

Dramatized Media Events in Children of Men

Media Representations

- Lifestyle and living conditions
 - Ominous street views: decaying infrastructure, cages, fires, litter, etc.
 - Hippy culture
 - Dystopic living conditions
 - "Peaceful" rural conditions vs. "chaotic" urban life
 - Militaristic culture, referencing Britain's colonial history
 - Vapidity of cult of youth
 - Plastic surgery to simulate youth
- Architecture
 - Ominous street views: decaying infrastructure, cages, fires, litter, etc.
 - Luxurious home of government official versus unsanitary conditions for refugees
 - High altitude of wealthy versus ground-level accommodation for poor
 - Improvised barriers and walls as signs of raging conflict
- Celebrity culture
 - Arbitrary attachment to celebrities
 - Sign of hope and despair
 - Hypocrisy of mourning over "Baby Diego" while thousands seem to die nearby
- Music
 - Quiet, soothing music for Quietus ad
 - Classical, dramatic and religious overtones in music revealing Kee's child
 - Alarming sounds or music at Jasper's house
 - Reference to Pink Floyd album through Nigel's gallery / home
 - Reference to British legend with DJ from "Radio Avalon"
- Screens and digital media
 - Addiction to screens (e.g. scene at Nigel's home)
 - Screens across people's homes, evoking extent of government control and propaganda
 - Message of videos eliciting fear and paranoia
 - Messages of videos encouraging distrust of seemingly trustworthy members of a community (with propaganda for deportations)
 - Security cameras throughout different spaces, representing desire for control or fear
- Advertising
 - Quietus ads referencing today's pharmaceutical companies
 - Dubious motivations behind ads for medication (does the government want to better manage the population through drugs? Are companies simply seeking a profit?)
 - "Forever Young" ad evokes the fetishization of youth, and prominent desires in society
- Graffiti
 - Signs of desperation and hope
 - More "authentic" / direct expression of the ills of society than videos or newspapers

- Expressions of support for the "Uprising" and the "Human Project"
- Dark humour (e.g. "Can the last one left alive turn off the lights")
- Like many backgrounds in the film, walls with graffiti can be read for clues about general social problems and issues
- Fine Art
 - Privatization of art collections
 - Hopelessness for direct appreciation of art by future audiences
 - References "low" culture (Banksy's graffiti of kissing cops) and "high" culture (Michelangelo's *David*) gathered together
 - Tied to extreme wealth
 - Expression of anti-war sentiment
 - Expression of loss and sorrow
 - Signs of (neutralized?) subversiveness and rebellion
 - Museum (Tate Modern) turned into private home
- Religious iconography and references
 - Reference to Michelangelo's *Pietà* (Nigel attempting to save the work, but the work is referenced visually through the shot of a mother holding her child)
 - "Shanti" chanting
 - Mixed / indeterminate expressions of spirituality
 - Reference to Christian Nativity scene (in the barn scene with the cows)
 - Reference to immaculate conception; however, this contrasts with Kee's allusion to promiscuous or anonymous sex
 - Theo and Kee seeking the Tomorrow ship, as a symbol for religious faith, or God
- Writing and newspapers
 - Reference to T.S. Elliott's *The Wasteland* (through infertility and 'shanti' chanting)
 - Anti-Iraq war sign referencing nostalgia, and a failure of anti-war protests (at Jasper's home)
 - "M15 deny involvement in torture of photojournalist" suggesting government-facilitated torture
 - Old family photos evoking nostalgia (at Jasper's home)
 - "Political cartoonist of the year" headline evoking past/ neglected media
- Other
 - Union Jack seen in government propaganda, reflecting military / colonial power
 - Other flags represented differently, e.g. French flag lower to the ground in Bexhill Camp
 - Dogs represented as stand-ins for children
 - Faded Olympics 2012 sweater representing past mega-projects
 - Allusions to storks, representing humorous approach to infertility