



# Movies and Culture Report

## Culture Quote

The greatness of the best Hollywood movies is that they can be slick, entertaining, and appeal to the masses and, underneath, convey ideas, principles, and universal truths that reach audiences on an entirely different level. This underlying level of morality is explored through the film's ...

Quotation from Michael Hauge, master storyteller, teacher, and script consultant • continued, pg 5



# Superheroes and the Supernatural

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# THEATRICAL RELEASES

July 22



**Captain America: The First Avenger** (PG-13 for intense sequences of sci-fi violence, action) Deemed unfit for military service, Steve Rogers volunteers for a top secret research project which turns him into Captain America, a superhero dedicated to defending America's ideals. ([Watch the trailer.](#)) Chris Evans, Hugo Weaving, Tommy Lee Jones, Toby Jones, Stanley Tucci, Natalie Dormer, Neal McDonough.

Yet another superhero movie. Where is Hollywood's creativity? How many more must be made?

In an age where patriotism is considered shameful and it's exceedingly rare to hear high-profile pro-American statements made in something other than an election speech, it will be interesting to see how the America part of Captain America is handled. Whatever the result, we should all be happy they didn't choose to reboot the character as Captain United Nations or Captain Citizen of the World.



**Another Earth** (Unrated) As a duplicate planet in the solar system is discovered, an ambitious young student and an accomplished composer cross paths in a tragic accident. ([Watch the trailer.](#)) Brit Marling, William Mapother, Jordan Baker.

Rhonda accidentally kills a family in a car crash and is sent to prison. While there, a second Earth appears in the sky, a literal copy of our world. Even copies

of ourselves live on the duplicate planet.

Looking for some type of closure, Rhonda tracks down the widower of the family she killed; at the same time, an essay contest is conducted which allows the winner to visit the Second Earth. Rhonda hopes to go to the other world to see how her life could have been lived without the accident.

This is an outstanding concept for a science fiction film—the intellectual and moral twists are intriguing. When horrors descend upon our lives, we dream of living in an alternate

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## THEATRICAL RELEASES, continued

### *Another Earth*, continued

reality where things go back to normal. It's an easy fantasy to imagine. We all long for do-overs in life.

This is the kind of film where the quality of storytelling will depend on its final act. What happens when Rhonda can confront the new world? What is the moral of the story? How the filmmakers answer their premise is critical.



## Culture Link 1

[In a publicity interview for her movie \*Friends with Benefits\*](#), starlet Mila Kunis (*Black Swan*, *That '70s Show*) responded to the question, "Ever been in one of those relationships?"

**Mila Kunis:** "Oy. I haven't, but I can give you my stance on it. It's like communism—good in theory, in execution it fails. Friends of mine have done it, and it never ends well. Why do people put themselves through that torture?"

Kunis publically denounced communism as a failed political system. This may not seem like much, but when we consider how many of those in Hollywood are open Marxists, this is a rare utterance from an A-List performer.

*Also interesting* is her admission the casual sexual behavior she portrays in the film "never ends well." We can assume she means more than just awkward moments and jealousy. Even though she admits the behavior in the film, if followed, will injure the participants, she still makes the movie.

» [to Culture Links 2 and 3, pg 10](#)

### Also

***Friends with Benefits*** romantic comedy; "adding sex to a friendship does have consequences" — **NOTE:** See [Culture Link](#), below, for Mila Kunis stance on this topic.

***Sarah's Key*** war drama; 21<sup>st</sup> Century journalist witnesses the Holocaust; French production with new view on "the horrors of Jewish persecution during WW2."

***A Little Help*** comedy / drama; "A woman gets entangled in a series of bizarre lies in order to take care of herself and her 12 year old son."





## THEATRICAL RELEASES, continued

July 29



**Cowboys & Aliens** (PG-13 for intense action, violence, partial nudity, crude reference) The title of the film sums up the plot. There are cowboys. Yep, they fight aliens. ([Watch the trailer.](#)) Harrison Ford, Daniel Craig, Olivia Wilde, Paul Dano, Sam Rockwell, Keith Carradine, Clancy Brown.

Yet another film adaptation of a graphic novel. The original graphic novel—Oh, ish. Sorry. Can't call them that. We've been marketed into calling them graphic novels so adults won't feel ashamed to buy COMIC BOOKS with bindings. The COMIC BOOK for this is littered with things like flying horses and other silliness.

The movie should be a fun carnival-ride of a film. Pay attention to Harrison Ford's character: he's the sheriff who rules with an iron fist. Watch how he is presented. What is the basis of his morality? What personal details do they give about his character? The answers will shed light on the worldview of the filmmakers.



**Crazy, Stupid, Love** (PG-13 for coarse humor, sexual content, language) Middle-aged divorcee wants to reboot his love life and his relationship with his children. ([Watch the trailer.](#)) Steve Carell, Ryan Gosling, Julianne Moore, Marisa Tomei, Kevin Bacon, Emma Stone.

Cal (Steve Carell) takes advice from a playboy (Ryan Gosling). As the trailer and movie poster clearly show, Jacob's direction for Cal is not to find a healthy, loving relationship.

Since this is from the same illustrious filmmakers who brought the proudly filthy *Bad Santa* and the homosexual romance *I Love You, Phillip Morris*, don't expect this to be something you'd want to see with the kids or the parents.

Which brings up this quick tip: If you wouldn't watch a movie in front of your parents, chances are you shouldn't be watching it—regardless of how old you are.





## THEATRICAL RELEASES, continued

Also

**Attack the Block** sci-fi / action / comedy; UK production; “Teen gang in South London defend their block from an alien invasion”

**The Smurfs** animated comedy based on the Sat a.m. cartoon

**Editor’s two cents:** I don’t trust anything with Neil Patrick Harris in it.

**The Devil’s Double** action biography of Saddam Hussein’s son, Uday, through the eyes of the man forced to act as his body double; Belgium production

**The Guard** comedy thriller; Irish policeman with a confrontational personality is teamed up with an uptight FBI agent (Don Cheadle) to investigate an international drug-smuggling ring

## Culture Quote

**The greatness of the best Hollywood movies is that they can be slick, entertaining, and appeal to the masses and, underneath, convey ideas, principles, and universal truths that reach audiences on an entirely different level.** This underlying level of morality is explored through the film’s theme.

Theme is **the universal statement the movie makes about the human condition.** It is the screenwriter’s underlying prescription for how one should live one’s life in order to be a more evolved, more fulfilled, more individuated, more moral person. **It’s the filmmaker’s way of saying, ‘This is how to be a better human being.’**

**- Michael Hauge. *Writing Screenplays that Sell.***

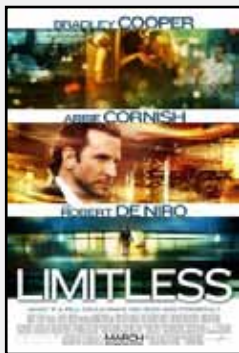
Collins Reference. 2011. Pg 82.





# DVD RELEASES

July 19



**Limitless** (PG-13 for drug use, violence, disturbing images, sexuality and language) ([Watch the trailer.](#)) Bradley Cooper, Anna Friel, Abbie Cornish.

A loser takes a designer drug that allows him to use 100% of his brain. He instantly becomes a nearly perfect version of himself. When he rises to the top of the financial world, he sparks the interest of some very dangerous folks.

This is certainly an interesting concept for a film, there's no denying that. The concept does have a flaw, however. The movie's assumption is that since we humans are incapable of using our brains, the answer to our fallen nature is pharmaceuticals or other unnatural enhancements. Rather than rely on the fact that we are as God has intended, we should look to improve ourselves through synthetics.

If not sinful behavior, it's closely walking the line.



**Take Me Home Tonight** (R for language, sexual content, drug use) ([Watch the trailer.](#)) Topher Grace, Anna Faris, Dan Fogler, Teresa Palmer, Lucy Punch, Michael Biehn.

This is what I wrote in response to viewing the trailer (linked above): Having graduated from high school in 1987, I can say I don't recall things being this way in '88. It's a movie, what

do I expect?

Well, I expect the music to make sense. They toss in *Relax* and *(There's) Always Something There to Remind Me?* Both were 4-5 years old by 1988 and no one would have been listening to them. In 1988, white kids were listening to U2, INXS, Michael Jackson, and George Michael. The blue collar kids were getting into Metallica, Def Leppard, and Guns N Roses. If you needed to pull from pop music there was Debbie Gibson, Robert Palmer, and Whitney Houston. *Freddie*

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## DVD RELEASES, continued

*Goes to Hollywood?* Really? *Straight Out of Compton* wasn't a hit until a year later, and when it hit I doubt rich white kids were aware of it immediately. Sheesh.

Regarding the meat of the trailer - NEVER trust a film that has to sell the entire story in the trailer. There is no reason to see this film—you have the entire tale told in two minutes. The trailer screams “wait for the DVD!”

This film, centering on a group of young goofballs in 1988, was in and out of theaters quick. There's a reason. If I can peel apart the trailer like this after a single viewing, don't expect the rest of the film to be any better. This is a shame because I'm a huge fan of one of the movie's stars, Anna Faris. She's a great comedic actress who keeps getting cast in unfortunate nonsense like this.

### *Also*

***Tekken*** futuristic drama; boy witnesses murder of his mother and takes revenge; Japanese production

***The Reef*** horror; shark attack; Australian production

***Potiche*** comedy; CEO is kidnapped and his trophy wife (Catherine Deneuve) comes off the shelf to successfully run the corporation; French production

***Small Town Murder Songs*** crime thriller; Canadian production; “A modern, gothic tale of crime and redemption about an aging police officer from a small Ontario Mennonite town who hides a violent past until a local murder upsets the calm of his newly reformed life” (imdb.com). — Mennonite town. Hmm. All kinds of possibilities for Christian-bashing there.

***Cracks*** romance thriller; “lives and relationships among girls at an elite British boarding school”; Irish production — tagline: “Innocence isn't lost. It's taken.”





## DVD RELEASES, continued

July 26



**Source Code** (PG-13 for violence, disturbing images, language) ([Watch the trailer.](#)) Jake Gyllenhaal, Michelle Monaghan, Jeffrey Wright, Vera Farmiga.

*Source Code* is an action thriller about a soldier who wakes up in the body of an unknown man and discovers he's part of a mission to find the bomber of a commuter train. With that description, you can assume two things:

- (1) The soldier falls in love with a woman on the train, and
- (2) The bomber isn't Muslim.

Pay attention to the race, gender, and occupation of the bomber. I've not seen this film, but I'm willing to bet that the bad guy will, indeed, be a guy and, more than likely, his motivation will be attached to American patriotism in some way.

Since the 9/11 bombings, it seems Hollywood has done anything possible to avoid the honest portrayal of those who actually plan and carry out a majority of the bombings around the world: Islamists.



**Dylan Dog: Dead of Night** (PG-13 for violence, sexual references, drug material) Brandon Routh, Anita Briem, Taye Diggs and Sam Huntington.

Based on the horror comic books primarily enjoyed in Italy, this adaptation has been hammered by critics across the Atlantic for its deviation from the source material and general lousiness.

Brandon Routh stars in the titular role, a private detective who deals with zombies, werewolves, and all manner of supernatural evil.

This story is based in Louisiana, so expect cheap shots at Southerners. Often the reason for the impulsive insulting of Southerners comes from the industry's natural inclination to look down on Middle America. Since the entertainment industries are primarily housed on the coasts, it's easy for those in the insular bubbles of New York and L.A. to see their fellow Americans as essentially foreign entities. There is an institutional bigotry against people, places, and things

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## DVD RELEASES, continued

that speak to the American soul. This reflective push to insult Southerners comes from the same place that urges insults against Christianity.

Given [the reviews](#), I think it'd be best to just skip this one. You've probably never heard of Dylan Dog before now, anyway, and there's no reason to get acquainted at this point.

### *Also*

**Once Upon a Warrior** family fantasy, adventure; India production; "a 9-year-old girl with special healing powers tries to save her homeland from the tyranny of an evil queen with the help of a blind swordsman"





## Culture Links



**F**riends star David Schwimmer has gone on record as concerned about the sexualization of culture. [He told the UK newspaper The Telegraph:](#)

All I know is that the sexualisation of young kids to sell products has got much worse since I was a teenager.

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Too bad he so directly contributed to that decay by participating in the show that made him famous. *Friends* promoted casual sexual behavior, homosexuality, and a myriad other liberal social policies which corroded the moral structure of our culture.



“Imagine there’s no heaven.

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It’s easy if you try.”

John Lennon is, of course, remembered as the moody Beatle. His later years are best remembered for his Marxist anthem *Imagine*.

Now [the Toronto Sun is reporting in an article entitled “Lennon was a Closet Republican”](#) that in Lennon’s final years he had abandoned his leftist

ideology and actually become a supporter of Ronald Reagan:

John Lennon was a closet Republican, who felt a little embarrassed by his former radicalism, at the time of his death - according to the tragic Beatles star’s last personal assistant.

Fred Seaman worked alongside the music legend from 1979 to Lennon’s death at the end of 1980 and he reveals the star was a Ronald Reagan fan who enjoyed arguing with left-wing radicals who reminded him of his former self.

Now *imagine* what might have happened if he had survived his wounds.

**T**hese three statements exemplify the lack of consistency between personal beliefs and an artist’s work—and that is at the heart of the corruption of our culture. If people in the entertainment industry would stand on their beliefs, their morality, it would slow our decline. Easy to say, of course, when many performers are forced to work with material about which they disagree in order to survive. Once artists make it, however, they must stand up, stick to their beliefs, and stop participating in productions which continue the corrosion of our society.





## Movie Watching Tip

# Comic Relief



**W**hen people become embroiled in intense discussion they often lighten the mood with a quick joke. This introduction of humor allows all parties to stop and breathe. Often humor reminds us that we are fundamentally more alike than we are different.

This aspect of human interaction is also found in our movies. Films are about conflict. In essence, there is a hero and there is a villain and the two lock horns to fight it out. From opening moments to closing credits, most good films involve the unpleasant aspects of daily life: stress, tension, and sometimes blood-vomiting zombies.

The screenwriter must keep the ebb and flow of his story moving forward in a way that doesn't cause an audience to become exhausted or overloaded. When thrust into a tale of turmoil without being given a breather, an audience will eventually tune out. The best way to offer a relief valve is through use of comedy—dropping one-liners and quips throughout the story to bring some levity to the proceedings.

Insertion of humor for this purpose is often performed by a specific character, a sidekick to the hero: C3PO and R2D2 in *Star Wars*, Sallah in *Raiders of the Lost Ark*, Reilly in *National Treasure*, or the little teacup Chip in the animated *Beauty and the Beast*. These sidekicks usually offer little in comparison to the hero; they may have specific talents which come in handy from time to time, but their main purpose is to deliver comic relief.



**A**nother use for humor, especially that which is self-deprecating, is that it highlights the superiority of the hero, as opposed to the more mere-mortal qualities of the sidekick. This use of humor not only offers a break in the tension but it connects the audience more deeply to the hero and his friends.



**F**inally, it's important to remember that humor is the one emotion that we experience which drops our protective walls—opens us, emotionally, in ways few other things can. The making of jokes may seem like a meaningless thing, but it's critical to the successful delivery of a movie and a movie's message. Comic relief not only gives us room to breathe, it makes the characters more human—and makes us more ready to receive what they want to us to know. ☺





## EVEN ATHEISTS NEED GOD TO DELIVER THEIR MESSAGE

by Scott Nehring

Most evangelical Christians are unaware that a new and active counterattack on their efforts to reach people for Jesus Christ was deployed, or should I say screened, during Robert Redford's Sundance Film Festival. On January 21, 2011, evangelical atheists premiered the new film, *The Ledge*, and with it launched their attempt to turn people toward their way of thinking. What atheistic filmmakers don't understand, however, is that—in direct contradiction to their non-belief—they, themselves, must rely on God in order to deliver their god-doesn't-exist messages.

**F**or as long there have been believers there have been non-believers. For as long as there have been Christ-followers so, too, there have been people who repudiate belief in Jesus. Throughout a good portion of European civilization, though, anti-Christian forces have been smaller in number and relatively without broad powers.

Over the last forty to fifty years the atheist mindset has gained strength and popular standing in our society until, today, public references to religion are considered an imposition—except for non-Christian religious references or claims of total unbelief.

**T**oday, however, atheism has left its rational stance of non-intervention. Let's face it, if you consider Christ and God as no different than the Tooth Fairy and unicorns, there's no reason to be overt about non-belief. If I were to tell you I worshipped a lampshade, how would you react? Chances are you would shrug and dismiss me as a kook.

But atheism has taken on a new trend. Not satisfied with simply not believing, they have assumed the offensive, as evidenced in the recent release of the film *The Ledge*.

**T**he *Ledge* tells the tale of an atheist who seduces the wife of an evangelical Christian man. The Christian responds violently to the intrusion into his marriage. Despite the inherently negative aspects of the plot, the movie is marketed as a positive film which actively promotes atheism.

The film's director, Matthew Chapman, is the great-great grandson of Charles Darwin. Chapman hopes his film will spark discussion, i.e. propaganda, regarding the atheist cause. He claims, "This suspicion about people

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whose only crime is not believing in things until they're proven seems weird.”

[Watch the YouTube video](#) and you'll see Chapman's opinions aren't always so timid. He maintains an arrogant, self-assured position based on literally nothing and, contrary to his quotation above, wants no exchange of ideas.

Chapman actively holds believers in contempt. In [interviews on \*The Blaze\* \(Atheist Filmmaker Hopes New Hollywood Movie will Inspire Non-Believers\)](#) and [on CNN \(New Atheist Movie \*The Ledge\* Evangelizes Godlessness\)](#) he makes his position quite clear.

Liv Tyler (*The Lord of the Rings* trilogy), a star from Chapman's film, claims the message of *The Ledge* is

that the world, especially now with the Internet, we're so quick to judge people based on their clothing, sexual preference, religion, food they like. I guess I came to realize from this [film] that you really don't know what people have been through unless you find out.

As nonsensical as Tyler's statement may be, her remark is quickly refuted by Chapman's dream that this film act as a *Brokeback Mountain* moment for the atheist movement. What he means is he believes *Brokeback Mountain*, a film that tells the story about two sheep herders overcome with homosexual lust, was a watershed moment for the

homosexual movement in the Midwest and made gay rights worth more consideration within the slopped foreheads of Midwesterners' minds. This is, of course, idiocy. If his thoughts were right, then gay marriage legislation would have passed in all Midwestern states, not just liberal Iowa.

Director Chapman has dedicated himself to evangelical atheism. No longer content to simply be a non-believer, Chapman wants to convert not only people who have religious questions but also doubting God-believers. *The Ledge* is the latest branch of his belief system.

**W**hat Mr. Chapman and other atheist filmmakers fail to understand, however, is that despite their futile attempts at non-belief, they must actually rely on God to deliver their godless messages.

As I explain far more thoroughly in my book *You Are What You See: Watching Movies Through a Christian Lens* (Right Line. 2010), Christ is at the center of all stories regardless of their intent. God's presence can be seen in almost any movie you name.

When we think of the presence of God in film, we often consider only overt displays, such as Captain Dan's screaming fit atop the shrimp boat during the hurricane (*Forrest Gump*) or Sherrif Ed Tom Bell (*No Country for Old*

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Men) dismayed over his disconnect from the Lord's grace. But God's presence goes deeper than characters' open discussions. Less-overt displays of God consistently appear in most films. These references are sometimes intentional, but more often they are used instinctively. You can even find these God motifs in films which try to repudiate the very God they borrow from (*The Da Vinci Code*, *Constantine*, or *Hannibal*).

### THE DEATH OF GOD IMAGE

We, humans, naturally understand common shorthand images and motifs—symbols that, when seen, deliver immediate messages. These symbols can be positive (a cross) or negative (a swastika). Many motifs transcend culture and speak to us deeply, intimately, immediately.

Filmmakers intentionally *and* unintentionally use shorthand images to quickly deliver messages to their audiences. **Even when used by atheists, these images show our underlying belief in a God-centered universe.**

Filmmakers use the Death of God Image to show us God's governing hand has been lifted from the story's universe and, thereby, transformed the world into hell. Great evil now fills the void left by an absent God.

- » In Steven Spielberg's *War of the Worlds*, aliens attack Earth. First structure destroyed? A church.

- » In Danny Boyle's *28 Days Later*, Jim awakes to find London devastated by a zombie apocalypse. Where does Jim first encounter the blood-vomiting zombies? A church.
- » Even in Dreamworks's **animated *Monsters vs. Aliens***, when Susan is radiated by a meteorite and transformed into Ginormica, the first thing destroyed by her transformation is, you guessed it, a church.

When evil is unleashed in film today, it is common for it to heighten its reign of terror by destroying a church, kill a member of the clergy, or defile a religious symbol. I refer to this moment as the Death of God Image.

The removal of God from the world of the story establishes the basis for all horror films, for where there is no God there can be no hope. The film's hero is abandoned to fend for himself, truly alone to face the evil of the story.

Sometimes filmmakers employ this motif with a secular foundation. Rather than the removal of God, we're shown monuments of the state or institutions being destroyed (the coming *Rise of the Planet of the Apes*; dramatic destruction of the White House in *Independence Day*). I believe use of governmental institutions, monuments, or

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other man-made structures is a perversion or morphing of the motif. Destruction of landmarks and buildings may make human governance difficult but still leave God intact. Since His will is still in play, evil does not reign supreme within the story's universe.

**T**he Death of God Image is not the only God-based motif readily found in our movies. Stay alert and you'll find characters who replicate the imagery of Christ Himself. Through use of the Christ Pose, images of the cross, and the heroic resurrection, filmmakers and storytellers attempt to cast their characters or other aspect of their story in a divine light.

## THE CHRIST POSE

At Golgotha, Jesus was offered in ultimate sacrifice for the sin of mankind. The striking image of His sacrifice—outstretched arms, hands elevated higher than His shoulders, legs crossed at the ankles, head tilted—is a haunting, painful recollection of the horrors of His death. It is also an awe-inspiring reminder of the ideals of sacrifice, duty, and selfless love.

When movie characters die during moments of sacrifice, it's common for filmmakers to place their actors into

this Christ pose—intentional posing of the actor's body to mimic the posture of Christ on the cross:

- » In the final moments of ***Braveheart***, William Wallace faces execution. He is tied to a wooden rack, arms outstretched, legs bound together. He is then brutally tortured and dies for the freedom of Scotland. Director Mel Gibson included a bird's-eye view of Wallace on the rack. The visual connection to Christ's sacrifice is obvious.
- » Mr. Incredible is hung in the pose while a prisoner of Syndrome in ***The Incredibles***.
- » In ***4: Rise of the Silver Surfer***, the Silver Surfer strikes the pose when he sacrifices himself to save the earth.
- » In ***Heat***, the criminal McCauley walks by a large cross hanging on a hallway wall then turns the corner to find a colleague mortally wounded and lying in the Christ Pose, complete with a halo of blood pooled around his head.

When you see a character in this position, take it very seriously. The director is replicating the sacrifice of Jesus

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Christ, Himself, and the director runs a huge risk. If the Christ Pose is used for nefarious purposes, the director is maligning Jesus' death by using it to promote evil.

Actively look for the Christ Pose. You'll be astonished how many films and television shows utilize it (*Lost*, *CSI: NY*, *The Shawshank Redemption*, *The Fugitive*, *U. S. Marshalls*, *Gran Torino*, *Cool Hand Luke*).

## THE USE OF THE CROSS

In film, whenever you see a cross hanging on walls, from an actor's necklace, or from rear-view mirrors, know that both image and symbol were planned. The presence of a cross is never an accident. Someone had to find that cross, the right-looking cross, and intentionally place it in just the right location for the camera angle.

You can often see crosses in scenes where death is present. They're also common in scenes involving sacrifice (as in the moment from *Heat* mentioned above).

A cross placed in the background of a shot will subconsciously connect the action on screen with the concept of Christian sacrifice.

In other instances, you may see the cross used for the opposite purpose. The cross may be in scenes of oppression and cruelty.

In the movie *Monster*, the heroine, serial killer Aileen Wuornos, and her lesbian lover are caught in bed together by her partner's bigoted, Christian mother. The scorn of the mother is buttressed by the ominous cross which hangs above their bed. The vitriol of the Christian mother combined with the dark cross over the bed is an intended contrast to the lesbian lovers, showing the filmmaker's desire to repudiate Christians' narrow-mindedness and advocate for the homosexual lifestyle.

## RESURRECTION

In all stories the hero dies, or at least he appears to die—his car explodes, he gets shot, he's seen going over the cliff or pulled underwater until the bubbles stop surfacing. The other characters, and the audience, believe he's dead. Then, against all odds or reason, he is reborn—someone else was in the car, he pops up from the murky depths down river, he exposes his bulletproof vest, he grabbed a vine as he went over the cliff and now hangs for dear life, literally.

After this death and rebirth, the hero is renewed and somehow more heroic. His determination has been sparked, and he has become stronger and smarter through the experience. Our hero is ready to bring this conflict to a close.

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Something occurred during this death, during this low point, that reminded our hero of his first goals, rekindled his original passion. He was once lost, now he's found—and he's ready to get busy. He rallies his companions and heads straight for the villain.

This death/rebirth correlates to the story of Jesus Christ in an obvious way. In most storylines the hero can be segmented into two personalities, the pre-death and post-death hero. Before his death he'll be troubled by his flaws and is fallible. Following his rebirth, his flaws are gone and he takes a more superhuman posture.

When the hero is actually killed, his demeanor prior to this sacrificial death becomes more self-assured and at peace.

### FALSE RESURRECTION

Contrasting with the hero's rebirth, the villain often attempts a resurrection, but his attempt will fail. A villain (Jason in *Friday the 13th*) will appear to be dead then suddenly lurch at the hero one last time; he struggles, then suddenly drops over, dead.

This false resurrection shows the villain as incapable of rebirth.

It should be noted that the difference between the deaths of both hero and villain actually track with Scriptural, Christian theology. The hero, in his rebirth, is free of his prior flaws (sins) and renewed. The unrepentant villain is denied this new life.

First Corinthians 8:6 states,

[Y]et for us there is but one God, the Father, from whom all things came and for whom we live; and there is but one Lord, Jesus Christ, through whom all things came and through whom we live."

All of us, even storytellers, are created, and whether they like it or not, whether they want to or not, filmmakers reflect His image. Often this reflection is seen in the images they flicker onto the screen.

Begin to look for these motifs and discern how they're utilized. Ask yourself if the Christ Pose gives a Christ-like disposition to an otherwise bad, evil, or deeply flawed character. Is the cross on screen used to support Biblical teaching, or are they attempting to subvert or deny its power?

When you spot these, be alert; the filmmaker is telling you something he wants you to believe. 📺





# At Rest [Daniel 12:13](#)



## **Anna Massey** (1937–2011)

Actress

Best known in her home country of England, Anna Massey was a staple figure in the entertainment industry for over fifty years. While she performed in a number of films including *Peeping Tom*, *Bunny Lake is Missing*, *A Doll's House*, and Alfred Hitchcock's *Frenzy*, she is best remembered as a television actress on British TV.

## **Roland Petit** (1924–2011)

Choreographer

An acclaimed choreographer, Roland Petit was influential in both dance and cinema. In the 1950s he briefly worked in Hollywood on projects such as Orson Welles' *The Lady in the Ice*, *Daddy Long Legs* with Fred Astaire, and *Anything Goes* with Bing Crosby.





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# Information

Learn more about Story. Buy the book: [YouAreWhatYouSee.com](http://YouAreWhatYouSee.com).

Find Scott Nehring's latest film reviews: [GoodNewsFilmReviews.com](http://GoodNewsFilmReviews.com).

Scott is an award-winning screenwriter and film critic whose reviews have been published on a number of websites across the United States, Australia, and India including Reuters.com, USAToday.com, *The Chicago Times*, FoxNews.com, and a variety of local news stations across America.



As a former screenwriter, Scott is focused on balancing his love of story structure and cinema with his Christian faith. He loves to teach film studies to Christians, showing them how to read films and how to deal with the sometimes thorny subject of engaging modern culture.

Scott was a co-founder of the [Catholic Media Review](http://CatholicMediaReview.com). His current reviews can be found at [Good News Film Reviews](http://GoodNewsFilmReviews.com) and at [ChristianCinema.com](http://ChristianCinema.com).

Good News Film Reviews (GNFR) was established in June 2007 to discuss film and culture from a Christian perspective. From the first post onward, Scott has called for Christians to change both the way they view film and how they engage in culture. GNFR fell quiet following a short sabbatical, was re-launched in January 2008, and has been going strong since. GNFR is also home site for the Carnival of Cinema, a bi-weekly collection of film-related posts submitted from around the world. The Carnival of Cinema has been in operation since September 2006.



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