

Bewitched analysis

Business



Evaluating Sitcoms – Bewitched Bewitched is a situation comedy, produced in the year 1964 and set in America. The main characters include Samantha and Darrin Stephens. The program Bewitched conveys the premise to not make assumptions about someone instantly – because there may be more to a person than what meets the eye.

The pilot of Bewitched begins with the orientation, establishing the status of the newly wed couple. Darrin is portrayed as the breadwinner of the family, and Samantha is presented as the perfect wife, which fulfils all of the criteria of a typical suburban housewife.

The complication is then introduced when Samantha reveals she's a witch. The complication is followed by a series of events, which begin with an invitation to Shelia's -Darrin's ex-fiance- house. At arrival they are both greeted with a warm welcome, but soon things begin to get messy. Shelia starts to belittle Samantha's appearance, making her uncomfortable and annoyed; but to make matters worse Shelia begins to flirt with Darrin whilst occasionally glancing over at Samantha, in order to her to make her feel insignificant and envious.

Samantha comes into conflict with herself in whether or not to use magic, but she decides using magic is the only way to go –even after promising Darrin no more witch craft – Samantha uses her magic in order to teach Shelia a well learnt lesson, to keep her hands of her man. The complication is soon resolved with Darrin and Samantha returning home to discuss her behaviour and the use of magic. Darrin becomes upset with Samantha for breaking her promise, but as any wife would do, Samantha almost instantly apologises and tells Darrin she won't use magic again.

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The coda is illustrated in the end of the episode, despite Darrin's request Samantha finishes by saying, " Maybe I can tamper off," hence staying true to herself and not letting anyone change who she is. There are aspects of this storyline, which are plausible where the audience sees the common character/figure of the seductive ex-fiance/girlfriend. The credibility is generated with the behaviour of Samantha and Shelia.

In Shelia wanting to make Samantha jealous and herself the centre of attention the plot is made credible, but the audience is then drawn to feel that the plot is more relatable and convincing with Samantha's response to the situation, feeling annoyed, envious and angry. The relationship between Darrin and Samantha portrayed in the episode is clearly strong and affectionate. The Bewitched pilot reveals numerous characteristics of both Darrin and Samantha. Darrin is seen as the stereotypical husband, with his strong and demanding personality, which demonstrates that he obtains the authority between the two.

However the audience becomes aware of the love and affection Darrin has for his new wife, Samantha. Samantha is also portrayed as a stereotypical housewife, who follows her husband's expectations of a Good wife, by cooking, keeping the household clean and being Normal.

Bewitched reflects the values of the time, including some now-dated ideas about men and women's roles in society. The main characters, Darrin and Samantha are featured as binary opposite characters in the sense that Samantha is not you would call normal, being a witch.

However Darrin is just an ordinary typical man, who happened to fall in love with a not so normal woman. Wanting to use a bit of magic once in awhile and hoping for a one-day normal family, are expectation Darrin and Samantha both have for their relationship, which of course are completely different and contradicting. A situation comedy wouldn't be one without any humour.

Humour is an important component of a sitcom and like expected Bewitched definitely has humour.

In this episode there are numerous techniques used to generate a humorous response. This is evident in the use of irony when only minutes before Shelia had been commenting on Samantha's appearance, focusing mainly on her "Hard-to-manage hair" and haughtily referring back to herself as having "Not a hair out of place" but ironically Shelia's wig is ripped off and flies into the strong -magic made- winds, to reveal her very impressive hair, the use of the irony in this scene conveys a very humorous response from the audience.

Furthermore the use of the visual scenes with Samantha using magic, creates a sense of humour as the audience witness strange happenings as do the characters, but the audience knows the cause of these strange happenings -magic- whereas the characters in the program seem not to. Hence the audience responds to the confused and perplexed state of the other characters with humour.

Thus, the pilot uses numerous techniques in order to receive an entertained and humorous response from the audience.

Bewitched is a fantastic example of a situation comedy as it obtains and fulfils all of a sit-com's characteristics and criteria, having an orientation, complication, resolution, coda and most importantly family and humour. Bewitched evidently represents concepts referring to family and family relationships, through the status of the couple where the male figure, Darrin is seen to obtain the authority and the female, Samantha to simply be the perfect housewife.

Family relationships are represented through affection, kindness and compassion. The program exhibits ideas about family values, where without these values there would be no family; a family without forgiveness, honesty, generosity, curiosity, communication and respect isn't a family at all. Thus the family representation in Bewitched obtains all of these values in order to create the perfect household and television sit-com.