



Movie Club

Happy-Go-Lucky (2008)

1. The film focuses on the main character of Poppy. Where most films rely on plot to drive the narrative forward, 'Happy-Go-Lucky' relies on character, and insofar you might say the film is a character study of Poppy. At the end of the film Zoe says to Poppy, 'you can't make everyone happy.' Do you think it is Poppy's goal to make everyone happy?
2. What is the purpose of the scene between Poppy and the homeless man? As the audience, we see this encounter, yet Poppy does not speak about it with anyone else throughout the course of the film.
3. Poppy visits her younger, pregnant sister Helen. Helen believes Poppy is not happy, she goes so far as to ask Poppy when she is going to settle down. Poppy retorts with:

"I am happy. I love my life. Yeah, it's tough at times, but that's part of it. I've got a great job, brilliant kids [school pupils], lovely flat. I've got her [Zoe] to look at. I've got amazing friends. I love my freedom. I'm a very lucky lady. I know that."

The film goes against traditional female stereotypes. Where other films define female happiness as being dependent upon a man, kids, or both, 'Happy-Go-Lucky' shows that happiness can be sourced elsewhere. In what ways does Poppy defy traditional female stereotypes?

4. While there is no single major dramatic plot line, the film retains a high level of dramatic tension, a sense of 'high-stakes' through the regular driving lessons Poppy undertakes with Scott—a pessimistic, narcissistic and aggressive driving instructor. It is the scenes in the car where Poppy and Scott converge into a small space, which produces the most emotional impact. It is Scott's actions and words that help define Poppy as a character, and also highlight the character arc that Poppy undertakes. Without these scenes, we as an audience member may regard Poppy as just another 'airy-fairy' kind of character. However it is in these scenes we see the depth of Poppy's personality, and this moves us. What other scenes do we see Poppy as a deeply caring and smart individual?
5. In this character-driven film, what do you think the climax is? Is there a climax at all?