

Jennifers Body Analysis

Jennifer's body – Analysis of pool side scene

Director – Karyn Kusama, Writer – Diablo Cody

The use of mise en scene with the long white dress shown in this picture represents purity. The image is almost bridal. But because it's stained with Blood this signifies a loss of innocence and purity. The blood is a violent signifier and also connotes a demonic presence. Thus the Purity is tarnished.

Having Megan shown with long black hair and also a choker connotes to the audience a sense of gothic horror. The use of the gothic genre directly targets a teenage audience. With the previous use of gothic horror in films such as Twilight and grossing millions from it This film has found the type of film that most teens like now and can relate to references to gothic horror throughout. The themes of sex and death are appealing to modern teenage audiences. This is evident from the success of films like 'Twilight' and TV shows like 'The Vampire Diaries'

With the use of the Low cut dress, this signifies that the film represents young woman in a sexual way which is looked upon through the male gaze. This is even seen with Amanda Seyfried's characters. Even though she is covered in mud and bleeding there is still a lot of flesh being presented.

When Megan's character references "Hannah Montana" it implies to the audience that Megan is ridiculing Amanda's character by comparing her to a young teen's program. This connotes that Megan fox's character is trying to present herself as rebellious, unconventional and dangerous in comparison to Amada Seyfried's safe and conventional character. Most modern teens like to see themselves as rebellious so this would appeal to them more.



During the sequence you see the power is shifted from Megan's character to Amanda's. This is displayed by Megan's insecurities being triggered by Amanda's character insulting her about Megan's worries about body image. This is a use of black humour that is also social commentary - critiquing behaviour of high school students. You notice the true power shift when Amanda's character rises from a hunched position. This connotes who is the greater being.

All of references of sexuality that are being put forward throughout this clip would appeal more to a male audience. This could suggest that the women are being looked upon as objects. With skin showing, and sexual connotations.



The use of the word "Eat" would refer to Megan's character eating Amanda's soul but it could also have sexual connotations when she Amanda says "you only eat boys". Further evidence of sexual connotations would be when Megan strikes back with "I go both ways". This is taken as a sexual reference to being bi-sexual. To a male audience this could be appealing, being teen girls who could be attracted to the same sex.

Amada Seyfried's Character is represented as being more vulnerable than Megan with the use of mise en scene - her clothes being messy and the dirt against her body compared to Megan's character that is clean except for some blood. This signifies, at this point, who is more powerful. From this we get a sense of the humans and their vulnerability against the powerful beings of the supernatural. The two characters are represented as being in binary opposition

Jennifer's Body analysis delves into the complexities of a film that has garnered a cult following since its release in 2009. Directed by Karyn Kusama and written by Diablo Cody, this horror-comedy features Megan Fox as Jennifer, a high school cheerleader who becomes possessed by a demon. The film explores themes of female empowerment, sexuality, and the dynamics of friendship, making it a rich text for analysis. Understanding the layers of this movie not only enhances our appreciation of its artistry but also sheds light on its cultural impact and relevance in today's society.

Overview of Jennifer's Body

Released in September 2009, Jennifer's Body was met with mixed reviews from critics but has since developed a dedicated fan base. The film combines elements of horror, comedy, and drama, centering on the relationship between Jennifer and her best friend, Needy, played by Amanda Seyfried. After a tragic incident at a local rock concert, Jennifer is transformed into a flesh-eating succubus. The film cleverly uses horror tropes to explore deeper issues surrounding female relationships, societal expectations, and the darker aspects of adolescent life.

Thematic Elements

Female Empowerment

One of the most significant themes in Jennifer's Body is female empowerment. The film presents Jennifer as a character who embraces her sexuality and uses it as a means of gaining power. However, her empowerment comes with a cost; her transformation into a demon signifies the dangers and consequences of societal expectations placed on women.

- Complex Female Characters: Unlike traditional horror films that often portray women as victims, Jennifer's Body showcases complex female characters who navigate their own desires and struggles.
- Subversion of Stereotypes: Jennifer's character subverts the typical portrayal of women in horror, turning the trope of the "final girl" on its head. Instead of being merely a victim, she becomes the predator.

Friendship and Betrayal

The bond between Jennifer and Needy is central to the film's narrative. Their relationship highlights the complexities of female friendships, including jealousy, loyalty, and betrayal.

- Codependency: The film explores how Needy and Jennifer's friendship is marked by a codependent dynamic, which is tested as Jennifer's character evolves.
- Betrayal: Needy's eventual realization of Jennifer's true nature serves as a poignant commentary on how friendships can change and how betrayal can occur when personal desires clash.

Sexuality and Objectification

Jennifer's Body also tackles issues of sexuality and objectification. Jennifer's transformation into a demon can be interpreted as a metaphor for how society objectifies women's bodies, particularly in the context of adolescence and sexual awakening.

- Sexual Agency: Jennifer's character exhibits sexual agency, challenging the notion that women should be passive in their sexuality.

- Consequences of Objectification: The consequences of objectifying women are depicted through the violence Jennifer inflicts on her male victims, who initially view her as an object rather than a person.

Visual and Cinematic Techniques

Cinematography and Aesthetic Choices

The visual style of Jennifer's Body plays a crucial role in conveying its themes. The film employs a vibrant color palette and striking cinematography to create an otherworldly atmosphere that contrasts with the mundane setting of a small town.

- Color Symbolism: The use of colors, particularly pink and red, symbolizes femininity and danger, reinforcing the film's exploration of female identity and empowerment.
- Symbolic Imagery: Various scenes contain symbolic imagery that alludes to the character's internal struggles and societal pressures.

Soundtrack and Score

The film's soundtrack is a significant aspect of its identity. Featuring a mix of rock and pop songs, the music complements the film's themes and adds to its overall tone.

- Cultural Context: The music selection reflects the era's cultural landscape, appealing to a younger audience while also enhancing the film's emotional resonance.
- Emotional Impact: The score heightens the film's tension and underscores pivotal moments, reinforcing the audience's engagement with the characters' emotional journeys.

Critical Reception and Cultural Impact

Initial Reception

Upon its release, Jennifer's Body received a lukewarm response from critics, with many dismissing it as a superficial horror film. However, with the passage of time, it has been re-evaluated and appreciated for its subversive qualities.

- Critique of Gender Norms: Critics have noted that the film critiques traditional gender norms and societal expectations, making it relevant in discussions of feminism and horror.
- Cult Following: Over the years, Jennifer's Body has developed a cult following, particularly among young women who resonate with its themes of empowerment and friendship.

Legacy and Influence

The film's legacy is marked by its impact on contemporary discussions surrounding gender and sexuality in cinema. It has inspired a new wave of feminist horror films that challenge traditional narratives.

- Rise of Feminist Horror: Jennifer's Body is often cited as a precursor to the feminist horror movement, influencing films that prioritize female perspectives and experiences.
- Ongoing Relevance: In today's cultural climate, the film's exploration of female empowerment and the complexities of female relationships remains pertinent, resonating with new generations of viewers.

Conclusion

In summary, a comprehensive Jennifer's Body analysis reveals a film that transcends its genre, offering a rich tapestry of themes centered around female empowerment, friendship, and societal expectations. As a work of art, it challenges traditional horror conventions while providing insightful commentary on the complexities of female identity. Its evolving reception reflects broader cultural shifts, making it a significant piece for study and appreciation in the realms of film and feminist discourse. Whether viewed as a horror film, a dark comedy, or a feminist manifesto, Jennifer's Body continues to captivate audiences and stimulate critical conversations long after its release.

Frequently Asked Questions

What are the main themes explored in 'Jennifer's Body'?

'Jennifer's Body' explores themes of female friendship, sexuality, and the complexities of adolescent identity, along with commentary on male desire and the horror genre's treatment of women.

How does 'Jennifer's Body' subvert typical horror tropes?

The film subverts typical horror tropes by presenting a female antagonist who embodies both empowerment and victimization, challenging the notion of the 'final girl' and the objectification of women in horror.

What role does the character Needy play in the narrative of 'Jennifer's Body'?

Needy serves as the moral center and narrator of the story, showcasing the contrast between her loyalty to Jennifer and her ultimate realization of Jennifer's true nature, representing the struggle between friendship and self-preservation.

How does the film address the concept of toxic relationships?

The film highlights toxic relationships through the dynamic between Needy and Jennifer, illustrating how manipulation, jealousy, and dependence can distort friendships and lead to destructive

outcomes.

What cultural impact has 'Jennifer's Body' had since its release?

'Jennifer's Body' has gained a cult following since its release, becoming a symbol of feminist horror and inspiring discussions about women's agency in film, especially in the context of the MeToo movement.

How does the film use humor in its horror elements?

The film blends humor with horror through witty dialogue and dark comedic situations, creating a unique tone that allows it to critique societal norms while still delivering traditional horror elements.

In what ways can 'Jennifer's Body' be interpreted as a commentary on adolescent sexuality?

'Jennifer's Body' can be seen as a commentary on adolescent sexuality by exploring how societal expectations and peer pressure shape young women's experiences, as well as the consequences of sexual liberation.

What is the significance of the title 'Jennifer's Body'?

The title 'Jennifer's Body' underscores the film's focus on the physicality and objectification of women, while also highlighting the transformation of Jennifer from a high school girl into a literal and metaphorical monster.

How has 'Jennifer's Body' influenced modern horror films?

'Jennifer's Body' has influenced modern horror films by paving the way for more nuanced female characters and stories that prioritize women's experiences, inspiring filmmakers to create more diverse and complex narratives within the genre.

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