* In your view, how well does the film balance the perspectives of 'the afflicted', with those of various people in their orbit (friends, family, medical professionals, etc.)?

Considering the episode is focused on those afflicted with a certain illness, the episode does a good job explaining the symptoms and everyday life-styles of those the illness directly affects. For example, the illness is explained through the eyes of those suffering from the illness by way of explaining their daily routine or feelings. It covers how their lives used to be and how drastically their affliction has changed their lives. The episode also does a good job of giving the perspective of those close to the afflicted experiences. For example, for Carmon, it was her husband and for Jamison, it was his caregiver.

* In what ways do questions of authenticity, legitimacy, belief, or trust come up in the episode?

The authenticity of the afflicted is put into question as their illnesses are very esoteric and idiosyncratic. They are not common and very unknown. To most, they sound made up, as there are not very apparent physical distinguishes. For example, there is no physical evidence of a disease such as external deterioration. We have to trust that what the patients are actually feeling is true and not just in their minds. Clearly, the patients are afflicted with an illness, but whether it is a mental or actual physical illness is indistinguishable.

* Did you find yourself empathizing with certain people more than others?

I found myself empathizing with the patients, but also those close to the afflicted, as I could relate to them. My grandmother suffers from dementia and her medication causes her to hallucinate and remain inactive. Taking care of her in her current state was one of the hardest things I’ve ever done, as I have memories of who she was before her illness took over her personality. Seeing the stark difference between who she was and who she makes me empathetic to the caregivers and family members who have stuck by the afflicted and gone through the journey with them. The illness affects not only the afflicted but everyone close to them as well. This experience is hard on everyone involved, especially knowing there is not much anyone can do to fix the situation.

* What does it mean for symptoms to be *unexplained*? (I don't mean literally; I mean: what does it mean for the afflicted person? What does it mean for the doctors? For loved ones and caretakers? How do different parties cope with or interpret an absence of explanation?)

For the afflicted person it means that they don’t have an understanding of why they are experiencing what they are. It’s a struggle for themselves to cope with losing their own lives and figuring out low to live with their new illness. For the doctors, it means not being able to actually diagnose a prognosis for what the patient is experiencing. The illness that these people are afflicted with not unique and unheard-of, so the doctors don’t have an accurate understanding of the situation, causing them to misdiagnose the patients or leading the patients to self-diagnose their symptoms. For the caretakers and loved ones, this leaves them helpless as they don’t know to properly take care or support the patients. They are also left questioning whether the illnesses that the patients are feeling are actually real or fictitious. This may cause mistrust and frustration in relationships.

* What questions were you left with?

I am left wondering how the producers of the show were able to find these afflicted people. I am wondering if these are just mental illness that have begun to evolve into physical illnesses.