Team: *Stand By Me*

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HHS 387-A

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Proposal for Remake: *Stand By Me* (1986)

Rob Reiner’s 1986 coming-of-age film *Stand By Me* as adapted from Steven King’s novel/short-story *The Body* is a masterclass telling of how fast today’s kids must “grow up” in the face of adversity and maturity by exploring these topics through the eyes of the four main boys Gordie, Teddy, Vern, and Chris. This movie is beloved for its portrayal of the innocence of youth and its refusal to “pull punches” when exploring the physical and mental effects of abuse and the triumph of the childish spirit in spite of it all. Rolling Stones describes why the movie *Stand By Me* is regarded with such reverence: “Bruce Evans and Raynold Gideon’s script nails the wandering-mind banter sessions so common among barely pubescent young men, as they tool on one another in a gesture of affection and fraternity” (Rolling Stone par. 5). Essentially, the boys’ fearless spirit and simple relatability resonate with viewers of all ages and identities because they are/were just like the gang at one point in life. The nostalgia of simpler times and the tragic realization that the boys have finally lost what made them innocent is what draws us back to *Stand By Me* and back to our past selves.

Thanks to the film’s incredible relatability to the human condition there is an opportunity to remake *Stand By Me* in modern times to continue to discuss the impact of modern problems on kids (or in our case young-adults). The world, for better or worse, has gotten much more complicated than the Labor Day weekend of 1959 that saw Gordie, Chris, Vern, and Teddy on their adventure to find Ray Brower’s body. As such the technological revolution has vastly changed how we learn, share information, and experience life as we know it. The main driving force of *Stand By Me*, being the pursuit of finding the body, almost certainly could not happen in today’s world where its location would be known by many at the click of a button/Tweet. This is not to say that the film’s primary themes and plot are irrelevant to today’s life. This proposal argues to the contrary that *Stand By Me*’s themes absolutely need to be retold to explore how modern kids/young-adults experience the pains of maturity in a technological world. In order to accomplish this the team believes that the key scenes, namely finding the “body” and the final departure when Gordie narrates the ultimate fates of the boys, should be updated to reflect the team’s hopes, ambitions, and fears of graduating college and entering a bleak and unpredictable world thanks to the prolific sharing of news/data.

Another aspect of *Stand By Me* that made it so endearing and relatable to its audience was the cast of pre-teen characters and the themes about growing up and growing apart from those you have been close with for your entire life. While those motifs are certainly still relevant to the age demographic as depicted in the original film and short story, they could also be applied to an older, but not still fully matured group of characters, to be specific, college students. One’s college experience, comparably to one’s preteen years, is a time of self-discovery and creating meaningful relationships. However, again like one’s adolescence, college can be a source of great stress and worry about what the future holds. What career path one might want with their degree, a potential relocation due to said career path, and, most importantly for a potential remake of *Stand By Me*, the possible loss of friends are all roots of stress for a university student. Of course, the rise of technology in the world that was previously discussed allows people to stay in communication with friends and family across the world. While social media and instant messaging may allow for relationships to stay intact while people are geographically far apart, there truly is no substitute for in-person interactions, as we believe most people in a post-pandemic world would agree with.