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Rosemary’s Baby

Rosemary’s baby film involves issues like occult, Catholicism, liberation of women, and paranoia. The movie focuses on Rosemary Woodhouse and her husband, Guy, who move to New York City. The settle in an old apartment and their weird but harmless friends, Roman Castevet and Minnie begin to befriend them. Rosemary experiences difficulties with her pregnancy. She begins to read a book, which claims that Roman is a Satanist’s son. Rosemary suspects that the neighbors coaxed her husband to make a deal with the devil concerning her pregnancy in return of a successful career. The Rosemary’s baby film uses the character of Rosemary to portray feminist speculation on reproductive freedom when society was less inviting to the idea of maternity for unmarried women.

The film showcases society’s assumptions on women’s purity, which prevents them from being free members. Society assumes that there is no reconciliation between purity and corruption of pregnancy. Rosemary is not afraid of getting married, become a homemaker, and undertake traditional roles of women, such as preparation of dinner for her husband and renovation of the domestic space. Nevertheless, external forces are constantly attacking her purity and the integrity of her body. The source of her anxiety was the patriarchal structure of society. Also, they force her to pump breast milk, take vitamin mixtures and chocolate mousse, experience extreme pain, and use pills. Rosemary loses control over her body. Also, she believes that she has lost her purity when she exposes her breasts in public and when she ascended the Sistine Chapel. Rosemary is vulnerable to satanic workings because of her Catholic upbringing. In the movie, Rosemary experiences things that are against her will, freedom, and purity, including lies, anguish, rape, and sedation.

**Rosemary:** Where is my baby?

**Dr:** It is dead because there were complications, but the good thing is that the complications have no impact on future births

**Guy**: We can have other babies in future

**Rosemary**: I do not believe what both of you are saying, you are lying!

These conversion shows the challenges that Rosemary went through, causing her pain. The doctor and her husband tried to take her baby away, and claiming the she was having pre-partum crazies. They tell her that some “complications” occurred and the baby could not survive. The doctor then injects her with a sedative, and when she wakes up, she hears her husband talking about relocating to Los Angeles. She realizes that they lied to her baby when she hears him crying. She does not hear better, hence, she turns off the air conditioner. A lady enters the room and gives Rosemary some pills, she hides them instead of swallowing them. As the lady leaves the room, Rosemary takes a butcher knife and approaches the closet. She looks through the keyhole and sees people partying at Castavets’ apartment. She is familiar with all people in the apartment, including the Castavets, Dr. Sapirstein, and other neighbors ("Rosemary's Baby", 1). She sees a bassinet with a black satin cover and hears baby’s noises coming from it.

**Rosemary**: What is happening to his eyes?

**Roman**: His eyes resemble those of his father

**Rosemary**: Guy’s eyes are normal!

**Roman**: Satan is his father

**Chorus**: Hail, Satan, his father is Satan, and has named him Adrian

This dialogue displays the anguish that Rosemary’s neighbors, her doctor, and her husband caused her. She drops the butcher knife down and spits on Guy when he tries to explain to her what is happening. As the baby continues to cry, a motherly urge overwhelms Rosemary and accepts to take care of Adrian when the coven asks her to do so, “out of all the women in the world, he wanted you to be his mother, he is powerful, and his mighty is long-lasting. They also say, “Be a real mother to the baby”.

Moreover, the film uses dream to show the lack of reproductive freedom among women. She dreams that John F. Kennedy, who was a steering a ship, changes into Roman Castevet, the cult’s leader. She sees Guy taking off her clothes and leaving her naked. Guy begins to have sex with her and becomes demonic as he continues. However, in her experience, motherhood deals with rape, which expanded her body and challenged her feminine smallness. Even though she knows that she is pregnant, Rosemary continues to live her aesthetic lifestyle; for instance, she is still party-prepping, Nevertheless, Guy disapproves her lifestyle, including her boyish haircut ("Rosemary's Baby", 1). Her new short haircut indicates her readiness to fight for her reproductive freedom and oppose gender conventions and roles that society has imposed upon her during her pregnancy and childbirth periods. She gathers with her female friends in the kitchen, where she narrates her story because she can trust them.

As her stomach continues to grow bigger, Rosemary becomes frailer and it is obvious that her cleanliness framework cannot accommodate her anymore. Getting pregnant was Rosemary’s will because she was a married woman. However, her husband raping her when she was unconscious and getting her pregnant was against her will. She encounters horrible situations, for instance, she bites a raw chicken. She also gets shocked when she sees her reflection in the toaster. This part of the film shows that many pregnant women encounter dissonance between the romanticized pregnancy visions and horrific changes. However, Rosemary gains her freedom when she finally learns and accepts how motherhood relates to purity and rejects the hierarchies that the patriarchal society has created. Although Rosemary gave birth to a demonic child, the cry of the baby comforts her. At the end of the movie, Rosemary spits in Guy’s face after realizing his selfish intentions. She begins to mother Adrian and becomes a monstrous and sacred mother to her child.

Rosemary overcomes the dual nature of motherhood and begins to interact with both the sinful and the pure. The movie shows that during this period, society denied women their freedom, independence, and self-realization that they deserved. It categorized women as either pure or impure, and motherhood complicated this categorization even further. Also, this categorization affected the ability of women to have their reproductive freedom. Rosemary’s pregnancy unites opposing elements, which threatened the patriarchal binaries and encouraged her self-realization and understanding ("Rosemary's Baby", 1). However, she attains her reproductive freedom and independence when she finally understands the true nature of motherhood. She becomes the defiled and virtuous woman when she finally realizes her true self. Also, she is no longer submissive to her husband, Guy. However, many women may not be able to achieve what Rosemary attained and they may require a schismatic system to attain self-fulfillment and discovery. Moreover, many sidelined women will uncover the effects of patriarchal structures of society if they get the chance to live free and independent lives.

Work Cited

*Rosemary's Baby*. 2021, p.1 https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6q8LbUhPzLE. Accessed 5 Mar 2021.