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Video Production

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Camera Work Analysis: House Season 3 Episode 6

House is a fictional tv series about Greg House, a disease specialist, who works with his team of young diagnosticians in order to solve mysterious health cases. Nearly flawless instincts and unconventional thinking help House save patient lives, despite House's insufferable frankness and rudeness.

In season three episode six, House and his team try to figure out what is wrong with a morbidly obese man.

The episode utilized a lot of wide, medium, and close up shots. It occasionally used establishing shots, usually to draw the audience back in after what I assumed to be the last scene before commercial. Close ups were used to convey sadness and intensity. Wide shots were sometimes used to transition a scene from one location to the other. For example, Dr. House waited outside a police station to be picked up. As his friend tried to find out why he got arrested, the camera worked in closer to the characters. As the two went from standing outside the car to entering the car, the camera went out to a wide shot. Then the camera returned to a medium shot.

The camera shots used normal and bright lighting during normal and humorous conversation. This lighting was often used when the doctors gathered in Dr. House's office to discuss the health case. The lighting was dark when there was a somber or sad scene. The show reflected on the sad condition of the patient. In every scene where they were treating him with

big machinery (i.e. CT machine), the lighting was dark and slightly green. This was not only done to express the intended mood, but to relay medical accuracy.

Camera shots primarily focused on the speaker. However, there were exceptions. Several times when Dr. House or Dr. Chase made a joke, the camera would pan over to their colleagues to capture their reaction. The camera would do this while the speaker continues or after he was done speaking. For example, Dr. Cameron looked through the patient's house while the tenant explained the patient's personal life. When the tenant explained the patient's job, the camera did not focus on her, it focused on Dr. Cameron. It did this because Dr. Cameron was holding the patient's work possessions, in particular business letters.

Camera shot length varied. During normal scenes, the shot would last no more than four seconds. These scenes helped me to focus on the dialogue and characters. This kind of camera work does not evoke any particular emotion, but allows the dialogue, characters, and story to evoke emotion from viewers. During intense scenes, where the patient became critically ill, the shots cut quickly and were rapid. For example, the patient woke up from a coma inside a CT machine. The patient was last conscious in his home, so when he awoke, he was startled and tried to escape. This rocked the machine back and forth and caused great distress. This caused me to become more alert and on edge, just like the doctors. During emotional scenes, the camera would linger and focus on the face. For example, after the patient learned he would die from lung cancer, the camera held on his reaction for an extended period of time. This helped me feel how he felt and allowed me to reflect on the significance of the news.

My favorite use of the camera was a long shot that went from one firefighter, up the side of a wall until it settled on another firefighter several stories above the first firefighter. The dialogue and camera work complimented each other well to provide a great camera shot.

