

Examines the file "a beautiful mind" essay sample



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The shots of A Beautiful Mind consists of mainly medium, high angle and low angle shots. John Nash is often shot in a medium shot. The film uses color as symbolic of good and evil. During scenes where the lead Nash was in a good mood or was having something happy happen to him, the colors were all saturated with a golden hue. The lights looked gold, and it was as if all the actors' faces were covered with golden morning sunlight. During the sad times there was a lot of desaturation going which gave it a pale blue or gray tone. At one point when his wife discovers he has reverted into deep schizophrenia and is about to accidentally kill their child, it is of course raining, there is a fierce wind blowing, the house is devoid of any color and everything is gray. This treatment does however; influence the mood of how we are supposed to feel. High angle shots are used to show freedom and low angle shots to show hope. His relationship with Alicia is often shot in high and low angle shots.

A Beautiful Mind elegantly uses small, nice effects early on. When Nash is lost looking at geometric patterns, they dance across the screen of their own accord; when he looks at a page of numbers, digits float up to greet him. It is a smart visual, both suggesting the abstract joys of thought and the visual hallucinations to come.

The look of the film was very crisp and clear. There seemed to be no originality in the mise-en-scene and that was perplexing. In the school environment you saw school things, in a work environment you saw work

things. It was as if they were more concerned with dating and the period of the film rather than the mood it was trying to portray.

The film and the camera work are fairly straightforward, with only a few digitally animated instances of hallucinations that diverge from wholly photographic representation of the world of the film. So, with the film's naturalistic photography and narrative, as well as knowing that this is meant to be biographical, it's reasonably surprising when it turns out that several of the characters turn out to be hallucinations as well.

One thing that intrigued me was the treatment of Nash's hallucinations. In most part it was done so the audience wouldn't guess right off, but even after we are aware they are merely hallucinations, they still perform as real people, in a real space having real interaction. Another part that intrigued me was the use of windows. The reason this was so interesting is that there is no reason. I started wondering if it was trying to say something about our minds and trying to escape, then I thought it was alluding to our duality of personality. However, they are used so often, and at such different times and moods I have to come to believe it was a convention the director came to like and used it often. I liked the idea of numbers on a surface between you and the action, or anything for that matter. It's a way of filtering, sending a message without actually using a filter.

The score is a warm orchestral score, something that is noticeable from the beginning. With little brass, percussion and a lack of fanfare, the score never cools off either. The warm sentimentality of the music remains throughout. The melody, though very beautiful, has a thoughtful essence to it like every

subsequent chord is a direct result of the previous. Thus, even with the warm orchestral cues, the score remains almost mathematical – absolutely fitting. I know most music is essentially mathematical and of course there are chord progressions, but the way that melody moves gives it that feeling even more. Thus, the wonderful part about this score is that it can maintain a high level of emotion while maintaining that structure.

I truly enjoyed the acting by Crowe and Connelly. At first there didn't seem to be anything really special about the work, but as the movie went on, I got more and more into their performances. Crowe managed to capture a lot of passion in a man who didn't appear to show a lot of emotion. The more Nash started to fall apart, the better Crowe's performance was, and the more his wife had to deal with his breakdown, the better Connelly got.

It is 1947 and John Nash has arrived at Princeton for graduate study in mathematics. "The mysterious West Virginia genius" has no prep school legacy or old money ties to cushion his entry into the Ivy League – just Princeton's most prestigious fellowship to signify that he does indeed belong. It's not an easy fit for Nash, or for Princeton. Social niceties mean nothing to him; neither does attending class. He is obsessed with just one thing: finding a truly original idea. That, he's convinced, is the only way he will ever matter. Princeton's math department is brutally competitive and some of Nash's classmates would love to see him fail. Still, they tolerate him, and inadvertently incite him to greatness. He's with them one night in a local bar when their reaction to a hot blonde grabs his attention. As Nash observes their rivalry, the idea that has been haunting him bursts into focus. His resulting paper on game theory – the mathematics of competition – boldly

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contradicts the doctrines of Adam Smith, the father of modern economics. One-hundred-fifty years of accepted thought is abruptly outdated, and Nash's life is changed forever. Nash subsequently wins a coveted research and teaching post at MIT, but is not satisfied. Science had played a huge role in bringing about America's triumph in World War II, and now, as the Cold War rages, Nash yearns to play a role in this new conflict.

His wish is granted when the shadowy Parcher recruits him for a top-secret assignment as an enemy code breaker. Nash throws himself into this consuming effort while continuing his work at MIT. It is there that he is challenged in an altogether new way by the beautiful and brilliant Alicia, a physics student who introduces Nash to a concept he'd never seriously considered - love. Nash and Alicia marry, but he cannot confide the dangerous project he has undertaken for Parcher. The work, the secrecy and the danger take their toll. Nash is furtive, obsessed and finally lost in a world of overpowering delusions. The diagnosis is paranoid schizophrenia. Not only his college roommate, but Parcher and his work for the Department of Defense are all hallucinations caused by his illness.

Devastated by the implications of her husband's condition, Alicia struggles under the strain of loving a broken genius. The glamorous couple of their courtship has vanished as each day seems to bring new horror. But Alicia can still glimpse the charismatic man she fell in love with, and that fuels her commitment to him. Inspired by her unwavering love and faith, Nash finally decides to fight a disease thought to be not only incurable, but degenerative. This humbled Nash has simpler goals, but they are even harder to achieve. Still burdened by demons, still driven by the intoxicating demands of

mathematical theory, he is determined to find his own kind of normalcy. Through sheer force of will, he continues his work and in 1994, receives the Nobel Prize.

The story of A Beautiful Mind is an adapted screenplay written by Akiva Goldsman based on the book by Sylvia Nasser based on the true story of John and Alicia Nash. While the adaptation does leave out certain parts of his life, including a wife and son before Alicia and rumored bisexuality, the movie is generally very close to the book and actual story.

While John Nash is obsessed with breaking codes, A Beautiful Mind is really a film about learning to read social codes. It teaches viewers what ways of making sense of the world are acceptable, what ways are not and, in doing so, legitimates a particular world view. In its portrayal of Nash the film naturalizes a world divided into haves and have-nots by teaching viewers how to find their "place" in existing social relations. We are shown that not only must we accept the differences in others, we must accept the differences within ourselves.