

another. Here is an example in which the student briefly looks at color, tone, and spatial relations in Nicholas Roeg's *Don't Look Now* (1973):

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*Don't Look Now* (1973) is a movie about not wanting to see red but being unable not to see red. The story concerns a man and a woman whose young daughter dies tragically by drowning. Later, they go to Venice, where he has a job restoring an old church that is slowly sinking. They both want to forget the horrible death of their daughter, but in Venice, they—and we, the frightened viewers—are pursued by a color, the bright red glow of the raincoat the daughter was wearing when she died.

Even before her death the color leaps out of the film. While the father is studying slides of the church he will repair, the tone and texture of the red in the image begins to vibrate and then ooze like blood. As if it is a premonition, he dashes outside to find his child face down in a pond, her coat the same color as the red in the slide.

Venice is a rather gray city in this movie, but wherever the father turns the bright shade of red seems to catch his eye, as if it has a life of its own or is beckoning from another world. For a second or longer, stained-glass windows, pieces of clothing, or a passing car appear to bear the shade of red which we and he have come to identify with the dead daughter. That red is a common color, if a shocking one, only adds to the mystery and confusion as this simple color grows more and more hypnotic and frightening. It seems to contrast with the ordinary gray life of Venice, and, since visual space is made so claustrophobic by the narrow, windy streets of the city, the glimpses we and the father catch of a fleeing red figure in the background become moments of true terror.

This color becomes a life in itself, a life that comes to mean death. The grays of Venice and the mazelike spaces of its streets make this color impossible to miss and more fascinating because it is always vanishing into the depths. The shock of the final scene, when we and the father finally corner the color, suggests that we have been horribly seduced by the power of Roeg's images.

The *frame* of the movie image forms its border and contains the *mise-en-scène*. Many movies, such as Jean Renoir's *Grand Illusion* (1937) and Alfred Hitchcock's *Rear Window* (1954) fill their *mise-en-scène* with the internal frames of windows or doorways or stage sets to call attention to the importance of frames and point of view in the story. Almost every film, though, must maintain a certain consciousness about the frame of the movie screen and the frame of the camera (Figure 16). A wide-screen frame is especially suited to catching the open spaces of a western or the vast stellar spaces of sci-fi films. The smaller standard frame is perhaps best suited to more personal interior dramas or genres



Figure 16 What makes this shot from *The Exorcist* (1974) so disturbing?