't understand the reason why. Why you? What makes people want to bully others? Is it to make themselves feel better, or simply because they feel as if they are superior to that person? 13 Reasons Why, created by Brian Yorkey is a TV show about a high school student, Hannah Baker who explains the reasons that caused her to end her life in a series of 13 tapes. She goes on to explain to every person who was a part of her life how they were a reason for her suicide. The show was raved about and in fact, it was the most tweeted show in 2017. The viewers enjoyed this show because the topic of bullying and sexual assault and on how students truly feel in school influenced American popular culture tremendously. While some found it too graphic and, in a way, believed it "glamorized" the subject of suicide and rape, many after watching the show were encouraged to apologize to those they hurt, or stand up to those are being hurt. The topic of bullying and what it brings with it needs to be acknowledged in a more realistic way so people could understand and see for themselves how important and serious this matter is. There are campaigns, books, movies, shows, documentaries, and bullying experts out there for the people, yet students are still getting bullied on an everyday basis. It's time for people to finally see the real effects of bullying, even if it means being graphic for the viewers.

As stated in the show 13 Reasons Why, it is a fictional show that tackles tough real-world issues from sexual assault to bullying and so much more. The show's main concept was to help people who are going through anything like that of the show, but not everyone is keen on the way it was portrayed. Before the 1st episode began the cast stated that if anyone is going through anything similar to that of the show, speak with someone you trust, call a helpline, or visit the 13 Reasons Why.info website the creators of the show made to help anyone who needs it. ("Tape 1 Side A". 13 Reasons Why, season 1, episode 1). That right there shows how much the creators care and want to shed light on this topic. It also gives us viewers a sense of connection with the cast and creators of the show because it shows that they care enough to tell you that if you need help, you're not alone and that we're here for you.

We know what bullying is. Either we've been through it or know somebody who was bullied, and if neither, we've seen it on TV. Sadly, bullying is a very pop culture thing in America. Based on the article "Bullying and Suicide: A Public Health Approach" by Marci Feldman Hertz, it spoke about the concept of bullying and the affect it has, as well as the percentage bullying when it occurs at different ages. Whenever you look speak, dress, or act different, you're going to get bullied for it. The studies showed that gays and lesbians get a huge percentage of 60% bullying while people that are straight are only 28.8% (Hertz, 1). Why is it when you're different you must be bullied for it? Bullying occurs when someone isn't rich, isn't included in what standardized beauty is, their religious beliefs are "weird", aren't of white color or white background, and basically anyone who isn't ideally fit in today's view of what society is supposed to look like.

The side effects of bullying are that of depression, anxiety, social anxiety, students making up excuses for not wanting to go to school, and of course causing students to slack in their

schoolwork. In fact, 5.6% of high school students don't attend school because they feel unsafe. That's around 840,000 high schoolers who skip school one day out of the month, as Justin W. Patchin stated in the article about students skipping school each year because of bullying.

Suicide and bullying are occurring all over American schools, yet aren't much of a popular subject for people to speak about, although it should be spoken about much more. The show's main point was they wanted to shine a light on a very controversial topic and explain how serious this matter is. In an interview with Selena Gomez, who is the executive producer of the TV show, she is speaking to Elvis Duran on The Morning Show about the controversy going on about how some scenes from the show are graphic and whether it was too much for the viewers. She simply said, "this is happening every day. So, whether or not you wanted to see it, that's what's happening". The only way people seem to understand things nowadays is if we show it to them in ways that are disturbing because it has been going on for too long. It's important to reveal how intense and problematic the topic of suicide can be, even if it means being graphic.

In the article from Forbes, it is stated how more than half of the teens that watched the show apologized to those who they bullied, and three quarters of the viewers wanted to start to treat others with more consideration. So, that just proves how big of an impact the show had on American popular culture, specifically the bullies themselves. Words and actions of people have a great effect on students, even if those students that said and did them didn't know of it. It is very important to think before you speak because what you think is okay to say or do, doesn't mean that everybody else thinks that as well. Just like Hannah, many of the students and even her friends never would have thought that they were one of the 13 reasons as to why she killed herself. Hannah's friends, Kat, Justin, and Clay always thought of themselves as one of her close friends and would have never thought that they were the main reason for her death. What they said and did, they didn't think was wrong and. That is why it is very important to remember that everyone's actions will be interpreted differently by everyone.

Not only can friends help you out when it comes to bullying, but staff at the school should be expected to help you as well. When Hannah Baker went to her school's counselor, Mr. Porter to report that she was raped, he put the blame on her saying "the only other choice is to move on". ("Tape 7, Side A". 13 Reasons Why Season 1, Episode 13). Schools don't do enough to prevent bullying from occurring. If a staff sees that a student is getting picked on in any form, they need to take charge.

13 Reasons Why is not the first show about bullying but, it is the first show to have this much rave about it, as well as spark so many controversial topics in today's popular culture. The viewers did not have enough of the show and wanted more seasons to watch. The creators gave the fans what they wanted and released a second season. That's how successful the show was. I believe the way they portrayed the topic of bullying and sexual assault was very realistic and a lot of students could relate to it because it was real and raw. And because of this show, it influenced many students in popular culture to be more kind and treat people fairly. This stuff does happen, and people need to learn to accept it because it's the truth and millions of students go through this every single day.