

Crenshaw's Intersectionality of Racial and Gender Discrimination of Black Women in *The Six Triple Eight* (2024)

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ABSTRACT

The representation of marginalized groups, particularly women and Black communities, has long been a central concern in social and cultural studies. This study examines the intersectionality of racial and gender discrimination experienced by Black women as depicted in *The Six Triple Eight* (2024), directed by Tyler Perry. Using a qualitative descriptive method within an interpretative film analysis framework, the research investigates how intersecting identities, specifically race, gender, and class; are constructed and represented through the film's narrative and character development. Drawing on Kimberlé Crenshaw's theory of intersectionality, the analysis focuses on selected scenes, dialogues, and character interactions involving members of the 6888th Central Postal Directory Battalion, the only all-Black, all-female military unit deployed overseas during World War II. The findings reveal key themes, including layered racial and gender discrimination, the resilience of Black women in confronting oppressive systems, collective solidarity among unit members, and the historical invisibility of their contributions. Furthermore, the study demonstrates how the film contributes to broader discussions on intersectional identity and the representation of marginalized groups. Overall, the findings suggest that *The Six Triple Eight* not only brings attention to the historically overlooked role of Black women in military history but also functions as a cinematic medium for reclaiming and preserving historical memory.

Keywords: intersectionality, racial discrimination, gender, Black women, World War II.

INTRODUCTION

Racial and gender discrimination remain persistent social problems that disproportionately affect Black women. Racial discrimination refers to unequal treatment based on race or ethnicity that results in social exclusion, limited access to resources, and structural inequality embedded within institutions. Gender discrimination, meanwhile, manifests through stereotypes, power imbalances, and restricted access to social, political, and economic opportunities. These forms of inequality are not separate phenomena; rather, they are produced through historically constructed power relations shaped by patriarchy, racism, and institutional dominance (Crenshaw, 2016; Collins & Bilge, 2020). In the United States, racism and sexism operate simultaneously, positioning Black women at the intersection of multiple systems of oppression and creating distinctive forms of marginalization.

Film has become an important medium for representing and interrogating social inequality. Through narrative, character construction, and visual symbolism, cinema can reinforce dominant ideologies or challenge oppressive structures (Hall, 2013). Recent film studies emphasize that representations of women from marginalized racial backgrounds often reproduce stereotypes, limit agency, or render their contributions invisible (Benshoff & Griffin, 2021). Studies on films depicting minority communities show that women are frequently portrayed as

passive, subordinate, or secondary to male-centered narratives, reflecting how gender discrimination is embedded in cinematic representation (Marchetti, 2017; Shih, 2020). These portrayals demonstrate that discrimination in film is not merely individual but structurally produced through cultural narratives.

However, much of the existing research focuses on women's oppression within domestic, immigrant, or civilian contexts, often emphasizing patriarchy, class, or migration. Limited attention has been given to representations of Black women within military institutions, spaces historically dominated by white male authority. This gap is significant, as the military functions as a powerful site of national identity, discipline, and institutional hierarchy. The film *The Six Triple Eight* (2024), directed by Tyler Perry, offers a distinctive perspective by portraying the experiences of the 6888th Central Postal Directory Battalion—the only all-Black, all-female military unit deployed overseas during World War II.

By applying Kimberlé Crenshaw's intersectionality theory, this study examines how racial and gender discrimination intersect in shaping the lived experiences of Black women soldiers. Intersectionality provides a critical framework for understanding how multiple systems of power operate simultaneously, producing forms of oppression that cannot be explained through race or gender alone (Crenshaw, 2016; Collins & Bilge, 2020). Through this lens, the film reveals how Black women are marginalized not simply as women or as Black individuals, but specifically as Black women occupying a position outside dominant military norms.

The novelty of this research lies not only in its focus on a historically overlooked military unit but also in its emphasis on agency, solidarity, and resistance. Rather than portraying Black women solely as victims of discrimination, *The Six Triple Eight* represents them as active subjects who respond to oppression through discipline, collective action, emotional resilience, and leadership. This approach expands studies of minority women's representation in film by demonstrating how intersectionality generates both layered oppression and forms of resistance within institutional constraints.

Based on this background, the research addresses the following questions:

1. How does *The Six Triple Eight* (2024) represent the intersectionality of racial and gender discrimination experienced by its main characters?
2. How do the main characters respond to and confront these forms of discrimination?

Theoretically, this study contributes to literary and media studies by deepening discussions on intersectionality and representation in historical cinema. By integrating Crenshaw's intersectionality framework with Stuart Hall's theory of representation, the research enriches understanding of how race and gender operate together in film narratives. Practically, this study aims to raise critical awareness of Black women's contributions during World War II and to promote more inclusive historical storytelling. By examining film as a cultural text, this research encourages scholars, educators, and filmmakers to engage more critically with representations of marginalized communities and historical memory.

This study focuses specifically on the intersection of race and gender and does not examine other identity categories such as sexuality or religion. Attention is directed toward scenes and dialogues that depict layered discrimination, institutional exclusion, and collective solidarity,

highlighting how Black women navigate military structures while reclaiming dignity, agency, and historical visibility.

LITERATURE REVIEW

The theoretical framework is the foundation of this research. It helps the researcher understand how meaning, identity, and power operate in social life. This study uses intersectionality theory as its main approach because this theory offers a more complete way to understand people's experiences. Intersectionality was developed by Kimberlé Crenshaw as a response to the limitations of approaches that look at identity from only one angle, such as only race or only gender. Crenshaw explains that a person's identity is shaped by the intersection of many social categories, including race, gender, class, ethnicity, religion, and economic status. When these categories overlap, they create different and more complex experiences for each individual. Intersectionality shows that discrimination or inequality does not happen for just one reason. A person may experience oppression because of a combination of several identity factors. For example, one woman's experience may be different from another woman's because race or class can make the discrimination, she faces more severe. This means inequality cannot be understood by looking at one factor alone; it must be seen as a set of connected and reinforcing processes.

This approach helps us understand how social structures like patriarchy, racism, and economic inequality work together. Intersectionality also reveals that some groups are more vulnerable because they are positioned at the crossroads of multiple forms of oppression. Using intersectionality, this research aims to understand how identities are formed, how power works in society, and why certain groups often remain unseen or unrecognized in dominant social narratives. This perspective allows the study to look at social reality in a more complete, sensitive, and critical way.

Intersectionality Theory

Intersectionality is a critical theoretical framework in social and cultural studies used to analyze how various social identities such as race, gender, class, and sexual orientation intersect and shape individual's lived experiences in complex and interconnected ways. The term was first coined by legal scholar *Kimberlé Crenshaw* in 1989 through her seminal essay *Demarginalizing the Intersection of Race and Sex: A Black Feminist Critique of Antidiscrimination Doctrine, Feminist Theory and Antiracist Politics*. Crenshaw introduced intersectionality in response to the marginalization of Black women's experiences in both legal frameworks and feminist discourse, which often treated race and gender as separate and isolated categories of analysis. She argued that such an approach failed to capture the unique forms of oppression faced by individuals situated at the crossroads of multiple marginalized identities, particularly Black women.

The central premise of intersectionality is that no single category of identity such as gender or race, can fully account for the complexity of an individual's experience of oppression or privilege. For example, the experiences of Black women cannot be adequately understood through an analysis of racism or sexism alone, because both systems of discrimination intersect and reinforce each other in distinctive ways (Collins, 2000). Therefore, intersectionality calls for a

simultaneous and integrated analysis of multiple identity positions in order to understand social realities more accurately. It challenges one-size-fits-all approaches to justice by emphasizing that people who are multiply marginalized experience layered and compounded forms of inequality.

Over time, the concept of intersectionality has expanded beyond its legal roots and has been widely adopted in disciplines such as sociology, gender studies, cultural studies, and media studies. In media analysis, intersectionality has become a vital tool for uncovering how representations of identity often oversimplify or exclude the complex experiences of marginalized groups. It provides a critical lens through which scholars can evaluate whether narratives include or erase the voices of those who endure multiple forms of oppression such as women of color, LGBTQ+ individuals, or those from lower socioeconomic backgrounds.

Crenshaw's work emphasized that many public policies and institutional structures are designed with a "universal" subject in mind, often a white, middle-class, heterosexual male thus failing to address the needs of those whose identities lie outside this norm. This oversight produces what she calls "structural invisibility," where the compounded experiences of certain groups are rendered socially and politically invisible (Carbado et al., 2013). Intersectionality, in this sense, does not merely describe overlapping identities but also exposes how systems of power and privilege operate on multiple, intersecting levels.

Moreover, intersectionality recognizes that an individual can simultaneously experience both privilege and oppression depending on their social context, and that these positions are fluid and can shift over time. This multidimensional understanding of identity encourages scholars and activists to examine the broader sociopolitical and historical structures that shape experiences of inequality (Hill Collins & Bilge, 2016).

Building on this foundation, *Anna Carastathis* (2016) argues that intersectionality should not be reduced to a checklist of identity categories. Instead, she proposes that it should be understood as a dynamic and evolving analytical framework used to explore shifting power relations. Carastathis emphasizes that intersectionality must be responsive to specific historical and social contexts and should be used critically to understand how positions of marginalization and privilege are produced, maintained, and contested.

Intersectionality offers a powerful analytical framework for revealing how interconnected systems of oppression and privilege shape both individual and collective experiences. This theory promotes an inclusive and comprehensive understanding of social inequality and serves as a crucial tool in advocating for social justice that recognizes the complexity of human identity (Crenshaw, 1989; Collins, 2000; Carastathis, 2016). Thus, intersectionality is more than a method of categorizing identities, it is a powerful critical tool for understanding structural injustice and proposing more inclusive frameworks for social change. In the context of media representation, particularly films that depict historical narratives or marginalized communities, intersectionality provides a robust foundation for evaluating the authenticity and depth of such portrayals.

Racial Discrimination in Crenshaw's Intersectional Framework

In her essay *Demarginalizing the Intersection of Race and Sex* (1989), Kimberlé Crenshaw critiques how legal and antiracist frameworks fail to fully address racial discrimination, especially when it intersects with gender. She emphasizes that the experiences of Black women

are distinct from those of Black men or white women, yet often ignored in both antiracist and feminist approaches. Crenshaw describes this as a "single-axis" framework, where identity is viewed through either race *or* gender, but not both. This limited view overlooks the unique forms of oppression faced by those at the intersection of multiple identities. As she writes, "The intersectional experience is greater than the sum of racism and sexism" (1989), highlighting that these experiences cannot be separated.

She also reveals how legal systems dismiss claims from Black women because they cannot prove discrimination based solely on race or gender. This makes their lived realities legally invisible. To address this, Crenshaw proposes an intersectional approach, a framework that considers how race, gender, class, and other factors interact. Only through this lens can we understand and challenge complex forms of injustice effectively.

Gender Discrimination in Crenshaw's Intersectional Perspective

In her essay *Demarginalizing the Intersection of Race and Sex* (1989), Kimberlé Crenshaw critiques how gender discrimination has been narrowly defined in both feminist theory and legal frameworks. She argues that mainstream feminism often centers on the experiences of white, middle-class women, ignoring how gender intersects with race and other forms of oppression. Crenshaw highlights that Black women face unique challenges that cannot be explained by looking at gender or race alone. She criticizes the assumption of a universal womanhood, stating that identity politics often erases the specific experiences of women of color by treating all women as the same.

She also critiques legal systems that force individuals to prove discrimination based solely on one category, either race or gender. This approach fails to recognize how intersecting identities shape real-life experiences, leaving Black women without legal protection. To address these gaps, Crenshaw proposes an intersectional framework analyzing how gender interacts with race, class, and other systems of power. This approach provides a fuller understanding of discrimination and promotes more inclusive solutions.

RESEARCH METHODS

This research employs a qualitative descriptive approach to examine how *The Six Triple Eight* (2024) represents the experiences of Black women in the U.S. military during World War II. This approach allows for an in-depth analysis of narrative structure, character portrayal, dialogue, and visual representation without relying on numerical data (Creswell, 2014; Babbie, 2013). The film is treated as a cultural text that constructs meaning through visual and verbal storytelling. Guided by Kimberlé Crenshaw's intersectionality theory, the study analyzes how racial and gender discrimination intersect within a historically white, male-dominated military system (Crenshaw, 1989). The qualitative design enables close examination of character development, plot progression, and cinematic techniques that portray resilience, solidarity, and resistance (Hall, 1997). Through this analysis, the research highlights how the film challenges conventional war narratives and restores the historical visibility of Black women's contributions during World War II.

The data are drawn from selected scenes, dialogues, character interactions, and visual elements in *The Six Triple Eight* (2024), directed by Tyler Perry. These data focus on representations of racial and gender discrimination, as well as responses such as agency, solidarity, and resistance. All data are analyzed qualitatively using intersectionality theory to ensure alignment with the research objectives.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Finding Results for Research Question No. 1 - Representation of the intersectionality of racial and gender discrimination experienced by the main characters.

Table 1. Representation of The Intersectionality of Racial and Gender Discrimination

No.	Findings	No. of Findings	Explanation
1.	Gender inequality	7	There are 7 scenes showing how Black female characters experience unequal treatment compared to male soldiers and white women, particularly in terms of authority, recognition, and access to opportunities. These scenes reveal how gender discrimination operates within military and social structures.
2.	Layered Sexism	7	These 7 scenes illustrate layered sexism, where Black women face overlapping forms of discrimination, as women in a male-dominated institution and as Black individuals in a racially segregated system. This layered oppression intensifies their marginalization.
3.	Sexist Assumptions	5	There are 5 scenes depicting sexist assumptions that frame Black women as less capable, emotionally weak, or unsuitable for important responsibilities. Such assumptions are used to justify limiting their roles and undermining their competence.
4.	Historical Erasure and Lack of Recognition	5	These 5 scenes demonstrate how the contributions of the 6888th Battalion are ignored, minimized, or excluded from official military narratives, reflecting the broader historical erasure of Black women's roles in wartime history.

Finding Results for Research Question No. 2 - The main characters respond to and confront the discrimination.

Table 2. The main characters respond to and confront the discrimination

No.	Findings	No. of Findings	Explanation
1.	Resistance, Agency, and Solidarity as Intersectional Responses	6	There are 6 scenes showing acts of resistance, collective agency, and solidarity among the Black female characters. These moments highlight how they actively challenge discrimination and assert their identity and dignity through unity and resilience.
2.	Responses, Resistance, and Agency of the Characters	6	There are 6 scenes illustrating how the characters respond to discrimination through conscious actions, strategic decisions, and emotional resilience. These scenes emphasize individual and collective agency, showing that the characters do not passively accept oppression but actively negotiate, resist, and adapt within oppressive structures.

Representation of the intersectionality of racial and gender discrimination experienced by the main characters.

Gender inequality

Scene 1 — Recruitment and Lena's Decision to Join the WAC



Figure 1. Lena's Decision to Join the WAC

At the beginning of the film, Lena's decision to join the Women's Army Corps reveals intersectional discrimination. As a Black woman, she encounters both racial and gender-based barriers that restrict access to military institutions. Her recruitment reflects conditional inclusion driven by wartime need rather than genuine recognition. At the same time, Lena's enlistment functions as an act of agency, challenging stereotypes about Black women's roles and capabilities.

Scene 2 — Training Phase: Underestimation by Male Officers



Figure 2. Underestimation by Male

During training, WAC women, particularly Black women are underestimated and belittled by male officers. They are portrayed as physically weak and intellectually inferior, reflecting gendered racism where sexism and racism intersect. Black women face harsher scrutiny than white women and less respect than male soldiers. Rather than openly confronting authority, they respond through discipline, perseverance, and strong performance, enacting a form of quiet resistance.

Scene 3 — Poor Living Conditions and Unequal Facilities.



Figure 3. King Edwards School

The film highlights unequal treatment through the depiction of poor barracks and inadequate facilities for Black women soldiers. Compared to white units and male units, their living conditions are neglected and overcrowded. This reflects institutional discrimination, where inequality is embedded in military structures rather than individual actions. Intersectional discrimination is shown as systemic, privileging white male soldiers over Black women. The women respond through collective resilience and solidarity, improving their conditions without institutional support.

Scene 4 — Harassment and Hostility from Male Soldiers



Figure 4. Harassment and Hostility from Male Soldiers

This scene shows how WAC women experience verbal harassment and intimidation from male soldiers as a way to assert male dominance in the military. Such behavior reflects everyday sexism that questions women's legitimacy within a traditionally masculine institution, framing their presence as incompatible with military norms.

Scene 5 — Death of a Soldier and Institutional Neglect



Figure 5. A Soldier Steps on a UXB and Dies in the Line of Duty

The death of a female soldier is treated with institutional indifference, shown through the lack of proper compensation and a dignified burial. This response reveals how women's sacrifices are devalued compared to those of male soldiers. The scene highlights gender-based injustice and the erasure of women's contributions, prompting moral outrage and demands for recognition from the female characters.

Scene 6 — Female Authority and Lack of Respect



Figure 6. Major Charity Adams' Authority Questioned and Undermined

Despite her official rank, Major Charity Adams is repeatedly undermined by male officers. Her authority is questioned because she is a woman, not because of incompetence. The film shows that women's leadership remains conditional within male-dominated hierarchies. Major Adams responds by using discipline, negotiation, and military regulations to challenge discrimination from within the system.

Scene 7 — Delayed Recognition and Visibility



Figure 7. Public Confrontation and Delayed Recognition

Layered Sexism

Scene 1 — Recruitment and Perceptions of Black Women.



Figure 8. Recruitment and Perceptions of Black Women

This scene shows Black women being evaluated through racial and gender stereotypes rather than individual ability. They are treated as temporary labor rather than capable soldiers. The recruitment process reflects intersectional discrimination, where racism shapes gendered expectations. The women respond by enlisting with determination, asserting agency through their willingness to serve.

Scene 2 — Demeaning Military Training



During training, Black women are underestimated and subjected to harsher criticism than other recruits. Sexism is intensified by racial prejudice, reinforcing unequal standards. The women resist through discipline, persistence, and strong performance.

Figure 9. Demeaning Military Training

Scene 3 — Placement in Substandard Barracks



The poor living conditions assigned to Black women reveal institutional discrimination embedded in military structures. Their treatment reflects the devaluation of Black women's bodies and labor. The women respond collectively by improving their conditions through cooperation and resilience.

Figure 10. Placement in Substandard Barracks

Scene 4 — Verbal Harassment and Everyday Degradation



Black women face ongoing verbal harassment from male soldiers, combining sexism and racial stereotypes. Discrimination is shown as routine and normalized. The women protect their dignity through professionalism and mutual support.

Figure 11. Verbal Harassment and Everyday Degradation

Scene 5 — The Questioning of Black Female Leadership



Major Charity Adams' authority is repeatedly challenged despite her rank. This scene shows that leadership does not shield Black women from discrimination. She responds strategically by using discipline and military regulations to assert her authority.

Figure 12. The Questioning of Black Female Leadership

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Scene 6 — Death of a Member and Institutional Denial



The military's refusal to honor a fallen Black woman soldier exposes the ultimate denial of dignity and recognition. Intersectional discrimination continues even in death. The women respond with collective grief and moral resistance.

Figure 13. Death of a Member and Institutional Denial

Scene 7 — Mission Success and Delayed Recognition



Although the battalion succeeds, recognition comes years later. This delay highlights historical erasure of Black women's contributions. The film frames remembrance as a final form of resistance, reclaiming visibility and historical presence.

Figure 14. Mission Success and Delayed Recognition

Sexist Assumptions in Leadership

Scene 1 — Questioned Leadership Appointment



Figure 15. Questioned Leadership Appointment

The scene of Major Charity Adams's appointment shows institutional doubt rooted not in her competence, but in her identity as a Black woman. Her leadership is framed as provisional, revealing how sexism and racism intersect within the military structure. The film conveys intersectionality by highlighting how racial and gendered assumptions shape perceptions of authority. Adams responds with professionalism, choosing to assert her legitimacy through performance rather than confrontation.

Scene 2 — Disregarded Orders from a Female Leader



Figure 16. Disregarded Orders from a Female Leader

Orders from Major Adams are ignored or undermined, reflecting sexist and racialized assumptions that frame her authority as negotiable. The film shows intersectional discrimination through the delegitimization of her leadership, which Adams counters by enforcing discipline and institutional rules.

Scene 3 — Confrontation with Male Superiors



Figure 17. Confrontation with Male Superiors

When Adams challenges male superiors, her assertiveness is labeled as emotional or defiant, illustrating the double bind faced by Black women leaders. The scene highlights how racial and gender stereotypes shape perceptions of leadership, which Adams navigates through strategic and professional assertiveness.

Scene 4 — Emotional Pressure Used to Undermine Leadership



Figure 18. Emotional Pressure Used to Undermine Leadership

Adams's emotional responses are interpreted as weakness, revealing gendered leadership norms that privilege emotional detachment. Intersectionality appears in the unequal scrutiny of Black women's emotions, which Adams resists by maintaining composure and focusing on mission success.

Scene 5 — Mission Success and Continued Doubt



Figure 19. Mission Success and Delayed Recognition

Even after mission success, Adams's leadership remains questioned and recognition is minimized. The film emphasizes the systemic nature of intersectional discrimination, portraying Adams's resistance through resilience and the preservation of her leadership in historical memory.

Historical Erasure and Lack of Recognition

Scene 1 — Deployment with No Expectations



Figure 20. Deployment with No Expectations and Minimal Recognition

The battalion's deployment is met with indifference, reflecting low institutional expectations rooted in racial and gender bias. As Black women, their labor is seen as expendable. They respond by committing to the mission, reframing duty as resistance.

Scene 2 — Invisible Assignment and Unacknowledged Labor



Figure 21. Invisible Assignment and Unacknowledged Labor

The mail-sorting task is framed as unglamorous and invisible despite its importance. This highlights how gendered and racialized labor is undervalued. The women resist erasure by redefining the mission's significance and taking pride in its impact.

Scene 3 — Death without Equal Honor



Figure 22. Death of a Member and Institutional Denial

The denial of proper military honors for a fallen member exposes the devaluation of Black women's lives. Intersectional discrimination appears through material and symbolic injustice. The women respond with collective mourning and renewed determination.

Scene 4 — Mission Success without Recognition



Figure 23. Mission Success and Delayed Recognition

Even after exceeding expectations, the battalion's success is minimized and delayed in recognition. The film shows that achievement alone does not dismantle systemic bias. The women sustain excellence and unity despite exclusion.

Scene 5 — Epilogue: Delayed Recognition



Figure 24. Delayed Recognition and Historical Recovery

Recognition arrives decades later, revealing long-standing historical erasure of Black women's service. The film frames this delay as evidence of institutional injustice, emphasizing survival and remembrance as forms of resistance.

Dissussion for Responses of the main characters in confronting the discrimination. Resistance, Agency, and Solidarity as Intersectional Responses

Scene 1 — The Decision to Enlist as an Initial Act of Agency



Figure 25. The Decision to Enlist as an Initial Act of Agency

The decision to join the Women's Army Corps is the women's first act of agency. In a context that excludes Black women from military authority and national belonging, enlistment becomes a political act that challenges racial and gender norms. By entering an institution that marginalizes them, they assert visibility and participation as forms of resistance.

Scene 2 — Internal Solidarity in the Face of Unjust Treatment

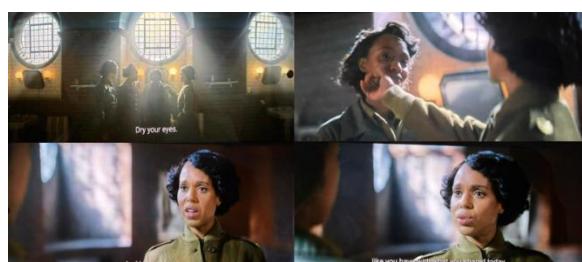


Figure 26. Internal Solidarity in the Face of Unjust Treatment

Facing verbal abuse, disrespect, and exclusion, the women respond through internal solidarity. Emotional support and collective affirmation create a protective space within a discriminatory military structure. Solidarity becomes a strategy to survive and resist intersectional marginalization.

Scene 3 — Reorganization of Labor as Institutional Resistance



Figure 27. Reorganization of Labor as Institutional Resistance

Major Charity Adams' reorganization of the mail system transforms devalued labor into institutional resistance. By improving efficiency, the battalion challenges assumptions of incompetence tied to racialized and feminized work, reclaiming authority through competence and innovation.

Scene 4 — Emotional Support Following the Death of a Member



Figure 28. Emotional Support Following the Death of a Member

After the death of a member, the military's denial of equal recognition exposes intersectional dehumanization. The women respond with collective mourning and emotional care, asserting emotional resilience as a legitimate form of agency against institutional erasure.

Scene 5 — Direct Confrontation with Male Authority



Figure 29. Direct Confrontation with Male Authority

Major Adams' direct challenges to male superiors represent explicit resistance. By opposing racially motivated orders and asserting equal dignity for her unit, she exposes how race and gender operate together to exclude Black women from military legitimacy.

Scene 6 — Collective Success as the Culmination of Solidarity



Figure 30. Collective Success as the Culmination of Solidarity

The battalion's early completion of the mission culminates their collective resistance. Their shared success directly refutes stereotypes of incompetence, demonstrating that excellence is collective and that discrimination is sustained by systemic bias, not evidence.

Responses, Resistance, and Agency of the Characters

Scene 1 — The Decision to Join the WAC as an Initial Act of Agency



Figure 31. The Decision to Join the WAC as an Initial Act of Agency

The women's decision to enlist in the Women's Army Corps marks their first act of agency. In a context where Black women were excluded from authority and recognition, enlistment becomes a deliberate challenge to racial and gender boundaries. Their choice reflects a pursuit of dignity, citizenship, and historical visibility rather than passive participation.

Scene 2 — Responses to Unjust Treatment in the Barracks



Figure 32. Responses to Unjust Treatment in the Barracks

In the barracks, the battalion faces neglect, hostility, and unequal treatment rooted in institutional racism and sexism. Instead of internalizing this injustice, the women respond with solidarity, discipline, and emotional support. Their collective resilience transforms everyday survival into a form of resistance.

Scene 3 — Restructuring the Mail System as Strategic Resistance



Figure 33. Restructuring the Mail System as Strategic Resistance

When Major Charity Adams reorganizes the mail system, the battalion turns devalued labor into a site of resistance. By improving efficiency and organization, they challenge assumptions about Black women's incompetence. This strategic action reclaims authority and exposes the discriminatory logic behind the devaluation of their work.

Scene 4 — Steadfastness Following the Loss of a Battalion Member



Figure 34. Steadfastness Following the Loss of a Battalion Member

The death of a battalion member marks a powerful emotional turning point. The military's denial of equal recognition in death reinforces the dehumanization of Black women soldiers. In response, the women engage in collective mourning, honoring their fallen comrade and strengthening their solidarity. This emotional resilience becomes a form of agency, resisting intersecting racial and gender-based devaluation.

Scene 5 — Confrontation with Dismissive Authority



Figure 35. Confrontation with Dismissive Authority

Major Charity Adams' confrontations with male superiors illustrate explicit resistance within the military hierarchy. She challenges racially motivated orders and rejects the marginalization of her battalion. By combining discipline with moral conviction, her leadership demonstrates how resistance can take the form of principled confrontation. The film highlights how authority is shaped by race and gender, and Adams counters this by asserting her legitimacy and refusing diminished status.

Scene 6 – Collective Success as the Culmination of Agency



Figure 36. Collective Success as the Culmination of Agency

The successful completion of the mission ahead of schedule represents the culmination of collective agency. This achievement challenges stereotypes of incompetence imposed on Black women and serves as a form of resistance against structural discrimination. Although recognition is delayed, their success affirms their competence, leadership, and rightful place in American military history.

CONCLUSION

This research analyzed *The Six Triple Eight* (2024) using Kimberlé Crenshaw's intersectionality theory to examine how racial and gender discrimination intersect in the experiences of Black women serving in the U.S. Army during World War II. Based on the analysis in Chapter IV, several conclusions can be drawn. First, the film portrays Black women as experiencing double discrimination in the form of racism and sexism. They face racial segregation, negative stereotypes, unequal treatment, and lack of recognition, while also confronting gender-based assumptions that question their competence and leadership. These overlapping forms of oppression support Crenshaw's argument that discrimination does not operate in isolation but through interconnected systems. Second, the film highlights the women's resilience, solidarity, and agency in responding to discrimination. Rather than remaining passive, the characters demonstrate unity, discipline, and professional excellence. Their collective strength functions as a form of resistance against both institutional racism and patriarchal structures. The leadership of Major Charity Adams further challenges stereotypes by showing Black women's capacity to lead and endure under systemic constraints. Finally, this research finds that *The Six Triple Eight* plays an important role in addressing the historical invisibility of Black women in military narratives. By depicting the struggles and achievements of the 6888th Battalion, the film restores visibility to a group whose contributions were long overlooked. This finding aligns with intersectionality theory, which explains how marginalized groups are often excluded from dominant historical accounts. Overall, the film emphasizes how Black women navigate oppression while reclaiming their identity, dignity, and historical significance.

Based on the findings, several suggestions are offered for future research, education, and general audiences. Future researchers are encouraged to explore intersectionality through other media such as novels, documentaries, or historical records. Further studies may also examine additional identity categories, including class, sexuality, or disability, or apply complementary theories such as feminist or postcolonial approaches to deepen the analysis of representation and power. For educators and students, this research can serve as a reference in discussions on discrimination, identity, and historical representation. *The Six Triple Eight* may be used as

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teaching material to promote critical awareness of how marginalized groups are portrayed in media and history. For general audiences, viewers of historical films are encouraged to engage critically with media representations. Understanding intersectionality can help audiences recognize overlapping forms of discrimination and appreciate the experiences of marginalized communities, contributing to greater awareness of social justice and inclusive historical narratives.

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