



# SHOW NOTES



## Parasite: Theme, Tone, and Structure Hosted by: Jacob Krueger

Parasite is built around a question: Who is the parasite?  
The structure explores this question by examining the way the rich view the poor as parasites, the way the poor view the rich as parasites, and the way the poor view the underclass as parasites.

In a way, what he's really looking at is our political situation and the ongoing class wars we're experiencing around the world.

Because Bong is a great filmmaker, he starts Parasite by weighting the argument against his own point of view, which is fairly liberal and progressive. Rather than starting with a parasitic rich family, he starts with the parasitic poor family.

As they infiltrate the world of the rich, this poor family, that used to be a bunch of sweet have-nots, are suddenly acting like cold, hard capitalists and crushing the competition by any means necessary.

This becomes the structure for the first half of the movie. Get the son a job. Get the daughter a job. Get the dad a job. Get the mom a job.

Great screenplay structure is always simple. The hard part is figuring it out.

Structure happens in relation to the theme and the question you're asking as a writer.

In the first half of Parasite, four people get jobs, and with each job they become a little more parasitic. Why do they become more parasitic? Because they get sucked into the societal world of money, of having. That having makes them want to have more and protect the things they have.

Halfway through the movie, they and their rich patrons have almost switched places. The rich patrons are out on a trip and the family is having a big party in the house. They're treating the house as if it was their own, even though in order to get it they pushed out the good people who were there.

At the same time we're watching the poor family that we love become more parasitic, we're also watching the family that we initially saw as wealthy parasites becomes more and more human.

Halfway through the movie, another door is opened, literally. This is when the movie switches and becomes more and more of a horror movie. But it still grows from the same question "who is the parasite?"

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In the middle of the party the poor family is having while their rich patrons are away, the old housekeeper shows up again and begs them to let her in. Once they do so, she goes down beneath the garage to the basement where her husband is secretly living, like a ghost in the house.

Bong takes the genre element of the haunted house and treat a character who is actually alive like a ghost that's haunting it. This decision grows out of the way we often see the underclass, as if they were terrifying ghosts from another world, instead of real people. The ghost haunting the house that the little boy saw is just a man the rest of society has turned its back on.

What happens next is the lower class finds the underclass. And, just as happens in our country, rather than asking how they can help each other, the lower class and the underclass try to push each other down so they can hold on to what they have.

The underclass tries to regain their rightful place in the home, while the newly lower class tries to push the underclass down so they don't lose what they fought for.

The horror in Parasite doesn't grow out of trying to make a horror movie, even though Bong is playing with those genre elements. The horror grows out of this resentment between three different levels of class. It grows and grows and grows until the ghost haunting the house is transformed into a real monster by the violence he experiences.

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