

Loneliness is a large topic among many art forms and focused on in everyday life. Many people fear the thought of being completely alone. Throughout the years, loneliness has been portrayed in countless amounts of horror films, my goal is to find out why. Why is loneliness a key component to forming a nightmare-worthy film? Also, what methods have producers and filmmakers used to incorporate loneliness?

Horror films and the creators of them find loneliness to be a very helpful aspect. This is because isolation creates suspense in the audience. The writers of stories and movies use this suspense and fear to create plot twists or take the story in a direction the audience may not have expected. The film, *Psycho*, from the 1960s, is one of the best examples of suspense, and this suspense is built upon the ideas of isolation and vulnerability. Loneliness in itself is more of a building block to add factors to in order to create fear in a film.

In past films and stories, writers would set their characters in a remote location or in a place with no access to phones or communication with the people outside of where they were. The methods filmmakers use to isolate the characters have changed with time. It was less of a challenge in the past because mobile phones weren't as efficient. Nowadays, most people have a mobile phone and they can use it to contact anyone. Filmmakers and story writers have to find different methods and strategies to get their characters to be alone and vulnerable.

In the 1960's movie, *Psycho*, the main character is isolated very early in the story, ultimately leading to dangerous scenarios. Marion, the lead character, obtain \$40,000 from her boss to deposit into the bank. Instead of going to the bank, she gets in her car and leaves to a different state for a night. On her way there, there are multiple scares due to her loneliness and isolation. She falls asleep in her car on the side of the road and is frightened by a cop, who, after letting her go, begins to follow and almost stalk her for the remainder of the day. Eventually, she loses him, but then things get more frightening and stressful when she makes it

to the motel that she stays at for the night. When she arrives, she is checked in by a man named Norman Bates. He and his mother, the owner of the motel, are the only people at the motel and they live in a large house atop the hill right behind the motel. Norman informs Marion that his mother is mentally ill which adds an element of fear to the situation. When Marion is alone in the shower of her motel room, ominous background music begins to play adding to the element of fear and suspense. In this situation, Marion is in a very vulnerable position, she is alone in the shower behind a curtain all while in an empty motel. Eventually, Norman's mother enters the motel room and murders Marion. This shows how isolation and loneliness cause danger and worry to the character of the story and the audience of the film.

A more modern example of isolation is found in the film *Get Out* from 2017. In this film, the main character, Chris, goes with his girlfriend, Rose, to her family's home. They arrive just a day before the annual family party. Chris is a black man and all of Rose's family is white. For the beginning of the party, Chris is oblivious to the fact that Rose's family is going to hypnotize him and auction him off to become a servant to whoever buys him. This isolates Chris, he is surrounded by people who want him to become one of them, they want to hurt him. Chris, later on, catches on to what is happening at the party. One of the servants that work for Rose's parents notices this and continuously unplugs his phone, disabling him from being able to contact anyone that may be able to save him. This is a good example of how filmmakers are incorporating loneliness and using modern things to create it.

In conclusion, horror movies throughout many years have used loneliness to create scary themes and suspense. The methods to create this loneliness have changed throughout the years but it has continued to be a very useful tool. Loneliness in itself is not an entire theme, it is more a base to create suspense and fear in a horror movie.