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Reel Reading
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Getting Technical with Rear Window
Lit log #1

Beginning the plan of a single movie takes lots of time and effort in many different categories. There are so many different ideas that a director would like to aim their focus on. As it turns out, *Rear Window* directed by Alfred Hitchcock mainly focuses on the technician of this movie and the layout of each camera in a precise place to show the studio that they are filming in. Much of this flick uses zoomed-in cameras to show what each person in their apartment is doing, tracking all the movement of the story.

Rear Window uses a certain shot size to show the importance of a scene. Whether that be a close-up of Ms. Lonelyhearts about to swallow her sorrows, or Lars Thorwald playing with his late wife's wedding ring. The idea of using close-up shots in this movie gives the viewer the same idea of what L.B. Jeffries has been looking at for the past six weeks. With this in mind, it doesn't give the director, Alfred Hitchcock, a lot of wiggle room when it comes to how he wants to lay out what is on screen and what is not.

Because this movie is solely filmed from L.B. Jeffries's point of view, and with some slight transitions to where we see his apartment, Hitchcock stayed in the apartment while the filming process was happening to make sure that he was seeing everything the way he wanted it to be portrayed to the audience. The tracking shots used by the cinematographer perfectly emphasize the illusion of voyeurism, feeling as though you are becoming a "peeping tom" to people on the screen. The addiction of wanting to know what happens next to fulfill the suspense is what makes this such a great movie.

Something that I tend to notice more than other cinematic techniques was the lighting used in this film to also show suspense, and notify the audience that there is a change of scene.

There is one major sequence of lighting changes that make the audience feel as though they are in Jeffries's apartment with Mr. Thorwald. As he learns that Jeff is the one making phone calls to his apartment, telling him he knows everything, Mr. Thorwald marches to his apartment and begins to attack him. The lighting is dim, but there is a glare on Thorwald's face, just enough so you can see the expression of anger strung around his head. The technique that Jeffries uses to blind Thorwald, affects the viewer as well, making it as if we were the ones losing our vision for a couple of seconds throughout the scene.

Turning this focus on the characters, there were definitely many decisions that were made when it came to choosing out each person's outfit. Lisa, Jeffries's girlfriend, would always show up in perfectly made dresses that she would, "only wear once", according to Jeff. Having this remark made, she continues to wear poofed-out, frilly dresses, still working every possible way, just with style. At the end of the movie, she and Jeffries are sitting in his living room, where the entirety of the movie took place. Now, she is wearing pants, and more comfortable clothes, this shows the effect of the movie, noticing how her elegant dresses got in the way of her becoming an illegitimate police agent.

To bring back my earlier statement about the set, this film relies majorly on the design of where everything is taking place. There is a couple of long opening shot setting the two main spaces, the outside world in the courtyard where everyone else lives in their own apartment, and then the space behind Jeff, his apartment with his furniture, photography, and equipment. Having these two parts of the movie be divided based on physicality is certainly an immense amount of editing and concentration from Hitchcock, the cinematography, and the film crew.

Alfred Hitchcock's, *Rear Window*, is accurately described as "the purest expression of a cinematic idea." There is a miraculous amount of work put into this movie, which is shown

throughout each scene. There are many elements of this film that make it one of the most known films of the 20th century. The editing, dialogue, and the set design make *Rear Window* a notable movie and one that is significant to our life today, showing the importance of recognizing voyeurism.