



Movie Club

Nebraska (2013)

1. Why do you think the decision was made to shoot the film in black-and-white? What tone does this add to the film?

“It’s a choice that highlights the story’s prevailing sense of melancholy and decay rather than trying to impose a cloying nostalgia.” Roger Ebert

<http://www.rogerebert.com/reviews/nebraska-2013>

2. Woody is mostly mute in the film, talking only occasionally, so we get to know him indirectly through other characters. For instance we only find out mid-way through the film via his ex-girlfriend, that Woody is a Vietnam veteran. How does this affect our understanding of Woody?

“As the complex lost soul who can be at once endearing and infuriating, he slips perpetually between irascibility and incoherence, focusing just long enough to exasperate those around him.” Mark Kermode

<https://www.theguardian.com/film/2013/dec/08/nebraska-review-mark-kermode>

3. There is an emphasis on sense of place—suburbia is dry and barren, streets are empty, there is an aura of loneliness in all of this, further highlighted through the omission of any colour. Director, Alexander Payne, grew up in Nebraska and has previously written three films all set in the state. What critique is he offering in this film? Think about his interpretations of the nature of greed, fading towns and the stereotypes of the people who live in them.

“It involves the liberal critique of greed and acquisitiveness, and the conservative insistence that something in the idea of American exceptionalism and the celebration of the inspired individual is true, that our landscape summons us and our families to something uniquely heroic and noble.” Larry Gross

<http://www.filmcomment.com/article/alexander-payne-nebraska-review/>