

Objectives: enhance  
and or improve  
critical thinking and  
media literacy skills  
by...

[History](#)



**Objectives: Enhance and/or improve critical thinking and media literacy skills by: 1. Developing a clear and concise thesis statement (an argument) in response to the foll**

Boyz ' N the Hood The film, "Boyz ' n the hood), portrays the hard conditions and "rough area" that black Americans must grow up in throughout their lives. The film shows the cultural and political differences that black

Americans cope with. This analytical essay also discusses the issue of drug trafficking and how the key stakeholders blame it on the blacks (Boyd 109).

2. Firstly, the film portrays the issue of racism and how blacks are treated differently. In addition, the film depicts the issue of drug trafficking and shows how the stakeholders have a strong believe that the blacks are responsible for such criminality hence they are the ones playing a strong part. Lastly, "Boyz ' n the hood" clearly shows how young black Americans always live in dangerous situations (109).

3. The three scenes in the film that support the above thesis statement are the car scene, the crime scene in school, and the gun shot scene. The car scene shows how the police officers were molesting the black Americans. The crime scene portrays that, black American scholars were discriminated by white teachers, and were not supposed to question anything during class sessions. The gun shot scene is also relevant to the thesis statement since it shows how Doughboy shows his fate towards his neighborhood and societal indifferences (110).

Introduction- "Boyz ' n the hood" is an insightful and scratching look into the issue of machinations of black Americans' culture. Rather than putting more emphasis on black Americans discrimination, the film further gives a

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narrative of three young black men who are struggling to adapt to the challenges surrounding them. The analysis purports to discuss the racism experiences of black Americans and adaptation challenges (113). Mise-en-scene in film criticism does not simply mean a set of propositions, which are readily detached from the film. This is a very vital element in visual arts and therefore inevitable for development of any successful film. However, this means a complex combination of the film's thematic concerns and its simultaneous embodiments in a number of elements (Walters 2008, p. 15). These elements include look and sound, the film's performance details and rhetoric of the camera, its tone, and structure. Thus, the mise-en-scene embeds in the film's texture. This concept makes a film highly interesting, hence attracts a huge number of viewers. Mise-en-scene therefore, refers to the contents of a film's frame and organization of these contents. The contents of a film's frame include costume, lighting, décor, actors, and properties (Gibbs 2002, p. 5). This essay explores the notion of using music in the film "A letter from an unknown woman" as a metaphor of the film's style and its thematic concerns. Musical concepts such as pace, rhythm, themes, and variations help the viewers understand all the mixed feelings aroused by the Letter (Walters 2008, p. 17).

#### Theme and variations

While the metaphor of music is not highly direct here, one can also view the Letter as comprising of abstract patterns of variations and themes, motifs, repetitions, echoes, and refrains. The gathering of this film is in a series of rhymes with elements of both "content" and "form" being found, and shifted systematically back as seen in a mirror (Ophuls, Wexman & Hollinger

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2006, p. 34). This character trait of such a classic cinema, balancing of recurring and different images enhances the mise-en-scene of the film, hence making it more attractive for the viewers. The use music in this film improves the viewer's understanding and makes it more interesting due to such accompaniment (Langman 2005, p. 87).

To begin with, the film portrays the theme of love. This theme is first portrayed during the beginning credits, and later in Lisa's letter to Stefan when she writes about how she loves and will always live to love him. This does not only references Stefan, but also her love for him as well as the memories she has for Stefan (Walters 2008, p. 18). Memories are more central in "Letter from an unknown woman", and portrayed through music echoes. For example, when Stefan after going through the letter he recalls some scenes. Music echoes accompany this theme. Similarly, when Lisa visits the café for a second time, she hears a slow type of music she heard at the first time. This tune was moreover audible at the time when she cries, standing at the window after putting junior to bed (Walters 2008, p. 21). Therefore, as this diegetic music returns to the film's score, it makes link between scenes and advances the unity of the film.

The concept of theme film's theme and variation, however operates metaphorically. The film aural and visual, texture is similar to the film's score whereby, diegetic and non-diegetic musical elements are repeated as well as, being varied upon. Given these elements' complexity, it is easy to make identification of these patterns after a single view (Walters 2008, p. 23).

Nevertheless, just as the musical themes, these patterns create a coherent impression. However, they create déjà-vu sense, portraying the central

theme “ memory” and putting stress on the inescapable tragedy seen in Lisa’s love. Everything returns, but Lisa blindly believes that things will change.

A specific aspect of music can metaphorically be essential to describe “ Letter from unknown woman”. In this case, pace and rhythm is the powerful aspects. For example, the sequence intercutting Stefan’s images playing the piano with those of Lisa and her friend. At first Stefan’s fingers appear peacefully playing the Liszt etude theme (Ophuls, Wexman & Hollinger 2006, p. 37). Thereafter, the camera moves towards Lisa, who is dreamily listening to the swing. She moves following the swing’s beat and so the camera does. Different angles of the camera show different perspectives, except that the pace remains low. Musicality, rhythm, and pace create a persistent sense of the film.

Using music in the Letter is highly central in a number of levels. The film is set around Vienna, a town, which is normally associated with Strauss waltzes and operetta. Most of movie’s screen acting involves music, and a lot of the film is diegetic. The mood in the film scene is set by use of non-diegetic music. The film’s director takes this Hollywood film to an extreme, hence creating a close relationship of sound and image (Walters 2008, p. 32).

Camera movements also create the same relationship between sound and image and corresponding to the actors’ psychological and emotional states. Arguably, although camera movements create relationship between sound and image, music fulfils a similar function in a highly effective straightforward manner. The use of music is the main Ophul’s movement counterpart (Ophuls, Wexman & Hollinger 2006, p. 39).

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The mood portrayed in individual scenes frequently is aural instead of visual. For instance, the first scene of the film indicates a clear example (Walters 2011, p. 74). The time Stefan is reading the letter, warning strings and drums swell on the voice track, making a declaration of despair and destiny (Langman 2005, p. 87). On the contrary, when Lisa remembers the way Stefan's furniture came in, a fairground form of music suggests her childish delight and wonder. In turn, this music contrasts with Stefan's romantic and love music (Walters 2008, p. 35). The film director uses an easy way of music in the film to portray the mood of every scene. The music played is different depending on the scene, for instance, when Stefan is reading the love letter; love music accompanies the scene. This makes the viewers understand the movie so easily as well as adding some interest to the film.

Apart from the music signaling emotional change, it also coincides with a new onscreen scene. For instance, the background music of the film swells in the two scenes when Lisa and Stefan. The relationship between images and diegetic music is not that straightforward. The diegetic music heard seemingly tends to add a particular dimension to all events. Sound is among the devices used to clarify what seems to be not apparent with the images (Ophuls, Wexman & Hollinger 2006, p. 45). However, in the case of Lisa's voice-over, the relationship between music and image is not univocal.

Throughout the film, the heavy emotional scenes are followed by a lighter sequence. For example, after the confusion due to Lisa's marriage proposal declination, it follows a joyous mood of Mme Spitzer. Similarly, the romantic scenes always get some disruptions, as seen when Lisa is listening to Stefan play the piano and her friend disrupts (Walters 2011, p. 76). All these mise-

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en-scene elements conspire to come up with an attractive Letter's contradictory and ambiguous texture. Lastly, the contents' organization in the film covers the relationship between the actors and the décor, and how they relate with the camera. Therefore, mise-en-scene in the film covers the camera movement, framing, photographic decisions, and lens used. The film "A letter from unknown woman" clearly portrays all these aspect, and therefore attracts the audience view (Gibbs 2002, p. 5).

### Conclusion

In conclusion, the concept of mise-en-scene includes the elements, which make a film more attractive and is a powerful signifier of a film's atmosphere (Gibbs 2002, p. 6). For instance, music in the Letter seems to be the most powerful mise-en-scene than any other element. The frame's content, organization encompasses actors' relationship and the décor of a film and their camera relationship. This makes a film more attractive, hence making it more interesting to its audience. Therefore, mise-en-scene involves framing, movement of camera, the type of lens used as well as other photographic elements (Gibbs 2002, p. 5). It encompasses what the viewers can see, and how they get invited to view it. It refers to a number of elements incorporated in a film, and how they operate expressively. Up to this point, it is realistic to assert that mise-en-scene is a very vital element in visual arts and therefore inevitable in film development (Gibbs 2002, p. 3).

1.

### Work cited

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