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ART 1204

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May 2nd, 2021

Fashion Film Critique (Essay #2)

Fashion plays a significant role on the big screen as it attributes to various aspects of the film/tv. It has the ability to manipulate tone, scenery, and impact on the viewer's perception of a theme. The film analyzed is the comedy *The Devil Wears Prada* directed by David Frenkel. The main cast consist of Anne Hathaway as Andy Sachs and Meryl Streep portraying Miranda Priestly, editor-in-chief of a fashion magazine. The films costume designer was Patricia Fields, who is also known for her work on television series *Sex in the City*. The 2006 comedy film is about an upcoming journalist (Andy) who ironically ends up working at a fashion magazine even though she thinks poorly of the fashion industry. Andy's perception of the fashion industry diminishes her chances of having a decent first impression as she is embarrassed and humiliated indirectly by editor-in -chief of *Runway* Magazine Miranda Priestly. Throughout the film Andy and Patricia both grow as people making them vulnerable to each other's respective worlds. Fashion plays a part in their growth as each garment symbolizes not only how they carry themselves but what they want people to know about them. The film is based on it's novel and serves a purpose of allowing the viewer to take an exaggerated look into the world of fashion. Despite it being a cutthroat industry for little to no room for error, the love and passion that comes with fashion is what defines each person's role in the movie.

The role fashion played in this role was to emphasize how fashion is a communicator and has the ability to speak to others without speaking. To further elaborate, in the film fashion is

used as a medium to project the lifestyle of the characters. One prime example of this is when Andy first arrives at the editors office. She wears what Patricia and the rest of the company might find unflattering. However, Andy feels that what she wears should not matter to them because she is more than just her clothing. She arrives in a powder blue knitted sweater over a white button down shirt, an argyle patterned skirt muted with dark green and brown color, and what seems to be undone hair. This communicates who Andy was as a person at the time, which can be categorized as “going through the motions”.

Another scene that displays great communication is when she wears an all black ensemble. She wears what seems to be a black sueded jacket with a matching skirt. Her hair is also kept nicely which was not very present in the beginning of the movie. This Communicates that throughout her time at the fashion publisher, she allowed herself to become vulnerable to the fashion world and embraced it for what it is. Not only does her way of dress express this, but her dialogue and facial expression emulates someone who is finally grasping a skill they set their mind on.

The most important scene that cemented the idea that fashion is a communicator is when she wears a mixture of both high end fashion and her style of clothing. Although she disposed of her previous perceptions of the fashion industry, it did not change her completely. She was able to be herself all throughout the process. This is not change but growth. Through fashion, she learned how communication is more than just words but how you present yourself to others. In this scene, she wears a brown leather jacket, black turtleneck, a necklace, and a crossbody bag that seems to be made from twill. This mixture of premium clothing and casual clothing demolishes her previous ideology of the fashion industry. In retrospect, Andy and Patricia clash

because of their takes on fashion and unwillingness to hesar the other out. As they begin to appreciate each other's ideas and lifestyle, they grow as individuals.

