

# Movies that Portray the True Miseries of Life: The Florida Project, Joker, and Parasite

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## Abstract

Today's movie industries provide us with a variety of entertainment options. However, certain films take us into the realm of truth, a reality that we want to avoid but cannot. These are the films that place a transparent mirror in front of us, allowing us to see our genuine selves. Some of these films are discussed in this paper. The Florida Project, Joker, and Parasite are the films that I will cover in this paper. These films have received numerous awards, not only for their originality but also for their hidden messages that kept us engrossed in reality for a brief period. The struggles that people face as a result of poverty, mental illness, parental concerns, and social turbulence have all been depicted in these three films.

**Keywords:** Joker • Parasite • The Florida Project • Struggle because of poverty • Mental health • Movie analysis

## Introduction

The world in which we live now is very mysterious, or to put it another way, a completely unpredictable world. Whether you wish to envisage a better future or not, the transition to living in your reality is difficult. Whether it sounds harsh or not, the reality is a constant battle, suffering, and a never ending conundrum. We fail to see reality most of the time because our childhood teaches us a different world, a world of fairy tales, a world of happiness with no problems. However, when we are confronted with the harsh realities of life, it becomes a struggle for us. At the end of the day, we refer to the difficult phase of reality as "struggle." And now, thanks to cinema, we can discuss and watch stories of people's struggles. Because movies have become an integral part of our daily lives.

"Thousands of films have attempted to depict the difficult period of reality or the struggle of human life. These films are mostly based on true events. As a result, when we watch.

These films, we can identify with the characters and experience their pain, because we all encounter difficult truths at some point in our life. This paper discusses some of the best films that have captured the true essence of our life. Joker, Parasite, and The Florida Project are the films I'll include in this paper. These three films are all about the same thing: "life's struggle." The causes depicted in the films vary, but the goal of these films is to depict the genuine period of life."

## Literature Review

### Three films that are linked by a common thread

**Joker:** The tremendously dark new film "Joker" is the type of film that may be interpreted in a variety of ways, both positive and negative. But one thing is undeniable: it's frightening and shocking in a manner that no major studio film has been in years. The character study by director Todd Phillips imagines the origin of the famous Batman adversary in a throwback Gotham city. Arthur Fleck, played by Joaquin Phoenix, is a rent a clown who aspires to be a stand-up comedian as his mother, Penny (Frances Conroy), told him that he was born to bring joy and laughter to the world.

However, a violent encounter sets him on the way to becoming the new incarnation of a legendary adversary.

### How did the Joker become the Joker?

There's a sequence in the movie that sums up everything about Joker's ascent to power. When Phoenix's disturbed character boards a subway train, he has already battled with unsupportive social workers, street hooligans, and dismissive, angry fellow Gothamites. When three rich wall street types board, he's still dressed as a clown after being sacked for carrying a gun to a children's hospital one supplied to him by a coworker. They proceed to beat him up after one of the jerks sings "send in the clowns" at him. The gun suddenly goes off, and you watch Arthur shooting one in self-defense before shooting the other two. When one escapes, Arthur pursues the

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wounded survivor to the next subway station, shooting him twice in the back before killing him. Arthur locks himself in a neighboring bathroom, and then the switch is flipped, and Arthur transforms into the Joker: he gently dances around, his terror giving way to a sense of power.

"The most common portrayal of a psychopath in films is that of a callous, calculating and aggressive individual, but such a character tends to only scratch the surface of the problems associated with psychopathy" [1].

Similarly, there are numerous moments in which the protagonist experiences challenges in life and the audience may identify with them.

After initially believing he was the long-lost son of wealthy mayoral candidate Thomas Wayne (Brett Cullen), Arthur learns that his memories of a happy childhood were a lie and that the mother he had lovingly cared for years had allowed him to be horrifically abused by her boyfriend when he was a child. Arthur visits his ailing mother after she suffers a stroke, approaches her bed slowly as she tries to speak to him, and puts the pillow to her face, suffocating her, after discovering this unpleasant information in papers at Arkham state hospital, where she had been sent. As his mother's hands flap before going motionless, he maintains a calm, determined expression on his face. So, these are the scenes in which the audience may get a sense of the Joker's plight. "Maladjusted own worst enemy was the most prevalent stereotype depicted in the films; the two least common cliches were pitiable and tragic, and menacing, evil, and criminal" [2].

### How the society is responsible for Joker's unfavorable appearance

"The primary character's superego is dedicated to the survival of virtuous people. It is a moral concept that, through the laws of parents and society, represents an idealistic standard" [3].

Some people may feel more seen and powerful after watching joker, and they may act out in response. The film contains numerous obscene, self-serving sentiments, which appear to be aimed at eliciting sympathy for batman's arch enemy and one of DC comics' most notoriously heartless mass murderers and tragedy architects. Whether you like it or not, the film creates a seductive vision of persecution and relief, of embracing nihilism as a total escape from a bad reality.

However, this film joker has created various moments in which the audience can sense the terrible reality of life. As a victim of sensitive mental health, the protagonist has challenges in his life. He had a difficult childhood, which contributed to his mental illness.

"We feel that this film's combination of mental illness with violence will give the public the impression that mentally ill individuals are violent, reinforcing the stigma of a fairly popular stereotype" [4].

Although the nature of Arthur's ailment is never revealed in the film, we can draw some deductions based on the symptoms and mental state of the joker. Loneliness, isolation, and 'continuous bad thoughts' are among Arthur's complaints during treatment sessions. 'The toughest thing of having a mental condition is that people expect you to behave as if you don't,' he writes in his notebook. We know the character has been to treatment for a long time and has been

prescribed several psychiatric meds. Apart from that, society had a significant role in establishing the character Joker a legendary evil. The impact of society on the protagonist is highlighted on a metro train ride where he gets pummelled by a group of three men simply for laughing alone. The spectator can hear railway tracks even before we see the characters in this scene, therefore the J cut introduces it. Arthur is seated aboard a train with only four male passengers, fully dressed as a clown. As Arthur begins to laugh, the boys exchange glances and scream at him for acting strangely. They start beating him, making the protagonist character appear weak and susceptible to the three men. And then we can see that there is a surge in crime rates in Gotham, and Arthur wonders if he is the only one who is insane or if the rest of the world is as well. An extreme close-up image reveals the features of his frail body and jutting bones, emphasizing his problems, which appear to be caused by external forces, particularly the mistreatment he receives from others.

Overall, it may be concluded that society forces Arthur to be a mental health victim. It may sound harsh, but society may sometimes become an impediment to enjoying a happy life, as depicted in the film.

**Parasite:** Parasite is a black comedy thriller film. This film tells the story of the poor Kim family, who plan to escape poverty by impersonating high quality personnel for the wealthy Park family. Through this film, we can see the problem of the rich-poor divide in modern society. Parasite is a South Korean film set in the twenty-first century. The film is about two different families, each with their history and social standing. Park's family consists of his wife, Choi Yeon-gyo, and their two children, Da-Hye, a lovely adolescent, and Da-song, a young boy. Gook Moon-gwang, a housemaid or housekeeper, and Park Keun-rok, a driver, are also there. They are a wealthy family with a large, gorgeous home and a fleet of expensive automobiles. The storytelling of the rich and poor differs from that of many other films in the same genre. The poor are kind and hopeful, while the rich oppress the poor. In the film, there are no absolute good or bad people. It primarily tells the stories of two families: The wealthy Park family and the poor and unemployed Kim family, who rely on the Park family for employment. The severe social satire "Parasite" is about a destitute household. Kim's family got involved in the film with Park's family. Then they were having a conversation about money. "She's rich but still nice-Ki-taek."

### How poverty is the backbone of the movie "Parasite"

Not "wealthy but pleasant." She's lovely because she's a millionaire. If I had all this money, I'd go to hell. It'd also be good! Chung-sook is a Korean actor.

They were dreaming to have a lot of money and become rich in the future. In daily life, they struggle with every daily component. Even sometimes they didn't have food to eat properly they don't have wi-fi to look for jobs on the internet. So we've met here today to celebrate the reconnecting of our phones and the abundance of wi-fi-Ki-taek. They don't have internet facilities and they were trying to manage the internet. The struggle has been seen in the movie in a very tragic way.

The Kim's are from the lower class, while the Parks are from the upper class! The Kim's con the Parks (who are naturally gullible) and

get a job at their opulent mansion thanks to their wicked schemes. But one day, while the Parks are away, the Kim's discover a hidden secret: They are not the only ones with parasitic intentions! The film emphasizes the reality that the true struggle is not between the upper and lower classes, but rather within the various segments of the lower classes. If life is a ladder, and the rich are at the top, the poor are at the bottom, fighting with each other to reach the top. Over here, there are no individual heroes or villains. The real villain is the massive wealth disparity between rich and poor, which is the root cause of all the world's turmoil and chaos. In reality, a parasite is an animal or plant that lives on or inside another animal or plant and feeds on it. But, in the context of the film, what does parasite mean? And who is the true parasite in the film? Is the Kim family financially dependent on the Parks? Or is it the Parks who can't function without the Kim's because they do all the menial and hard labor? Is it Moon-gwang and Geun-se, or both? In fact, in my opinion, everyone in the film is a parasite. Because we can see in the movie how they are leading life depending on each other. It is clearly shown in the movie about Kim's family struggle and park's family's so called rich behavior and the impact of that behavior on Kim's family.

"While Parasite makes us sympathize to some extent with the plight of the Parks, and thereby with poor people everywhere, it is odd to see how rich the poorish Parks in this movie really are" [5].

The social class system is solidifying, upward mobility between classes is becoming more difficult, upper class resources are firmly controlled, and opportunities for the poor are becoming increasingly scarce. The actual thing is even money is not the main issue in life but the financial gap and the economical gap between rich and poor in the current society and the perspective of the current society. "The poor want to fight back, and their chances of changing their class and destiny, which appears to be predetermined before birth, are dwindling" [6]. This film depicts society's established socioeconomic classes as well as the terrible reality that still prevails. This could serve as a wake-up call to the community that these social issues are still present in the area.

**The florida project:** While Disneyland in Florida appears to be the ultimate playground, many others live in deplorable conditions right next door. Moonee (played by Brooklynn Prince in her breakout role) lives in a humble hotel outside of Disneyland with her mother, Halley (played by Bria Vinaite), who fights to keep financially afloat while raising Moonee in Sean Baker's A24 film "the florida project. The film's powerful narrative provides viewers with insight into what it's like to grow up in poverty as a child. The brutal facts of this picture are juxtaposed with youthful naivety. Adults frequently must make sacrifices for their children to succeed. Children, on the other hand, may not be aware of or comprehend these sacrifices until later in life. Moonee is playing with dolls in the tub, a youthful, innocent activity, in the scenes where Halley is sacrificing the most (selling perfume for money or stealing Disney wristbands). Moonee is aware of Halley's actions, but she is unaware of the significance of what is occurring or why they are not typical parental decisions.

In a world dominated by greed, envy, anger, and consumption, The florida project investigates the relationship between social solidarity and isolation caused by poverty. It emphasizes how children copy adult conduct by continually using harsh language and breaking every norm conceivable. In contrast to the adult world of rivalry and prestige, these children cling together and never reveal information

about one another. They value group loyalty like a group of small animals discovering a wonderful world of traffic signals, trash cans, security systems, and hotel lobbies. They are uninterested in watching television. They rush around outside, determined to outdo one other in terms of creativity and irreverence. Baker's movie thoughtfully raises issues about children's vulnerability to institutional procedures. "The audience is asked to judge life through the perspective of Moonee, a six-year-old child, in the florida project. In this sense, we're dealing with a youngster rather than an adult legal person (a parent) whose decisions and actions are investigated by the state [7].

If we undertake an analysis of the movie's conclusion sequence, we will find that it left the audience stunned.

Halley catches the attention of the Florida Department of Children and Families (DCF), who arrive to the magic castle motel with a pair of cops in tow to deposit Moonee in foster care after The Florida Project. Moonee escapes the DCF employees and arrives at Jancey's motel in tears, and the two dash off to disney world together, via the shabby motels and cheap outlet stores on Kissimmee's tourist strip. In the last scene, Moonee and Jancey gallop down main street hand-in-hand before arriving at disney's Cinderella castle.

Although the film's climax has been lauded as one of the best endings in a decade, it has split moviegoers, with questions raised over whether the closing moments are genuine or fabrication of Moonee's imagination. After all, it would take a couple of six-year-olds a long time to go from Kissimmee to Disney World, and sneaking past the theme park's security would be nearly impossible.

According to filmmaker Sean Baker, the ending of the florida project is purposefully left up to such interpretation. "Now we're informing the audience that this might not be genuine," Baker explained in an interview with the Los Angeles times, but perhaps it's the audience's time to use Moonee's sense of imagination and astonishment to make the best of what might not be a happy conclusion. It's up to the audience to believe Moonee is in the back of a cop car on her way to foster care or running down disney world's main street with her closest friend when the florida project ends.

"The florida project" compares the American dream's expectations with the realities that many poor individuals in this country confront. The realities of poverty are partly toned down by having the viewer see this experience through the eyes of a child, but they also become more forceful and devastating. Overall, this movie leaves the spectator with a sense of empathy for the plight of the poor, regardless of their origin.

### How these films portray struggle in terms of daily life

If we view these films together, we'll discover that they have a lot in common. Poverty is the common denominator. Poverty binds these tales together, and we, as viewers, may identify with their themes. We've all seen what poverty can do to a person's life. Every day, it forces us to put up a tremendous fight.

## Discussion

Poverty, discrimination, and social class are all intertwined in a web that spans age, gender, ethnicity, race, and educational attainment. The world has money, and individuals all across the world donate money to help battle poverty via collective compassion. However, there is a widespread, unspoken issue that keeps poverty alive. Poverty has a dark underlying reason that revolves around social class and prejudice. To begin with, domestic, sexual, and generalized forms of violence encourage poverty and prejudice. Traditional anti-poverty efforts have failed to remove poverty and foster equality, which would reduce discrimination. From the concept of the locust effect, it is evident that poverty makes people vulnerable to more than just cold and hunger. People are left vulnerable to exploitation and violence as a result of it.

And these films are only a few of the best examples. Films are intended to entertain, but some were created to inspire us and deliver unspoken messages of brutal reality.

## Conclusion

From the descriptions above, we can see that these three films have a very strong message about struggling people who are constantly fighting poverty in their daily lives. We can also see some intense scenes from all three films. And each of these films has been a huge success in its own right. These movies are successful because people can easily identify with them. The above mentioned theme is all about the struggle as a result of poverty.

As we can see, Joker and Parasite tell scenarios in which the characters are unable to maintain their low income lifestyles and become involved in a variety of criminal activities. However, if we look

at the character Moone in the film the florida project, we can see that despite her poverty, Moone enjoys her life. Moone is content with her pals despite her mother's inability to give her a nice life. In reality, life is full of challenges, and we are here to live our lives as Moone did in the film. We may feel depressed and insecure at times just because we do not have enough money to live a lavish lifestyle, we must overcome our desire for a lavish lifestyle and begin to live life contentedly with what we have.

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