

An aerial photograph of the Liberty University campus, featuring various academic buildings, a prominent tall tower on the right, and surrounding greenery. The entire image is covered with a semi-transparent blue filter.

The Looking Glass Self in Film: The Effects of a Positive Self Image

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Overview

- Research question
- Literature Review with Theory Overview
- Movie Introduction
- Scene Analyses
- Conclusions

An aerial photograph of a university campus, likely Loyola University, is shown with a semi-transparent blue overlay. The image captures various campus buildings, including a prominent tall tower on the right, and surrounding greenery. The text is centered over the image.

How can the Looking
Glass Self be utilized
to improve self
image?

Theory Overview

- The Looking Glass Self
 - “Humans act toward people or things based on the meanings they assign to those people or things” (Griffin et al., 2023, p. 57)
 - Divided into the “me” and “I”
 - Self image socially constructed
 - Usually seen as having a negative impact

Literature Review

- Impact of self image on leadership (Nebo, 2022)
 - “If leaders cannot see and use the judgements they receive from the mirror to measure their own worth, values, and behavior, the possibility of influencing followers could be slim” (p. 13)
- Opportunity to maintain positive image taken (Ploner & Regner, 2013)
 - “Robin Hood” mentality

Literature Review

- Importance of motivation (Steele, Spencer, & Lynch, 1993)
- Importance of focusing on others (Crocker & Canevello, 2012)
- Generation Z's struggles (Schlee et al., 2020)
- Greater interest in self-enhancement affects self image (Harari et al., 2022)

An aerial photograph of a university campus, overlaid with a dark blue tint. The image shows several large, modern academic buildings with multiple stories and many windows. A prominent tall, thin clock tower stands on the right side of the campus. In the background, a range of mountains is visible under a clear sky. The overall scene is peaceful and academic.

It's a Wonderful Life



Scenes for Analysis

- Scene 1: Taking Over the Business
- Scene 2: Responding to Potter's Invitation
- Scene 3: Going to Potter for Help
- Scene(s) 4: Seeing an Alternate World
- Scene 5: Reuniting With His World

Scene 1: Taking Over the Business

- Bailey's Current State of Self Image
 - Difficult to determine
 - Unaware to aware; "I" to "me" (Griffin et al., 2023)
 - Positively affected by those around him
 - Leadership abilities (Nebo, 2022)
 - Shows Bailey what he is capable of
 - Illustrates necessary compromise

Scene 1: Taking Over the Business

- Outsider Feedback
 - Crucial for Bailey's realization (Steele et al., 1993)
 - Opens up for feedback from the board
 - Improves Bailey's confidence
 - Low confidence = low self image (Steele et al.)
 - More likely to change when brought to attention
- Overall feedback? POSITIVE

Scene 2: Responding to Potter's Invitation

- Bailey's Current State of Self Image
 - Average with room for improvement
 - Little movement from "I" to "me"
 - Illustrates the ability to reject an image (Griffin et al., 2023)
 - Anxiety paired with negative self image (Meral & Vriends, 2021)
 - Realizes the inaccuracy of the image presented

Scene 2: Responding to Potter's Invitation

- Outsider Feedback
 - Increasing Bailey's self image to unhealthy level
 - Feedback crucial only when used correctly (Steele et al., 1993)
 - Presenting an inaccurate image
- Overall feedback? MIXED but ultimately NEGATIVE

Scene 3: Going to Potter for Help

- Bailey's Current State of Self Image
 - Lowest it has been
 - Focusing on himself too much
 - Incapable of providing for his family
 - Greater number of negative consequences (Crocker & Canevello, 2012)
 - Lacks the confidence to reject Potter's image (Steele et al., 1993)
 - Consequences of a lack of motivation (Steele)

Scene 3: Going to Potter for Help

- Outsider Feedback
 - Looking for a new reflection (Griffin et al., 2023)
 - Neglects to provide a positive new image
 - Ideal outsider influence (Crocker & Canevello, 2021)
 - Help an individual to focus on the people around them
 - See the positive consequences of a positive image
 - Could have played out various ways
 - Secondary scenario: Bailey's *self image* rather than *love*
- Overall Feedback? NEGATIVE

Scene(s) 4: Seeing an Alternate World

- Bailey's Current State of Self Image
 - Difficult to determine
 - Begins to improve with different focus (Crocker & Canevello, 2021)
 - Countered by each interaction
 - New focus seems to backfire
 - Scenes end with a healthy positive image
 - Realization of the lack of the "other" (Griffin et al. 2023)
 - Realization of the genuine love in his life
 - Negative to positive; "I" to "me"

Scene(s) 4: Seeing an Alternate World

- Outsider Feedback
 - Clarence only positive exception
 - Mother, wife, brother, friends
 - Subtly suggesting need for change (Crocker & Canevello, 2021)
 - “Strange, isn’t it? Each man’s life touches so many other lives, and when he isn’t around he leaves an awful hole, doesn’t he?” (Capra, 1946, 01:58:06)
- Overall feedback? **NEGATIVE** but **ENDS POSITIVE**

Scene 5: Reuniting With His World

- Bailey's Current State of Self Image
 - Hishest and most positive yet
 - Ability to step outside the situation (Griffin et al., 2023)
 - Final acceptance of the positive reflections
 - Confrontation with his own lack of motivation (Steele et al, 1993)
 - Focus on others (Crocker & Canevello, 2021)
 - Removed negative consequences

Scene 5: Reuniting With His World

- Outsider Feedback
 - Allows Bailey to focus on the positive reflections
 - MOTIVATION (Steele et al., 1993)
 - “I wouldn’t have a roof over my head if it weren’t for you, George” (Capra, 1946, 02:06:58)
 - Pure friendship and love
- Overall feedback? POSITIVE

Conclusions from Movie

- Interactions with others significantly affects self image (Griffin et al., 2023)
 - Focus on others
 - Choice to remain happy in a positive image
- Influence of outsider feedback
 - Obvious change of image depending on feedback
 - Build and reinforce positive self image
 - Anxiety = more vulnerable to feedback (Meral & Vriends, 2021)

Conclusion

- Self image GREATLY impacted by others
- Staying aware of the impact of words
 - “Sticks and stones may break my bones...”
- Self image drop inevitable
- Capability of rising once again
- Created in the image of God
- Looking Glass Self application and relevance

An aerial photograph of a university campus, overlaid with a dark blue filter. The image shows several large, multi-story academic buildings with many windows. A prominent tall, thin clock tower stands on the right side of the campus. In the background, a range of mountains is visible under a clear sky. The foreground shows a large, open area that appears to be a sports field or a large plaza, with some trees and pathways. The overall scene is a wide-angle shot of a sprawling university campus.

Thank You!



References

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