

Microtheme 2: applying a source as a lens

[Linguistics](#), [English](#)



Microtheme 2: Applying a Source as a Lens. *Welcome to the Dollhouse* is an American comedy film about a shy, unattractive and unpopular girl called Dawn Wiener who is in 7th grade. She has two other siblings, an older brother and a younger sister with whom she does not get along with most of the times. The plot of the film revolves around Dawn Weiner's life and the challenges she comes across in her daily life. From the perspective of using a source as a lens in applying a concept or a claim to the analysis of a test object and in this case the film *Welcome to the Dollhouse*. The aim of this paper is to identify and define a key concept from Cohen's essay "Monster Culture: Seven Theses", and use the concept as a lens to analyse details from a film scene. The feasibility of a monster as a desirable entity is going to be the major highlight of this paper.

Cohen's theses number six theses states that the 'Fear of the Monster is Really a Kind of Desire' that is defined or construed as a forbidden fruit that is very attractive to all those that come into contact with it in their life. According to Cohen, the monster can represent a myriad of different things depending on the context that the viewer is applying this concept (Reid-Walsh & Mitchell 182). Cohen postulates in his essay, that monsters are a creation of man's imagination to represent those aspects of his life that are beyond reasoning or explanation. In one of his thesis, he claims that monsters are used to represent emotions and desires that people can not understand and control. A discernible and interesting observation on the use of monsters is that they are rarely used to represent positive and good aspects. Monsters are discovered and created take the place of weird, complex and mostly negative aspects of life that put people in turmoil and

pain. In the context of the film *Welcome to the Dollhouse*, there are different sub-themes that are explored in the film. All of these themes revolve around the life of Dawn Weiner and those that she interacts with in her daily life. Of interest in this paper will be the theme of relationships between adolescent boys and girls in the film. The monster in this film is represented by the aspect that is presented as the difficulties that some characters in the film have interacting with other people around them and how they cope with the situation.

Dawn's difficulty in making friends both at home and in school is illustrated as the source of most of her problem. When most of Dawn's peers have a girlfriend or boyfriend, she is left without one until she meets Brandon who initially threatens her with bodily harm. This is illustrated in the film by a close up shot over the Dawn's shoulder when she stares at other kids having fun with their friends. This is a good example of how vectors and sight lines can be used to accentuate emotions or their source in a character (Morris 125). Brandon threatens to rape her. But we are shown that the idea of having sex even if it is through rape, intriguing, Dawn willingly presents herself to Brandon for 'rape' upon his request (Morris 261). The genre of this scene in the film is brought out in such a way as to indicate a sexual proximity between people that is uncommon in people of Dawn's age. The genre of this scene helps the viewer understand the position and status of the characters in the scene. The monster that is sex in this film is satisfactorily brought out by the social distance created by the camera's distance especially when the scenes where Dawn and Steve are together. Sex is generally discouraged among teenagers, and in the context of this

film and Cohen's discourse, sex can be regarded as the monster. In Cohen's essay, the monster poses irrevocable consequences if entertained and sex in the context of the film is viewed with such monstrous proportions especially in the eyes of the youth.

Cohen describes a monster as an entity that is simultaneously attractive and repulsive, but in the same breath, it awakens one to the pleasures of the body that are brought about by fear of the unknown and the forbidden (Mittman & Dendle 321). The thesis by Cohen of a monster representing people's hidden desires helps in analysing the scenes where Dawn is alone with Brandon and Steve. An understanding of Cohen's thesis is insightful in analysing the scene where Dawn is also alone with Brandon; the viewer is able to discern her willingness not from her words, but from the non-spoken actions. Dawn's unspoken dialogue with Steve during their time alone is a good example of how monsters help in the analysis of a scene.

Works Cited.

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