

"Mad as Hell!": The Corruption of Personal Humanity in *Network* through Satire

by Sophie Watson
Cinematography Student

Network (1976) was nominated for 10 Academy Awards; won 4 Oscars.

Dr. Inga Meier
Faculty Sponsor

A film has the power to connect to its viewers through dark or absurd humor, revealing truths we may not want to face. My paper explores how *Network* shows the corruption of different types of people through satire.

Moment of Satire & Purpose of Character

Diana Christensen is forced to make absurd choices in her career, including working with terrorists to create a hit TV show, and eventually killing a man on live television, to save her career.

Max Schumacher loses his position as the news division President at UBS due to trying to prevent Beale from causing self-harm in his sermons. He later faces his decision of committing an affair with Diana on his wife, Louise.

Howard Beale becomes a crazy prophet lured by Diana for personal gain in achieving successful show ratings. His preaches regarding the corruptness behind television networks should be the end of TV itself, however his own show's views keep it alive.

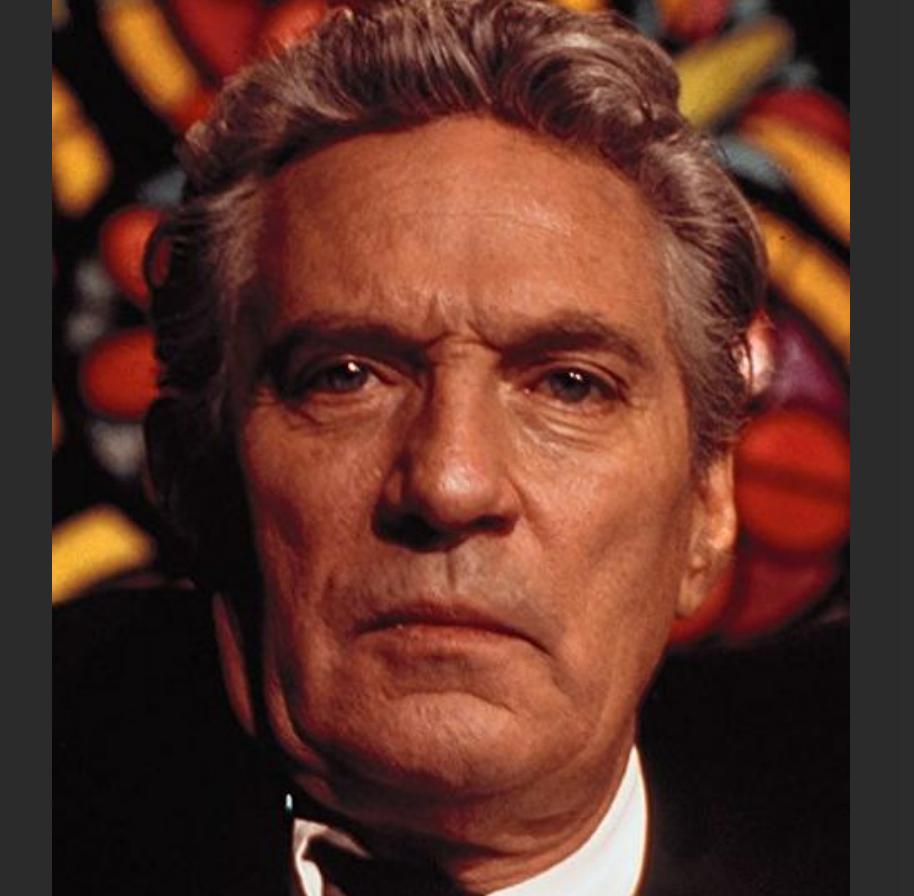
Diana believes success is her only means for survival. In reality, she needs human connection to truly live and exist. In the end, she loses everything.



People can be drawn to a younger life by temporary moments that make us feel as if we are in control. They are just that, though - temporary. It is okay to fail. He learns of forgiveness and to move on when he can no longer control things in his life.



Sometimes it's up to the public to fight for what's right. However, satire proves that people will go back to their normal ways regardless of whether change was even achieved. They'll still turn on the TV. They will always be mad at something, but can they really change?



"I'm mad as hell and I'm not going to take this anymore!" - Howard Beale, *Network* (1976)

Network is a dark comedy full of drama, using satire in instances of character development, with the characters' lives moving on while they fail to adjust. The drama is too unrealistic for the common world but resonates in film. Though TV executives will preach what they wish, it is up to human morale to determine whether or not what is occurring is true. Television networks are corrupting the minds of the public, and those involved lose themselves as a result. They either become too enriched with success and commit terrible acts to hold onto selfish ideals or fail, acting unfaithfully. Nobody wins. *Network*, though made in 1976, is still relevant – what makes the television screen each day will be used to control the public, making many forget of the true harshness in the world while gaining profit.