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## Winnie

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# Winnie

## **Abstract**

This is a film review of *Winnie* (2017), directed by Pascale Lamchi.

## **Keywords**

Truth and Reconciliation Commission, South Africa, Mandela

## **Author Notes**

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**Winnie (2017), dir. Pascale Lamche**

The South African Truth & Reconciliation Commission was designed to help South Africa heal after years of a brutal apartheid. Some reparations were made to injured victims, but some amnesty was given to perpetrators of harm. The idea was that forgiveness was better than vengeance in bringing about much needed healing.

This film is a biography of Winnie Mandela, billed as a more accurate account of her contributions to the struggle for freedom and human rights in South Africa. The movie suggests that Winnie's contributions have been underappreciated. It also suggests, often in Winnie's own words, that she was badly treated by the TRC; indeed, it suggests that Winnie should never have been brought before them at all for her actions. Some people, however, have felt that she was treated too lightly and that justice is as important to the healing process as forgiveness. Of course, the line between justice and vengeance is often a thin one; the TRC was controversial in its decisions not to punish some, but it also has been viewed as a model for how Christian forgiveness

could be modeled in state policy after a civil war. Although he did not often speak of his faith, Nelson Mandela modeled his Christian beliefs in how he led his nation through the painful period of reconstruction.

The movie, unfortunately, has the feel of a self-promoting video, so that the idea that Winnie has been treated badly or that she deserves greater recognition for her contributions falls flat; it fails to make its point effectively, and so one is left with the sense of an unconvincing argument more than a new sense of her own perspective.