Clueless As A Coming Of Age Film: Film Analysis

Clueless is a coming of age film that follows the life of Cher Horowitz a preppy rich highschooler in Beverly Hills, California. The films plot lies around Cher's character development as she sets out to better other people with her 'powers' of popularity. At surface level, Cher appears to be a regular ditzy spoilt girl living in her own reality. But carrying her well known expression, 'as if' Cher proves herself loyal to the people in her life and portrays good character as the main female protagonist. When new girl Tai begins at Bronson Alcott High School Cher a good opportunity to better herself by doing a good deed and upping Tai's reputation at the same time. Cher's character carries many different personality traits that build up to her 'spoilt and ditzy' reputation. I personally feel that the characters in Clueless carry traits that would make people think it's a typical teen movie such as, the popular girl, the new girl, the nerd and some sort of love interest. However I found Clueless to be quite inspirational and some might even say Cher's character had feministic values.

Cher is obviously the 'popular girl' but instead of doing everything the typical popular girl would do in any other movie, she realises that she could become a better person and choose to help others as well as herself. Clueless is unique because of this. The stereotypical ditzy popular girl, for once, in someone that developed for the better. She uses her brain to solve problems and her voice to stand up for herself and what she believes in, which is something that the target audience of teenage girls should see more in movies and the media. Clueless is a coming-of-age film that is important in our media culture. With the heavy use of social media these days it is hard for young people to be their own person and really express who they are. Society shapes who you are and creates assumptions around your character that we are expected to fulfill. Before getting to know Cher throughout the film it is evident what stereotype she fulfills.

In today's world if you're wearing pink and sparkles you're considered a girly girl, if you focus hard on school work you're considered a nerd. It doesn't matter how different you are society always has a name and a place for your character. Society is constantly making people feel like they have to look/dress a certain way. Every body type, face shape, outfit, hairstyle etc is categorised to fit certain stereotypes and expectations, I mean god forbid someone doesn't dress the way they're expected to. With heavy expectations on body image and every other part of a person's exterior, it is hard for young teens to grow into their own person. Gone of the days when all that mattered was how kind you were to yourself and others, these days you could meet the loveliest person ever but because of the way they choose to dress they're expected to be rude and judgemental. I think the portrayal of Cher's character in clueless shows exactly this.

Cher is the most gorgeous girl in the school, she dresses the nicest, has the most expensive car, rich house and the latest clothes from Dior therefore she is the popular girl. Take Tai for example, Cher wanted to change the way she dressed etc, a complete makeover before she was liable to be one of the 'popular girls'. With every teen movie having a 'popular girl' it is making it harder for young people to express themselves. Their only goal is to be as great as the person everybody loves - Cher. I feel that it is s unneceassarily hard for anyone these days, especially teens to be their own person with their own style without being labeled and categorised into a certain stereotype. The cruel reality of society is shown throughout Clueless

when Cher and Dionne give Tai a makeover because she doesn't meet their expectations. Clueless is a feminist masterpiece. Unlike many other teen movies that revolve around male horniness, clueless is all about the ladies! Female friendship and empowerment is vital to Clueless. When it comes to sexuality, the girls all respect each other.

Despite the fact that Tai and Dionne have a few more notches on their bedposts, Cher does not feel any pressure to lose her virginity and the girls support her decision. The girls are all respectful of each other which means no slut-shaming or virgin-bashing and as Cher says “I'm not a prude, i'm just highly selective.” Cher makes her decision abominately clear when a boy tries to grope her at school but she shoves him away saying “Ew, get off of me! As if” - Her most famous saying. And when her friend Elton gets all touchy feely with her in his car she tells him “no means no”. Even if that means getting out of his car and being stranded in the valley. Her body. Her choice. Cher also goes out of her way to make Tai feel welcome at their highschool. Introducing her to the beauty and fashion world and steering her away from drugs. Best of all Cher’s character is inclusive. Her best friend Dionne is black. Dionne, not a token, not a sidekick or a stereotype has a mind of her own, often calling Cher out on her nonsense. Cher also finds out that her crush Christian is gay,

Cher lovingly accepts him as a new shopping buddy rather than disagreeing with his choice. The girls love fashion, beauty and shopping yet their interests aren’t portrayed as silly or symbolic of their fragile female natures nor are their classic interpretations of femininity portrayed as shallow or cruel. On the contrary, all three of the girls are portrayed as strong, sassy and opinionated yet loving and generous as well. I personally believe that Clueless is a good film. The way Cher’s character contributes to the society that we have a problem with today. I think it is insightful to have the voiceover for Cher’s character so that instead of just hearing how she talks and acts, people can hear what she's thinking. This might be relatable for a lot of people. Some people believe that the popular girl is always stuck up and nasty but from hearing Cher’s thoughts you can see that she has similar thoughts to every other regular person. A lot of valuable points were made throughout this film that relate back to the everyday lives of teens in this day and age. I think focusing it around the characters personal growth is a good way to rope the audience in as they will most likely be able to relate. “Everything I think and everything I do is wrong” - Cher