

# The truman show

Food & Diet



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The fictional town of Seahaven is presented to the audience as an American dream, through the life of Truman. Wier presents the fictional theme using various ideas.

In this essay I'm going to explore the ideas and see how they are presented to the audience. At the beginning of the film, the theme of the " American Dream" is really shown. The first shots of Seahaven show how perfect Truman's life is. This is done by presentational devices. In the beginning the setting establishes how perfect the town of Seahaven is. In a mise en scene we see the whole town of Seahaven and it doesn't appear to the audience as a set.

We see the setting as bright and clean with no traffic or pollution making the town unattractive. We can see this properly in the first appearance of Truman in the first scene. He walks off from his tidy house and garden to his car where he passes a family that are typically perfect. They are stereotyped to the American dream with a traditional wife, husband and sweet young daughter. They are there to keep the faultless running in Truman's happy life plus it can reflect back to the audience of how his life is just like the American dream.

The beginning is also a good example of how the director uses presentational devices to show us that Seahaven is also a TV set. At the opening Seahaven is immediately presented to the audience as a reality TV show. An example of this is when Truman on leaves the house. The cameras follow him and zoom up giving us a sense that he is under surveillance. A

technique they use is making the camera move up and down in a jerky movement giving the audience a feel of CCTV being used.

They also link all the cameras together giving the audience the best view of Truman and what he is doing. For instance the camera in the dog's collar is there so we can see Truman's reaction as it jumps up on him. Truman's reaction is to raise his briefcase away from the dog allowing his camera (in his ring) to display what the dog is doing. This is all surveillance for "The Truman Show" making it more of a reality television program than a just a show.

The characters show different views of Seahaven towards the audience. Sylvia is a typical example of how she tries to change the audience's opinion. Sylvia tries to show Seahaven as being an evil place for Truman to be in. She tries to get her message across to the audience through Truman in his collage days and since the event he is slowly unravelling the fictional town. When Sylvia told him, she deliberately avoids the cameras and run off together hiding from them. When she gets a chance to explain the crew bring an additional actor playing Sylvia's "dad".

She quickly tries to explain everything but the actor covers up her story by making her seem mental. This allows them to show that's Seahaven is real and that whatever she said was a lie. Once this has happened the audience feel a lot of guilt for Truman and want what's best for him. However the characters also add back to the idea of the "American dream". The characters of Meryl and Marlon create another view of Seahaven towards Truman, making him think he has the perfect dream. They both present

Truman's life as being perfect to the audience leading to why the actual program was made.

Meryl is perceived as the perfect wife and she does everything she can do to be perfect like smiling, being constantly happy, doing household chores, and looking perfect. Being such a good wife reminds Truman of how lucky he actually is. Marlon always talks about how lucky Truman is to have an office job and constantly compares himself to him. Marlon is vending machine filler and he tells Truman that his life is much better because of his status. The two characters of Meryl and Marlon create a positive attitude of Seahaven for Truman making him believe it is his perfect life.

Because they are the main characters creating such a good view of Seahaven they are used as a marketing opportunity through to the audience. The Truman show present product placement to the audience through main characters. The main character of the advertising is Meryl as she spends more time with Truman. A good example is the " Chef's Pal" used by Meryl. She advertises a product that's a slicer dicer and peeler.

This advert is made really obvious to the audience because it is linked to the presentational devices of the show. When Meryl shows the product to Truman the camera zooms in close up to it so it can be seen clearly. Once she has been seen smiling with the product placed upright in her hand she freezes so the audience get a proper glimpse of it. This idea looks like a success to " The Truman Show" as the audience are seen with merchandise and other products from the show.

Another character in the actual film is Christoff the director of "The Truman show". As well as being the director Christoff is portrayed as God having a different approach to the audience. He is stereotyped as a director with his clothes, look and attitude towards the program. However the stereotyping of him being God leads him to be over obsessive of Truman when it all turns wrong.

When the show finds Truman sailing away to his freedom, the cast are told to bring him back to land in dangerous conditions. The cast refuse to bring the weather to a seriously dangerous level and are not prepared to risk Truman's life. Christoff is determined to keep him on his show even if it kills him.

Christoff has come up with the idea that if he was born on a television he can die on television as well. Christoff becomes so over powered it shows the audience that he can do what he wants because he controls Truman's life.

All this change in characters and story makes the audiences view of Seahaven change towards the end. The whole idea of Seahaven being the American dream is changing to a nightmare for Truman because of his dreams clashing with a reality TV show. The audience change to wanting Truman out of Seahaven and into real life which is unexpected from such an obsessed audience. When Truman is sailing away to reality Christoff changes the weather trying to stop him from leaving the island any further.

The audience within the film encourage him to hold on to the boat and keep going. This unexpectedness is a different turnout from the one expected because if he does carry on the show will end, but the audience want this to happen for Truman's sake In conclusion the fictional town of Seahaven is

presented to the audience in many ways. It changes from start to finish helped by characters and presentational devices making the audience have a different perspective on what the American dream really has to offer.