

Evaluation/aesthetics

The second season of *The Exorcist* follows the story of Father Thomas Ortega and Father Marcus Keane. Father Marcus has decided to be the mentor of Father Thomas as he embarks on his new calling as an exorcist. An important feature of their quest is that it is not necessarily sanctioned by the Catholic Church. In essence the two of them carry out exorcisms on their own terms at the behest of people who feel like their loved ones are being tormented by demons.

The show focuses on just how the church, and especially the Vatican, has been infiltrated by demons and a cult of demon worshipers. This cult of demon worshipers is masquerading as among the highest ranked priests in the Vatican with a lot of decision making power. They use the church as an avenue to advance their cause for evil as opposed to fighting evil. The only people standing in their way are a few rogue exorcists such as Father Thomas, Father Marcus and Father Bennett. These ^{PRESTERS} ~~fathers~~ have to fight the forces of evil while at the same time being hunted by the rogue elements of the church.

The second season works because of the manner in which it humanizes the main characters. They are not presented as superhuman demon hunters but rather as normal human beings with human struggles that they have to overcome while at the same time fighting evil forces. An example of this is Father Marcus who has to battle with the fact that he no longer feels a connection to God. This is a peculiar place for him to be since he is an exorcist. The fact that he is fighting demons on a consistent basis means that he needs to feel a strong connection to God. However, from the beginning of the season up to the very end he does not feel this connection at all. This comes into play as the demons he is trying to exorcise torment him for the lack of this connection.

Do more
with
this;
show it

Another important element of the story is the overall narrative. Andrew Kim is a kind hearted man who runs a children's home and takes in troubled children who have no home. A few year prior to the events of the second season his wife committed suicide. As the season continues it is revealed that she was possessed by a demon that led her to commit suicide. The demon has, for years, been possessing parents, forcing them to kill their children and commit suicide. It is now bent on possessing Andy and making him kill his children. The story arch is very interesting and appeals to the emotions of the audience. There is depth in the sense that it is not the first time that Andy and his orphanage are coming into contact with the demon. Initially the demon masquerades as one of the children in the orphanage. However, Andy is not aware of the fact that he is not the only person who can actually see this child.

The story works because it involves growth for all of the main characters. At the beginning of the season Father Thomas is rather impulsive. He is quick to carry out an exorcism even when he does not have all the facts at hand. However, as the season progresses he learns that there are people who jump the gun and cry demonic possession even when there is none. There is also progress on the side of the demons. From the beginning of the season they have a desire to possess father Thomas who comes off as the biggest threat to their domination of the church. At the end of the season the demon that had possessed Andy comes very close to possessing Father Thomas in what would have been a coup d'état for the demons. The demons are presented as being unrelenting in their mission to cause unspeakable human suffering and in the process kill the biggest threat to their domination in the form of Father Thomas and Father Marcus whom the demons refer to as the young cub and the grizzly old lion respectively.

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TO SHOW
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An important aspect of the season is its ability to keep the attention of the audience. The series starts off on a high with Father Thomas and Father Marcus carrying out an exorcism. It

then slows down but maintains an eerie tone as the audience is introduced to Andy and a mysterious child whom only he can see. When it is revealed that he is the only one in the house who can see the child the tempo of the program shifts as the demon is actually revealed and its heinous plan begins to unravel. Throughout the season the audience is worried about the life of Andy and his children. It is especially sad that Andy has to suffer despite the fact that he has been very kind to these children and has basically given his life to help them.

The season ends on a very emotional note. Andy gives his life to make sure that the demon does not escape and torment other people. Father Thomas is also willing to give his life in exchange for Andy's but Father Marcus does not allow him to do so due to his significance in the greater fight against evil. And is willing to continue suffering and traps the demon in his mind in a bit to prevent it from tormenting other people. He is presented as a selfless person who cared for children and was willing to give his life so that no other people end up suffering. His death is, thus, that much more traumatizing for the audience which has been rooting for him to come out victorious over the demon.

FOR THIS PERSPECTIVE,
YOU NEED TO MAKE
MORE OF A JUDGMENT
ABOUT THE SEASON
AS A WHOLE. THINK
OF THIS ONE AS A
REVIEW. YOU
DON'T NEED AS
MUCH SUMMARY

Genre

The second season of *The Exorcist* perfectly fits into the horror and supernatural drama genre. The supernatural drama element of the season is quite clear based on the array of characters that are explored throughout the season. First of all the actions of the priests in the season is based on a belief in God. They believe that they are agents of God and that their actions are sanctioned. They also believe that they are acting in the best interest of the world and the innocent people in the world.

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I.P.F.A

The antagonist in the season is a demon. The demon is able to appear to Andy first as a child who is seeking refuge in his house. However, this child is a bit persistent and tends to hurt him whenever he does not do exactly what she wants. When he rejects the advances of the child the demon undergoes a makeover and now appears to him as his deceased wife. It takes advantage of the love that he has for his wife and his emotional connection to her to appeal to him and make sure that he does exactly what the demon wants. To this extent the demon turns him against his children and begins to plant seeds of hatred towards them in his mind.

The dynamics of the nature of possession are also explained in the season. When the demon approaches Andy it does not use force at the beginning. The demon makes subtle suggestions to the extent of Andy giving himself over to it. An example of this is the little girl asking Andy to declare that he loves her more than he does all the other children in the house. In doing so he would have been giving himself over to the demon. When he does give himself over the demon comes out in its full horror and begins to torment him. The torment is based on psychological and emotional suffering. However, there is also an element of physical suffering when the demon hurts him physically.

The horror element of the season is very clear based on the appearance of the demons. The demons are very scary to say the least. They appear in various eerie forms and when they speak there is a duality to their voices. When a person becomes possessed by a demon they develop two pupils in one of their eyes. This is a form of disfigurement that is not only disturbing to look at but also very scary. The demons are also able to cause decomposition of the bodies of people whom they have possessed. Watching a living individual whose body is periodically decomposing is quite disturbing.

There are various artistic styles that are used to compound the element of horror throughout the season. Among these is the use of jump scares. This is a tactic that involves a long sequence of continuous events that ends in a climax where the audience encounters something that is very scary. The sequence where Father Thomas is walking in a church but something does not seem quite right is a perfect example. The people watching know that something is not right and that something will ultimately happen. However, they do not know when and this helps to further build suspense in the scene. When Father Thomas ultimately encounters the demon the audience is very scared. Some people may even jump out of their seats due to fear hence the name jump scare.

The medium of scary music is also used extensively throughout the season. The music is a very powerful tool that is used to create suspense as well as contribute to the impact of the jump scares in the season. It is also used to periodically control the mood of the audience. Terror is also available in the season in abundance. Terror is especially experienced during the suspense that ensues right before the demons are revealed. Members of the audience have to worry about the main characters who are moving oblivious to the fact that there is danger lurking around them and that their lives are in imminent danger.

Good
Do
MORE
LIKE
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THIS IS GOOD;
DO MORE TO DEFINE YOUR
GENRE + DESCRIBE ITS
CONVENTIONS/
RULES

Cultural significance

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The television adaptation of *The Exorcist* is a direct sequel to the 1973 movie *The Exorcist*. The 1973 movie was revolutionary in terms of making the horror genre mainstream. When people flocked theatres to watch it in 1973 there were reports of people fainting or vomiting in theaters with a number of people being completely unable to finish watching the film. There were also reports of miscarriages in theaters due to the grotesque nature of displays in the film. This film earned its place as among the most disturbing and scary works of cinema ever produced. It also created a genre of horror that is centered around demonic possession. The second season of *The Exorcist*, especially, tries to double down on this horror and terror element. It tries to capture the subject of demonic possession in a very vivid manner and create a picture that is very disturbing to the audience.

The Catholic Church has recently come under heavy criticism especially with claims of priests being involved in the sexual abuse of young children (Bachiochi, p. 38). This has been compounded by claims that the Vatican has worked deliberately to make sure that these claims are swept under the rug and that the truth does not come out. The second season of *The Exorcist* vaguely touches on this topic by revealing that there is extensive devil worship and demonic possession in the highest ranks of the Vatican. The fact that these high ranking priests are possessed by demons means that they are unlikely to follow the guidelines of the church. Rather they are likely to engage in behavior that is deemed as being evil. They actively encourage actions that are against the greater Christian doctrine such as murder, human sacrifice and deliberately giving themselves up for possession.

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MIGHT BE
WORTH
EXAMINING
FURTHER

Father Thomas is presented as a rising star who has the potential of becoming the very first Mexican Pope. This touches on the dedication of the Mexican people to the Catholic Church and their desire to have a Pope come from their country. One of the temptations that the demons use when trying to get Thomas to agree to possession is telling him that they will make him the very first Mexican Pope. They tell him that he can make real change as the pope and really help the poor as he desires to. This is also an allusion to the social and political power that the pope holds in modern day society (Yamane, p. 138). The pope is one of the most influential leaders in the world today and has the power of making real change just through his words.

DO MORE WITH THIS

The Catholic Church has, for a very long time, been a subject of suspicion. There is a lot of secrecy especially in the Vatican. This secrecy has led to conspiracy theories to the extent that ^{SOME PEOPLE BELIEVE THAT} the Pope is the antichrist prophesied in the book of Revelations in the Bible (Plante, Kathleen, p, 208). This element of folklore is explored to an extent in the Exorcist. The highest ranking priests are presented as demon worshippers. Some of them are even willing to let themselves be possessed by demons. The secrecy of the church especially at the higher ranks has led to this conspiracy theory which is explored in the season.

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The subject of demonic possession is also very common in popular culture. The season goes further to explore the subject of integration. This is when a person who is possessed by a demon becomes completely infused with the demon to the extent that they become one being (Caciola, p. 81). In such a situation an exorcism cannot work and the only way to get rid of the demon is to kill the possessed individual. The show delves deep into the dynamics of demonic possession and the rules of engagement when one is possessed. It also explores the reaction of skeptics to the subject of possession and emphasizes the presence of demons despite the belief of a greater portion of society to the contrary.

ALSO THINK ABOUT BROADER SKEPTICISM ABOUT INSTITUTIONS (GOVT, CHURCH, ETC)

SOME INTERESTING IDEAS HERE THAT COULD BE DEVELOPED MORE THOROUGHLY