A Cinematic Exploration of Canine-Human Bonds in “Marley and Me” and “777 Charlie”

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Abstract:
This study aims to analyze how films depict the intricate relationships between humans and their canine companions, employing narrative analysis and emotional resonance assessment. Key themes include loyalty, communication, companionship, and the impact of dogs on mental wellbeing. Films may showcase dogs as unwaveringly devoted friends or brave protectors, highlighting the deep emotional connection between species. Through this investigation, insights into popular culture’s portrayal of canine companionship and its influence on public perceptions of human-animal relationships will be gained.

Keywords: Canine Companions, Human-Animal Relationships, Contemporary Cinema, Popular Culture.

Introduction

Concept of Canine Companions on Screen

In the realm of cinematic discourse, where narratives serve as conduits for emotional exploration and societal reflection, few topics evoke as much profound resonance as the tender yet intricate bond between humanity and its canine counterparts. Literature and film have always been fascinated by and interested in exploring the ongoing link between people and animals. Dogs retain a particular place in our hearts as our most beloved pets among the many animals that have appeared on film. At the heart of this cinematic discourse lies the notion of the canine companion, an emblem of unwavering loyalty, boundless affection, and unspoken understanding. The concept of canine companions on screen encompasses the representation of dogs in the visual medium of film.

Dogs have been a popular feature in cinema for decades, often playing integral roles in storytelling. They serve various functions, from providing companionship to their human counterparts to playing central characters with their own arcs and development. In film, canine companions can symbolize loyalty, bravery, and the bond between humans and animals. They
often evoke strong emotional responses from audiences, eliciting feelings of warmth, nostalgia, and empathy. Recent research looks at how human characteristics—particularly attitudes and personalities—affect dog behavior and the relationship between dogs and humans. This understudied field raises the possibility that relationships would benefit from a behavioral template. The essay explores the possible differences between dyadic functionality and working performance as well as the ways in which different relationships impact how dogs view their owners. Additionally, it examines and suggests improvements for bond measurement methods. Positive connections enhance the wellbeing of both species. Subsequent investigations seek to elucidate successful bonding. The significance of comprehending and improving dog-human connections for better animal welfare is highlighted by this work (Payne, Bennett & McGreevy, 2015).

Filmmakers utilize canines to enhance narratives, add depth to characters, and explore themes such as friendship, loyalty, and the human-animal connection. The portrayal of canine companions in cinema has undergone a profound evolution over the decades, mirroring shifts in societal values, narrative techniques, and cinematic innovations. Often depicted as steadfast allies to their human counterparts, dogs embody virtues of bravery, loyalty, and selflessness on the silver screen. Lassie, immortalized in “Lassie Come Home” (1943) and its subsequent iterations, stands as an enduring symbol of unwavering loyalty and indomitable courage. Similarly, Hachiko's poignant tale in “Hachi: A Dog's Tale” (2009), based on a true story, poignantly underscores the power of loyalty as the titular character faithfully awaits his deceased owner for years. Moreover, dogs have provided invaluable comic relief in cinema, infusing films with levity and charm. Characters like Einstein in “Back to the Future” (1985) and Dug in “Up” (2009) lend their endearing antics to the narratives, enriching the cinematic experience with their humorous escapades. In certain instances, canines even take center stage, propelling the storyline forward through their unique perspectives and courageous deeds. Whether it's Bolt's heroic cross-country journey in “Bolt” (2008) or Lady and Tramp's enchanting romantic escapade in “Lady and the Tramp” (1955), dogs serve as catalysts for adventure and heartwarming tales. Furthermore, canine companions frequently feature in adventure and survival narratives, showcasing their resilience and resourcefulness in the face of adversity. From Buck's journey of self-discovery in “The Call of the Wild” (2020) to Max's poignant return from service in “Max” (2015), these narratives underscore the profound bond between humans and their faithful companions. Animated films, in particular, excel in anthropomorphizing dogs, endowing them with human-like traits and emotions, enriching their stories with depth and relatability. Whether it's Scooby-Doo's mystery-solving escapades or Pongo and Perdita's resourceful parental instincts in “101 Dalmatians” (1961), these characters captivate audiences with their charm and resilience. Moreover, dogs in cinema often serve as potent symbols or allegorical figures, representing broader themes of wilderness versus civilization or the passage from adolescence to adulthood. From White Fang's struggle for survival in the wilderness to Old Yeller's poignant lessons in responsibility and loss, these canine characters transcend their on-screen presence, leaving an indelible mark on audiences worldwide.

The Depiction of the Canines on Screen

The portrayal of canine companions in cinema has undergone a profound evolution over the decades, mirroring shifts in societal values, narrative techniques, and cinematic innovations. Often depicted as steadfast allies to their human counterparts, dogs embody virtues of bravery, loyalty, and selflessness on the silver screen. Lassie, immortalized in “Lassie Come Home” (1943) and its subsequent iterations, stands as an enduring symbol of unwavering loyalty and indomitable courage. Similarly, Hachiko's poignant tale in “Hachi: A Dog's Tale” (2009), based on a true story, poignantly underscores the power of loyalty as the titular character faithfully awaits his deceased owner for years. Moreover, dogs have provided invaluable comic relief in cinema, infusing films with levity and charm. Characters like Einstein in “Back to the Future” (1985) and Dug in “Up” (2009) lend their endearing antics to the narratives, enriching the cinematic experience with their humorous escapades. In certain instances, canines even take center stage, propelling the storyline forward through their unique perspectives and courageous deeds. Whether it's Bolt's heroic cross-country journey in “Bolt” (2008) or Lady and Tramp's enchanting romantic escapade in “Lady and the Tramp” (1955), dogs serve as catalysts for adventure and heartwarming tales. Furthermore, canine companions frequently feature in adventure and survival narratives, showcasing their resilience and resourcefulness in the face of adversity. From Buck's journey of self-discovery in “The Call of the Wild” (2020) to Max's poignant return from service in “Max” (2015), these narratives underscore the profound bond between humans and their faithful companions. Animated films, in particular, excel in anthropomorphizing dogs, endowing them with human-like traits and emotions, enriching their stories with depth and relatability. Whether it's Scooby-Doo's mystery-solving escapades or Pongo and Perdita's resourceful parental instincts in “101 Dalmatians” (1961), these characters captivate audiences with their charm and resilience. Moreover, dogs in cinema often serve as potent symbols or allegorical figures, representing broader themes of wilderness versus civilization or the passage from adolescence to adulthood. From White Fang's struggle for survival in the wilderness to Old Yeller's poignant lessons in responsibility and loss, these canine characters transcend their on-screen presence, leaving an indelible mark on audiences worldwide.

Performativity of the Canines in the Cinema

The performativity of canines in cinema highlights their ability to convey complex
emotions and narratives, making them indispensable to storytelling. Through a combination of expert training, advanced animatronics, and sophisticated CGI, dogs on screen exhibit a wide range of behaviors and expressions that resonate deeply with audiences. In live-action films, trained dogs perform intricate tasks and display behaviors that enhance the realism and emotional depth of their roles. For instance, the naturalistic performances of dogs in films like “Marley & Me” (2008) and “A Dog’s Journey” (2019) create a genuine connection with viewers, eliciting empathy and affection. Animated films leverage anthropomorphism to imbue canine characters with human-like qualities, enhancing their relatability and appeal. Characters like Dug in “Up” (2009) and Scooby-Doo demonstrate how voice acting and animation can bring out humor and personality, making them memorable and beloved. The performativity of canines in cinema underscores their versatility as actors. Whether through realistic portrayals or animated characterization, dogs bring unique emotional depth and charm to films, enriching the narrative and forging strong bonds with audiences. Throughout history, dogs have played a significant role in human society, and their presence in the film industry is no exception. The portrayal of dogs in films has evolved over time, reflecting changing societal attitudes towards these animals (Arden Fayard, 2020). Within the fabric of “Marley and Me” and “777 Charlie”, these canine companions transcend their roles as mere pets, emerging as conduits for emotional catharsis, companionship, and growth. Through the lens of cinematic exploration, this research aims to shed light on the universal truths and timeless themes embedded within these narratives, inviting audiences to contemplate the enduring power of love, loyalty, and resilience in the human-canine bond.

The central objective of this research study is to analyze and compare the portrayal of human-animal connections in “777 Charlie” and “Marley and Me”. The research will also delve into examine the interactions between people and dogs that are seen in these movies. The study will also underline the significance of dogs as friends and forces for progress in individuals.

Review of Literature

The representation of dogs in film has been a subject of significant academic inquiry, reflecting broader societal attitudes and emotional connections between humans and their canine companions. As a cultural artifact, film not only mirrors but also shapes perceptions of dogs, showcasing them in various roles that evoke emotions ranging from fear to affection. This review of literature examines diverse scholarly works that explore how dogs are depicted on screen, the symbolic meanings attached to these representations, and the evolution of these portrayals over time.

Emotional Impact and Symbolic Inconsistency of Canine Representations in Film

Chodosh, Caleb (2018) examined how dogs are used often in films to evoke emotions like fear, affection, and excitement. Despite the fact that dogs have come to represent a number of commonly acknowledged features in society, canine representations on television are wildly inconsistent and lack coherence. Dogs play a variety of roles, including 'good boys' in domestic comedies, the hero in coming-of-age films, and the muscle to a villain; they have also been racialized, anthropomorphized, and made into weapons. This study examines the numerous ways that dogs are shown and what their symbolic meanings may vary.

Evolution of Canine Portrayals Reflecting Changing Human Attitudes

Arden Fayard (2020) explored as with every other element of our existence; dogs were very early introduced to the film business. The way we utilize and portray dogs in films has evolved throughout the years. The purpose of this study is to determine whether changes in how dogs are portrayed in films as a result of people's changing attitudes towards them.
Advancements and Challenges in Studying Dog-Human Interaction

Therese Rehn, Linda J. Keeling (2016) reviewed to make a contribution to this quickly evolving topic by highlighting the advantages and disadvantages of the methods currently used to study the dog-human interaction. The primary goal is to deepen our comprehension of the dog's perspective on the connection. The state of the art about the relationship between dogs and humans is examined and debated. One method to achieve this is to concentrate on striking a balance between the dog's separation anxiety and the degree to which the owner's caregiving approach is successful in relaxing the dog upon reunion. From an applied perspective, the result is that owners are more conscious of the kind of attachment style and caregiving approach their dog possesses. Understanding this might help owners find points of conflict in previous or current partnerships, resulting in the formation of more fruitful and fulfilling relationships going forward. Better matching could also result from it when rehoming shelter pets.

Tradition of the Hero Dog in Cinema

Sarah Weir, Sharon E. Kessler (2022) identifies the tradition of the dog hero in films was, however, established by the dogs of the 1920s. As courageous, powerful, devoted, loving, and constant heroes, these canines were portrayed as such. They constantly prioritise human life before their own and never express fear. Hero canines were often shown as perfect members of society, and these representations fit the ideal that society at the time held. The heroes in “Hero Dog: The Journey Home” (2021) and “Balto” (1995) exhibit many of the same qualities as the original dog movie stars, demonstrating the ongoing relevance of this concept of heroism.

Human-Dog Attachment and Emotional Processing

Sabrina Karl, Christoph J. Völter & Ludwig Huber (2020) behavioral studies revealed that the human-dog attachment is similar to that of a mother and child, albeit the underlying processes are still unknown. By showing morph films with a stranger and a carer displaying either a joyful/furious face, seeing the carer stimulated human brain areas linked to emotion and attachment processing regardless of the person's emotional state while the latter, activated mainly in brain regions related to visual and motor processing. Though these results are preliminary, they suggest that examining the relationship between the brain and behaviour at several levels might yield fresh and complementary
understandings of how the hypothesised attachment system functions in dog-human interactions.

**Young People's Coping Strategies for Canine Behavioural Issues**

Renata Roma (2023) This exploratory study focused on young people's coping strategies while using a qualitative technique to investigate how young people saw their dog's behavioural problems. Seven participants, ages 17 to 26, discussed their experiences with their dogs and coping mechanisms for unwanted canine actions in semi-structured, in-depth one-on-one interviews. When dealing with their pets' undesirable habits, young people choose proactive coping strategies, according to the study's findings. The results of this study also suggest that young people's emotions are related to how severe a dog's behavioural problems are.

**Exploitation and Abuse of Dogs in Cinematic Representation**

Marjetka Golež Kaučič (2018) examined how the film industry uses theoretical discourses from critical animal studies, anthropology, philosophy, and speciesism theory to examine how human exploitation and abuse of dogs is portrayed in the media. It offers a critical analysis of domestication, which made it possible to exploit a dog in a movie, and it discusses vivisection through made-up cinematic images as well as the anthropomorphization of non-human subjectivity in general. Analyzing two films (“Balto”, 2012 [1925] and “The Plague Dogs”, 1982) with canine protagonists serves to further support the thesis. While their themes, genres, and content are different, they both thematize reality.

**Understanding Dog Psychology and Its Applications**

Theovoulos Koutsopoulos (2024) explored dog psychology, which until recently was the sole concern of humans. The fundamental concepts of dog psychology are covered in detail, including the following theories: Pack Mentality and Dominance, which is based on the idea that dogs that follow wolves constantly compete to rank highest in the pack; Operant Conditioning and Positive Reinforcement, which is based on the idea that dogs can change their behavior by applying positive or negative stimuli; and Pavlovian or Classical Conditioning, which holds that dogs learn by mentally connecting two unrelated events. Also provides with the elements that shape dog psychology as well, including the physical traits of dogs—despite having a very different appearance from humans, they share many physical traits; the behavioral traits that demonstrate that dogs are intelligent, entertaining, complex, interesting, and generally useful animals; the adaptability of dogs, which affects their psychology and, in turn, their training; and the senses, which serve as a valuable resource for learning about dogs and their psychology. Furthermore, it addresses how to apply dog psychology and deal with its challenges. While its application is crucial in responding to dog needs, training methods, and daily life with a dog, its practice greatly aids in dog activities like puppy selection, supplier selection, and evaluating puppy qualifications.

**Methodology**

The method employed to examine gender performativity in the movies “777 Charlie” and “Marley and Me” is discussed in this chapter. Prior to exploring the methodology used for the two movies, it is important to comprehend what methodology comprises. A discipline’s rules, guidelines, and procedures for a certain process or group of related activities are referred to as its methodology. It facilitates understanding of the researcher's methodology and conclusions. This facilitates comprehension of the researcher's methodology and methods of conclusion-making.

**Sampling Method**

The study compares the two films in order to find commonalities and contrasts in how humans and animals are portrayed, providing insights into the many ways that these relationships are portrayed on screen. “Marley and Me” and “777 Charlie” were analyzed qualitatively as a part of the research process. The storylines, character arcs, and visual
portrayals of human-animal connections in these movies was extensively scrutinized in the study. This study recognized recurrent themes, motifs, and narrative strategies that are employed to illustrate the link between humans and dogs. To conduct a thorough analysis, the study also consulted previously published works on the subject of human-animal connections in media.

**Reasons to Select “Marley and Me” and “777 Charlie”**

“Marley and Me” represents American cinema, while “777 Charlie” is an Indian film. This cultural contrast provides rich material for comparative analysis of how human-dog relationships are depicted in different cultural contexts. Both films are renowned for their emotional storytelling and nuanced exploration of the bonds between humans and dogs, making them ideal subjects for comparative analysis.

“Marley and Me” and “777 Charlie” have garnered widespread acclaim and have large fan bases, ensuring a significant audience for the study and diverse perspectives on the films’ themes and representations. Both films have contributed to discussions about human-animal relationships and have influenced popular perceptions of pets and pet ownership, making them culturally relevant subjects for comparative analysis.

**Analysis**

The chapter explores the endearing and frequently moving ways that dogs are portrayed in movies, with a particular emphasis on the movies “777 Charlie” and “Marley and Me”. Despite having distinct stories, these films all center on the strong relationship that exists between people and their dogs. Dogs play an essential role in our lives and, consequently, in movies, since this link is portrayed through a blend of joy, obstacles, and emotional growth. These movies follow a long-standing tradition in which dogs play important roles in the plot and the character development of the protagonists, rather than just being pets. Famous instances of this include “Old Yeller”, “Lassie”, and “Hachi: A Dog’s Tale”, which all emphasize the bravery, devotion, and emotional nuance that dogs bring to the big screen. This chapter will investigate the emotional appeal and narrative strategies that make these dog-centric tales timeless and cherished by people of all cultural backgrounds.

**Introduction to the Directors**

David Frankel was born and reared in New York City, and his lifelong desire was to become a movie director. Like most young filmmakers, he began his career as a writer, writing numerous episodes for the sitcom “Doctor Doctor” (CBS, 1989-1991) and co-scripting the Gene Wilder comedy “Funny About Love” (1990) for director Leonard Nimoy. He co-wrote the script for the 1992 romantic comedy “Nervous Ticks” and shortly thereafter, he developed the television series “Grapevine” (CBS, 1992). However, that program was discontinued after just six episodes. After nearly ten years of obscurity, Frankel made his breakthrough in 1996 with the comedy short film “Dear Diary”, which he wrote and directed.

The short went on to win the Academy Award for Best Live Action Short, propelling Frankel to sudden fame. Soon after, he began directing episodes of “Sex and the City” (HBO, 1998–2004) and “Entourage” (HBO, 2004–2011), in addition to the HBO miniseries “From the Earth to the Moon” (1998) and “Band of Brothers” (2001). After guiding Meryl Streep to an Oscar nomination in “The Devil Wears Prada” (2006), he caused a stir in the industry in 2008 with the hits “Marley and Me” (2008) and “The Big Year” (2011). Frankel made a comeback to directing in 2016 with “Collateral Beauty”. In the film, which debuted in December 2016, Will Smith played a New York advertising guy who had a mental breakdown.

In Indian cinema, Kiranraj K is a rising talent. Kiranraj K was born in the small village of Kumbadaje in the Kasaragod region of Kerala. He worked as an assistant director in the Kannada film business at first. Due to his commitment and love of movies, he eventually became a director and screenwriter after gaining invaluable experience in the industry through a variety of projects. Kiranraj is a director of several music albums, documentaries, and...
motion pictures. His 2011 telefilm, “Kaavala”, was morality and justice oriented. The focus of his well-known music video, “Kanasu” (English: “dream”), was on interpersonal connections. At the 2013 Vibha South Indian Short Film Festival, his short film “Kabbina Haalu” (English: Sugarcane juice), which was based on a true story, took home the Best Film Award. In addition, he directed the first Yakshagana Puppets documentary.

“777 Charlie”, his debut feature film, won praise from critics for its gripping story and deep emotional depth. Kiranraj’s direction of “777 Charlie” showcases his ability to craft compelling narratives and believable character arcs. His work has the ability to emotionally connect viewers and demonstrates a profound understanding of visual narrative. The highly praised feature film “777 Charlie” marked his transition from assistant director to director in training, showcasing his ability to oversee a major project and his potential to become a well-known name in Indian cinema.

**Introduction of the Movies**

This film closely mimics the novel of the same name on which it is based. It's an adorable narrative about a time in the Grogan family's life. Newspaper reporters John (Owen Wilson) and Jenny (Jennifer Anniston) Grogan are blissfully wed. A few years later, Jenny brings up the subject of having kids. John convinces her that getting a dog initially would be preferable. Marley, the world's worst dog, makes his appearance. Marley is a massive, compassionate and reckless labrador. He is totally untrainable; he chews on everything, howls during thunderstorms, knocks over objects and people, and so forth. But there’s something charming about him. They adore him despite the fact that he drives them crazy. He provides a feeling of security into their life, survives the relocation from Florida to Philadelphia, and is present for the birth of their children. He becomes a regular contributor to John's column, and readers eagerly await his escapades each week.

“777 Charlie” is a feature-length movie that explores the bond between people and animals. The film's deep story and complex emotional content immediately gained it plaudits upon its 2022 premiere. The main focus of the movie is the transformational friendship that happens between a reclusive, grumpy guy named Dharma and a stray Labrador Retriever named Charlie.

Dharma, a reclusive trapped in a cycle of a lonely and boring life, is portrayed by Rakshit Shetty. His life changes when he meets Charlie, a playful and affectionate dog. Charlie is initially reluctant, but with time, they form a close bond that greatly enhances Charlie's quality of life. The film highlights friendship, healing, and the power of unconditional love to transform. “777 Charlie” delves into the profound emotional bond that exists between humans and animals, highlighting the possibility of personal growth and change that can arise from these alliances. The film's poignant narrative, superb directing, and outstanding cast evoke strong emotions in audiences, resulting in an unforgettable and thought-provoking cinematic encounter.

**Portrayal of Marley and Charlie in the Movie**

Marley, a yellow Labrador Retriever, was a difficult yet beloved dog for his owners, John and Jenny Grogan. Even though Marley was a naughty person who frequently caused chaos, he had a good heart when Jenny miscarried. The rambunctious dog moaned gently and stood still between Jenny's knees during this challenging moment, his head lying peacefully in her lap and his tail hanging down flat between his legs. Jenny would cry and find solace in burying her face in his thick fur and petting his head.

Marley's behavior in obedience training showed that he was an active dog. He was in severe need of obedience courses, so John and Jenny enrolled him when he was not nearly six months old. Marley turned out to be a difficult learner who was full of nerves and often distracted. He was also thick and wild. Jenny and John quickly discovered that Marley was not like other dogs.

The obedience class teacher pointed out that Marley's behavior indicated that he had been let to consider himself the alpha male of his pack.
However, the movie skillfully intercuts those scenes with heartfelt, genuine moments of human-dog bonding. Marley steps in during the family's most intimate times and grows with the kids. Although Marley is a continuous and somewhat bothersome presence, he enhances the film's emotional tone without taking center stage.

The core character and emotional center of “777 Charlie” is Charlie, the Labrador Retriever. Her portrayal is notable for a variety of important characteristics and moments that endear her to the viewer and have a significant impact on the main character, Dharma. There was also a real Charlie, an Indie. Kiranraj K, the director, has always loved animals and has owned an Indie dog.

Dharma's transformation is sparked by Charlie's entry into his life. At first, her presence irritates Dharma, but he gradually learns to value Charlie's unwavering love and dedication. As they spend more time together and Dharma grows to care about Charlie, he is able to reestablish his emotional and personal connection with him. Charlie is a prime example of the transformational power of love and companionship in delivering healing and atonement because of his unwavering devotion to Dharma, even in the face of early resistance. Charlie acts as Dharma's emotional cornerstone throughout the story. The highs and lows of their journey together show the tremendous impact that animals—which provide safety, comfort, and direction—can have on people's lives.

Charlie's performance in the movie stirs up a range of feelings and emphasizes the transformational potential of love and friendship. Her moving depiction of Charlie and Dharma's relationship makes the movie a poignant and unforgettable experience.

**The Transformative Impact of Marley on the Grogan Family and Charlie's Journey with Dharma**

As John and Jenny negotiate their early marriage, they are simultaneously dealing with the responsibilities of their job, they take consolation in their unwavering love for Marley, who provides them with comic relief and comfort through all of life's ups and downs. The Grogan family experiences obstacles and turning points as they become older. They relocate to a new home, have two more children, and go through the ups and downs of parenting. Whether things are good or bad, Marley is always there to provide reassurance and affection. The family is reminded by Marley's imperfections and misadventures that life is precious and memorable because of imperfection.

In the movie “777 Charlie”, Dharma's life is significantly and profoundly changed by Charlie, the dog. Charlie broke Dharma's life of isolation in this film. Dharma is presented as a reclusive, grumpy, and lonely man who has cut himself off from society. She has been living alone, so when Charlie arrives, she is compelled to talk to someone and starts opening up emotionally. Charlie's business helps Dharma confront and go past his old traumas. Thanks to Charlie's unfailing love and commitment, Dharma can heal emotionally in a safe setting. Charlie acts as a link between Dharma and the outside world. Charlie's influence on Dharma has been far-reaching and deeply transformative. She is a source of happiness and company for him, but she also acts as a catalyst for his personal growth and emotional recovery. Their common path exemplifies the transformational power of love, commitment, and friendship, illustrating how the fundamental relationship between pet owners can lead to profound life transformations.

**Changes in the Behaviour of Marley and Charlie from the Beginning to the End**

Marley's actions change dramatically from the start of the story to its conclusion. Marley is initially seen as a misbehaving and disruptive dog who causes problems and chaos for the family. He is characterized as tense, outgoing and a little out of control. It soon becomes clear that Marley has a golden heart and is only acting in accordance with his nature, despite his problematic behavior. As Marley enters his senior years, he begins to slow down and experience health issues common to older dogs.
Marley’s once-boundless energy is replaced by a quieter, more contemplative demeanor.

Charlie comes across as a lively and energetic Labrador Retriever. Her enthusiasm and inquisitiveness often lead her into trouble. Charlie exhibits a degree of independence, showing that she can function independently and adapt to changing conditions without heavily relying on a human companion. As Charlie and Dharma spend more time together, she begins to show signs of developing affection and trust. This is demonstrated by her increasing desire to follow his lead and stick with him. By the end of the film, Charlie's actions show how devoted to and dependent on Dharma she is. She continued to be a lively, playful dog, but she has also developed into a devoted and faithful friend. By the end of “777 Charlie”, Charlie has evolved into a loyal, watchful, and intimate buddy from an independent and mischievous dog.

How Dogs Transformed Human Behavior in Marley & Me and 777 Charlie

The Grogan family's behaviour in the film “Marley & Me” changed in a number of ways after they adopted Marley, the Labrador puppy. When Marley was a puppy, John and Jenny had to get used to his rambunctious personality and destructive desires, which included him chewing up furniture, drywall, and pillows. Their former way of life without a dog had drastically changed from this. They attempted to train Marley but were unsuccessful due to his excessive activity and lack of training. They put Marley to obedience school but were forced to remove him because he was misbehaving and had a negative effect on the other dogs. John's weekly column about Marley's antics transformed into interesting stories about their dog's daily activities, which was a good change since it gave him a creative outlet to write about Marley. Marley's wailing and energetic approach drove all of the caregivers insane, making it difficult for the Grogans to go on holidays or vacations without their puppy. Despite Marley's difficulties, the family acknowledged he was a vital member of the family, especially when he became older and slowed down, proving their relationship with Marley deepened with time. As the Grogan kids grew older, Marley was also good with them, adjusting to the changes that came with a larger family and playing a significant role in their dynamic.

Dharma is shown in “777 Charlie” as a solitary, recluse man who is emotionally cut off from society. Charlie, a playful Labrador Retriever, is adopted, and it completely changes his life. Dharma finds happiness and emotional warmth again, breaks free from seclusion, and embraces healthier habits as he tends to Charlie. Dharma's interactions with Charlie aid with her reintegration into society. He starts interacting more with his neighbors and other people, reintegrating into the community bit by bit. Dharma's recently found social interaction helps connections grow and heal, which contributes to his emotional healing. Through their common experiences and struggles, Dharma changes from a solitary, resentful man to a more understanding, cheerful, and compassionate individual. By the end of the film, Dharma has undergone a profound personal transformation as a result of Charlie's unshakable love and devotion, which provide him with the emotional support he needs to confront and overcome his past traumas.

The Function of Film Language in 777 and Marley and Me Charlie for Showcasing Dog Performance while Focusing Particular Attention to Lighting and Camera Angles

The director's intention to display the dog performances in “777 Charlie” and “Marley and Me” was sustained in large part by the language of the film. Ideally, “film language” relates to the production's technical aspects. How the concept and general tone of the movie are portrayed through the use of lighting, dialogue, and camera angles. Camera angles and lighting play a part in narrating the lifestyle and performance of dogs in both movies.

Applications of Camera Angles to Emphasis the Character of Marley in “Marley and Me”

The makers of the movie “Marley and Me” have used various camera angles to convey emotions, perspective and character traits effectively. Some of the noticeable camera angles used in the movie

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to portray Merley’s character were close up shot, extreme close up shot, low angle shot, high angle shot and over the shoulder shot.

The close-up shots were used in scenarios where Marley was found mischievous or affectionate, where its expressive eyes conveyed Marley's personality and emotion to the audience. Since wide shots are useful in capturing the whole extent of action, this angle was used where Marley could be seen playful focusing on how energetic and lively, he is. Now, when it comes to various scenes where Marley did some brave work, being powerful, determinant or in heroic light, low angle shots were taken where viewers felt looking up at him conveying a sense of strength and courageous character. Whereas, high angle shots were used to focus on Marley’s vulnerable side or engaging playful tactics emphasizing the consequences of action. Another angle is the, over the shoulder shot which is a technique where the camera is placed just behind an off-screen actor. In the movie, this shot is used to capture interactions between characters and provide a complete view of the scene’s dynamics, enriching the audience's understanding of character interactions.

In “777 Charlie”, the use of several camera angles is essential for highlighting Charlie's personality and strengthening the film's emotional resonance with viewers. Charlie's expressions are often captured in close-up, displaying her fun, inquisitive, and loving personality. Viewers are able to better connect with her character because of these close-up perspectives, which highlight the nuances of her emotions.

Charlie's bright and vivacious personality is frequently captured in low-angle pictures, especially in situations where she is playing or running. Her liveliness is highlighted by these angles, which also give her a more dynamic appearance and place in the scene. On the other hand, when Charlie is in a vulnerable position, high-angle shots are employed to make him appear smaller and more frail, which makes the spectator feel sorry and concerned. Wide shots are used to highlight the interaction between Charlie and Dharma, showing them together in different settings to highlight how their bond is developing. These photos frequently convey the vastness of their trip together, illuminating the emotional and geographical distances they travel.

Charlie's actions are carefully followed by tracking shots, which add to the sensation of immersion and immediateness. By using this method, viewers are able to see the world via Charlie's eyes, which enhances their connection to her personality. Ultimately, “777 Charlie” skillfully employs camera angles to highlight Charlie’s personality, feelings, and bond with Dharma, giving her a charming and pivotal role.

**The Impact of Canine Characters in Films**

It’s obvious for many reasons why dogs are being portrayed as pets in movie than any other animals. A study conducted by (Ghirlanda Et al) has found that the number of dog themed movies has increased in recent years. Taking the year until 1940 where movies portraying dogs were less than one per year whereas by 2005 a tremendous change could be noticed with seven movies per year were released. One reason why dogs are chosen is because Dogs seem to possess a trait that is universal and transcends human civilization. Though we don’t seem to understand certain things in screen yet we as humans won’t fail to understand dogs. The 1982 American drama “White Dog” is a movie with a title and concept that are comparable. White dog follows a black dog trainer as he works to rehabilitate a stray that has been trained to harm people of color. Racism is shown as a mentally sick condition that is not entirely curable, and the dog is utilized as a stand-in. The trainer's fixation on healing the dog is a result of his hope that racism may have a counter-agent. By challenging viewers preconceptions of what a dog can and cannot be, the director reveals the depravity of using a dog to weaponize an idea. Although dogs are not inherently racist, they may be trained to be such. The choice to examine institutional racism via the lens of a dog lacks complexity in a creative way. Dogs are perfect topics for storytelling and emotionally engaging audiences because of their loyalty, intelligence, and compassion.
Discussion

Emotional Connection and Universality

Dogs, who are frequently referred to as “man's best friend”, have a special capacity to establish profound emotional bonds with people. They make the ideal subjects for stories because of their compassion, devotion, and intelligence. As demonstrated in “Marley and Me”, Marley's charming and mischievous personality makes him popular with both the Grogan family and viewers. Comparably, in “777 Charlie”, Charlie and Dharma’s transformative friendship arouses intense feelings and emphasizes the importance of unconditional love. Dogs have characteristics that cut over linguistic and cultural divides, giving filmmakers a worldwide platform to engage a wide range of viewers.

Narrative Potential and Character Development

Character development chances and great narrative potential arise when dogs play major roles in movies. Marley's shenanigans propel the plot of “Marley and Me”, acting as a trigger for the Grogan family's development and evolution. Similarly, in “777 Charlie”, Dharma's journey from emotional recovery to solitude is sparked by Charlie's presence. Dogs frequently act as windows into human nature, reflecting our pleasures, difficulties, and frailties. Through examining the relationships between people and their dogs, filmmakers can dive into topics of devotion, friendship, and personal development.

Cinematic Techniques and Dog Performances

The way that dogs are portrayed in movies greatly depends on cinematic devices like lighting, editing, and camera angles. In “Marley and Me”, a variety of camera angles are employed to accentuate Marley's diverse personality traits, ranging from naughty to brave. While low-angle images show Marley's strength and resolve, close-ups highlight his expressive eyes. In “777 Charlie”, too, several camera angles are used to highlight Charlie's lively personality and emotional journey. Wide and tracking shots draw viewers into Charlie's world and heighten the emotional effect of her story. Filmmakers can effectively display dog performances and elicit empathy from viewers by utilizing these strategies.

Societal Commentary and Symbolism

Even though canines are frequently shown in films as cherished pets, dogs can also represent more significant social issues. As demonstrated in “White Dog”, racism is examined via the eyes of a canine that has been trained to injure persons of color. This thought-provoking method questions viewers' assumptions and encourages contemplation on difficult social topics. Dogs are innocent animals who have the capacity for both love and harm, making them excellent symbols for society dynamics and human conduct. Through the lens of a dog’s innocence, filmmakers can explore the darker sides of human nature and spark meaningful conversations about significant subjects.

The portrayal of dogs as pets in movies transcends mere entertainment, offering profound insights into the human condition and societal dynamics. Through compelling narratives, cinematic techniques, and symbolic storytelling, filmmakers harness the universal appeal of dogs to engage audiences on emotional, intellectual, and societal levels. Whether as lovable companions or thought-provoking symbols, dogs continue to captivate audiences and enrich the cinematic experience.

Conclusions, Limitations and Recommendations

The research primarily focuses on the portrayal of dogs as pets in movies, particularly in “Marley and Me” and “777 Charlie”. However, there are many other movies and genres where animals play significant roles, such as wildlife documentaries or films like “Hachi: A Dog's Tale”. Limiting the scope to only two movies may not fully capture the diversity of ways animals are depicted in cinema. The research relies heavily on qualitative analysis of film narratives, character development, and cinematic techniques. While this approach offers valuable insights into the emotional and symbolic significance of dogs in movies, it may
lack quantitative data or empirical evidence to support its claims. Incorporating audience surveys, content analysis, or experimental studies could provide a more comprehensive understanding of audience perceptions and reactions to animal portrayals in film.

Future research could explore how the portrayal of animals, particularly dogs, varies across different cultural contexts and film industries. Comparing Hollywood films with productions from other countries could reveal unique cultural perspectives on human-animal relationships and societal dynamics. Researchers can investigate audience perceptions and reactions to animal portrayals in film could provide valuable insights into the emotional and psychological impact of these representations. Conducting surveys, focus groups, or experimental studies to gauge audience empathy, identification, and emotional engagement with animal characters could enrich our understanding of the role animals play in cinematic storytelling. Also examining the evolution of animal portrayal in cinema over time could shed light on changing societal attitudes towards animals and their representation on screen. Analyzing trends in the depiction of animals, from early silent films to contemporary blockbusters, could highlight shifts in cultural norms, ethical considerations, and cinematic techniques used to convey human-animal relationships.

References


