

Name

Professor

Institutional Affiliation

Date

### **Theme Representation in Coherence**

Directed by James Ward Byrkit, *Coherence* is a low-budget movie that was released in 2013. The film starts with Emily on the phone with her boyfriend, Kelvin. As they talk, they lose their mobile signal, and the call is interrupted. Just almost immediately the signal disappears her phone's screen cracks. Emily is the main character of this movie, and even as the film progresses, she is the one that is being focused on. Emily is headed to Mike's place where she and other friends (including) have been invited over for dinner. When she arrives, she tells them about her phone, but they don't seem to take it seriously. Later the other friends join them and they start eating as they converse in happiness. Emily tries to tell them about a comet passing, but they don't seem to believe. She tells them of how the last time a comet passed, it made people lose their minds and gives them an example of a woman who completely forgot her husband. Things look normal until a loud thud is heard and a power cut is experienced. They are in total darkness now until they light up some candles and then later power on the generator. They later noticed that there are more than one other realities in different houses which mean that after the comet has passed everyone will be stuck in his/her reality. For that reason, Emily looks for a reality that is more peaceful and has to replace the one from that reality. The central theme of this film is the passing of the comet and its effects on the people that experience it. This paper will analyze how the director has represented the theme.

### *Cinematography*

The cinematography is one of the most critical aspects of a film. It is used to show the film-making process and photography of a movie. The director of cinematography in this film has used different kinds of shots to represent the theme. At the beginning when Emily is driving, a medium shot is used to show that she is on the phone while still in the car. This shot is important since it shows the calmness and normality of that day when the comet was scheduled to pass. More so, the shot is meant to show the viewer that Emily is in a car and at the same time get a good image of her. There is also the use of different close-up shots in the movie. One of the times when a close-up shot is taken is when Emily realizes with shock that her phone has cracked on the screen. A close-up shot of the phone is made for viewers to see the phone well and understand how effective the comet can be. More close up shots is taken when Emily goes to Mike and Lee's house for dinner. In the movie, the director has used several close-up shots to show the expressions that the people show as they converse about the comet. She uses close up shots to show laughter, sadness or even quarrels in a clear and better means. The viewer can see these expressions clearly from the clear close-up shots.

Moreover, the director has used wide shots when showing the characters in full. He does this in different instances in the movie. One of these instances is when the characters leave the house and meet their other realities out. The director has shown both groups in wide shots so that the viewer can see them. More so, there are also instances of wide shots when a character goes out and sees their reality from the other different houses. They can see what it will be like to be in the other life. The director used wide shots to make it look more real and for the viewers to examine the effects of the comet clearly as outlined in the film. Extreme close up shots are not many in this film. However, there is that time when Kelvin kisses his ex-girlfriend, and their

faces are shown closely as well as when they are all having conversations and extremely close shots of them are shown as they laugh loud to express the normality of the night expression of fear. The use of extremely wide shot is also seen in the film as the comet passes. An extremely wide shot of the comet passing is taken as the group watch it pass. The director uses a high angle shot to show how little the characters are as compared to the comet as it passes.

### *Mise-En-Scene*

The arrangement of the movie also shows a lot of representation to the theme of this film. The author has arranged this film in such a way that indicates that the passing of the comet is happening on a normal day and everything is going on in order. The setting of the movie was also relating closely to the passing of the comet. The director uses just one room to base the whole story on and focuses on just a few characters for the entire movie. He doesn't show what is happening to other people like the neighbors but only focuses on these few characters. The film is acted during the night which is a perfect setting to show why there is darkness outside and no people moving around. This is a good sign that as the comet passes people are supposed to stay in the house as a precaution to their safety. Lighting is essential in any film as it is to this movie. The illumination of this movie is done quite well to ensure that the central theme is well represented. The darkness in between one reality and another is one of the vital aspects of lighting in this movie. The total darkness that is witnessed during the power cut shows a lot of fear and tension among the actors as they try to find a light. The director uses this darkness and thud to show how frightening passing of a comet can be.

### *Acting*

Acting is an excellent element that one can use to show how the director represents a theme. The acting on Coherence film shows how dangerous passing of a comet can be. As Emily described the events of the previous comet, she shows it in a lot of shock and fear that shows that she is terrified of what might happen to them. The actors also act in such a way that makes the viewer feel what they are experiencing. Their acting is one that keeps the person watching involved in the movie. They can show the presence of happiness and peace as well as that of anger. As they open the white box that Amir and Hugh bring to the house, it is clear from their faces that they are really in fear. More so, the characters use their facial expressions to show surprise when they realize that the box contains their pictures. They are not aware that these pictures are from them but in a different reality. As they watch the comet pass, it is clear from their smiley faces that they are happy probably since power will be back and they will go back to their normal lives.

### *Sound*

Sound is crucial in representing the theme of a movie. For this case, the director has used different variations of sound depending on the moment being experienced. In the beginning, when Emily is talking on the phone with Kelvin, there is no background music. This is to show how quiet and normal the day the comet passed seemed.

Moreover, there is a big thud that is followed by a power cut when the comet is passing. This sound is significance in representing the theme of the film. The noise puts everything to a standstill, and they all realize that they have to stay in the house for their safety as the comet passes. More so, the director makes the knock on the door sound shocking since they wouldn't expect anyone else to be out in the dark during this period. The sounds that follow are slow and silent. These sounds create an image of how events might unfold creating more suspense to the

person watching the movie. The producer managed to filter sound such that the scene would feel more scar during certain scenes. For instance, he uses the sound of hearts beating and heavy breathing when the four of the characters go out and meet with themselves but in a different reality. As they run away due to fear, except for the sound of their feet as they run, they can be heard breathing heavily in a lot of fear. The producer hence uses sound well in the film to show fear as well as happiness among the characters. The editing also represents the theme well except that the movie keeps showing a blank screen when changing scenes which don't seem to appropriate. This is because when the screen blinks, one might think that there are going to be scary scenes to follow.

In conclusion, Coherence is a great movie whose central theme is the passing of Miller's Comet. This film is acted on a low budget since only a few characters are used and just one house. More so, this film has conveyed valid points in representing the theme of the story. The director and producer use different elements of analysis to show the significance of the theme in the movie. The setting of the film is well laid out and planned to illustrate the idea of the story. Furthermore, the director has used sound to depict the element of fear in the movie. This is clearly shown when a big thud is heard which makes the scene very scary as well as when the characters run away from their realities in great fear. Overall, the movie has portrayed the theme of the story well.

Works Cited

Byrkit, James Ward, director. *Coherence*. *Coherence*, Bellanova Films, 2013,

[www.youtube.com/watch?v=rCeALYY3Jy4](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rCeALYY3Jy4) .



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