



Psychoanalytic Alteration of Truth and Interpretation of Reality in *Shutter Island*

Hanna Ann Mathews¹, Akshay Viswanath², Prakeerthi A Nair ,S Shilpa Nair³

^{1,2} Department of English, Amrita Vishwa Vidyapeetham Amritapuri, India

Email: ¹hannaann@am.students.amrita.edu,

²akshayviswanath25@am.students.amrita.edu,

³prakeerthianair@am.students.amrita.edu, ³shilpanair@am.amrita.edu

Abstract

Shutter Island (2010)'s script is embedded with elements of a unique dual narrative into perfection: the audience can 'choose' the two worlds pitted together in the script. One only needs to select two possible perspectives. Sometimes phenomenal events overpower psyche, and the individual is caught in the deluge. What makes sense amidst this turmoil is surviving the flood, as it is clear a greater peril overshadows the self's existence. The human mind is fragile, but the breaking point varies from individual to individual. Normality is something most of humankind yearns for. Needless to say, life isn't meant to be something normal. This is seen evident from the central protagonist's venture in *Shutter Island*. The current project sheds limelight at psychoanalytical stages experienced by the character. The film's script is intensively analysed to find all traces of conditioned reality and the reason/s behind its formation. Sigmund Freud's findings on unconscious, based on his *On Narcissism- an Introduction*, is the theoretical framework followed here.

7202

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INTRODUCTION

Shutter Island is the film taken for script analysis of this project. Built on Dennis Lehane's 2003 novel by the exact name, the film is a pure thriller engaging the viewer in panoramic illustration of the environment mantling *Shutter Island* in the movie's first half while a chain of revelations is thrown upon the unexpected viewer within the second half. Released in 2010 by Paramount Pictures, it is directed by Academy Award-winning director Martin Scorsese, whose influence upon *Shutter Island* is an exceptional filmmaker. When an intrigued interviewer asked about the twist at the

end and attributed it to be a story with the possibility for multiple interpretations: either the protagonist is psychopathic, or he is sane), Scorsese replied with a dash of a smile:

But isn't that life (loud laugh)? For all we know, it might be real life. I don't want to be so glibly "intellectual," but as you get older... What is? And who is it? And who exactly are you? It's Alice's Adventures in Wonderland. Who... are... you? Do you recall the caterpillar? Why is the caterpillar's question so upsetting to her? I recall presenting it to my five or six-year-old daughter. 'Who... are... you...?' said the



caterpillar. But it's fascinating with cinema because all the signs are there throughout the film, and I believe, without giving too much away, if you watch it and don't know anything and find it gratifying by the end, you might want to go back and see it again (Calhoun, Dave.)

The thin line between sanity and havoc in the human mind has become a point of interest in the contemporary world. Is the diagnosis of an abstract concept such as "insanity" possible?

Moreover, can it ever be cured? Amidst these troubling times, this film sheds ample volume on society's conclusions – discerning what is sane and not. Each scene is superimposed with a purposeful endeavour aiming at psychological diagnoses, often posing them as questions to the viewer.

Shutter Island was set in 1954; shortly after the Korean War ceased, the Cold War was gaining pace. Such a historical backdrop, along with the rising threat of a nuclear conflict between the superpowers, infused the gothic thriller with an air of foreboding and paranoia. The film begins with United States Marshal Ted Daniels (Leonardo DiCaprio) and his newly assigned partner Chuck Aule (Mark Ruffalo) arriving on Shutter Island, a small archipelago of Massachusetts where a grandiose Civil War-era fortress now features a criminally insane hospital. The duo has been summoned to the venue to investigate the mysterious disappearance of an inmate woman (who had been said to have murdered her own three children). Life is often seen reflected on the air subtended around us. Each human emotion can be anointed with nature. And nature portends a hefty weight of fate over *Shutter Island* in the form of cumulus clouds. Our protagonist Ted is a profoundly restless man. He is nauseous on the boat trip from Boston to the island; additionally, an internal sickness prevails. He claims to be tormented by flashbacks of the Dachau

death camp where he and his fellow US soldiers executed German guards. Haunted by visions of hundred mutilated corpses bedecked on the ice-cold terrain of the camp, he often woke up from his bed drenched in sweat.

His wife died in a fire two years ago, and he grew restless as he learned that the arsonist who set the deadly fire was being housed at the forbidden ward of the institution. The subject of investigation, the missing woman, is Rachel Solando (Emily Mortimer). Dr Cawley (Ben Kingsley) leads the charge of managing the twisted inmates. Though he is a bit lucid, his colleague Dr Naehring (Max Von Sydow) is direful, whom Ted suspects a former Nazi. The foci of the protagonist converge at doubting the institution hosting a mind-altering government project. Dr Cawley remains consistent on the claim that he is a devout proponent of the "talk therapy" school of psychiatry, condemning both the old-school psycho-surgery and innovative psychopharmacology.

Cawley summarises the scenario: Rachel Solando appeared to have departed her room without any significant attempt the night before. Teddy and Chuck interview the staff to know about Rachel's whereabouts but only could find a note left behind by her which Teddy and his partner found: "The Law of Four, who is 67?" That night, Teddy suffered terrible dreams about his wife, Dolores Chanal, who died two years back in an apartment fire. Despite the recurring visions, Teddy refuses to address them. Initially, the dreams tell the viewers a love story, but their relationship became perilous before her death due to Teddy's alcoholism and Dolores' mental illness. As a critical motif in *Shutter Island*, Teddy's visions suggest that dreams reveal truths the conscious mind refuses to accept. Fortunately, they also help him crack Rachel's first code, indicating the existence of a mysterious Patient Sixty-Seven.



Skipping forward the narrative, Teddy decides to drop the investigation. With a plan to escape the island in the cover of the night, Teddy plays along with the full intention of catching the ferry to the mainland as soon as possible. But Cawley figures out his plan, leaving Teddy with no choice but to head to the lighthouse, determined to find the truth and possibly rescue Chuck. But Cawley is the only item Teddy discovers within the structure. He claims Teddy is Andrew Laeddis, develops a persuasive case, and reintroduces Dr. Lester Sheehan, who has been posing as Chuck the entire time. Cawley unravels the complexities of Teddy's dream, explaining that his wife Dolores was mentally ill and murdered Teddy's three children, and that Teddy—who is Laeddis—was shot in the stomach. Teddy got delirious while suffering from guilt delirium and was transferred to Ashecliffe for treatment. Teddy's destiny, however, is precarious; either he must demonstrate to the institution that he understands the truth, or he will be lobotomised.

Finally, the night draws in the complete picture, and the following day he admits to Cawley that he is Andrew Laeddis. At the conclusion of *Shutter Island*, readers must decide whether to accept Teddy's account – that he is a marshal who discovered a government cover-up – or Cawley's story, in which Teddy is a psychotic killer. The final chapter provides no resolution. Teddy appears to have embraced his identity as Andrew Laeddis at first, but then he begins talking to Chuck – who might be Dr Sheehan or a nightmare, it is uncertain – about leaving Shutter Island. In the closing scene, Cawley and a gang of orderlies advance on Teddy with a straight jacket, but Teddy still believes he may escape.

**Script Analysis of Film *Shutter Island*:
Psychoanalytic Alteration of Truth and
Interpretation of Reality in the Film *Shutter
Island***

[FADE IN,
EXT. FERRY ON WATER - - MORNING
The fog TWISTS over the water, a thick and
almost impenetrable CURTAIN - - that
suddenly PARTS, to reveal:
A FERRY]
[SENSE OF DANGER in the eyes of U.S.
Marshal TEDDY DANIELS, is bent over the
toilet, PUKING his guts out, LOOKS at
himself in the mirror - -
A MAN, late 30's, comes out of the cabin
where shackles and chains hang from the
roof.
CHUCK: You okay, boss?
TEDDY: Fine (Gutting it out)]

The initial scene sets the cover of mystery and is filled clues on the intention behind the arrival. The atmosphere heralds the trouble coming for these two marshals (TEDDY and CHUCK) on this island. Manacles and chains followed by the introduction of central protagonist Edward Daniels (aka TEDDY) suggest that the boat's cabin is meant to contain a prisoner of some sort. But the elemental symbols in the film despite providing complete clarity of imminent danger, makes the reader impossible to predict the future events. The expressionistic claustrophobic atmosphere is indeed heavy but the sole intention of the same is to serve as a deeper emotion which motivates the viewer to realize the gravity of each symbol. The construction of ominous score reminiscent as suggest by the script fills the hearts of the audience with enigma as they struggle to see through the heavy fog.

The protagonist portrays the initial reality and is set until the first half of the film ceases. Teddy absorbs in the information provided by the imperious Dr Cawley regarding the holistic approach taken to cure the patients' mental illness. He gets to interview each inmate and each encounter from the man who "happily loved his wife even after killing her" to a refreshingly lively patient (Robin Bartlett) who urges him to "run" (a caution that underscores the loop

7204



of the experiment: there is nowhere to run to). The authorities refuse to aid Teddy and his partner in any evidence, which undoubtedly ruins the constructed reality. Dr Naehring's accent itself purges Teddy in his flashbacks- To Dachau, where he was one of the liberating Americans, where hundreds of opponent soldiers were shot in cold blood as they began to surrender. Reflecting morale disgust, Teddy stood extra mad at the experimenting doctors, who are baffled by the "vanishing into thin air" of Rachel, a wretched woman who drowned her children or slit their throats. The subtle pioneer memory fragments serve as crumbs of salvation for Teddy even without him knowing the same. Guilt had infused in him a reality, but the solution costs dire alteration of events or creation of people (Chuck) to see the pieces of Teddy himself reflected in them. The sole motive of the holistic experiment was to make the patient discover his cure. The initial reality was a palette upon which Teddy was to draw until he runs out of paint of forced imagination.

The fixated perspective of the narration from that of the protagonist and protagonist alone warns the viewer to be on guard. Amidst the confusion, the movie invites the viewer to see through Teddy's eyes: glaring at uncooperative staffs, irritated by the doctors' obfuscations and unreasoned delays, justifying his anger. Drenched by rain, he and Chuck explore the cemetery for clues and wind up sheltering in a bunker. Teddy perspires and burns red with suspicion of a possible conspiracy; his white face becomes somewhat visible as he turns and leans at night. Ultimately, he looks alone. Periodic "visits" from his dead wife paid to Teddy might seem to the viewers as a distraction. Hair-wet, Lips-red and silky clung dress, she emerges on the flaming chairs and near the charred walls. But signs of the fiery apartment can be seen nowhere; this proves the brittle nature of "Teddy's view". The wife insists on Teddy

and her to leave and abandon the hunt-claiming that he should be "happy" for the arsonist killed her off and at the same time was not responsible for the malady. He presses his face to her neck, embracing her close to him until she collapses into the air like ash. This smoky enchantment and spectral Dolores can be considered as the first clues to Teddy's untrustworthiness.

En route to the lighthouse, we see that Chuck disappears as Teddy dwells far into a cave, mentioned by the doctors as "unreachable". Teddy reaching the place and finding Chuck had disappeared soon turn out to be half-true – Since Teddy having a mystical encounter with another (doctor) version of Rachel Solando is to strengthen his "alternate reality simply". Thus, throughout the film, Teddy keeps on the place on cards over cards on his card-castle, and Dr Cawley is aware of the fragile nature and havoc Teddy might slip into unless the decks are rearranged wisely.

The viewer now gets to re-examine the deliberate flaws in the constructed reality from the very beginning. As Teddy and Chuck proceed towards Ashcliff, they are required to turn in their guns. Chuck follows Teddy despite Teddy's reluctance, but he appears to be having problems pulling his gun off his hip-guard, so he detaches the holster and gives over the entire contraption. This symbolises that Chuck has not used a firearm as had claimed in his introduction to Teddy, and he may not be who he says he is. As all lighthouses are supposed to be, the lighthouse on the island should be a beacon lighting up the sea, letting the ships know where the rocks lie ahead. However, it is ineffective for its intended purpose in this context. Teddy is told that it is a sewage treatment facility. Shutter Island is meant to be a metaphorical safe haven for the mentally ill, but it has been seen to have become a dangerous place that is not being used as it should have been.

7205



For the duplicate reality to persist unshaken, isolation of the patient was necessary. All through the storm, Chuck and Teddy learned that all radio communication had failed. This is a sign that both of them are becoming estranged, wholly disconnected from the outside world. Andrew Laeddis is Edward Daniels. Dr Cawley begins narrating the origin of “Teddy” as soon as he becomes vulnerable. The sudden stillness of the atmosphere narrows the focus down to a more truthfully realistic and interwoven interpretation of the dreams cum visions those Teddy had. The whole manipulation of reality, making the viewer see things that there isn’t there (viz. the meeting with Dr Rachel in the cave), was to submerge the truth that Andrew has come to Shutter Island to receive treatment and care after murdering his wife, who drowned his three children. The note left by the hospital authorities in a readily noticeable “hidden” corner was scribed by the intrigue on “Who is 67th patient?”. The metaphorical fog enshrouding the island symbolises the lies he has been living under in order to guard himself against the guilt of killing his wife and letting their children perish under the care of such an insane mother:

[TEDDY: “Then personally, doctor I have to say screw their sense of calm.”]

Dr Cawley repeatedly glorifies treating insanity with conditioned “sane” reality. Teddy, on the other hand, believes that they do not deserve peace since they are violent criminals who must be punished for their actions. Quite strikingly, the doctor intended to Teddy recollect his deeds: [TEDDY: “It wasn’t warfare, it was murder.”] Teddy states the reason why he abandoned frontline combat to Chuck. He remembers what he and his fellow American soldiers did to the German officials during the Dachau liberate. They lined them up and executed each and every one of them without a hearing, even as the lot surrendered, comprising German mothers

as well as their children. Teddy’s words demonstrate that he is certain that what was done was wrong.

Here we see Teddy breaking apart his delusions, accepting reality as soon as he mentioned a somewhat unreal daughter. This subtle transition from surreal to real makes the narrative exceptional. The protagonist’s profane facial expression transparently conveys a large number of emotions- grief, guilt, discomfort, and so on. Ultimately when he is inquired on the very identity duality, the core fantasy around which the story he created for the backdrop for his escapade from the reality pivots. He confesses on the macabre of imagination for the first time, which gave birth to an elusive Teddy Daniels. But the hospital authorities have to break down the truth carefully; otherwise, he will regress to the madness (again).

The root cause for the chaos to slip into Teddy’s psyche was his mentally ill wife, but Teddy somehow refuses to believe it, even if she confesses of the “bug in her brain”. This is why Teddy refuses to assert any illness to his wife throughout his constructed reality. She smiles and is hysterically excited as she grins and exclaims to Teddy as he had just returned home from his gruesome experience at the Dachau battle camp. This can be seen where his wife Dolores replies eerily that the children are at school (but it is a holiday: Saturday) when asked about their whereabouts. The antithetical expression of emotions attributed to Dolores Chanele in the screenplay renders an out-of-the-world visual for the viewer. On deeper inspection, the “school” can be interpreted as “school of fishes” – corresponding to the lake where they lie dead.

[Dr. Cawley (relentless): Why did you make them up?

TEDDY/ANDREW: because – I can’t bear the thought of allowing my wife to murder my children. (Voice breaks) I murdered them.



Because I did not provide her any assistance]

This portion of the script highlights the action of “transferred guilt” by Teddy as actuality isn’t something a man who already has seen enough blood on the warfront tolerate. The philosophy on the magnanimity of “little things” in life, which humans often give lesser heed to, is important here. Unbelievably, his love for his wife and children remained unwavering even after breaking apart from the world he created. ‘Rachel Solando’ is an anagram of ‘Dolores Channel’, similar to ‘Edward Daniels’ to ‘Andrew Laeddis’. This marvellous manoeuvre secludes the clues towards the identity duplication superficially, only if the protagonist focuses on exploring his conscience rather than finding faults in his surroundings. Perception plays an integral part in the visions he created, thereby the reality resultant. The human mind refuses to sway away from one’s base concepts easily. This is seen reflected in the attitude of the protagonist. We might conclude that the protagonist’s good object was already compromised. Acknowledging the priority of the initial selection of objective (anaclitic or narcissistic) as devised by Freud (1914) in his paper *On Narcissism*, this implies that Daniels must have made himself to be his own optimal solution, and to give that up would result in immediate delusion and psychic crucifixion as a maniac of unequivocal guilt:

The effect of dependence upon the loved object is to lower that feeling: a person in love is humble. A person who loves has, so to speak, forfeited a part of his narcissism, and it can only be replaced by his being loved. In all these respects self-regard seems to remain related to the narcissistic element in love. The realization of impotence, of one’s own inability to love, in consequence of mental or physical disorder, has an exceedingly lowering effect upon self-regard. Here, in my judgement, we

must look for one of the sources of the feelings of inferiority which are experienced by patients suffering from the transference neuroses and which they are so ready to report. (Freud, 54)

The climax is reached and the vows of gratitude fills the viewer’s mind with a sense of satisfaction. The question of whether whose reality is original remains vague for some. The shattered narrative in the first half causes this. It makes the possibility of story of arsonist burning down Teddy’s family plausible with the arsonist as his wife and later Teddy killing her off. But the narration by Cawley is more “believable”. The confession of Andrew Laeddis waves green flag for his exit from the island and can be presumed that the whole experiment staged was a brilliant success. But *Shutter Island* has one more scene in room for exacting the trial.

Let’s de-structure the clues anointed in the script by Scorsese to examine the line drawn between reality and the subconsciously constructed surreality. Many other films have carried out transfixed reality, but deliberate clues given in the script enable us to analyse a text accurately. Complete evidence is mandatory to feed the proposed theory. In *Shutter Island*, Teddy believed that a series of conspiracy brewed, but the clues rendered the truth.

- As the film opens, “Teddy” is on a boat en route to Shutter Island, boat being real of course. Manacles and chains hung in the chamber where Teddy first arrives are shackles for the convicts sent to the shore. Likely Teddy/Andrew might have been possibly held here before the initiation of the role play experiment. But for the time span where Teddy resided when he “resets” his memory is a non-invasive plot hole.
- In the lighthouse, Dr Cawley explains that his visions and body tremors are because of “withdraw”. However, the smokes and pills he consumes in the



film are not intended to drug him. Cawley and Sheehan, on the other hand, take Andrew off his medicines for the role play experiment in order to assist him break through reality. Teddy continues to have more vivid hallucinations while awake as the film progresses. His medications were designed to reduce, not stimulate, that sort of insanity. His refusal to take his medicines is what causes him to go nuts later in the story.

- Andrew/Teddy experiences hallucinations if he is near fire. For example, when he blows up Dr. Cawley's automobile, when he ignites the matches in Ward C, and when he blows up Dr. Cawley's car. Thus, fire represents Teddy's dream world, while water, its polar opposite, represents the truth of what occurred to him. Drowned children are the striking illustration. In short, "Dr. Solando" is not real, likewise the whole spiel about Shutter Island being a covert government mind control lab is not real.
- George Noyce (Jackie Earle Haley) is a guy who Teddy meets in Ward C, who immediately recognizes him. Noyce was a "repeat offender" who ended up back on Shutter Island and supplied Andrew conspiracy tales for his dream. Noyce once addressed "Teddy" by his true name, "Laeddis," resulting in a manic episode in which Andrew beat him up. The physicians were compelled to lobotomize Laeddis as a result of the attack. As a result, Cawley and Sheehan decided to make a role-playing game as a last-ditch attempt to heal Laeddis.
- The guards throughout the film clutch their guns a little tighter whenever "Teddy" is around, getting extremely edgy. While the "The Marshals" come to the island, the same is evident. This is because they know that Teddy is a

lunatic and they are unfortunately not exactly thrilled by the experiment. They were not alert and let him explore the island as he went in search for Rachel Solando, who doesn't exist.

- In the staff interview scene for the Solando case, the nurses and orderlies see how ridiculous it is to them. One nurse says on how "far from normal" their jobs are – a subtle joke because she is talking to a lunatic dressed as a cop.

CONCLUSION

All of the conspiracy claims about Shutter Island being a secret government institution and the physicians "getting to" Teddy Daniels (DiCaprio) at the conclusion of the film is completely false. DiCaprio plays Andrew Laeddis (a.k.a. Patient 67), an unstable asylum inmate whom the doctors are attempting to rehabilitate. In actuality, Teddy's island inquiry is a complex role-playing game created by Dr Cawley (Ben Kingsley) and Teddy's colleague "Chuck" (Mark Ruffalo). Teddy's main lead is the "missing" Dr Sheehan.

Cawley and Sheehan, as the most compassionate doctors, feel that craziness may be healed in someone like Andrew Laeddis via treatment and kindness. Dr. Naehring (Max Von Sydow) and the Warden (Ted Levine), on the other hand, consider that males like Andrew are too unstable and aggressive for a therapeutic answer; fastening them down and drugging them (here to be stated lobotomized) are the remedies both argue in.

The role-playing game begins, giving Cawley and Sheehan one final chance to establish that Laeddis can be dragged out of his "Teddy Daniels" phantasm and, perhaps, acknowledge the reality of his pain. Guilt and hurt drive Andrew to create a second persona – one in which he remains a military hero named Edward (Teddy) Daniels. The depth of reality Teddy constructed proves that when an intelligent



mind goes wild in madness, the world can never be the same. The screenplay of the script attributed to the supreme techniques in sound and lighting adds more glory to the movie. The ambiguity of the ending in *Shutter Island* may seem perplexing to many people, but again, connecting the dots makes it clear-cut. Teddy is seen to have woken up to the reality that he is Andrew Laeddis.

However, when Dr Sheehan sits with him, Andrew is aware that the doctors and Warden are closely watching him and observing his behaviour. The problem is that the shame and grief are still so intense that he knows he can't live with them. He refuses to live with the knowledge of misery; instead, he pretends to be Teddy Daniels and lets them lobotomize him, freeing himself from his burden. Martin Scorsese appears to be suffering from the lofty status of his previous repertoire in terms of critical acclaim. *Shutter Island* may have gotten better reviews if it had been directed by someone fresh rather than the recognisable, bushy-browed filmmaker who directed *Taxi Driver*, *Goodfellas*, and *The Departed*. As it stands, this finely crafted psychological thriller noir looks to be well-received, but some viewers seemed to scoff at its quirky anomalies.

At the movie's beginning, Teddy arrives on the island on a ferry. This means after drugging him, Dr Cawley and Dr Sheehan put him on a ferry, move away from the shore, and the whole thing starts. Regarding why it is done this way, it seems logical that they need a clear starting point for their story. If the whole role-play started with Teddy already on the island, it would be much less convincing for him. Teddy has a fear of water based on the incident that happened in the past that he is trying to suppress. Water and fire are important themes throughout the movie. The whole water scene was planned. If you watch Chuck as he goes to fill the cup, he is watching Teddy and the woman the whole

time. He doesn't fill up the cup, but he pretends to. That entire scene was planned for Leo's character. The woman writing 'RUN' was already planned. Everything was planned for Teddy. Teddy had recurring nightmares about the librarian of the KZ Dachau during his WWII duty. He observed the body pile, watched an officer die slowly after a botched suicide attempt, and eventually showed the guards his fellow troops. He even considers remembering. Dr. Naehring is one of the KZ physicians. However, everyone, including Teddy, prefers to disregard this acquisition, despite the fact that a former war criminal operating as a doctor in a US institution would be rather embarrassing.

Teddy's last dialogue in the film reverberates through the cognitive horizon of the audience. He asks Chuck that "Which would be worse: To live as a monster, or to die as a good man?" By this, he meant that he accepts his guilt and becomes the monster. His hallucinations are his brain's method of erasing his guilt and concealing the truth that he disregarded his family, did nothing about his wife's mental illness, let her to murder their children, and then murdered her. Accepting what the physicians say will require him to live with the knowledge that he permitted bad things to happen and done terrible things. He will be able to be treated without a lobotomy, but he will be fully aware of his misdeeds. He believes he is a decent man. He genuinely feels he is on the side of law and order and is doing the right thing. If he continues to think this, he will be lobotomized and will lose the ability to question what he did or did not do. He is left to the private decision, either to live with maddening regret as Andrew or to exist as a man exactly opposite to his counterpart- Teddy. He will not die physically until later, but he will die believing that he is a nice guy.

Most of the patients, orderlies and doctors played the game. A special meeting was



arranged where only a few of the patients were allowed to be questioned by Teddy and Chuck. It is possible that not all the patients knew he was also a patient. Teddy is an untrustworthy narrator, and the entire inquiry was staged to cure Andrew Laeddis of an alternate world he created to alleviate his guilt over his family's murder. What's more thrilling and therapeutic about this choice is that it looks to be a moment of clarity in which he recognises what happened and is no longer enslaved by his fantasy. At this time of clarity, he decides that he can't live with his misdeeds and would rather lie to his doctor; he makes him aware of this as well. We may also argue that by choosing to be punished and believing in his delusion that he is good, he is being a decent guy.

Shutter Island is a gorgeous, fascinating, shivery gothic filmmaking experience with a hard-boiled heart and a cunning edge in asylum humour. We can say that the film ends in ambiguity. We can say that the film ends in ambiguity. We can classify this film as a twist ending, *Shutter Island*, to have what is called an 'unreliable narrator'. This film is a psychological thriller. It is in line with films like *Psycho*, *Vertigo*, *The Shining*, *Gone Girl*, *Hannibal Lecter* Franchise, *Memento*, *The Prestige* or *The Sixth Sense*. These films rely on a character-driven story with major plot twists, suspense, and mystery, with the identity of characters or the nature of their reality being questioned. *Shutter Island* has been Scorsese's and DiCaprio's biggest hit so far at the box office.

What began as a straightforward missing-persons investigation evolves into full-fledged psychological thriller as more alarming truths emerge and DiCaprio's nerves fray. Dream sequences insistently flow back into reality and confuse his hero's judgement, rendering his hero's horrors in vivid Technicolor flashbacks. As *Shutter Island* develops, the director's ability at linking the audience with a single

character's devotion has paid off spectacularly. Jackie Earle Haley and Patricia Clarkson provide powerful one-scene performances that further engulf the atmosphere in gloom. *Shutter Island* appears to be a nerve-wracking genre film in the mould of *Cape Fear*, but it's more like Scorsese's *The Shining*, a horror shows where it's often difficult to discern the haunted from those conducting the horror. The other patients of the *Shutter Island* each possess their own story. Each of them "broke apart" at some point in life. But the crucial question is that of the realization of their crime. Pivoting around a conditioned reality is normal to those suffering from Delusional Disorder. But this makes them hostile to the "real" real ones. Here the question on a subjective rendition of reality might be questioned. But one can be clearly distinguished from the other (sane from insane) by a degree of interaction when they are randomly allocated within the community. Again, the question of collective reality colliding with an isolated individual may surface. Here the material evidence comes into play. A matter repels the insane – may it be abstract or concrete or both, but the sane is equipped with the logical brain to at least tolerate it/them. In *Shutter Island*, such pieces of reality can be seen hidden in Teddy's shrewdly constructed reality – ranging from fire to water, literally.

Remnants of Teddy can be seen buried deep within our subconscious mind. That is why the film seems to grow into us. Each of our decisions is narrowed in conclusions of the best possible result. This possibility consists of accessory factors such as wealth, material availability, etc. But the soul force driving human thought into action is one's will. This will conduct through the reality what we consider possible. The distance between our thinking and its place in "our" reality depends on our next move in life. Like each boat that yearns for the land and each soldier counting down days to reach



home, Teddy is the dream of normality in each of us. In the right amount, it is termed “hope”, but when our world intervenes with the trepidation of another world of an innocent soul, delirium ensues.

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