Developmental Program Guide

The Shining

"He Came As The Caretaker, But This Hotel Had Its Own Guardians - Who'd Been There A Long Time."

Called "a masterpiece of modern horror" and "a tour-de-force of sheer terror" by the critics, Stanley Kubrick's film is a chilling adaptation of Stephen King's novel. THE SHINING combines eerie special effects, haunting performances by Jack Nicholson and Shelley Duvall, and an unmistakable aura of evil into a spectacular horror film.

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Programming Suggestions

This developmental guide is designed to facilitate educational programs after viewing the film THE SHINING. Its purpose is to generate discussion based on social issues found within the movie and for program participants to reflect on themes that may be pertinent to them. Therefore, there are no "right" or "wrong" answers to questions in this guide.

The discussion facilitator may choose to utilize one of the following activities as a means of developing discussion:

- Invite a faculty member from the Psychology Department to talk with students about mental illness and / or the phenomenon of ESP.

- Have students participate in a Jack Nicholson impersonation contest re-enacting scenes from their favorite Jack Nicholson movies.

- Invite a representative from the Religious Studies Department to discuss life after death, spirituality, and "possession".

- Invite a local Palmist or Tarot Card Reader to talk with students about their craft and conduct readings. Note: Some participants may have strong feelings or beliefs concerning the occult.

- Invite a representative from the Health Center to talk with students about hypothermia, winter dementia, and Seasonal Affective Disorder (S.A.D.).

An important consideration in choosing any facilitation option is that all students have an opportunity to participate. Be aware that many of the topics addressed in the film are not often talked about in public settings. Students who attend the program may have varying degrees of comfort level with the discussion.

ISSUES

DRUG AND ALCOHOL ABUSE
MENTAL ILLNESS / STRESS / DISABILITIES
VIOLENCE

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

General Questions
- What was the movie about?
- What were the themes you saw in the movie?
- Was the story realistic? Could this happen? Were the characters believable?
- What "stranger than fiction" news story can you name? (i.e., Son of Sam, THE EXORCIST)
- What issues that came up in the film do you have to deal with as a college student?

The Hotel
- Would you go to the Overlook with your family for the winter? Why or why not?
- What was wrong with the Overlook Hotel?
- Was it a coincidence the Overlook Hotel's season ended on October 30? Why do you think that?
- What were the visions seen in the hotel? Have you seen such visions?
- Do you think the fact that a hotel was built on a burial ground would make any difference about how the hotel would operate? Would you live in a house built on a burial ground? Why or why not?
- Why were so many scenes shot as reflections in mirrors?
- What was the significance of the lady in the bathtub? Why did she appear beautiful at first then turn ugly?
- Who was Lloyd?
- Why was Grady depicted as a waiter and not as a guest in the hotel?
- Who were all the people in the ballroom?
- What did Grady mean when he said Jack had always been the caretaker?
- What became of Jack?
- Why were the visions able to open doors?

The Family
- What was your initial impression of Jack Torrence?
- Why did Jack want the seclusion and the job?
- Why did Danny not tell his family about what he saw at the hotel?
- What were the relationships between Danny, Wendy, and Jack Torrence?
- Why did Wendy believe everything that Danny said, and not trust Jack?

The "Shining"
- Who was Tony?
- Do you believe in ESP? Have you ever seen any evidence of ESP?
- What is the "Shining"?

Horror
- What was the scariest scene in the movie? Why was it scary?
- What is the scariest movie you have ever seen?
- What is the scariest story you have ever heard?
- Did you read Stephen King's book, THE SHINING? Which did you like better? Should you read the book or see the movie first?