

# Example of argumentative essay on hollywood and armageddon

[Environment](#), [Disaster](#)



## **Introduction**

Ostwalt has focused his studies on the interconnection between film and religion, especially the concept of Armageddon which is about the end of the world. Different movies portray Armageddon in different ways depending on the type of movie; be it a horror, comedy or children's movie. However, in his studies, he reveals that most of the movies produced focus on forces of evil, which attempt to end the world and the good forces which fight the evil in an attempt to save the world from eternal destruction. His theory is inclined toward End-of-World battles which involve the two antagonist sides, each fighting for the opposite result of what the other side wants. Therefore, Ostwalt's theories may not prove to be useful in understanding Melancholia, a movie based on the end time.

In the movie, Melancholia, there is no hope of salvation; there is no messianic hero present to resist the destruction. Human beings have been only left to reflect on impending life-threatening disaster. Melancholia portrays how the three main characters (Justine, Claire and John) react to the coming disaster. These three represent the different psychological impact that disasters have on different personality types.

## **Hollywood and Armageddon- Conrad E. Ostwalt Film Analysis**

Melancholia is a drama movie written by Lars Von Trier with the stars being Kirsten Dunst, Charlotte Gainsbourg, Keifer Sutherland and Alexander Scarsgard, among many others. It was released in 2011, and it revolves around Claire and Justine (who are sisters) and the existence of a rogue

planet that is threatening the existence of planet earth. The prelude is prominently accompanied by a slideshow of images and an accompaniment of Richard Wagner's opera known as Tristan und of the Isolde. This gives a general idea of the eventuality of the movie.

Ostwalt states the increased popularity in apocalyptic themes in movies across all categories over the past two decades or so owes to the increased apocalyptic consciousness. He says that " modern films tend to portray certain characteristics as at least a trace of apocalyptic imagery but those which end with a heroic aversion of evil" 57. He considers the apocalyptic characteristics of dualism, mystery, revelation and impending destruction and eventually doom as traditional. His theories of Armageddon are inclined to prevention of the end of the world, a category which does not represent Melancholia.

Melancholia is a movie that embraces the end of the world and all events taking place lead to that fate. It reinforces the idea that the end of the world is unstoppable. Reactions to the fact differ but the eventuality is not escaped. The reactions to the impending doom differ among different people with Claire reacting to the situation with panic after John told her that the planet Melancholia is headed straight for the earth(00: 87: 53). John constantly reassures her that things will be back to normal and the planet Melancholia will be averted, somehow. He is in denial of what is about to happen. However, Justine keeps her cool awaiting the clash of Melancholia with planet earth. Her reaction to this situation could be as a result of her state of depression, which makes her accept the worst of situations because she is used to them anyway. This is because her life on earth is already a

mess, and she feels she has nothing to lose even if the world was to be destroyed. She ruined her marriage for being unfaithful and lost her job for being rude to her boss. What is worse is that nobody bothers to know the reasons behind her behavior, not even her own mother.

According to Ostwalt, “apocalyptic movies portray a conflict between good and evil, whereby an apocalyptic hero who defeats evil finally shows up and saves the day” (54). This is the case in the Christian based apocalyptic movie, “Pale Rider” which has its reference in revelation 6: 4-8. The movie revolves around a mysterious being, the pale rider who shows up after a young girl reads Revelation 6: 4-8 concerning the pale rider. He is back to fight evil, which he does and returns to the grave. In Ostwalt’s theory of Hollywood and Armageddon, a messianic hero always shows up during a critical time and makes everything alright. He or she is usually supernatural and unbeatable. Eastwood is the messianic hero who appears to save Demi Moore from destruction as she tries to intercede. However, in the movie Melancholia, the impending disaster is not caused by any evil party, which requires a hero to overthrow. The problem is a natural disaster which, if science does not solve, will ultimately destroy the planet earth and nobody in particular will be blamed.

Western movies have, however, shifted the unbeatable source of power from supernatural beings to science. Apocalyptic presentation has shifted from traditional characteristics of the apocalypse to modernized characteristics such as a cosmic cataclysm. As presented by Ostwalt about “Apocalypse Now,” the best setting for Armageddon is war in most movies whereby the evil side’s aim is to destroy the world through the war. However, Melancholia

changes the order of things by making the cause of the world be an uncontrollable natural disaster. In the case of *Melancholia*, the end of the world is expected to be brought forth by a collision of planet earth with Melancholia.

The contemporary model by Ostwalt on the apocalypse tends to strip the fate of the end of time from the gods' realms and sees it as an avoidable event altogether. Ostwalt tends to make the belief that the end of time can indeed be under the total control of human beings so that the movies remain relevant to the various audiences they target. It goes contrary to the traditional apocalyptic model. However, *Melancholia* puts the mercy of the world and everything in the hands of the supernatural because no natural means can solve the chaos that will occur. Unlike Ostwalt's theory, which suggests that Hollywood's apocalyptic movies all focus on a negative turn of events followed by a struggle to resolve chaos by human power or science, *Melancholia* focuses on the events one by one and portrays the true meaning of fate.

The true meaning of apocalyptic movies is avoiding fate, according to Ostwalt, and if his theory is followed in an attempt to escape the cataclysm that comes along with the apocalypse according to the Bible and other religious books that touch on the end of the world, that is a misnomer. He focuses on the apocalypse being as a result of nuclear destruction set to suit the modern world. *Melancholia* is based on a natural disaster which we human beings have little control over. It does not provide a battleground for Armageddon whereby chances of escaping destruction were possible, and analyzing this movie based on Ostwalt's analysis would be misleading.

Information gathered would be confusing when compared to the expected information.

He gives one example of the movie, *Apocalypse Now* which presents the apocalypse in the nuclear age. It is composed of Willars and his unrestricted pride and evil crew. The war of Armageddon takes place on forbidden grounds known as Cambodia where the unimaginable happens. The evil is settled and despite all the drama, the “good” human beings restore stability to planet earth and the world is saved from extinction. The hero does save the day again and the eventual result is a positive outcome. When we compare this to the theme around which *Melancholia* revolves, the conditions are more uncontrollable and real in a way that one can predict the coming disaster. Lars Von Trier does not spare his viewers the reality of the eventuality by forcing a happy ending or leaving suspense. The collision does take place and the music played can tell the mood of the eventuality which is not a positive one. All events are shown and the apocalypse shown as the word means, “the end of the world.” *Melancholia* is the perfect example of an apocalyptic film in every sense of the word.

## **Conclusion**

According to the book of revelation, from which the story on the apocalypse is derived, this period is supposed to be an end time scenario which is inevitable, and which everybody who it finds has to undergo. Many apocalyptic movies have distorted the original idea of the apocalypse to fit their audience and the technological times. However, a few authentic apocalyptic films such as *Melancholia* still exist. To understand them, one

needs to have accurate information concerning what the apocalypse is all about and not base it on theories provided by various researchers of this age. This is because getting misled on the idea that the movie is trying to bring out is going to be a possibility and the end result will be a lack of understanding of the movie in general.

Ostwalt described the apocalypse in relation to the movies being produced in Hollywood for the past two decades, not based on the facts of the apocalypse. Inadequate information on the topic leads to misunderstanding of films that deviate from the norm and reflect the original idea of the apocalypse .

## **Works Cited**

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