

A note in appreciation of *Eyes Wide Shut*

2 September 1999

While I agree that attempts to read a larger social statement into this film will inevitably fail, I feel that MJ's comment does not do *Eyes Wide Shut* justice. Much of the film's success has to do with Kubrick's understanding of the craft of powerful visual storytelling. The long shots, especially in the scenes between Cruise and Kidman, cement our belief in the characters and subsequently in what is occurring. This may be seen as purely technical virtuosity and thus cover for lack of a compelling story-line but I don't believe that's the case here.

Yes, "nothing happens" in a literal sense. The film is dealing with the inner life of a marriage or relationship, feelings of guilt and betrayal that inevitably arise when illicit sexual desire surfaces, even if it is not acted upon. The fact that both wife and husband remain faithful even though all this decadence is swirling around them makes that final scene plausible, funny and moving all at once.

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