

Gran torino oral presentation from perspective of clint eastwood essay



**ASSIGN
BUSTER**

Gran Torino, my name is Clint Eastwood and I'm the director and protagonist of the film Gran Torino.

My character Walt Kowalski is a grumpy, tough-minded, Korean War veteran who has an intensely strong opinion on different races because of experiences from the war that haunt him from his past. Having also directed the film I was able to express the character Walt in such a way that emphasized three particular themes; racism, religion and family. I also used a wide range of cinematic and film techniques to help portray each theme. Essentially this is what made this film successful.

Racism is a major theme that is shown particularly throughout the first half of the film because of Walt's hatred towards foreign races, or as he calls them; swamp rats, gooks, hooks, slants, and many other names. What we are exposed to throughout our lives shapes us; our beliefs are established biased on our experiences. Walt is strongly closed-minded at the beginning of the film because of his experiences and he just wanted to be left alone, he believed he was at peace in his own mind. An example of this is when he says to the foreigners when they offer him food, "can't you people just leave me alone," this showed Walt was stubborn and racist.

I used a particular straight on camera angle when Walt is talking about the 'swamp rats' that move in next door, asking himself "how many swamp rats can you get in one room?" The medium portrait shot I used shows Walt standing in front of his house with the American flag in the background, a large depth of field is used to keep both Walt and the flag in focus, this cinematic technique contributes to emphasizing Walt's stereotypical American

war veterans ??? racist personality. Walt always came up with unnecessary racist comments but manage to overcome his hatred. There was a sense of satisfaction and Joy the audience found from seeing Walt overcome his racism with an almost relieving forgiveness. My character Walt, was exposed to one set of beliefs and experienced hardship, death and pain all brought on by one culture, which shaped the way he saw that culture and the world. Walt never had any strong religious beliefs, he hated church, and quickly rejects an offer of friendship from the local priest (Christopher), in fact he Says to him “ I think your an over educated 27 year old virgin.

When he is trying to persuade Walt to take confession. This showed in the beginning Walt didn't feel the need for any religion or belief despite his wife expressing what she thought was best for him. He is trying to show us that people are perfectly capable of living a life of faith without the help of organized religion. Eventually Walt realises out of respect of his late wife that he needed to forgive to be able to go In peace. The film adopted the Idea of confession and forgiveness of sins, the love of one's neighbour and ultimately the laying down of one's life for their friends. Also remember the Titans theme I used Walt's lighter as a symbol of his patriotism and a reflection of his war veteran past but In his final scene, It then becomes a symbol of him being at peace saying “ I've got a light”, symbolically meaning that he is at peace and he is ready to sacrifice himself. 1 OF2 see him as an independent healthy man. He also disapproves of his granddaughter's belly-button ring and his son's car. On his birthday, his son and daughter in law bring him a cake, but not just to celebrate his birthday. They try and persuade him to consider moving to a retirement village, this shows that

they really don't know who he is or how capable he is. In this scene, the camera switches between shots of the three of them, a close-up of Walt's intensely angry expression and a shot of the cake from Walt's viewpoint.

As Walt stares at the cake with grief in his eyes, it becomes obvious that the cake is an excuse to talk to him about moving him to a home, and instead of celebrating Walt's birthday they only offend him. Walt throws them out, along with their presents. Considering family as an important theme in this story, what that means to the majority is the idea of being together as a family unit, those who accept you for who you are, provide support and guide the choices you make in life, this helps the audience relate to Walt. Feeling like his family has pushed him away has actually allowed him, in the end to expand his idea of family, giving him a broader sense of the community as being his family or someone worth dying for. In conclusion the way I have expressed the central themes along with the hidden symbols and cinematic techniques have made this film heart-warming and appealing to any audience. The humor that Walt created out of racism and his view of religion was something that the audience would have appreciated although sometimes politically wrong.

Making the film appealing to a broad audience using strong controversial themes as religion, racism and societies idea of the family unit, all played a vital role in making this film a success.