

Unit 10 Final evaluation

This unit required me to create a short film, based on a chosen genre, horror. The film had to be no longer than eight minutes in length, using technical codes and conventions related to the given genre, horror. I chose to create a film relating to the sub-genre, home invasion. Therefore I will be discussing to what extent my film met these requirements.

When creating my film I considered technical codes by using a range of iconography in order to make the genre of my film clear to the audience. My film was set at night creating an eerie atmosphere through the use of chiaroscuro lighting. The location gave the feel of isolation which enhanced the tense atmosphere; the theme of isolation is commonly used in the home invasion genre. I also used a range of hand held following shots to add to the disorientation of the scene and to foreshadow that something terrifying is about to take place, forcing the audience to be on the edge of their seats anticipating the next event.

The main character in my film is a young teenage girl which complies with the genre of the film as it emphasises the vulnerability of a young person, increasing the dramatic effect for the audience. Also at the end of my film the killer's identity is hidden, which is a common convention used in home invasion films. This convention is effective because it dehumanises the perpetrator of the crime and encourages the audience to play an active role by almost forcing them to imagine what the appearance of the killer is by forming their own ideas about his identity.

I also considered intertextuality in order to make the storyline clearer to the audience as they would be able to associate film with famous films of a similar genre. For example, the main character is a young girl, phone calls are used as a recurring motif, the killer has a hidden identity, all these elements are references to the horror movie 'Scream'. I made this explicit by deliberately choosing to play 'Scream' in the background of the film. The outcome of my film wasn't as expected as the audience were led to believe that the main character would be the victim, but then she wasn't – this red herring challenges the conventions of the home invasion genre. This is a reference to the film 'Don't Breathe', because one of the characters at first is portrayed as the victim but then he becomes the villain.

I used a range of diegetic sounds which I sourced through Final Cut and YouTube. These sounds helped to create a sense of realism for the audience. For example, I used the sound of a kettle boiling to enhance the tense atmosphere. I also used the recurring sound of the phone ringing to reflect how the character begins to become more threatened by what is considered to be a normal occurrence. The use of the diegetic sound of 'Scream' playing throughout the movie heightens the tense moments – for example, the moment where the main character is walking towards the door the audio in 'Scream' mirrors her fear. The use of the killer's dialogue allows us to empathise, to put ourselves in the main character's shoes. The non-diegetic sound of the soundtrack that plays both at the beginning and at the end of the film helps to set up the genre and at the end brings the movie to a close through symmetry.

Apart from just continuity, editing was used to increase the dramatic effect for the audience and to set up the narrative. For example, cross-cutting used between the two main characters, which I cleverly used to mislead the audience into thinking that Lucy was the victim. However at the last moment of the film the audience find out that she was a red herring and Molly is the real victim, cross-cutting constantly hints to the audience that Molly has involvement in the end result before it

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is demise actually revealed. I used a range of long takes when the main character is being followed to slow the editing pace, increasing the anticipation and to put us in the character's shoes. At the point where the main character is opening the door I cut to the most dramatic moment in 'Scream' to emphasise the fear. The fact that at the end of the film I use a smash to black is another traditional horror convention and is intended to make the audience jump and allows the audience to imagine the outcome of Molly's death which encourages the audience play an active role and can sometimes be more effect than them actually viewing the action. My final editing choices were to use a letterbox to make it appear more professional. Also In terms of colour I added a blue tone effect over the top of each clip to represent the cold and terrifying atmosphere, instantly causing the audience to feel a strong sense of unease.

Overall I think my production was a success as it effectively demonstrated the codes and conventions of the sub-genre home invasion – however, I was also able to be more creative with some of my narrative structure to add unexpected moments for the audience.