

Comparison between two films essay



**ASSIGN
BUSTER**

In this essay I am going to present a comparative analysis of how an iconic central character is represented in both 'The Queen' and 'Batman Begins'. Despite the fact that this character is present in both materials, there are different techniques used to portray these characters in a certain way. Since the genre and audience is different between the two films, the mise-en-scene varies to create the required effect. In 'the Queen', the mise-en-scene is used to create the impression that the royal family is quite distant from the realities of normal life, and that they are extremely privileged. In contrast to this, 'Batman Begins' uses techniques to show that the main setting, the city of Gotham, is a dishonest and sinister place.

Seeing that 'Batman Begins' is aimed at a younger audience, it is unable to show a lot of violence. Therefore non-diegetic sound is used to convey a sense of aggression and brutality. 'The Queen' is composed of predominantly diegetic sound. This presents more a documentary or biography-esque type film, suggesting that what you see in the film is a true representation of the royal family. Since there is dialogue throughout the majority of the film, the characters emotions are represented by the dialogue, so there is no need to expose these through the use of non-diegetic sound. Music is used throughout the whole of 'Batman Begins', to create a more dramatic feel, as well as emphasising certain parts of the film.

This is most common when Batman appears, which creates the impression that he is a powerful heroic character, in contrast to when his alter-ego, Bruce Wayne, is on screen. The orchestral and deep percussion music helps to portray a sense of menace and threat. Unlike 'Batman Begins', 'the Queen' rarely has music, except to emphasise certain parts of the film or

emotions. This is usually when there is no speech to produce a sense of feeling, for example it sets the emotion tone at the funeral. Most of the film 'The Queen' is set in large and clearly expensive estates, such as Buckingham Palace and Balmoral estate, however there is shots of Tony Blair in his house that many people would connect with.

This is used to further impose the contrast between the affluence and advantages of royalty and other people. It also makes them prime minister seems normal and down-to-earth. Setting 'Batman Begins' in a city similar to Chicago, allows the audience to relate what they are seeing, perhaps allowing them to create a stereotypical impression of what life and crime would be like in Gotham. 'The Queen' uses a subtle approach to props and costume which again shows her superiority.

For example they are constantly in formal clothes, unlike the prime minister and members of the public who are seen in the pyjamas or casual attire. This depicts the royal family as out of touch with the British Public. In comparison, there are a number of props and costumes used in 'Batman Begins', particularly the bat disguise and his accessories. The effect of this is to show the difference between Batman and his less heroic character Bruce Wayne, not only in his appearance but mannerisms.

The props used by the hero are all of advanced technology, creating the impression that he is better and more cutting edge than the habitants of Gotham. They are also aesthetically pleasing. 'The Queen' uses no special effects, and the use of simple continual cutting, which makes the film appear more realistic and natural as with a documentary. However there is a lot of

seamless interweaving of real footage with that of the newly filmed footage. This allows a more genuine insight to the royal family's reaction to the death of Diana and the effects it had. The high amount of editing used in 'Batman Begins' is enjoyable and appealing to the audience as it allows an insight into the mind of Batman, for example through the flashbacks.

It is also appropriate to the action and can be used to create a sense of drama and mystery as it cuts from frame to frame. Dissimilar to 'Batman Begins', 'The Queen' uses the appearance of less expensive cinematography to create the impression of behind the scenes footage, through the continuity editing and lack of non-diegetic sound. 'Batman Begins' uses a lot of kinetic camera movement, particularly during the fight scenes to create more of an action packed film showing the conflict and struggle. Also, it is unusual in the sense that it does not have opening credits, and the name of the film is not shown until the end.

In place of this, the internationally recognised symbol of Batman is used. This would appeal to people who know about and have enjoyed the previous Batman films and other franchise; it also shows the presumed popularity of the film. The fact that the two films are extremely unlike, through their story lines and style, they appeal to different audiences. Given that 'The Queen' simply depicts the story without the use of any intriguing or special effects, it is aimed at an older audience.

Presumably one that already has prior knowledge, or is interested in the story behind Diana's death and her relationship with the royal family, as it spends little time explaining the background of it. Whilst 'Batman Begins'

also preys on the previously aware audience, it has a clearly defined target audience due to the nature of the film. Since there have been many films, comics and TV programmes based on the character of batman, the assumption is made that the watchers will know what batman is concerned with. Owing to the action and implied violence in the film, it is evidently aimed at young adults. This is further suggested through the use of special effects as it would intrigue a more technology advanced audience.

By appealing to the female demographic through the involvement of a love story, the batman franchise has now widened its audience, by varying it's story and make it more interesting to others.'The Queen' represents the normal life and an average person by showing the day to day occurrences and lifestyles that people, not only the queen, face. The distinction between the two lifestyles of both the queen and prime minister are presented through their telephone conversations, in which the shot cuts between the two and their different surroundings. The royal family is depicted as dysfunctional; this makes them appear impaired in unity and strength. This is depicted through the family's disagreement about their opposing views of the monarchy's image.

The queen is shown as stubborn, through her constant refusal to give a speech on the events, as well as her lack of appreciation for Tony Blair when he assists her. In addition to this, she is presented as someone who has a stiff upper lip, above all in contrast to the British public. This is due to her lack of emotion displayed when she found out about the death of the princess compared to the outrage shown by the public.'Batman Begins' contains unrealistic and impractical comic book style plots which construct

an evidently fictional appearance. A number of races are presented in the film.

Firstly, there is the predictable positive role of the Black man who assists Batman and supplies him with the tools he needs to carry out his actions. On top of this is an Asian kung-fu master, who fits into the stereotype that all Asian people are part of some sort of martial arts. The fact that this character lives in a temple represents the assumption that all oriental people are Buddhists. Both films expose institutional issues; however these are different between the two. 'The Queen', with its lack of special effects and excitement, is a non Hollywood film. It is also based on a controversial political issue, still debated about today.

The effect of the interaction between the public and the queen suggests that the royal family is unnecessary as they are out of touch with the public. 'The Queen' hints at patriarchal ideology as, even though she is of a higher status, Tony Blair advises the queen and in doing improves the situation. To gain sales, the Hollywood film 'Batman Begins', relies on its visual merits, such as the special effect of the scarecrow mask. It raises the issue of corruption within corporations throughout the film, and depicts the notion that whilst the rich are becoming increasingly wealthy, the poor are simply losing more.

Since Batman works alone attempting to change the ways of the deceitful city, it is implied that any sense of morality comes from individuals.

Capitalist ideologies are presented in the film as the corporations are the powerful influences throughout the city. It could be argued that the fact that

Bruce Wayne is wealthy also agrees with the ideology as it insinuates that he would not be able to become the saviour batman without the money and the power that it brings. Another ideology depicted in the film is that of bourgeois, owing to the fact that the people in the city of Gotham are constantly striving to improve and acquire a higher status. Released on a smaller scale to 'Batman Begins', 'the Queen' belongs to a political genre, in the style of a documentary. However, 'Batman Begins' is taken from the fantasy sci-fi genre and has many of the expected conventions to prove this.

Todorov's theory of narrative can be applied to 'the Queen' as it goes through the process of overcoming a crisis. Originally, the equilibrium is when the royal are living their lives as normal. Then arrives the disequilibrium of Diana dying, and in response the public turning against the queen due to her reaction. Finally, when the queen makes her speech she is reaccepted by the public, this is the new equilibrium. This is also applicable with 'Batman Begins' as at the beginning of the film Bruce Wayne is going through his childhood years, and we see him as part of a wealthy happy family, which is then disrupted by the murder of his parents and the downfall of the city. These are the equilibrium and disequilibrium respectively.

A new equilibrium is produced when batman becomes the hero and saves Gotham city and reconstructs his house.