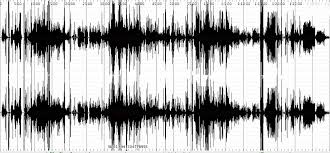
Andrew Wolins Section A

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The Impact of Sound on Movies

The first movies ever created were black and white and had no sound. Imagine willingly paying to see a movie like that in theatres today. Since then, sound has completely reinvented the way of cinema productions. Before sound, we had only silent films, which had dialogue boxes and music. Then in the 1920’s, everything changed with “talkies”, which is what they called the movies that first involved talking. Now that we’ve improved technology and evolved with sound and music, the Academy Awards even acknowledge the impact that sound has on movies. For example, the categories of Best Musical Score, Best Sound Editing, or Best Sound Mixing proves how sound in movies have become a distinct art worthy of Oscars and other recognitions**.** (infoplease.com)

Films with dialogue changed the way that movies were made and created new issues that have never been faced before. They had difficulty with synchronizing the sound and the movement on screen and amplifying the sound properly. There was also a problem with noisy cameras and equipment that would have to be kept in a separate room (infoplease.com). Actors’ careers were ruined because they did not have a good voice and were not able to adjust to the new style of acting.

There are three kinds of sounds found in movies: the human voice, sound effects, and music. The combination of these three sounds are used to create all the sound used in movies. According to lightsfilmschool.com “audiences seem to be more annoyed by poor sound quality than by poor cinematography”. This just shows how the evolvement of movies through sound affected its audience.

A major aspect in movies involves the human voice, which is used to create dialogue. This dialogue is used to tell the story, as it also expresses characters feelings and motivations. Dialogue in movies now-a -days is arguably the most important part of the movie. The conversations that the characters have with each other is what drives the plot of the movie today and is what moves it forward (Marshall). The proper use of the dialogue and sound is essential to a movie’s success. In order to get a point across, an actor has to deliver the lines of the script appropriately and effectively. Of course, this is dependent on the genre of the film. Comedy movies will involve lighthearted, comical action and phrases, while dramas will have a more serious undertone. Speech delivery is an art in itself, and it takes a lot of rehearsal and practice to portray a character through voice correctly. It can give a movie great depth and allow the audience to reflect and think, or give a relief with humorous puns and laughter.

There are two kinds of special effects sounds used: synchronous and asynchronous sounds. Synchronous sounds are sounds that can be matched with what is on screen. Synchronous sounds could be the sounds of opening or closing the door, or the sound of putting an item on the table. Asynchronous sounds are sounds that are made by things that cannot be seen on screen. These sounds could be sirens heard from a distance (Marshall). Both of these sounds are important and can be used to make a significant impact in the movie. In animated films, this can be an incredibly difficult tasks. The sound has to be timed a recorded to match the films animation (Sjuve). This type of sound relates a movie to our daily lives which makes it relatable to the audience. The special effects are not something that many people think about, but if they were not there they would be noticeably missed.

Lastly, there is the background music. Background music is not meant to be noticeable, but it is added to help create an emotional scene or it may foreshadow a change in mood coming (Brook.edu). Background music can be used to make drastically increase the effects of a scene. In horror movies, it is used to create the idea of suspense. It is very common that horrors movies use music to give the illusion that something scary is about to occur. This background music draws the audience into the movie physically and mentally. The sounds that give that feeling of suspense and thrill might physically cause our heart to race or give us a cold sweat, while mentally we are captivated by what will happen next. Similar to the musical sounds of a band after a main character has survived a close call to death, the music lets the audience know to feel relieved and relaxed at the beloved character’s survival. These feelings that we get from movies would not be as intense without sound, for it gives us cues of how to feel and how to react.

The sound in a movie changes the way that the movie plays out and how an audience see it. It is helpful for a movie to use all the forms of sound to achieve success. The human voice, sound effects and music are all great tools to create a great movie. Today, it is very unlikely that a movie would be made without one of these sound elements and be successful. The people who go to the movies today expect to hear the dialogue between characters and the sound effects involved and music in the movie, because with sound is the capability to dig deeper in a film. Adding sound gives us an entire new realm of possibilities when it comes to script, genre, actors, and depth. A movie comes to life when we use the human senses to listen and watch. It is captivating and is what enthralls the audience. I believe that at the time, Silent Films were and still are great movies that deserve recognition. However, one cannot deny the major changes of movies today through sound. As technology improves and creativity continues, there is still a bright and growing future for movies, and sound will always remain a major part of it.

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