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| ****Text:********Black like me********Produced by/when:********Stan Grant, 2020********Precise one-two sentence summary of this text:********Stan grant talks about the oppression faced by him and his family for being aboriginal while also talking about how the BLM movement isn’t uniquely American, but universal in its message of equality for black people. He proceeds to call for allegiance to be “free” and be “seen as human”.********Key people in this text:********Stan grant, Eunice Grant, George Flyod**** |
| ****Syllabus skill**** | ****Notes on studied text**** |
| **Use of generic conventions to achieve purpose*** **Identify one or more specific purpose(s)**
* **Make notes on how this purpose is achieved through specific language (identify) and/or textual features?**
* **How is this a hybrid text that blends generic conventions?**
 | **To educate people of the type and degree of hardship he faces just for being black and to advocate for the BLM movement as not exclusively American. At the end, he calls for the support of non-blacks to support this movement.****Genre: Interpretative, personal****His purpose of educating people of hardships is done through showing the audience pictures of Eunice grant’s childhood, where she was forced into assimilation and obedience and forced to be as “white” as possible.** **Stan grant combines the genre of documentary with that of a feature article and interpretive essay. The piece starts off as an ordinary text based article, accompanied by a photograph of recent BLM riots, to establish from the outset a context of political tension and unrest regarding this issue. Throughout the text, he litters interview style videos of him answering questions about his autochthony and other aspects of race related struggles. These interviews feature him alone, against a black canvas. He is also answering questions from a voiceless interviewer. This, coupled with the fact that the interviews are distributed amongst paragraphs of texts recalling the past incidences of aboriginal oppression gives me the impression that these interviews are self-reflective in nature. Whereas the text is talking about the larger issue as a whole, the interviews are focused on his individual struggles, as he is ultimately an unalienable part of those very issues. Another technique of hybrid textuality that stan grant exploits is the fact that the article is presented to the reader as a digital artifact, making the reader scroll through the text manually and allowing them to watch the videos at their own pace. This gives readers a level of control not usually ascribed by the genre of video, and stan grants gets around this by interlacing multiple short videos throughout the text instead of posting one long video with all the questions at the same time. This way, he is able to exploit the intimacy of self-reflective interview videos while giving the audience the same level of control they would have over a normal article. He gets the best of both worlds. This is not least aided by the genre of old images including that of his auntie’s institutionalisations as a child. The inclusion of this old media emphasizes how old this issue is thorugh showing how far it dates back, while also showing the staggering recency with which such atrocities were committed (such as how the stolen generation is still within the living memory of many people).******Textual techniques:********#1 Inclusive/Exclusive language** – “**A deep love of each other and our country, and how we love our country, even if we love it with a broken heart.” The word “we” and “our” is used a lot when referring to aboriginals and the autochthonous country they own. Even though the words “we” and “our” are inclusive words, they are used as exclusive words in this case to include aboriginals and exclude non-aboriginals. This creates a sharper focus on aboriginals and their struggles.****#2 Repetition** – The repetition of the term “whiteness” and it’s characterisation as an adversary to racial equality is a common theme in this text. His rejection of ‘whiteness’ is repeated as a means of stressing the disparity between the privledge of the white and disadvantage of the black****Visual techniques:****Picture 2:****#1 Symbolism** – The megaphone that is used by the subject in the forefront of the image symbolises speaking out. In the photo, he is literally shouting into the megaphone, this represents how minorities aren’t or wont be heard and have to shout and amplify their voices to make themselves heard. It also shows how technology has helped in raising the capacity of minorities to stand up for themselves.**#2 Implied Movement** – The picture is taken in front of a BLM march. Thus, there is a lot of implied movement by the way the subjects are literally marching forward. The march forward symbolises the demand for progress, for society to progress forward in terms of dealing with racial issues**#3 Composition** – The photographer intentionally included subjects of varied racial identities to achieve the effect of the appearance of unanimity of humanity behind the movement. The primary, black subject is joined by 2 older white subjects, showing the solidarity practised by everyone, regardless of race. |
| **Make notes on how voice reveals values, attitudes reinforced or challenged through the text.** | **The author begins with a pensive voice, “this is not something I can break down with facts” revealing his value of education about the oppression of racial minorities. This Is further supported when he talks about “every person enslaved. Every person in chains. Every person who has lived under the whip.” It seems like he is trying to educate us on the symbolic significance of the death of George Floyd and how It represents the larger issue of racism. He clearly believes that the death of George Floyd was a symptom of a much larger issue of systemic oppression. This shows his indignant attitude toward senseless police brutality and supportive attitude toward the BLM movement. Thus, it can be said that he values racial equality and the destruction of unfair racial hierarchies.** **Throughout the text, however, he moves to a reflective voice. In the first self interview, he asks how “to express the senseless rage… that says ‘I’m here, I’m a human being’”, right after asking the audience to imagine what it would be like to “live in a society that doesn’t view you as a human being”. This demonstrates his strong belief that western society is unfair towards black people, adding to his rebellious attitude toward how society views black people as inferior.** **Grant is not asking for empathy or pity, it is calling for “black and white” to “march together”, pointing out that “there is room to dream” of a better future. He views the issue as a “cultural war”, a battle to be won rather than a pity party for black people. The final words of the text “we will not surrender hope”, intentionally use “surrender” as it has connotations to war and battle. Hope, in this case, is the primary asset, weapon, mechanism of the voiceless to win the ‘cultural revolution’ according to Grant. This reveals his attitude of hopefulness and his value of truly fighting for the equality of his people. The text is not just a commentary on Australian society, it’s a battle cry.** |
| **Identify the perspectives offered in the text – particularly paying attention to more than one perspective within a text.****Remember that perspective is both viewpoint and context together.****Are any perspectives in conflict within a text?** | **He brings up the story of Wongmar, an aboriginal born before the Whiteman discovered Australia. In the context of this text, the story of Wongmar is significant as it gives an insight to a time before rampant racism was an issue in Australia. It is revealed in this context to show the degradation of Australia as Wongmar “saw his country stolen” and “his people killed”. As the first generation to witness the beginning of what was to be hundreds of years of oppression, this viewpoint of watching the degradation of his own people and land first hand, coupled with today’s context of oppression of aboriginals creates a powerful perspective showing the long lasting detrimental effects of colonialism on Aboriginals as a people.****The perspective offered by June Oscar of hope and resilience in the face of plight is almost contradictory to the first perspective discussed. “we learn to continue to believe in ourselves… our determination for change” this viewpoint is offered in the context of finding solutions for the systemic issues faced by aboriginals. As the head of the social justice commission, her hopeful outlook aims to strengthen the hope of other, more vulnerable aboriginals.** |
| **Make notes on audience positioning – are we positioned to be empathetic? How so? Is there controversy within the text or surrounding the context of production/reception? Controversy is when there is significant public disagreement about an issue. Something that gives rise to public debate.** | **There is certainly great debate over the BLM movement, primarily over whether or not systemic racism actually exists and whether what is attributed to as systemic racism should instead be attributed to regular racism, because the institutions in countries such as Australia are not inherently racist. This text positions the audience to accept the narrative of a systemically racist regime running back hundreds of years, rearing its ugly head now in the form of the death of George Floyd. The text, by going deeper into the origins of colonialism and the other actual civil rights violations faced by aborginals connects the death of George Floyd to the events that has happened in the past (including the stolen generation, terra nullius, etc) to make the argument that aboriginals still face countless setbacks in today’s society. Grant even asks the audience to question “what it feel[s] like to live in a society where [you aren’t] viewed as a human being”, suggesting that Australia today doesn’t value aboriginals as much as other people. This attempts to position the audience to that of support toward the cause of BLM and resentment toward the systems that allow apparent systemic racism to happen, calling upon an attitude for change. In the context of reception, a lot of popular media would disagree strongly with the notion that systemic racism even exists. The argument is that Australia’s institutions do not discriminate on the basis of race whatsoever, meaning that any racism that actually happens is down to actual individual racists, not the system as a whole. Thus, there is large backlash against the BLM movement from this ideological point of view. Another source of public disdain for the BLM movement are the examples of looting and rioting that has happened as a result of BLM protests primarily in the USA. This gives BLM a connotation of violence and chaos, not one of equality and equity. Thus this is a refutation of the BLM movement from a practical point of view. This is where the context of production and reception collide. The context of production is of an aboriginal journalist who has viewed the oppression of minorities in other coungtires and wishes to point out that racism and oppression isn’t exclusive to the USA. His context is that of being raised as an aborginal in a culture more dominated by White people. He is attempting to tell the story of his struggle, through outlining the issue of systemic racism in Australia.**  |