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### Life Does Not Wait on Time

Time is everything to people who live life on a strict schedule. It is through time people can foresee what is next in their day. Focus is given on a clock and panning into the daily ritual of a man in the opening scene in a short film *Our Time is Up*. This clock is merely an element of *mise-en-scene* in which the viewer can begin to understand just how things or objects relate to identifying the character with a particular personality. In fact, this and other aspects of the décor give the film its structure and say more than words alone ever can.

The clock shot transitions into a pan of the man's tediously organized life while dissolving through images from his closet. It is within edited transitional wiped scenes of his well-organized closet we see orderly hung white dress shirts, aligned ties, and a rack of dress shoes through to an extreme close-up of a thermostat then onto a cup of brewing coffee. From the opening scenes alone, the viewer gets an understanding of a man who is set in his way of living by organization and structure. As viewers, we notice through changing tilt that the depth of field remains in deep focus to display all the elements of his living while he busily is tracked quickly from shot to shot. Through *mise-en-scene*, the perception of his character is that Dr. Stern is not only a structured man but a busy one.

Dr. Stern's first form of dialog prepares the audience for his monotone yet busy personality. The cleanliness of his home and office appears to only be the background on just how routine his life is. While the audience begins to get a humorous feel for Dr. Stern through

the cleverly edited diegesis and sound bridge from him in varying discussions with his patients, they also begin to feel the connection of his acclimatized monotone personality. The images of his home and office day in and day out go without change, just as his conversations with his patients do. It is with the cut-in of a telephone ringing from his office that the viewer begins to notice change within the film. The following day Dr. Stern's environment begins to gradually become less structured and more carelessly placed or disheveled.

The clock again begins a new point in scene from Dr. Stern's structure to carelessness. As the clock buzzes and the frames transitional wipe through his closet, home, and back to his office, the viewer realizes Dr. Stern has remained still since his notification of six weeks to live. As the film continues the diegesis of Dr. Stern's world changes, his attitude begins to open up a new personality that is free of concern in his actions and words. The background décor also changes from his once manicured closet and shoes and his reading material of the psychology journal to a magazine with no real content and no glimpse of his closet or shoes. Through the film, elements of *mise-en-scene* like his décor give the viewer the emotion the character is feeling and reveal his experience without his saying anything about it.

Eventually at the end of this film, it is *mise-en-scene* like the décor in the the closet or the props like the clock, which sets the tone in the character's evolving life. Symbolically we notice that the clock is no longer the character's concern, nor is his appearance, personal views, living conditions, or his career. In the end, it is the fact that now the Dr. Stern, a once busy man who led a well-structured life, is finally taking time for himself and actually helping those he has counseled for years to overcome their own fears through his honesty and carefree attitude.

Work Cited

Pearlstein, Rob. *Our Time is Up. YouTube*. 3 June 2008, <https://youtu.be/OsnzGqIWXDE>.