

Movement as a narrative device, screen hope (1948)



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Movement as a narrative device " A film is a ribbon of dreams. The camera is much more than a recording apparatus; it is a medium via which messages reach us from another world that is not ours and that brings us to the heart of a great secret. Here magic begins." - Orson Welles

This paper encompasses a discussion of Alfred Hitchcock's use of movement as a narrative device in his movie *Rope* (1948). More specifically the paper examines the technique to John Brandon's sense of power in the film.

Hitchcock is regarded as one of the most brilliant film directors that ever lived. This was due largely to his interest in narrative possibilities. This paper is concerned with Hitchcock's use of movement as a narrative in the film *Rope* (1948) and Hitchcock's use of it to illustrate Brandon's motives during the film.

Movement is used as a narrative by Hitchcock in *Rope* as he reveals conversations between the characters. The major aspects that Hitchcock utilizes his technique is during conversations " in which a pair of educated young men in Chicago in the 1920s committed a random murder for the thrill of it and to demonstrate their superiority to society." (Go Upstate. com)

Brandon, the character we are concerned with, is one of the two killers and through his use, of movement during the film Hitchcock uses movement to show Brandon's smug and sinister side to the audience.

Hitchcock's adherence to shoot the entire picture in eight 10-minute takes is significant especially in the scenes featuring Brandon. In the scene where Brandon unexpectedly quiets the sobbing Philip with a slap. " It is about the only time in the film's eighty minutes that action takes precedence over motion" (Up State. com) Up until this scene Brandon's movements worked more effectively on the audience than even the dialogue. In scenes featuring <https://assignbuster.com/movement-as-a-narrative-device-screen-hope-1948/>

Brandon there are lengthy and nonstop movement. These movements by Brandon show him going in and out of rooms without a cut. Since Brandon and Phillip share, an apartment these movements by Brandon consume the scenes, especially in the abrupt manner he enters and exits and moves around.

The film being one long take expose the dark and cynical side of Brandon becomes more apparent through his body language and that combines with the movement used by Hitchcock during the film magnifies this side of Brandon. The use of movement by Hitchcock in the film reveals as much about Brandon's nature that the viewer learns about him through his conversations.

At one point during the film Brandon becomes more daring and this becomes apparent through his movements and body language not just his dialogue. The movie *Rope* and the way it was filmed by Hitchcock was experimental. He did a brilliant job of portraying all of the characters using movement as the narrator. I found this to be especially true for both the characters Brandon and Philip. However, I did find that through movements as a narrative Brandon's character was displayed best through the use of movement.

In conclusion, it can be said that Hitchcock was successful in his experiment in making *Rope*. As Coursodon points out " the plot of *Rope* is simple and based on a successful stage play: *two*" (Rouge Press) The movements of Brandon throughout this thriller worked efficiently in conveying his character's significance to the film.

Works Cited

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