

Whiplash essay

2019

"Explore how one example of specialist writing has deepened your understanding of the film"

One key idea that Tom Beasley presents in specialist writing option C is the theme of **masculinity**. This idea is clearly demonstrated through the **uber-macho** character of Fletcher, in **binary opposition** with the younger Andrew, who is in a constant **power struggle** to gain the validation of his **male superior** (Fletcher), eventually winning the title of **alpha male**. **Masculinity** is initially established in the opening sequence. From the start of the film, we are introduced to Fletcher in a **midshot** where he steps towards the camera; this immediately asserts his **dominance** over Andrew. In contrast, Andrew's costume is a white v-neck with scruffy hair - a **metrosexual** look, which shows how he is much further away from the **masculine utopia** than Fletcher is. Throughout the film, Andrew's costume grows closer to Fletcher's stripped-back, black and tight look, perhaps predicting their showdown. In my opinion, I agree with Beasley - I think that **whiplash** does demonstrate a clear **male dominance** that also reflects the time. The 2015 Oscars were dominated by films about men and masculinity, and 'whiplash' exemplifies that.

* a lack of

The Popcorn Muncher article also presents ideas of *female involvement. This can be seen through the character of Nicole. When her and Andrew are on their date, the extreme close up on Nicole's face highlights her feminine features and the highkey lighting supports this and softens her features. This actively portrays Nicole as a tool for Andrew to reach the stereotypical conventions of a male - to have a wife. However, the moment Andrew believes Nicole may hinder his journey to his masculine utopia, he dumps her with no emotion. In this scene, the close-up on Andrew in centre frame shows he makes himself the centre of his world and doesn't have time to prioritise anything else. In addition, Andrew is now wearing a fitted black shirt - proving he is moving closer to the hypermasculine look of Fletcher. He needs the validation of Fletcher to be able to make big steps in his life - to ask out Nicole and eventually to dump her when she gets in the way.