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The Sounds Behind the Scenes: An Analysis of Sound and Music in *The Shining* and *Bridget Jones's Diary*

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Running head: THE SOUNDS BEHIND THE SCENES

The Sounds Behind the Scenes:

An Analysis of Sound and Music in *The Shining* and *Bridget Jones' Diary*

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Communication Studies

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Abstract

Although often subtle, music and sounds have been an integral part of the motion picture experience since the days of silent films. When used effectively, sounds in film can create emotion, give meaning to a character's actions or feelings, act as a cue to direct viewers' attention to certain characters or settings, and help to enhance the overall storytelling. Sound essentially acts as a guide for the audience as it evokes certain emotions and reactions to accompany the narrative unfolding on-screen. The aim of this thesis is to focus on two specific films of contrasting genres and explore how the music and sounds help to establish the genres of the given films, as well as note any commonalities in which the films follow similar aural patterns. By conducting a content analysis and theoretical review, this study situates the sound use among affect theory, aesthetics and psychoanalysis, which are all highly relevant to the reception of music and sound in film. Findings consist of analyses of notable instances of sound use in both films that concentrate on the tropes of juxtaposition, contradiction, repetition and leitmotifs, and results indicate that there are actually similar approaches to using sound and music in both films, despite them falling under two vastly different genres.

Table of Contents

Introduction.....	p. 4
Literature Review.....	p. 10
I. Affect Theory.....	p. 11
II. Aesthetics of Sound.....	p. 12
III. Psychoanalysis.....	p. 14
Methodology.....	p. 16
Results and Discussion.....	p. 17
I. <i>The Shining</i>	p. 17
a. Affect Theory.....	p. 17
b. Aesthetics.....	p. 20
c. Psychoanalysis.....	p. 21
II. <i>Bridget Jones' Diary</i>	p. 23
a. Affect Theory.....	p. 23
b. Aesthetics.....	p. 25
c. Psychoanalysis.....	p. 27
III. Comedic and Horror Juxtaposition.....	p. 28
IV. Thematic Identities.....	p. 29
Conclusion.....	p. 30
I. Future Research.....	p. 32
References.....	p. 33

Introduction

Music is something that moves, inspires, and connects us to the world and the people around us; it is quite possibly the truest representation of humanity. Artists and songwriters put pen to paper and tell stories about their personal lives, including highs and lows and everything in between. Musicians pick up instruments to connect with others and essentially become catalysts of creativity. For listeners, music can be a vehicle to express who you are or what you might be feeling; people are drawn to songs that captivate certain emotions and situations relating to their lives. The ancient Greek philosopher, Plato, suggests in *The Republic* that music has a direct effect on the soul (Plato and Lee, 1974). Similarly, Frederick Delius, a composer best known for his pieces *A Village Romeo and Juliet* and *Mass of Life*, claims that “music is an outburst of the soul” (Shapiro, 2012). Because of music’s connections to the brain, it is able to drive our actions and emotions and create a sense of meaning and unity that not all other art forms can provide. So, while music can be an outward expression of a person’s emotions or life experiences, it can also touch the soul of the listener by resonating with their own thoughts and feelings, especially when words cannot convey the same message. By examining the use of music and sound effects in the context of film, this research seeks to develop an understanding of the potential affects and emotions created through sound and demonstrate the significance of how music and sounds contribute to the film’s overall emotional themes.

Throughout the history of film, music has been an integral part of the cinematic experience. However, viewers often overlook its presence and direct their focus on the visuals in front of them instead. While the footage shown on-screen is certainly important, it is also essential for any director or producer to keep the music in mind when planning or shooting a movie. Since the days of silent pictures when scores were played alongside the films, music has

served to enhance the emotional impact and provide a soundtrack. As Miller (1982) noted in his analysis of the role of music in silent films, “Music for the movies not only heightened the emotional response to a picture, but also served the practical purpose of drowning out the whirr of the projector” (p. 1). Despite the practicality of music in these cases, it is clear that music has been a major part of the film viewing experience for audiences for decades.

While early cinema featured everything from player pianos and individual accompanists to large live orchestras, the late 1920s ushered in a new era of film music (Miller, 1982). In 1927, *The Jazz Singer* revolutionized the film industry by effectively merging audio and visual entertainment with not only synchronized dialogue, but also a fully recorded musical score (Fossaceca, 2011). Two years later, Disney’s *Steamboat Willie* furthered the commercial appeal and development of sound in media as the first cartoon to have synchronized sound, which certainly played a “significant role in the evolution of creative sound” (Murch, 2009, para. 19). In the following years, up until present day, sound in film has continued to evolve to the point of using several thousand sound effects in one single film and creating chart-topping, commercialized musical soundtracks.

Soundtracks and scores from commercial films not only serve to increase a film’s revenue, but also to sell and market the movie, which can then sell and market the album, respectively. There are countless instances of songs popularizing a movie, and sometimes a movie is even responsible for popularizing a song. Theme songs are one example of how music can gain popularity through association, because many people are able to instantly recognize a song as representative of a visual work. In order to fully understand the literature and references discussed in this study, it is necessary to note the differences between a film score and a soundtrack. A film score usually consists of the music that is composed specifically for the film

to be played under the scenes and to enhance the story. Most of the time, this is instrumental and does not compete with dialogue. A soundtrack, on the other hand, typically refers to the complete works of music in a film, including the score and songs that were either licensed or specifically created for the film. Sometimes the terms “score” and “soundtrack” are interchanged because nowadays not only soundtracks, but also the scores can offer a complete experience even when played outside the film. For example, original scores are often released alongside the main soundtrack. Recently, film scores have been featured in live concerts like *Interstellar*, performed at London’s Royal Albert Hall, or the screening of *Back to the Future* with live accompaniment from the LA Philharmonic, as well as the globally recognized *Harry Potter* film concert series (Burlingame, 2015). For this study, any piece of music played during the film will be an object of examination because this analysis sets out to include the licensed songs placed in the film, as well as the underlying music and any sound effects or key speech inflections.

One well-known example of a film in which the score and the soundtrack differ is the recent Marvel film, *Black Panther*. The symphonic score composed by Ludwig Göransson, that was used to accompany the film, has a heavy African influence, while the soundtrack is a completely separate album of songs compiled by Kendrick Lamar. In this case, the score is used throughout the film itself to convey the depths of the fictional land of Wakanda. Throughout the film, the score mirrors the developments on-screen, and it provides the audience with emotional context as T’Challa takes his place on the throne with triumph or when Killmonger gazes over the country with a sense of mourning; in both examples, the orchestral score adds a cinematic weight to the film that could not have been conveyed through Lamar’s album (Josephs, 2018). However, Kendrick Lamar’s curated soundtrack represents the human stories beneath the superhero spectacle of the film, and it includes more contemporary songs inspired by the themes

of the movie. This is just one recent example of how music can lead the audience to experience a film in completely different ways.

In addition to the soundtrack and score of a film, this research will also look at first person narration and the characters' ways of speaking. This involves intonation and fluctuation, meaning how a person's voice goes up and down in pitch, which can often give the spoken words themselves a different meaning. Specifically, an object of analysis will be irony that goes beyond the surface meaning of dialogue or narration. For example, the audience could infer that a character is being ironic or sarcastic if their tone indicates something contrary to the words they're saying.

As a whole, this study will examine sound as a tool of communication in a cinematic context. Rather than studying the financial and commercial benefits of music in film, the focus here is on the ways in which a film's soundtrack and sound effects can not only contribute to, but also expand and enhance the meaning of a film's narrative. Additionally, the genres and uses of sound in film can potentially be used to communicate a certain message to the audience, and this research will explore specific instances of that in two critically acclaimed films.

By conducting a thorough content analysis and theoretical review, this research covers a number of topics relating to sound in film. The first area of interest is diegetic and non-diegetic sounds, which refer to the source of the sound effect. Diegetic sound is sound whose source is on-screen or implied to be existing in the present action of the film. Simply, this type of sound exists in the world of the film itself; examples might include voices of the characters, music played on the radio or other sounds made from objects in the film, in addition to music being played from instruments within the story. In contrast, non-diegetic sound is represented as coming from an outside source. Instances of this include narration, sound effects obviously

added for dramatic effect, or background music (Cecchi, 2010). Within the category of non-diegetic sound, this research will also closely examine character speech inflections and narration that might reveal meaning through their complementary or contradictory nature in relation to the characters' accompanying actions. Lastly, and most notably, this study will look at the music, both diegetic and non-diegetic, in scenes and analyze how it contributes and enhances (or does not enhance) the emotions and narrative of the story.

Specifically, this study will direct its analysis toward two films, *The Shining* and *Bridget Jones' Diary*. Directed by Stanley Kubrick, *The Shining* was released in 1980 based on Stephen King's iconic 1977 novel. The film follows Jack Torrance, an aspiring writer played by Jack Nicholson, as he becomes the off-season caretaker at the isolated Overlook Hotel. He settles in to the hotel with his wife, Wendy (played by Shelley Duvall), and his son, Danny, who begins to have horrifying psychic visions. As Danny's premonitions become more disturbing and Jack makes no progress on his writing, Jack gradually becomes more irritable and violent until he unravels and becomes hell-bent on terrorizing his family (*The Shining*, 1980). Also a film adaptation, *Bridget Jones' Diary* is a 2001 romantic comedy based on Helen Fielding's novel of the same name, which is a reinterpretation of Jane Austen's *Pride and Prejudice*. The film follows 32-year-old single and accident-prone Bridget, played by Renée Zellweger, as she makes a resolution to start keeping a diary in order to stay in control of her weight, smoking and drinking habits, and love life (or lack thereof). Although Bridget initially develops a major crush on her boss, Daniel Cleaver (played by Hugh Grant), she is thrown off-guard by her attraction to the seemingly boring and rude Mark Darcy (played by Colin Firth). After both men reveal their true colors and unfortunate embarrassing hilarity ensues, Bridget must ultimately decide who to choose (*Bridget Jones' Diary*, 2001).

By looking at two films from highly contrasting genres – psychological horror and romantic comedy – the music and sounds will likely vary and findings may indicate different uses of sound in correlation with the different genres of film. This work will contribute to the field of music communication by shaping sound as a tool for visual communication and by providing an explanation of the impact of sound on audiences. Although it must be acknowledged that media texts in the public sphere are up for constant and subjective interpretation, the aim of this study is not to survey specific audience members' reactions, but instead to theorize how emotion is colored by music in two specific films through encoding and decoding the sound use. To understand the abundant nature of the music in film, this analysis posed the following questions:

RQ1. What are the emotional themes of *The Shining* and *Bridget Jones' Diary*?

RQ2. How do affect theory, aesthetics and psychoanalysis apply to the music and sounds used in each of these films?

RQ3. How does the music differ or coincide between the contrasting genres of film?

Literature Review

As previously mentioned, this research is situated among three theories, so it is necessary to have a thorough understanding of why these theories are relevant to music communication. Affect theory, aesthetics and psychoanalysis are all applicable to the music and sounds in the chosen films, and this study's analysis will break down specific examples of each one in order to illustrate how even films of contrasting genres follow similar patterns in conveying emotion to viewers through music.

There are, however, other approaches to conducting musical analyses, such as cognitive psychology and neuroscience. The cognitive psychological approach deals more specifically with mental processes involving attention, memory, perception, and thinking (Anderson, 1985). Neuroscience also involves processes, but focuses more on the human brain; studies on music in this field typically address music's ability to stimulate certain cerebral circuits and evaluate how music can elicit specific neurotransmitters that are received as emotions (Trimble & Hesdorffer, 2017). Both of these concepts are vital to the study of music communication, but they have not been chosen for this research because of their focus on the subjective human experience. In order to fully understand cognitive psychology or neuroscience in the evaluation of *The Shining* and *Bridget Jones' Diary*, it would be more fitting to administer a survey with human participants to collect their own subjective responses, and then conduct a scientific analysis, which is beyond the scope of this research. Therefore, the three theories chosen for this study – affect theory, aesthetics and psychoanalysis – represent different dimensions on how music is processed on a broader psychosomatic level.

Affect Theory

The human process of affect is precognitive in the reception of music, which makes it fitting to be the first theory discussed. The term “affect” pertains to the instinctual reaction to stimuli that often occurs before the standard cognitive stages necessary for processing information and developing a complex emotion (Zajonc, 1980). Zajonc, an early scholar who wrote extensively on the mental processes underpinning social behavior, asserts that affective reactions to stimuli are often the very first reactions of humans and the dominant reaction for other organisms. He goes on to explain that affective reactions can be made sooner and with greater confidence than cognitive judgments. Furthermore, experiencing affect is unavoidable; as Zajonc states, “one might be able to control the expression of emotion but not the experience of it itself” (1980, p. 156). Essentially, experiencing affect is a natural process that can only be heightened by music in a film.

In more recent years, Gregg and Seigworth (2011) have asserted that affect refers to the powers “other than conscious knowing...that can serve to drive us toward movement, toward thought and extension” and cause us to feel calm or overwhelmed (p. 1). Simply, it is how we react to the world around us without conscious perception. Often, affect is understood as emotion; however, it is important not to confuse the two. As Shouse (2005) states, “affect is a non-conscious experience of intensity” (p. 1). Affect can be a difficult concept to explain because it tends to exist before and outside of consciousness, and it is transmittable, unlike feelings and emotions. While feelings and emotions are subjective and vary person by person, affects are more instinctive and can be transmitted through stimuli like films and music. In fact, any form of communication that contains facial expressions, tone, and body language can transmit affect. Because of the transmittable quality of affect, it is also potentially a strong social

force and means of socialization. Shouse (2005) goes on to explain that “the pleasure that individuals derive from music has less to do with the communication of meaning, and far more to do with the way that a particular piece of music ‘moves’ them” (p. 3). In conducting a content analysis of two films, my aim is to recognize affect in play; I will study aural and visual stimuli, and decipher when and how affects are transmitted to the audience.

In examining the meaning and/or affects in music, it is important to acknowledge subjectivity. It is obvious that music has powerful emotional effects, but Lawrence Grossberg (1984) goes further by explaining how rock and roll, specifically, “may represent different things for different audiences and in different contexts” (p. 1). This is an important concept to grasp, because many genres of music, besides just rock and roll, cannot be interpreted accurately through textual analysis; music can represent countless meanings, depending on the situation, culture, and identity of the listener. Furthermore, the definition of “rock and roll” can vary from person to person – not only are the boundaries of meaning blurry, but also the boundaries of genre. Therefore, affect theory recognizes the abundance of affects in different listeners, and it does not attempt to find meaning in what is subjective to the individual listeners.

Aesthetics of Sound

From a more philosophical approach, aesthetics serve to explain the structure and organization of music through rhythm, harmonies, tone and overall organization. Freeland (2012) defines the concept in her overview of aesthetics as a sort of sensory perception. Musical aesthetics focuses on issues besides the typical aspects of beauty and general enjoyment; in recent decades, music’s ability to convey emotion has been a central topic. In this point of view, music’s constructed nature and context are what give sound such great expressive potential. Going a step further, sound combined with visual images only amplify its expressive abilities.

So, the theory of aesthetics is relevant to this study because of its focus on bringing the visual and aural together.

In “Fundamental Aesthetics of Sound in the Cinema,” Bordwell and Thompson (1985) outline a number of elements of sound in film, including acoustic properties, sound selection, dimensions, and diegetic versus non-diegetic sound. In this case, sound is separate from music, because sound is broader and includes speech, noise/sound effects, as well as the music itself. One key point the article addresses is sound’s ability to capture attention, especially when combined with visual stimuli. Sound in a film engages two sensory modes: visual attention and aural attention. This is even evident in early silent films, when orchestral pieces accompanied films. Sound in film can also direct the audience’s attention to a specific point within the image. For example, if a narrator describes the crowded sidewalks, we will look at the people and not the traffic or buildings in the frame. When we hear a creaky staircase and the next shot is of an empty staircase, we will look at the stairs in anticipation and wonder about the age of the house or whether someone unexpected will appear. In these ways, sounds can act as cues in film or television, directing our attention on objects or thoughts of focus.

In addition, “sound can actively shape how we interpret the image” (Bordwell, 1985, p. 181). This highlights the incredible power of sound to change our perception of images. For instance, a scene of two people embracing could be accompanied by soft, romantic music that conveys their love for each other, or it could be accompanied by a climactic orchestra arrangement that indicates a significant moment, perhaps the couple reuniting. On the other hand, when accompanied by melancholy music, or the sounds of rain (which is commonly given a depressive connotation), the scene could signify a break up or goodbye. With these basic

examples, it is clear that when footage is accompanied by completely different sound tracks, the audience will interpret those same images completely differently.

Another interesting point Bordwell and Thompson bring to light is how “sound brings with it a new sense of the value of silence” (1985, p. 184). Many people can recall moments in a film, most commonly in horror or an especially sad or dramatic scene, where a director makes the choice to use silence for dramatic effect. This further illustrates the power of sound; when a scene is silent, it can be just as expressive, if not more so, than including a soundtrack.

Psychoanalysis

Psychoanalytic musicology has been a focus of psychoanalysts for years, who have studied music and musicians using theories and practices of psychoanalysis and philosophy (Graf, 1969; Michel, 1991). These studies commonly involved how musical compositions were used to express a composer’s feelings and evoke emotions in listeners. Theodor Reik, one of Freud’s early students, expanded on those studies on the individual level; he wrote about the “haunting melody,” in which certain tunes enter our daytime thoughts without our permission and may be associated with our deepest emotional conflicts (Liikkanen 2015). Through all of these studies, it is clear that psychoanalysis is especially relevant to this research to analyze music as a means of expression that occurs in the minds of both the musicians and the listeners. This is yet another factor of how the music and sounds in the films discussed are able to evoke certain thoughts or emotions in the viewers.

Interestingly, Sigmund Freud, the father of psychoanalysis and psychotherapy, had a strong dislike for music, so he did not direct his studies on music. As Cheshire (1996) notes, Freud wrote about how he was extremely resistant to “being moved by a thing without knowing why I am thus affected and what it is that affects me” (p. 1). Although Freud admitted to

enjoying certain operas, his serious distaste of music indicates the possibility that he suffered from melophobia, in which he experienced anxious reactions to music as an auditory stimulus, or even dysmelodia, which is the inability to detect pitches in tone (Diamond 2012). According to Freudian interpretation, however, it could be concluded that music must have triggered some repressed or traumatic unconscious event in Freud's past. In any case, it is fascinating that a person studying psychoanalysis would fail to recognize the relevance of music to what later became such a major part of the field.

In psychoanalytic musicology, repetition is a common factor recognized in evoking an audience response. Although repeating a phrase in a paper is often discouraged, repeating musical phrases is not only expected, but also encouraged. Many songs written in recent decades use similar chord patterns and musical structures because people respond to familiarity. Songs themselves are also structured repetitively, with choruses and refrains repeating a few times throughout a song, and it is the chorus that listeners usually sing along to. The way we consume music is also repetitive – we hear chart-topping hits over and over on the radio, and when we love a song we listen to it on repeat, feeling a sense of comfort and often discovering new nuances. In analyzing repetition in music, we can explore the interactions of consciousness and unconsciousness in the mind.

Repetition in music is a complicated phenomenon that occurs in the brain, and without it, humans would have difficulty in processing music at all. As Otchy (2017) points out, “music exists ‘in motion,’ and therefore we need to hear pieces of it over and over to be able to understand and process them” (para. 8). Essentially, music is only fully understood in relation to its entire song or sound. Repetition exposes listeners to music that they can process under slightly different contexts every time. Garcia (2005) studies the repetitive nature of electronic

dance music (EDM) which is known for looping sounds over and over. Garcia states that, “most EDM tracks offer many perceptual ‘points of attention,’ whether implied in minimalist textures or fully fleshed out in thicker ones. Thus, looping allows the listener to plot pathways between these points of attention, mapping out a landscape of shifting creation pleasure while prolonging the process pleasure of an ever-changing same” (para. 39). Just as sounds in film direct our attention in certain ways, repetition in music does so as well.

Bragazzi and del Puente (2012) examine the use of music in psychoanalysis, specifically in music therapy sessions. Music has a role in even the early stages of human psychological development; modern neuroscience shows that a fetus is able to recognize and react to music while still in the womb. Music is also arguably a form of language. Composers transfer their ideas to musicians, who then transfer the sounds to an audience. Audience members then process that music stimuli in a similar way to how language is interpreted – through repetition, elaboration, and endless semiotics (Bragazzi 2012). The importance of musical repetition has been analyzed before in songs and auditory music for the most part, but this research will be able to bring a new perspective to the discourse by analyzing the use of repetition in film scores, combining auditory and visual stimuli.

Methodology

By conducting a thorough content analysis and theoretical review, this research sets out to develop a comprehensive understanding of how emotion in film is inspired by all sounds, including music and character’s vocal inflections, and how they enhance (or do not enhance) the story. This study utilizes textual criticism as methodology by treating sounds as text and a sort of language that carries a significance in visual content. Simply, the music/sounds in two specific

films are the objects of analysis. While recognizing that once a piece of media has been presented to the public sphere it is up for constant and continuous interpretation, the contrasting genres of the films in discussion will serve as indications of the story's meaning to the larger audience. *The Shining* and *Bridget Jones' Diary* are stories with highly contrasting emotional themes, so the findings will also note any differences or similarities between the genres. In addition to an analysis of notable scenes, variables gathered include diegetic and non-diegetic sounds, instances of character speech, and background music in relation to the object(s) of focus in the shot visually. Any occurrences of musical repetition will also be noted. Through encoding and decoding the music in these films, I will be able to situate these films among affect theory, aesthetics and psychoanalysis.

As previously stated, the two objects of analysis are *The Shining* and *Bridget Jones' Diary*. Because of their contrasting genres and storylines, these films offer differing uses of music and sound effects. In addition to the highly contrasting genres, these films were also chosen because one is critically acclaimed, and the other is more of a commercial success. However, both films follow lead characters whose voices serve as key sources of change in the story, so any commonalities are important to recognize as well.

Results and Discussion

All Visuals and No Sounds Make Jack a Dull Boy: An Analysis of *The Shining*

Affect theory. *The Shining* is often regarded as a masterpiece of the horror genre. In addition to the striking visuals of blood pouring through the elevator doors and the girls standing at the end of the hallway, there are certain musical elements that contribute to make each and every scene that much more frightening. Without the music and sounds used in the film, *The*

Shining would likely not convey the same affects that send shivers down viewers' spines again and again.

From the very start of the film, it is clear that music is used to shape the viewer's interpretation of the action on screen. *The Shining* begins with a sweeping shot of the Rocky Mountains, as the camera follows a yellow car driving along a winding road by the snow-covered mountains (Kubrick, 1980). Although the visuals alone are quite serene and picturesque, the music creates an eerie mood that completely changes the interpretation of the opening sequence. The musical theme used here is actually an electronic reworking of the Latin hymn, *Dies Irae*. Interestingly, the medieval hymn translates to "Day of Wrath" and describes the Last Judgment Day when the faithful will be saved and sinners will be thrown into eternal flames (Campbell, 1949). The work here represents human mortality and extreme forces of evil, which is all quite fitting for the first piece of music used in the film to signify the genre.

As the camera follows the car, the music becomes increasingly unsettling beginning with long-held dark notes and progressing into shrieking operatic voices and screeching sounds, indicating that something bad is on the horizon. Featuring a song with such dark notes played slowly in succession is a way for the filmmakers to ensure that the audience senses that something is awry from the very beginning, which is shortly discovered to be the car's destination: The Overlook Hotel. Without the music in this scene, the visuals make no indication of the film's genre. This is a prime example of affect theory in motion; clearly, the director, Stanley Kubrick, and film composer, Wendy Carlos, chose to use a certain type of music here in order to elicit specific affects of dread in viewers. While the visuals in the scene make no indication of a horror film, the choice of music and its properties stimulate viewers to experience the unconscious energy and instinct that something is unnerving.

Another notable use of music in the film occurs when Jack is seen working at his typewriter before Wendy enters the room. In addition to the sound of the amplified typewriter, a sample from *Music for Strings, Percussion and Celesta*, originally composed by Béla Bartók, is used as the camera moves slowly toward Jack from behind. When Jack is working at his typewriter, the clip from *Music for Strings* features piano and string sounds swirling together, increasing in pitch and intensity the closer the camera gets to Jack. This, combined with the sound of Jack aggressively typing, indicates that something is wrong, which we later come to discover is Jack's writing with the same statement typed over and over. Although the audience does not know yet of Jack's crazed writing in this moment, the music and sounds elicit an emotional response of uncertainty.

This piece of music is used in several other significant scenes throughout the film as well. *Music for Strings* is actually first heard as Jack stands over the model of the hedge maze and sees Wendy and Danny walking through the center area. Here, the section of the composition features a dream-like xylophone melody as the look on Jack's face appears to be slightly lost from reality. If the music while Jack stared at the hedge maze was not enough to convey his mental state, the intensified typing sounds two scenes later, layered over the same piece of music, really express how Jack is losing his mind. Just seconds after typing, he yells at Wendy to leave him alone, so it can be inferred that the music used in the previous shots was symbolic of his descent into frustration and insanity.

Music for Strings is used once more when Jack beckons for Danny to come sit with him on the bed and reassures his son of his love. Here, the sample used is more of a quiet and solemn section that slowly increases in intensity and speed, which unconsciously informs the viewer that something tragic is surely going to happen. Although Jack's words that he will never hurt his son

are reassuring, his tone is manic and his facial expressions are contradictory. However, the spiraling music, getting higher and louder as the scene goes on, does more to represent Jack's true feelings and really indicate that he must be lying to Danny. By the end of their conversation, the audience is thoroughly aware that something inside Jack has snapped. Through all of these moments, it is clear that *Music for Strings* is used as a theme for moments when Jack appears to be losing his mind so that the audience will experience haunting affects.

Aesthetics. The most prominent representation of aesthetics in *The Shining* is through its use of diegetic sounds and how the non-diegetic music acts as a cue for the audience for what they should focus on. Perhaps the most notable example of diegetic sound in the film is the sound of Danny riding his tricycle inside the hotel. The first time the audience sees Danny riding his tricycle is shortly after the Torrance family arrives at the hotel. The camera follows Danny in one continuous shot as he rides through the kitchen and across the alternating hardwood floors and carpeting of the hotel. During this scene, there are no non-diegetic sounds included, only the diegetic sound of the tricycle wheels on the floors. The lack of non-diegetic sound here really reflects the isolation of the family in such a large place.

Furthermore, the sound of the wheels abruptly changing between the hard floors and the carpet makes a seemingly innocent child's activity of riding a tricycle elicit a feeling of suspense. As Danny rides quickly over hard floors, then soft carpeted sections, then hard floors again, the accompanying sound is rhythmic and undulating, mimicking a beating heart. The significance of this sound is twofold. Firstly, the reverberating rhythmic sound as Danny moves across the floors actively personifies the hotel as a vast supernatural force, which contributes to how the audience later understands how the hotel is responsible for transforming Jack. In addition, the suspenseful sound of the tricycle wheels, paired with the lack of background music, primes the viewer for the

next time Danny is seen riding his bike a few scenes later. This time, he comes around a corner to see the two little girls standing at the end of the hallway. By previously giving the tricycle ride such a suspenseful sound, viewers will likely associate Danny pedaling his tricycle with something frightening.

A similar sound is heard in another scene as Jack throws a tennis ball against a wall in the Colorado lounge before he has written anything on his typewriter. This repetitive thudding also mirrors the sound of a heart beat about to start racing, and this continuous pounding gives the audience a sense of tension about the unknown ahead.

Toward the end of the film, during Jack's violent hunt for Danny, a beating noise is heard yet again from the sound of Jack limping through the hotel and kitchen. While the limping illustrates Jack's brokenness, the rhythmic sound of his feet hitting the floor is a cause for panic. He limps slowly, symbolizing the thudding heart beat Danny is likely experiencing as he awaits what's to come. When Jack picks up the pace, the limping sound increases in frequency, just like the panicking racing heartbeat of Jack as he eagerly looks for his prey, of Danny and Wendy as they try to escape Jack, and of the viewer who is anxiously awaiting the final outcome.

One of the most pivotal moments in the film is the scene on the staircase of the great room as Jack follows his wife up the stairs while she tries to defend herself with a baseball bat. The music used in this scene is a fundamental example of rising tension. As Wendy tries to get further away from Jack and climbs up the stairs, the music also gets higher in pitch. By mirroring the actions on-screen, the music effectively directs the audience to feel tension and panic for Wendy that Jack could close the gap and attack her at any moment.

Psychoanalysis. Just like how Jack's written statement, "all work and no play makes Jack a dull boy," is repeated over and over, repetition of sound serves to enhance the story of *The*

Shining. As discussed previously, *Music for Strings* is repeated several times throughout the film in different contexts, yet it is always representative of Jack losing his mind. Other than the music, though, is Danny's voice of Tony that comes out whenever he is "shining." There are several examples of leitmotifs associated with Danny's abilities that will be discussed in a later section, but his vocal repetition of the word "redrum" is a significant turning point in the plot.

Although saying "redrum" over and over is a part of the script rather than the score of the film, Danny/Tony's voice changes as he keeps repeating the word, which really enhances the meaning of the word. During the scene in which Wendy rushes to Danny and begs him to wake up from his nightmare, Danny is repeating "redrum" for the first time. Here, the tone of his voice is even, albeit a bit screechy, but he still sounds like himself. Later, however, Danny enters the bedroom while Wendy is sleeping, and he picks up a knife and writes the word out on the door, all while repeating "redrum" again. The difference here is that his voice is now low and scratchy, and the word is very drawn out. This tone is much more fitting with the meaning of word, especially after we (and Wendy) discover that it actually means "murder." Danny's gruff mumbling voice is also important because as Danny continues to chant "redrum," we know that Jack is elsewhere in the hotel planning the murders of his wife and son. As Danny picks up the knife and makes sure it is sharp, Jack is being released from the kitchen storeroom and likely fetching an axe. As Jack is likely getting closer and closer to the apartment and becoming more and more insane, Danny's repetitive chanting of "redrum" becomes faster and louder. Just as certain repeated verses in music allow listeners to better process the piece of music as a whole, the repeated "redrum" phrase in an increasing vocal pitch and frequency allows viewers to better understand the parallel narrative of Jack's intended murders.

Songs and Sounds for Singletons (and Dull Marrieds): An Analysis of *Bridget Jones' Diary*

Bridget Jones' Diary is a fan favorite of the romantic comedy genre with its exaggerated yet relatable characterization, laugh-out-loud humor, and a common theme of the search for love. The subtitle fittingly describes Bridget as “Uncensored. Uninhibited. Unmarried” (Maguire, 2001). Bridget Jones, played by Renée Zellweger, is very single, very accident-prone, and very worried about her weight and her relationships with the caddish Daniel Cleaver and family-friend Mark Darcy, which conflict on just about every level. For the most part, Bridget is a consistent character who is well-meaning, prone to temptation, and although her awkward stuttering and embarrassing moments are fairly cringe-inducing, she is all-in-all extremely endearing for viewers who likely are rooting for her to find the true love happy-ending that she so desperately wants. Rather than a score comprised of mainly instrumental compositions like *The Shining*, this film uses primarily contemporary pop songs to amplify the characters and their story.

Affect theory. The most notable example of affect theory throughout *Bridget Jones' Diary* is the use of silence during moments when Bridget, and consequently the audience, is seemingly unsure of how to behave or react in certain situations. The first obvious moment of silence is shortly after Bridget and her boss, Daniel Cleaver, begin flirting and are riding in an elevator with another coworker. The scene starts with The Pretenders' song “Don't Get Me Wrong” playing in the background, but once the elevator doors close, the upbeat music fades abruptly. Here, the use of abrupt silence not only emphasizes the confined space, but also lets the audience relate to Bridget in her awkwardness and uncertainty of how to behave with Daniel, especially when she is alone with him and only one other person. The characters do not interact with each other, except for some small polite smiles, until the elevator doors open again and a

different coworker enters. The music fading to silence in the elevator mimics the fun flirtation between Bridget and Daniel coming to a pause as the focus shifts from their carefree flirting (while the song is playing) to a recognition of other coworkers in the office and coming back to a somewhat awkward reality (the silence).

Another turning point in the film when the director chooses to use silence is when Darcy confesses his feelings to Bridget after his dinner party, and tells Bridget that he likes her “just as you are” (Maguire 2001). During his confession, there is no background music, which lets the audience really focus on what is being said. However, as soon as Natasha interrupts the conversation and Bridget starts to process what he just told her, Van Morrison’s “Someone Like You” softly begins to play. The first lyrics heard after Darcy turns around to go back upstairs are “I’ve been searching a long time for someone exactly like you” which could be emphasizing Darcy’s newly-confessed feelings for Bridget, or Bridget’s confused realization that Darcy might be the one for her. This transition from silence to the love song follows Bridget’s shift from her initial hatred of Darcy to what now might be romantic feelings, especially after finding out that he likes her for her true self.

The last major use of silence occurs on Bridget’s birthday when Daniel interrupts her dinner party and arrives drunk to profess his feelings. As Bridget’s friends propose a toast to her and Darcy stares lovingly at Bridget, Shelby Lynne’s lily “Dreamsome” plays in the background, creating a mood of contentment and her positive supportive relationships with not only her friends, but also with Darcy. However, the music fades as soon as Daniel begins to speak after entering the room and it is clear that he is drunk, as he stammers an apology and clutches on to a wine bottle. The silence indicates that the loving dinner party is now over as Bridget must deal with Daniel. Her frustration is evident on her face and an awkwardness clearly

comes over Darcy. The silence in this scene, as well as the other instances of silence discussed, really represents a shift to seriousness, which contrasts with the more frequent lighthearted and often comical scenes that make up the rest of the movie.

Aesthetics. Just like *The Shining*, *Bridget Jones' Diary* makes use of diegetic sounds to enhance the emotional themes of the genre. The first most notable instance of this is during the opening credits of the film as Bridget seems to sing along to “All By Myself,” recorded by Jamie O’Neal. The song itself begins as purely non-diegetic as Bridget lounges alone in her apartment flipping through channels and checking her answering machine with a dejected look on her face. But, after she drinks a glass of wine, she begins to lip sync the words, which implies that she can actually hear the music herself, as opposed to the music only being heard by the audience as it initially seemed. Although the song itself does a good job of highlighting Bridget’s loneliness, her passionate singing along makes it clear that Bridget is unhappy and lonely, instead of her loneliness just being an audience observation. To go a step further, her drunken lip syncing and use of a magazine as a microphone are comical and make for a good opening into just how pathetic her life can be, and her participation in the musical aspect of the scene effectively let the viewers empathize with Bridget while also making it easy to laugh at her.

The theory of aesthetics is also prevalent in this film through the use of musical cues during montages. The first montage starts after Bridget finds out that Daniel, whom she has been dating, is actually engaged to another woman. Although she is initially devastated, the montage begins as Bridget decides to avoid the “permanent state of spinsterhood” and write him off (Maguire, 2001). The introduction of “I’m Every Woman” by Chaka Khan plays as Bridget downs some vodka, passes out, and goes into a dream-like flashback sequence of her time spent with Daniel. Then, as the chorus of the song begins, Bridget is seen riding an exercise bike,

throwing away empty bottles of liquor and replacing books on how to attract men with books on becoming empowered, as well as looking through classified ads for a new job, which all show how she is now trying to become her own person without Daniel. The music then fades a little so that dialogue can be heard over the music as Bridget embarks on three job interviews. The second verse starts at the same time as the second interview, and the third interviewer offers Bridget a job just as the chorus begins again, which soon fades out.

The second montage occurs later in the film after Bridget has confessed her feelings to Mark Darcy and humiliates herself in front of everyone at his parents' anniversary party. The introduction of the song, "Out of Reach" by Gabrielle starts to play as Bridget rides a train back home. The verse begins right as Bridget arrives at her apartment then the shot switches to Darcy arriving in New York with a look of sadness on his face just as the first chorus begins. During the chorus, Bridget is seen frustrated and writing in her diary, and as the second verse plays, the montage cuts to her looking dejected while eating out of a jar. The last line heard before the music fades is "I know I will be okay..." as Bridget answers her apartment buzzer and her friends try to cheer her up.

In both montages, the lyrics perfectly match the moods of Bridget. The songs are especially effective in depicting Bridget's feelings because the visuals of the film are actually edited to the music. The images themselves cannot convey a full message, so songs are used in both cases to create a sort of cohesiveness. The use of popular songs is also important to note because the lengths of the songs' verses and choruses fit well with the structure of a montage sequence. In both montages, the songs fade out before they end completely, which create smooth transitions to the following scenes. If the complete ending of the song was heard, it would likely

create a more final and serious articulation of the montage, which is just not fitting for the examples in this film.

Psychoanalysis. Repetition occurs in *Bridget Jones Diary* through repeating the same songs throughout the film. The first repeated song is Aretha Franklin's "Respect," which is heard in two very different contexts, but both times in the same setting. It is first played when the audience sees Daniel Cleaver for the first time entering the office. Later, it is heard again in the office, when Bridget stands up to Daniel and quits her job. The song is likely used the first time because of how Bridget respects Daniel as her boss, but it is used differently the second time as her coworkers now look at her with respect as she confidently marches out of the audience with a look of empowerment. The second instance of the song signifies the respect shifting from Daniel onto Bridget, as the entire office admire her courage. The repetition of this song is significant because it is used as a sign of respect for two different characters, even though it is used in the office both times.

The second repeated song is "Ain't No Mountain High Enough" by Diana Ross. We first hear the song when Bridget finds out the truth about Mark and Daniel from her mother and she eagerly drives to the Darcys' Christmas party to see Mark. The song is then heard again toward the end of the film as Bridget runs after Mark through the snow. Both times the song is played are instances when Bridget is desperate to see Mark, so the repetition really emphasizes Bridget's feelings of longing and urgency. By using the song a second time, it foreshadows that as Bridget is running, she will ultimately be reunited with Mark because the last time we heard the song and she was eager to see him, she eventually did talk to him at the party. The difference, though, is that the second time ultimately results in a happier conclusion when Mark reciprocates Bridget's feelings and they embrace.

Comedic and Horror Juxtaposition

Although the genres of the films discussed are vastly different, there are instances in both *The Shining* and *Bridget Jones' Diary* in which the sounds used contradict what is being shown on-screen through music and through characters' vocal tones. This demonstrates the importance of sound in conveying a message to the audience; without certain aural cues layered over the visual images and script itself, the themes of the film would likely not have the same effect. Furthermore, although the genres of romantic comedy and horror are on opposite ends of the spectrum, the similar patterns of juxtaposition in each film show that there are certain ways to use character vocalizations and music that are useful in any film, no matter the genre.

As previously discussed, *The Shining* uses *Music for Strings* to convey to the audience that Jack is going insane, even though his words and actions do not always agree with the music. In the scene where Jack talks to Danny to reassure him of his love, the rising panic of *Music for Strings* informs the audience that something is awry. In addition, however, Jack's own words add another layer of contradiction to the scene. The way in which he says, "I would never do anything to hurt ya," is wild and forced, and his tone is just a bit too jovial for such a serious conversation. Here his tone is a major indicator that the state of his mental well-being is declining, despite the words themselves being reassuring.

In *Bridget Jones' Diary*, the comedic contradiction comes in a scene when Bridget's voiceover pledges to sobriety just as the visual image shifts to her falling drunkenly out of a cab. The true comedy lies within Bridget's confident and assured tone in saying that she "can hold her drink," and the editing placement of her falling out of the cab is timed perfectly as soon as she finishes her sentence. Although falling out of the cab has a certain humor on its own, pairing it right after a contrasting narration with no hint of sarcasm makes it all the more funny.

Another major juxtaposition in *Bridget Jones' Diary* arises when Mark Darcy and Daniel Cleaver confront each other and a fistfight ensues set to Geri Halliwell's "It's Raining Men." This is arguably an odd song choice for a fight scene, since both characters really are angry at each other and proceed to disrupt patrons at a nearby restaurant and end up crashing through a glass window. On the other hand, this music choice is quite literal in that two men actually happen to be fighting in the rain. The upbeat recognizable tune of "It's Raining Men" makes the visual fight scene utterly comical. The ridiculous fighting techniques of the men also contribute to making the scene such a crowd-pleaser, to the point where another similar fight scene takes place between the same characters in the second *Bridget Jones' Diary* film (also set to an upbeat pop song, "I Believe in a Thing Called Love" by The Darkness). Overall, though, the juxtaposition between the fighting and the popular dance anthem is what really enhances the comedy of the scene.

Thematic Identities

The use of leitmotifs to associate a particular character or situation with a certain piece of music is a common technique in film. Giving certain characters or situations a musical theme often helps to convey the true meaning of that person or situation, as well as allowing the viewers to connect certain plot points together when a recognizable musical theme is recurrent. In *The Shining*, the most obvious leitmotif is situational, while in *Bridget Jones' Diary*, music is used to amplify the characterization of Daniel.

Lontano by Gyorgy Ligeti is the most notable leitmotif in *The Shining*. This composition is heard in every scene when a character is "shining" with the exception of the very first scene with Danny's visions of blood spilling out of the elevator. Ligeti's *Lontano* is first heard soon after they arrive at the hotel when Danny is throwing darts in the game room. A very high-

pitched frequency is heard as Danny sees the two girls standing in the doorway. A similar section of *Lontano* is heard shortly after that, when Mr. Halloran “shines” with Danny and silently asks him if he’d like some ice cream. Later, *Lontano* is played when Mr. Halloran “shines” with Danny again, but a low heartbeat accompanies the high-pitched frequency this time, making the experience seem to be even more frightening. A variant of the leitmotif is briefly heard again when Danny/Tony writes “redrum” on the door by Wendy’s bed, but the music is a much lower frequency and is combined with a more whirling sound, before abruptly jumping to a frantic beat as Wendy sees “murder” reflected in the mirror.

In *Bridget Jones’ Diary*, the thematic music is not so much a recurrent leitmotif as it is an introduction to the character of Daniel Cleaver. As Daniel first makes his entrance off of the elevator to the tune of Aretha Franklin’s “Respect,” the viewer is almost as infatuated with his handsome charm as Bridget seems to be. Right as Bridget pledges not to fantasize about men who are “alcoholics, workaholics, commitment-phobics, peeping toms...” and calls out “a particular person who embodies all these things,” the camera jumps to Daniel Cleaver as Franklin sings the lyric, “What you want, baby I got it,” which further implies all of the characteristics that Daniel embodies. Interestingly, though, Daniel cheats on Bridget just 40 minutes into the film, and we find out that “Respect” could not have been less fitting for the man. Not only does he lack respect for Bridget, but he also lacks respect for her eventual relationship with Darcy and deserves no respect from Bridget in return.

Conclusion

Although music and sounds have been a part of films for decades, it often remains unclear just how much a certain piece of music or sound influences the overall narrative of a

film. This study has shown specific examples of sound in use by situating the soundtrack, score and character vocal inflections among affect theory, aesthetics and psychoanalysis.

It is obvious that the emotional themes of *The Shining* and *Bridget Jones' Diary* are highly contrasting. One major contributing factor to this is that *The Shining* uses a film score created from pre-existing pieces of instrumental music, while the music in *Bridget Jones'* is comprised of licensed popular songs with lyrics. Each composition used in *The Shining* embodies a similar quality of eeriness, sometimes more ominous and sometimes outright frightening. The songs themselves are fitting for a horror film, but when combined with the visual images and other sounds, they create a fearful energy. The tracks in *Bridget Jones'*, on the other hand, are primarily upbeat popular love songs which contribute to the overall lighthearted emotional theme and help fit the film into the romantic comedy genre.

Although there are aspects of both films that can certainly be expanded upon, this analysis serves to examine the salient parts of each film with not only a theoretical lens, but also by using the tropes of juxtaposition, contradiction, repetition and leitmotifs. While the specific examples of these elements differ between the films, the presence of each demonstrates key components that contribute to conveying the overall narrative of a film.

While the two films clearly vary by genre, there are certain commonalities within their uses of music and sound as well. Firstly, both *The Shining* and *Bridget Jones' Diary* share instances of aural juxtaposition that make the films more frightening and comedic, respectively, through first person narration, speech inflections, and unexpected background music. Both films also use repeated music to associate their characters and settings with a particular theme. It is also clear that certain neutral visual scenes can be pushed into conveying emotions solely based on what kind of music or sound effect is used. Through these shared characteristics, it is evident

that directors, composers and music supervisors follow similar patterns in deciding what their music and sounds should represent, no matter the genre.

Future Research

This research focuses on understanding the music and sounds in the film content itself, so a possible future expansion of this study could survey viewers to see if their responses align with the emotional themes of the films or if certain musical moments are more impactful than others. This would involve creating an empirical study to collect data on audience members' reactions to each film. Another potential aspect that could be expanded upon is the fact that both *The Shining* and *Bridget Jones' Diary* are film adaptations from novels. It could be interesting to conduct an analysis on whether sound choices vary between adaptations and original films. This would likely involve discussing the novels themselves in relation to the screenplays and eventual films themselves.

Another potential expansion of this study could involve focusing more on the current time period in regards to the advancement of film and music today. Currently, there are numerous changes occurring in the media landscape as media is becoming increasingly accessible through different platforms. Music, film, and television are all available now with the touch of a button. This means that people are progressively consuming films in non-linear ways. By examining the music in films, further research could potentially provide a defense for the irreplaceable experience of watching a film straight-through in its entirety. Essentially, findings might indicate that the emotions and atmosphere created through music might not be experienced in the same way while viewing non-linearly, as the music likely holds a greater power over the viewer/listener if the media is consumed from start to finish.

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