***Patch Adams*- Reader-Centered Approach**

**Student’s Name**

**Institution Affiliated**

**Patch Adams- reader-centered approach**

Patch Adams is a comedy cum drama-filled film featuring protagonist Hunter, a medical doctor, known for patching up patients’ loneliness through unconditional friendship. The film, directed in 1998 by Tom Shadyac, explores the idea that there is a need to have a healthy and long last relationship with patients as part of treatment. Patch’s ideology stems from his vision that successful treatment starts a fruitful relationship with the patient. As an aspiring medical doctor, I view Shadyac with a lot of optimism and open-mindedness because it brings new perspectives in the medical field. As a protagonist character in the film, I admired many things about Patch, especially in how he practiced his technique in the medical field and influence in recovery. He created a big impression in me and challenged my rudimental views about the role of medical doctors. Knowing how Patch successfully treated patients not only through the administration of medicine but by developing a sentimental attachment with them, I tend to think his viewpoint is valid and hugely applicable to contemporary measures. Despite the numerous use of humor and drama in the film, his practice captures underlying complexities in medicine. It shapes new discussions and perspectives in terms of patient care and recovery. I found the film not only creative, humorous, and enjoyable but also thought-provoking.

**Defense of theoretical approach**

My reader-centered approach employed in the interpretation of a film, Patch Adams, comes from Roland Barthes's theory postulating that once a text has been published, the author ceases to exist, and the text is the one speaking (Barthes, 2001). This theory assumes that once a writer produces a text, the authorship becomes irrelevant, and the text operates at the reader’s providence. Fundamentally, Barthes challenged a method of reading that relies on the authors’ identity, experiences, and biases as a definitive explanation of the meaning in the text (Allen, 2011). To Barthes, a complete and fruitful reading comes from a distinction of a literary work from the creator to liberate text from undue interpretation as each text has distinctive meanings (Logie, 2013).

As Barthes discussed, writers must always eliminate a reader’s expectations from their literary texts (Culler, 2002). This relates to my reading of Patch Adams having the same expectations that Shadyac’s, like his previous works, will produce similar laced work with comic styles. This means that while I interpret Shadyac’s work based on his previous work, I bring certain assumptions and judgments into my reading of Patch Adams, which are biased and delusional. Barthes’ theory postulates that the death of the author must occur to give space to the reader to make unbiased meaning and enter the text from the unperceived point of view (Vassar, 2007). Understanding Barthes's theory that the author of text cannot determine or give meaning to the text since innumerable sources dictate the meaning text gives better discernment of Patch Adams film. The theory dismissed my earlier stance that Shadyac’s creative texts are influenced by comic and humoristic styles.

In conclusion, a reading from the film Patch Adams as directed by Shadyac using Barthes's theory of Death of Author and the birth of the reader has compounded my convictions and allowed me to decipher the text in a better way.  As indicated, the film deviates from Shadyac's previous works, which had many comic styles. But using Barthes’ theory, a reader can remove the author in interpretation and give a new perspective and understanding of the text, not as comical text, but as text that carries a message about needed transformation in the medical field in terms of a better relationship with patients.

**References**

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