

Jaws – review essay



**ASSIGN
BUSTER**

Jaws is a stunning yet petrifying film movie or rather a blockbuster directed by the brilliant Steven Spielberg. The scene is Amity Island, a cosy coastal community dependent on tourist dollars during the summer months, year is 1975, favourite holiday destination, and the time is summer, just before the 4th of July holiday, time for the proud Americans to celebrate their national Independence day. This is time for the Americans to celebrate and enjoy themselves at the beaches and with summer approaching the beaches being occupied in large numbers.

The movie is based on three men being brought down to the level of a real-cold blooded killer while keeping perspective upon their essential humanity. The story is about a ferocious and cold-blooded shark that is responsible for the lives of innocent young lives that are purely there to have some fun. Setting the movie in binary opposition creates more drama and anxiety for the audience as the scenes are set in a really pleasurable and cheerful environment, this creates dramatic effect to the movie, and watching small kids who are having innocent fun being brutally killed creates more tension than having bad people being murdered. Music is always an essential part of this film; it is used to create different moods.

The shark is connected to the music in the title sequence as the music beats slowly and gradually gets more frequent every time the shark is about to appear. This makes the audience aware that something is to happen but at times, the music is used to create unnecessary apprehension; this acquires the audiences mind, gets them thinking, and tensed about what could happen. Subsequently, they are surprised, as nothing significant has happened. They use calm music at different points in the film to generate a

soft and secure environment, to rest the minds of the audience. This gets their minds off the attacks and that anything major could happen. Abruptly, the audience is stunned with what they are seeing, as they were not expecting it at all, this effects them more.

It gets the audience back into the action and they feel they are a part of it. There are four attacks in the whole film, where the people are being viciously murdered. In the second attack, it doesn't show the shark attacking the small boy in the waters by the beach. They gradually build up the pressure; they use a long shot showing the children in the sea enjoying themselves but also showing Brody's worry for what could happen. From that moment, it gets the audience involved as they are also in concern for the young children and they want the police officer to act upon his instincts and get the children out of the sea.

They use this kind of shot to present a mood and sense of drama about what is happening. Shark music gradually builds up again to create dramatic irony and more irritation for the audience, knowing that something may happen but there's nothing they can do about it to stop it. The camera is then used from a low-angle shot and track from inside the water to film the shark and its movement as it gets nearer to the beach. Just as it seems the shark may not attack anyone, it lashes out at a young boy on his lilo, it rips it apart and destroys the young boy cruelly. This causes panic and shock for the characters on the beach.

The police chief tries to get everyone out of the water but instead parents and relatives of kids in the water draw nearer to the beach to see if their

children are all right. Finally, one woman is left standing on her own. They use a medium long shot, to show the woman clearly standing out by herself away from the others as she can't find her son but can only see his lilo worn to shreds with bloodstains on it and lying on the empty waters of the sea. This makes audience feel emotive & remorseful for the mother of the child, who has been the sharks' second victim. It is crucial that throughout the movie, the director builds up fear of the shark.

The movie is based on the shark and the trauma it causes, so to keep the audience interested they have to keep them bewildered and amazed at the same time, wanting more shocks. The director uses these different skills to portray what the shark is capable of doing, for example; through the damage it causes and upon other characters' reactions in the movie. At the beginning of the movie, before the first attack, the audience are not expecting any shocks just yet as the movie has just begun and the first few scenes are jovial. Suddenly, the theme music starts and just shortly after, the first attack takes place, this bewares the audience of the shark and what it's capable of doing.

Using binary opposition, in the film is also an excellent way for the director to build increasing fear of the shark. As, Amity Island which is a beach resort, is the perfect place to set such a frightening movie, as the characters are there to have fun and are not expecting horrendous events to happen. The director uses this to build up tension through the characters reactions to what is happening. In addition, using binary opposition causes more tension for the audience as the shark is attacking such innocent people who haven't done any harm to it. The director plays down the tension by using different

techniques such as music and different scenes, then suddenly, the audience are shocked with the least expected. In the second attack, it is such a cheerful environment, this makes the audience think that the sharks killing first target was just a one off, just then the shark strikes again and its victim is a young, naive and vulnerable child.

This increases the fear for the shark deeply and what it is capable of doing. The story has been constructed in different ways to build up tension and fear. The director has set out the first two attacks close together to cause immediate effects on the movie, showing the audience that anything can happen while the shark is around and it can happen unpredictably so be warned! Although, the first attack is quite a shock and tragedy for the local people and chief police officer Brody, the mayor decides to keep the beach open at all costs. Unfortunately, when a little child's life is taken right in front of his mother, the movie takes an emotional turn also showing the shark holds no mercy for anyone, even little vulnerable children. Putting the two attacks close together causes real tension and fear of the shark and its capability.

This makes the audience sympathise for the victims sincerely. Quint, a marine biologist also a shark specialist is one of the three men who will get to stare at death in their face as they try to destroy Amity's unwelcome guest, also a fisherman called Hooper offers to come and reel in the beast at a cost although he doesn't realise what he has stumbled himself into.

Overlapping dialogue, such that the audience often get the gist of what's been said without being able to separate the words, proves wonderfully realistic as it creates an intense amount of pressure. False alarms are also

used to create anxiety. Brody's son looks to be the sharks' next casualty. It isn't just another bright and sunny day, it's the 4th of July, the American Independence Day, and the beach is jam-packed.

Brody's son and his friend decide to give a fright to all the local people around the beach not knowing that they are putting their own lives at risk but also causing further panic for the locals. Although, at this point even the audience aren't aware that Brody's son is up to a trick, to add pressure, the director uses split scenes, one showing the fun going on at the beach and one showing people that are getting worried with the action that is happening showing the shark near the beach. Finally, the two scenes come together and characters are terrified with what they are seeing. Only to realise later that it is a false alarm, that Brody's son and his friend, who have been swimming near the shore with a costume that looks to be like a shark with its fins sticking out causing a real scare for Brody and the locals, have hoaxed them. Just when they are caught playing their silly game, the theme music starts playing again showing that the real scare is yet to come which emphasises fear of the shark. The real shark all of a sudden lurches its body out of the water, which causes real shock and terror.

Panic is all around, as the two young children are in the water, with the shark just a few feet away from them. The shark overturns a boat, and heads for the man who has been forced out of his boat into the sea. The shark bites his leg off and eats him up alive, which causes even more fright as just minutes prior they had experienced a false alarm but knew this wasn't another false fright after witnessing one of the most lethal attacks of the movie. The last section of the film is where the three men decide its time to take instant

action and head out to sea to catch the cold-blooded killer. These last few scenes create the predominant pressure in the entire movie with the main characters coming so close to death knowing that they are the only ones who can stop the wild beast. The director sets out the entire movie so that for much of the time the shark is little more than a shadow or a brief glimpse of fin, the luck of being based on a naturally camouflaged monster.

The three men keep failing during the first night out at sea at their attempts to kill the shark, as the shark appears from out of the blue and they still can't kill it even though trying so hard. At this point, it seems as if it will be impossible to kill the shark with the men giving it all they've got. It seems that the men are giving up after their long hard fight against its fiend as they get drunk and look as if they couldn't care less about what may happen because they have no hope left. This creates tension and fear that the shark is going to keep striking repeatedly and there is nothing anyone can or will do about it.

Come the next day, the men look more determined than ever and set out against its brute. There is upsetting news, Hooper, the fisherman has been killed, and it looks as if the shark may choose another of the two men left as its next target. Now it is just Brody and Quint against the shark. The look on their face tells it all, indomitable and strong. Brody sets out to shoot the shark again, however, keeps failing but then at last, he gets what he truly deserves. The shark is deservedly viciously executed and it is nothing but joy for the two men.

You can tell their success on their faces, so happy yet so exhausted after the long battle. There have been many petrifying moments in this film, all built up with great amount of tension and scare. However, the one that is the most intimidating moment is when Quint and Brody go out to sea one night. Brody, who is afraid of going out to sea after a childhood experience, knows that he has no alternative than to go as he is chief police officer and everything relies on him. Quint advises Brody to stay in the boat while he is to dive into the sea after spotting something peculiar. Slow, steady, and calm music is played to relax the audience.

They use various different camera angles to show the scariest moment of the film. First, they have a camera angle from Quint's view, showing what he is looking at. From nowhere, as he reaches to what he was swimming down to look at, he sees a dead man! The dead man looks like the shark has also attacked him at sea as well; he is pale and looks frozen and hard as a brick wall. They also use an extreme close up to concentrate on the mans face.

This was the scariest moment in the film, as it seemed as if nothing would happen but unexpectedly they show the dead man; just as the audience is relaxed and calm, it makes the audience jump right out of their seats! Jaws is one of the best films ever made. It's the reason why many people still will not swim in the ocean and barely go in past their knees. Although that doesn't stop them from watching it, but it shows how effective a film this is. The director uses some impressive techniques to employ the horror and scare without being needlessly violent like most films are today. The best technique in the film is how the director is able to invoke horror and bloodshed without really showing all that he could.

You don't even get to see the size of the fish until near the end of the film. yet there are enough scares and thrills scattered throughout to keep the audience on the edge of their seats.