Directing *Cheery Point*

An Honors Thesis (HONRS 499)

By

Adam R. Bailey

Thesis Advisor

Chris Flook

Ball State University
Muncie, Indiana

May, 2012

Expected Date of Graduation

May, 2013
Abstract

In the Spring of 2012 I directed my first feature-length movie called “Cheery Point.” Before this endeavor I had a little directing experience with short student films, but “Cheery Point” was on a much larger scale than anything I was used to. Along the way I picked up some tools of the trade and learned a lot about what directing is all about. In this thesis is a detailed overview that demystifies the role of the director and sheds some light on the different aspects of the job from a student and independent point of view that I learned from my time working on “Cheery Point.”

Acknowledgements

I would like to thank Kenneth Stevenson for asking me to help make Cheery Point a reality, for making it a reality by conceptualizing it and finding funds as well as contributing his own, and for being the executive producer, director of photography, co-writer, and many other roles that came his way. His talent made this possible.

Thanks to James Treakle and Allison Flood for their hard work as our additional co-writers of the screenplay. Without their contribution the film could not be what it has grown to be.

I also thank the many, many people who poured out their support: Tim and Kim Stevenson for keeping us well fed for the shoots in Kentucky as well as letting us stay in and film in their home, The Bennet family for financial support, also letting us stay in their home, letting us film in their factory, Perry Puckett for graciously letting us film inside his home, Victoria Stevenson for letting us film in her home, and especially to Denny and Joan Markwell who let us film on their property for five strait, exhausting days. Without any of them, Cheery Point could not have happened.

Another huge thank you goes to all the cast and crew for their sleepless nights and immense effort and dedication to the project. I can’t thank them enough for their hard work.

Finally, I would like to thank Chris Flook for helping Kenny and I through the process of creating the thesis. He has been exceptionally helpful and encouraging.
Part I
Overview

The goal of a director is to bring an experience to life. To look at a fictional script as written history that he and his team must present with as much accuracy on screen as possible. Only the director has this vision, however, and he has to guide everyone else towards it. The director will make the creative decisions for literally everything that appears on screen. Who moves where, what they wear, what is in the background—everything. It is a tremendously involved and multifaceted job, as I experienced directing Cheery Point. I did not go into it knowing everything either, but learned quite a lot along the way. The purpose of this thesis is to review and reflect my experience directing Cheery Point.

A huge lesson I learned tackling this production is how mystified the role of the director is. Very little seems to be known about the director outside of the thought of the guy that sits on the director’s chair and calls action and cut before bossing people around and telling actors how to “be.” None of this is entirely true nor encompasses the work that goes into a film by the director or any of the dozens if not hundreds of people who’ve worked on it. While things seem more interesting while unknown, it is impossible to love what is unknown—and you’ve got to love this job to do it.

One more thing I will say before diving into the typical flow of film production is that it is absolutely essential to know that making a film is a team sport. The director should know what he wants the film to be, but should be completely open to ideas and suggestions from the cast and crew. He should also know when to take a step back and let someone else do their job. It mostly consists of communicating to everyone what is needed and then being the final filter in making decisions for the film, not necessarily choreographing every fight or designing every
prop or setting up and moving the camera. The director's job comes down to finding his vision for the images that will tell the story and then communicating them to the crew. Under the director's guidance, the skills of dozens of people will coincide into one coherent experience.

Before production begins, a screenplay is written and registered for copyright with the Writers Guild of America. Next, if the screenplay is picked up, the producers, director, and many others will enter what is called preproduction and will preplan everything for the film. After preproduction comes production and all the scenes are filmed. Next is postproduction and it involves the editing and visual effects of the film. Since at the time of writing this Cheery Point has only just entered postproduction, my reflections regarding it will be brief.

Preproduction is half the battle, as more than one professor has told me. Knowing and repeating this fact is one thing, actually understanding it is another. Unfortunately, even after I list the various duties attached to preproduction, I don’t think there is any way to truly understand the importance of preproduction without having experienced what happens when you don’t and do manage to complete it. As mentioned, the director’s jobs during preproduction are widespread. He must read the script over and over, finally analyzing the script. Once this is done, a director will typically work with a storyboard artist to sketch out hundreds of storyboards. These will then be used as aids during set design and location scouting. The director also needs to also give description to guide costume and prop design, all of which will be based on analysis and helped by the storyboards. Furthermore, he will also need to make a list of the camera angles that will be filmed called a “shot list” that will be worked on and discussed with the director of photography\(^1\) and assistant director\(^2\). In lieu of the shot lists the director will also block\(^3\) the action and also share it with the director of photography and assistant director. At the same time

---
\(^1\) The person who coordinates the placement and angles of the camera, lights, and everything photography
\(^2\) Responsible for keeping the production on schedule
\(^3\) The placement of actors on set within a scene
the director will also be casting and communicating with the actors chosen. He will meet and rehearse with actors multiple times and share necessary character analysis until they are fully prepped for their roles. Producers will make a detailed schedule, coordinate with every crew member, actor, and extra their call times as well as their transportation, talk with property owners to coordinate times to film on their property, and talk with dozens of other people to make sure that sets are built, props are built/acquired, costumes are made/acquired, and make sure it all happens according to schedule. All the while lots of other people, usually hundreds for a multi-million dollar Hollywood set, are getting those various tasks taken care of. Missing even one of these elements can seriously hamper the quality of the film later and add stress to everyone involved.

Production is the fun part when all the planning finally pays off. During this bout the director is responsible for maintaining coordination between himself, the assistant director, the director of photography, and the cast. However, this can all be summed up into making sure what’s captured on the camera is turning out how it should be according to his vision of the script. If the action isn’t right, the director should remedy the problem by giving new direction to the actors. Sometimes, the dialogue may need to be reworked on the fly. If something else is wrong, he should collaborate with his team to find some creative solution. Basically, it’s all fine-tuning from preproduction.

The director’s job carries on into postproduction and it is still just as important as it was before. The director will need to work with the editor to make sure the movie is cut as perfectly as it can be, and even one frame too little or too much can make a difference. How the movie is put together can also drastically change the overall effect of the film as it decides what information is presented to the audience and in what order. An ineffective cut can make certain
sequences feel off or simply confusing and can easily lose the emotional pull (whether it be inspiring or depressing) desired from the sequence. The director will also guide the visual effects, sound, and music departments as needed. Automatic Dialogue replacement, commonly called ADR\(^4\), sessions may be needed to patch up audio that may not have been recorded to the highest quality while on set, which is usually due to a background noise that simply could not be worked around. If ADR is needed, the actors needing to rerecord dialogue will be brought in to try and match the old recording. Other needs can arise for ADR, but this is the most common in independent filmmaking. Unfortunately, ADR can be seen as a tempting crutch to speed things up on set so that time consuming audio issues can be swept under the rug, but ADR is something that should be avoided at all costs. It costs lots of extra money and time and can be quite frustrating to work with. Granted, when on a limited budget and on limited time, there may not be a way around it. There also may be cases where the director wants to get some additional shots for the film and it will be up to the time, budget, and executive producer(s) to decide whether or not this can happen.

Once all of this is taken care of, the film should be ready for release and the director’s job is more or less “finished.” At the independent level, however, this is hardly the case as he must also find a way to promote the film alongside everyone else that is. Today this means sharing promotional material on facebook for showings at film festivals and other events.

\(^4\) Automatic Dialogue Replacement is the process of replacing dialogue captured on location with that captured in a studio by having the talent speak as closely in sync with the original recording as possible.
Part II

Analyzing the Script

*Cheery Point* went through writing, preproduction, and production all within a span of five months, which is a rather short span of time when you add in that all of the crew was trying to keep up in school at the same time. Since there was a huge time crunch, a lot of preproduction got shuffled into production and it became routine for us to work on the preproduction for the shoots coming up on the weekends. Regardless, my responsibilities were more or less the same.

I began preproduction by analyzing the script. I read it over quite a few times, each with different focuses in mind. The first was to simply get it fresh in my mind and start developing certain understandings then each time after was to get an idea for the perspective of each character as well as the overall tone and feel of the film and each scene within it. What I found early on was the main questions the film was asking. Outside of the obvious “what role does suffering play in the human experience?” was the underlying questions of “what is life worth?” and “what is living?” Further readings made me not only see more questions and statements the film is making, but realize that each idea is hinged around one of the main characters.

Joshua, the main character, seemed to be wondering what life was all about—and it’s a question that others tried to answer for him, and he ultimately needed to answer it for himself. He has used Torpase\(^5\) for the vast majority of his life, so he has not had much time to think on this until he is off of Torpase. This makes Joshua curious, but it has also caused him to be afraid of many things and he tends to runs away from his problems, so his arc needed to end with him taking a stance and deciding on an answer to the question himself. First, he simply doesn’t

---

\(^5\) Torpase is a fictional drug that exists within the world of *Cheery Point*. It takes away all feeling and emotion, leaving the user completely numb to everything physical and psychological.
know—it’s why he stays at the Springer⁶ camp in the first place. Then, after spending more time
with Becca and making friends, he seems to believe life is about who you spend it with. Soon
after this realization, however, Albert is killed, followed by Becca’s suicide. This completely
shakes the notion that life amounts to who it is spent with. Finally, however, Joshua comes to a
realization that it’s not just who you spend it with, but what and especially whom you remember.
His mistakes and suffering is worth it because it will stick with him until he dies, and he can use
it to make himself a better person.

Becca was one of the more difficult and complex characters to analyze, but, through that,
one of the more interesting. I noticed the character of Becca embodied the main struggle of pain
versus happiness, and whether the bad is worth the good. Very often she wants to believe
Joshua’s naive take that the happiness is well worth it, but she never does quite break free of her
depression. It would seem that she ultimately decides the pain is not worth it, and in a sense it is
true. However, after looking deeper I realized that her inevitable suicide was more of an attempt
to preserve herself from going back onto Torpase like Joshua had asked. The best way to view it
seemed to be that she did not quite believe that her pain was worth living with anymore, but that
going numb again would be worse than death.

The character of Corey struggled with the value of life—especially when it ends like it
does. He’s a hunter, so he deals in death more than most in Cheery Point, even if it is only to
animals. He never seemed to be fully on Torpase, so this thought of life’s meaning and value
would be one that he has mulled over for some time. He knows that what’s important is survival
and that pain is simply a part of life. However, he does not find it normal to experience more
pain than is necessary, which is why he is rather amused at Albert’s denial of Torpase even as he

⁶ A “Springer” is a derogatory term used in Cheery Point to define one who doesn’t use Torpase. It’s based off of the
Cheery Point slang term for crying called “springing”
bleeds out. Corey doesn’t really answer the question of life’s value, however, as that is covered in Joshua’s epiphany and, ultimately, left up to the audience to debate.

Other characters already have their answer to these questions, and their stance impacts the three main characters in different ways. Albert believes that pain is necessary for joy, as Christ suffered to redeem us, and that by denying that pain you are denying the existence God intended for humanity. Joshua latches onto this and takes a less religious stance, but it annoys Becca suggesting she’s experienced something that cannot be justified as a simple and necessary part of living. The Mayor does not believe the pain is worth the joy, but does seem to think that humanity is worth preserving. In fact, it seems that he cares deeply for humanity as a whole and believes that Torpase is the only way it can survive. However, the universe is also just one big game and that there are necessary risks, gambles, and sacrifices that must be made for the species to survive. The group mentality within Cheery Point suggests that life has nothing to do with emotions or memory, that it’s simply enough to survive and reproduce.

The juxtaposition of Albert and Cheery Point is a symbolic battle of religion and science. The fascinating thing about the script is that it tries to give each perspective equal footing, never quite invalidating one perspective. Albert and The Mayor, who represent an unwavering devotion to religion and science respectively, both die in the film. However, Joshua, a character who is always questioning, not only survives but also discovers the truth about Cheery Point. Joshua is the philosopher, and he outlasts the priest and scientist. This suggests that a mindset of always questioning the standards will both preserve and enrich your life.

All in all the film also suggests there’s more to life that simply surviving and that humanity can survive with our emotions and memory intact. It even goes so far as to say that you

---

7 One of the final scenes of the movie reveals that Cheery Point is a government testing facility and that the rest of the world was, in fact, not nuked. See the synopsis provided for more information.
need to believe in something, however it isn’t specific on the what. There will be a lot of pain and suffering in life, and it shouldn’t be avoided, but remembered so that there is still meaning to it.

Of course, this sets the tone to be rather surreal, sad, yet ultimately hopeful. As someone who has not lived there ever, surreal is the only way I can really explain experiencing life within Cheery Point. It’s the uncanny valley of existence; people do normal things like cook, eat, go to work, drive, walk, talk to each other, hang out at bars, and even have sex, only the emotion is gone. It’s like everyone’s acting at life from a set of expectations—and it’s this realization that has been my most valuable piece of insight on the community of Cheery Point in directing actors and everything else.

The factory, which also housed the office for the Mayor of Cheery Point, always had a looming bleakness overhead. As a factory, it only has one purpose—to produce Torpase. It ties in neatly with Cheery Point, as it produces the drug that more or less turns the residents into machines. More or less, the factory is the epitome of the Mayor’s perspective that humanity serves only the function of survival and that the accessories of emotion will drive it to extinction.

The cabin had a very hopeful feel the vast majority of the time, even in the midst of the tragedies that happen. In fact, this is only broken during the scenes that either involve the Mayor or Torpase “infiltrating” the cabin—and even then, the hope doesn’t seem to die. Albert’s death, for instance, is bogged down by Corey’s rather pessimistic views. Yet Albert’s persistence in abstaining from Torpase and his blessing on Joshua is still rather hopeful—that even when things turn for the worse, people can still hold to their beliefs.

After all this analysis, I was able to discuss with the actors what was relevant to their characters. I made sure not to discuss much further than their character, however, as I believe it
is important to preserve each character’s unique perspective within each actor. And since perspective also comes through what we experience, I thought it would be beneficial for each actor to have some understanding of their character’s untold back-story so that they had specific memories to refer to. Using the analysis of each character, I wrote the back-stories for the characters and provided them to the actors, and also asked them to be careful about sharing them with other actors. The actors ultimately found them to be very helpful in understanding their characters. A good example of this is Becca’s reaction to Albert’s speech about pain being medicine—how she seemed to have gone through something traumatic that makes her feel like she knows more than Albert. For her, I wrote about losing her mother to a house fire that she accidentally started and that it’s haunted her for her whole life. Wanting to capitalize on the use of back-story, however, I also made sure that various back-stories interconnected so that the actors could play off of each characters’ histories. For instance, I also made it so that Joshua had witnessed a burning house as a child and opted not to do anything about it since he was on Torpase.
Part III

The Experience of Directing

Kenneth Stevenson and myself talked a lot in preproduction about what we would want to present on screen. One of the first decisions we reached was that we needed to have a stark contrast between the Springers and Pasers. Black and white was almost immediately brought up, although we didn’t want to make it so that it became the cliché black for bad and white for good. Instead, we found that we could reverse the roles. White is rather lifeless and is the absence of color (as far as pigmentation goes) where black would represent the direct opposite. Plus, black matched the priest garb we would need for Albert, which settled it.

With this in mind, we opted for those in Cheery Point to wear very neat white clothes. However, we had trouble finding white pants in bulk at a reasonable price, so we instead went with khaki pants for male residents. I find this helped in some ways, as it shows that they’re trying to imitate a previous society on a certain level. We also wanted the houses of Joshua and Becca to only be white on the inside to further this, and we succeeded despite limited location choices. Torpase itself was ultimately chosen to be a white liquid within a pale pump resembling an insulin pump. Modified hypodermic needles and tubes were used as refills for the pumps throughout the film.

The Springers were all clothed in logo-free black shirts and varying types of black pants, although mostly sweatpants. They would not be quite as strict as those within Cheery Point, but would need a way of identifying themselves as a unified group, hence the same color choice yet varying specific type of clothing. The exception to this rule was Joshua, who was in a dark blue

---

8 Those who live in Cheery Point using Torpase.
shirt and gray sweatpants. I chose this to separate him further from everyone else and to help signify him as being between the two different ideals.

The props and costumes were all put onto a list and then purchased or created by various team members as time and money allowed. Normally this would have been much more streamlined, but because it’s an independent film with a limited crew, we all had to fill in the gaps the best we could. However, we found that it was best to always have at least one person in charge of props and costume after a few initial incidents caused us to lose time looking for the right props and costumes.

The role of the director was heavily involved in communication, and the amount of communication with others needed is immense. I experienced firsthand what happens when a director is not as communicative as is needed, and is certainly something I wish to improve as I work on this career path. If people aren’t told what the director needs or the director misses an opportunity to discuss character more with the actors, the quality will take a hit.

In line with communication is also the importance of the shot list. This is the number one thing I wish to improve in filmmaking, as I really underestimated its importance throughout the process. It’s not enough to make one, but it also needs to be able to looked over in depth by the director of photography, assistant director, camera operators, gaffer, and audio engineer, which means they need time to look over it. Not only that, but the director of photography also needs time to discuss the photography with the director so that additional shots may be added, unnecessary shots removed, and how each will be acquired can be worked out ahead of time.

Researching the craft of directing was also a major part of my experience during preproduction of *Cheery Point*. I read articles about different directing styles, took a class on acting as well as film study, and read through a couple of books. Through my research, the most
valuable source I found was a book by Judith Weston, Directing Actors. Most of the other tasks of directing, such as analyzing or creating a shotlist, speak for themselves as far as how to accomplish them and their significance. Giving actors direction, however, is not so straightforward. It was by far the biggest part of my job and the one that I understood the least about going in. This is probably due to it also being the least understood aspect of the craft (outside of realizing there is a craft to directing). Most people assume you tell the actors how to feel and what to do and that’s it—they’ll do it, and if they’re a good actor, it’ll look good. This, however, if far from the truth as I found out by reading the book, reflecting on my past experiences directing, and then seeing the results of following the book’s guidance while actually directing.

"Efforts to look serious often produce an unintentionally comical effect...consequently the effort itself is the effect that finally reads" (Weston 15). Directing Actors argues that simply telling someone how to feel or what to do does not really make them appear as they’re told, calling this “result directing”. In fact, it can usually have the opposite effect. It’s not how people think or act normally and so it doesn’t look natural. It also does not help to tell an actor how to feel either, as we cannot control our feelings. Weston suggests that actors be given playable action through the use of verbs that amount to some sort of goal. This turns the actor’s attention outward and gives them something to actually do.

She also warns against having the actors over-analyze their character. It separates them from the character, which hampers the performance. People are rarely in a state of such self awareness that they break down precisely why they do something, so making an actor think about why they do all the actions they do is completely unnecessary. The talented actors will use
analysis to figure out how to think like the character, but will ultimately and simply do and be the character without self-reflection in the moment.

It was this thought that lead me to create the back-stories for actors rather than an in-depth breakdown explaining the causes for each action. This isn’t to say that myself and the actors ignored the reasoning behind specific moments during our discussions, only that we never made a flow chart of actions and reasoning and never, ever discussed the psychology behind the character’s decisions and dialogue. I found the most useful was simply referring to the moment before or giving a very brief explanation based on one of the happenings in the characters life prior. This allowed for the action to be based on a memory of the actors, which helped them to be thinking of something specific as they carried out the action. However, I found that this only worked in rare cases and that forsaking reason for a specific goal works more often—the action will still fit the character, but will be a simplified version of what all the explanation would amount to.

I also found through Directing Actors and through practice that sometimes it helped to try the exact opposite action of what would be initially assumed or what was even discussed. There was one scene where The Mayor shows up at the Barret’s house to take Caroline. Analysis of this scene and others suggested that these two had a rather intimate history together, and that the Mayor might still have feelings for her. For one reason or another, having Louie, the actor for the Mayor, greet her as such at the door was not working. However, when asked to intimidate and loathe her, he drew in closer to her, making it seem like there was a true connection between them. In fact, as the Mayor comes off as very bitter all the time, it made him seem to care about her more.
Sometimes all the actor needs is time to achieve the desired effect. The old adage that you can’t rush perfection is incredibly true in the case of acting and directing. In fact, the biggest triumphs for myself as a director during production happened after more drawn-out series of takes. One instance I occurred when Joshua had finally remembered his mother killing his father in order to protect him, and the only real way to achieve this effect was to take Tommy, Joshua’s actor, on a roller-coaster ride of varying directions. It took around eight takes, but the idea was to start him off with the direction that I was sure that would work. As soon as that didn’t work I tried something completely different, such as having him experience the memory from his mother’s perspective instead of his own, and then his father’s, and then repeating the dialogue that happened throughout the flashback, to having him go over-the-top with his reaction, completely draw everything back, and then finally coming back to the original direction I gave. By then, it was perfect.

However, another bag of tricks the director has is the actors’ own experiences. I will say that these are not typically the most fun to use, especially in the tense, emotion parts of the film, even though they’re often the most real. When a director does this, they’re asking their actor or actors to open up old wounds, making the scene intensely personal. A director should never, ever be afraid to use this technique, only that they should understand what they’re doing and have the full support of the actor they’re asking it from. Cheery Point had quite a few of these instances. Once, to get an actor to become completely distraught, he asked me to tell him something horrible happened to his child—and so I acted as a police officer telling him firsthand what had “just happened”. It worked perfectly for the scene, although I’ll be the first to say I didn’t enjoy it. Also, as there was a couple who both acted in the film, there were many instances where they decided to use their own relationship to help certain moments in the film.
I cannot stress enough the importance of communication on the director’s end. If no one is told what the vision is and what it requires, how can it ever be realized? If the actors are left without knowing their characters, then it’s impossible to nail down a fully-fledged character and something along the line will make them seem off or just not right. What people wear and the tools they use are also important, and if those are absent then the story will not make sense nor will it hit the right effect. All of these things are achieved through steady communication and all of them fall through without it. A movie needs one coherent vision, and unless people know what that is, they’ll fill in the blanks and it will ultimately be all over the place.
Bibliography


Appendix A

Plost Synopsis (by Kenneth Stevenson):

Joshua Barrett, is an average guy in his late 20’s living in the small town of Cheery Point in the year 2017. Average, that is, in keeping with the circumstances of the times. Citizens of the United States were convinced by their government in the late 60’s to conform to a new welfare program. It stipulated that the newly founded drug torpase was essential for everyday living. Torpase eliminates all psychological and physical pain by delivery of an insulin-like pump on the abdomen, and as a result people simply exist without the need or knowledge of art, religion, or emotional empathy towards each other in any regard. Joshua’s life centers on a habitual workday as a photographer of the deaths of “Springers”, a term society uses for those who do not take Torpase and can cry. The other employees create little more than rudimentary art and are consistently fired and rehired by his manager, Mr. Richards.

However, this is all shattered for Joshua when he is taken hostage by Albert, the last priest of the Roman Catholic Church, who introduces him to a resistance of Springers. Joshua’s negative perception and criticism of this movement diminish as Albert enlightens him to the point of emotional awareness and a fuller understanding of the world around him. His path collides with Becca Reynolds, a young woman who is haunted with an overwhelming need to continue “pasing” to quell her issues with depression, despite her desperate desire to be without. In the mix also is Corey Jenkins, a man with his own perception of what pain can mean in the grand scheme of things that is not always contingent with the well-good of others. It is up to the Springers to demobilize the Torpase factory and restore sentimentality to Cheery Point.

However, more than a society of indifference resists them. The Mayor of Cheery Point, a tired and determined man with an affinity for games, wants all people to be given Torpase as “their medicine” and leads the Torpase Distribution Division (T.D.D.), the government/law enforcement of the town, to keep Cheery Point in a painless state. Not all is as it seems, however, as not one person is inherently bad or good.

The film is framed through the experiences and back-stories of the diverse characters, reminiscent of popular storytelling in shows such as LOST and complex story-driven movies like CRASH. At its heart are the questions we all grapple with in unique ways as humans: What is life worth? Is it always worth living? And if someone told you they could take all your pain away, would you go along with it?

Why We Think Making this Movie is Important:

As the ability of modern medicine and health care technologies increase, there is no telling what kinds of drugs may be issued in the near future and what their effects may be. Could science eventually take away what it means to be human? Are the things that make us human, like emotions and pain, a good or a bad thing? What does it even mean to be human? Through the dedication and inspiration of the entire cast and crew, we hope to explore these questions in depth throughout the film and leave you with a lasting answer to some of these questions, while leaving others up for your own interpretation.
## Scene - 64
Lighting: Daylight  
Mood: Calm

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>#</th>
<th>Shot</th>
<th>Angle</th>
<th>Characters</th>
<th>Dialogue/Character Action</th>
<th>Camera Movement</th>
<th>Equipment</th>
<th>Notes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>EWS</td>
<td>EL</td>
<td>Joshua, Kris</td>
<td>Kris paints, &quot;You see, in these woods...part of a whole&quot;</td>
<td>Track left to right</td>
<td>Dolly/Slider/Shoulder mount</td>
<td>Establishing shot</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>MS</td>
<td>LA</td>
<td>Kris</td>
<td>All action</td>
<td>Static</td>
<td>Tripod</td>
<td>Easel in FG</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>MS</td>
<td>EL</td>
<td>Joshua</td>
<td>All action</td>
<td>Static, shaky</td>
<td>Shoulder mount</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>CU</td>
<td>EL</td>
<td>Kris</td>
<td>All Action</td>
<td>Static</td>
<td>Tripod</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>CU</td>
<td>EL</td>
<td>Joshua</td>
<td>All action</td>
<td>Static, shaky</td>
<td>Shoulder mount</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>INS</td>
<td></td>
<td>Kris, Painting</td>
<td>Kris paints more on the easel</td>
<td>Static</td>
<td>Tripod</td>
<td>See actual painting rather than behind it.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Appendix C

Character back-stories

Analysis: Caroline

Current age: 45

Has only lived in Cheery Point. Had visited other towns, even went to college to be a teacher, where she met Aaron, who she married right after college. They returned to Cheery Point and had Joshua fairly soon after their marriage. 4 months after, in fact.

Her life was very happy overall, actually. It was a small-town life. She could breathe in Cheery Point, unlike the crowded college she attended with its “5000” students.

As a kid, she was a tomboy and a daddy’s girl. She went fishing with her dad, and, when she got older, by herself at night at the Hebron. She would run around town and play with the boys—anything from tag to football, it didn’t matter, she enjoyed it. However, even then she enjoyed instructing others, especially her younger sister and brother. She would often tell her friends random facts, even the history of football while they played.

Her family was avid dissenters of torpase, so she grew with a prejudice against it.

Her first kiss was after a dance in highschool. She was fifteen. Her “first time” was with the same boy two years later after prom. His name was Daniel, and he was perfect, especially considering he had a torpase allergy. However, they broke up when she decided to go to college. Things got a lot worse for her then until she found Aaron her junior year. They had dated 7 months before he asked her to marry him. He was an infrequent user of torpase, and used it for the sole purpose of the “high” it gave off when he came down from it. She thought she loved him anyway. When they did marry he promised not to use it. He kept his promise until it became mandatory to take torpase at work...Caroline became quickly unhappy with the marriage.

She began working as a teacher in Cheery Point when she was 23, doing various social work before hand. The bombs hit soon before she began.

Her family was always opposed to Torpase. After she killed Aaron and began taking Torpase, she ceased to care about them. They never joined the resistance, but it’s unlikely they survived very long after Torpase became legally enforced.

Like all in town, Torpase and her assigned job is all that she knows now.

---

9 Written as a supplement for actors’ performances. Non-cannon to Cheery Point franchise.
Later, during the story, Daniel pays her a visit and brings her to her son at gunpoint. He is the town’s Mayor now. She knew this, but the connection is distant and unimportant while on Torpase.

**Objective:**

On Torpase: Attend to Joshua and her needs. (accomplished by doing her job)
   Secondary: Keep Aaron’s death a secret

Off Torpase: Keep Joshua safe
   Secondary: Escape Cheery Point

**Motivation:**

On Torpase: It’s expected

Off Torpase: Cares for Joshua

Mary Sanders

Age: 40

Works at Brozki’s media as a secretary. She would organize and type files of importance for the organization of information.

Sole goal is to remain off Torpase and provide for her family. She lets her son take Torpase as he’s hyperactive and would give himself away at school—pretty much to keep him alive, although it’s not solely for survival but also because she loves him.

**INT. BROTZKY’S MEDIA:**

Objective: Keep job
Action: Plead to Mr. Richards

Final objective: Stay alive
Action: Plead

**INT. HOUSE**
Objective: Comply for family and society’s safety
Action: Comply

Analysis: Joshua

Age: 25

Background:
Always has lived in Cheery Point. Knows nothing outside of it and has always lived with the knowledge that anything outside it is glass, dust, and radiation. Raised by only by his mother, although his father is supposed to be in another zone working. Nothing has ever been explained to him, but since Cheery Point’s own airport doesn’t seem to be usable most of the time, he assumes his father must be stuck in similar conditions and that radiation interferes with any form of communication.
His father worked at Brotzky’s media as their photographer, so it was only logical that he take his father’s place when he was old enough. He began working at Brotzky’s at the age of 17 and has worked there since.
As encouraged by their government, he meets with “friends” Zach, Randy, and Corey at the bar to share news. It’s an important recreation so that experiences and information do not go stagnant by being limited to one’s self. The interaction with Zach and Randy make perfect sense because they work with him, but Corey’s “friendship” is a bit of an oddity in Cheery Point and only is allowed because Corey has an odd job that is assigned only to him and therefore needs others to participate in “friendship” with.

Joshua can only remember back to when he was 5. His first memory is of a cabinet with a camera on it. His mother took it outside and he never saw it again.
(His true first memories are before his mom stabs his dad—and that scene is his most violent and vivid)

Another memory is when he was 7. Two kids at school had forgotten their Torpase and reacted a little violently to him. He did not cry and did not fight back. He ran to the teacher who made sure their dosage was administered correctly. He saw their parents pick them up later that day and the teacher watch them go. He never saw them again.

When he was 8, he came across a house that had caught fire as he walked home from a “friend’s” house. The flames weren’t too high yet, but there were people inside it. He passed it by.

Another memory is of a vicious dog who cornered him when he was 10. He could not find a way to run, and fighting seemed illogical. His own dog, Maggie, although small, ran up and attacked the big dog. He ran away, not even seeing how Maggie did. Maggie returned home that evening with a limp. His mother saw and took her to a vet. Maggie came back with one less leg.

When he was 14, he had a run in with a Springer for the first time. They approached him and shook him up. He only ignored them the best he could and walked quickly home. He did not contact the T.D.D.
At 18 he is engaged in first sexual partnership. Met once a month for six months, followed by once a week for the next six. It was ended due to assumed sterility.

At 20 a springer was gunned down in front of him. He continued his dinner and walked home.

23—New sexual partner. No sign of any pregnancy to this point.

Other vivid memories (not accessed until off torpase) include the smell of his mom’s pot roast before she became too used to Torpase, swimming in the Hebron (not near the Cabin, though, but another finger of it), watching a beehive outside of his school, and blowing bubbles in his milk until.

Objectives:

On torpase: Be a normal citizen of Cheery Point by complying with what’s expected. “Be as he should be”

Off torpase: Live happily off torpase.

Secondary: happily with Becca

Save his mother

Later: Eliminate torpase

Final: Save springers

Motivation:

On Torpase: It is logical that he provides for his mother and he. Humanity must live on.

Off Torpase: Actual feels “desire” and desires more. Likes feeling and experiencing and doesn’t want it to go away.

Later: Keep Becca safe

Final: Honor Becca and Albert’s memory

Analysis Becca:

Current Age: 23

Background:

Has always lived in Cheery Point and has never considered leaving. Her father never seems to talk about the Russian nuclear bombs like they have much weight—like either they didn’t
happen or don’t matter. It’s not a thought she entertains very often, and even then for more than a few seconds. She was raised happily off torpase by her father and mother until she was about 6 years old...That’s when her house burned down, and with her mother inside it. She had been sick and sleeping. The alarm didn’t sound and her father barely managed to get her outside...She had been trying to cook something like her mom did—something that her mom would like. Her father had just arrived home as the flames grew higher. Her mom’s room, right next to the kitchen had already been engulfed. It was a horrific event and even at the age of 6 she knew it was her fault. However, she never did tell her father. Smiling was a very rare thing for her after that.

Her mother had worked high in management at Brotzky’s media—high enough that not taking torpase wouldn’t be an issue (this was the 90’s and so they were a little less strict than now). She would be expected to take her mother’s position, although she’d have to advance to it instead of inheriting it outright. She began working at Brotzky’s when she was 19. Before then her father kept her hidden away in the house. She learned and listened to music to pass the time mostly, and could play the piano. However, she hasn’t touched a music book or instrument since taking the job (her intake of torpase increased slightly) and has little desire to do so.

Since her father steals torpase for her, it isn’t always enough for the dosage she would need. Due to this, she often gets partially or fully weaned off the drug. Most of the time this means she remembers the fire and becomes depressed or even suicidal. Sometimes she will cut to make the memory go away. This caused her father to grow bolder and steal more torpase...

Her favorite color is blue. Specifically, paler blue.

Her earliest memory is the fire. She gets bits and pieces of laughter, a tree swing, piggy back rides on her dad’s shoulders, birthday cakes and their candles, and campfires, but almost all of them (especially the candles and fires) have been repressed since the fire.

She listened to an old vinyl recording of mozart at age 8. It intrigued her, but only a little. She listened to it infrequently for a couple of years.

She first messed with the keys on the piano at age 10. She found the notes helped her cope with the bad memories. She soon found a way to string some notes together.

Another memory is from when she was 13. She had practiced a piece by Mozart for a while and had finally made it sound mostly correct. It was one of the occasions that she smiled, and one of the even rarer ones her father was there fore.

At 15 she composed a song. It wasn’t that good and ultimately discouraged her from trying it again.

At age 20 her father yelled at her. It was the only time she could remember him ever doing that and it was for her attempting to cook a meal for him since his new shift required him to come home late. She had been on a steady dose of torpase for a little over a month at this point and had forgotten the emotional pain of the fire. She let herself get weaned off again. She felt guilt like she had never felt before. Soon after came her attempt to get hit by a car on the road. Her father
saved her. His shift changed back to where it had been the very next day...This has made her feel even worse about herself whenever she gets off torpase, which is not very often any more. Her father makes sure of it.

At 21 she tried to kill herself by getting hit by a truck. Her father pulled her away at the last second and asked “Do you really want to die?...Please stop doing this...I can’t lose you too.”

The majority of her life is now spent living up the expectations of others. In fact, everything she does is because of and for another person. Somewhere deep inside this troubles her, and the desire to do something on her own terms grows every day...

Objective:

On torpase: Remain on torpase and keep her father’s contentment

Off torpase: Be happy for Joshua

Ultimately: End the pain

Motivation:

On torpase: Because she’s expected to do what her father asks, followed closely by society

Off torpase: Only person she feels she might be happy with is Joshua. New, less painful memories could happen.

Ultimately: Life is not worth it and she only makes things worse for those around her. Besides, she’s ignored anyway and she’s tired of making decisions based on what others want.

Analysis: “The Mayor”

Age: 46

The Mayor’s real name is Daniel Stewart. The first fourteen years of his life was spent living with his mom, Nancy, and dad, Karl, in Chicago. His family was well off and attended church regularly. However, his father was a drunkard and it was not uncommon for him to get angry and violent. Of course, his father was also an overbearing supporter of the church...He grew to dislike both as one entity.

Later, his mother could not take his drunken behavior anymore. She shredded the marriage paper (at dinner, in front of both his father and him) and kept repeating, “it never happened...it never happened”. She left without even packing a bag and was never seen again. His father lost his job soon after, and found a new one in Cheery Point. Before his mother walked out, it was common for he and his father to play board games. They played very, very often and Dan began to apply the strategies he saw occur in the games to real
life—and found them to be strangely similar. It became an invaluable way of keeping his sanity in Cheery Point as it helped him out of bad situations with his father and out of trouble at school. His cultural obsession was China—where his favorite game, “Go”, had its origin—they even considered one of the arts of a gentlemen. He eventually read Sun Tzu, of which one of his biggest philosophies was drawn: that war is a game, and that war is all about deception.

As the torpase trend increased, he caved in and tried it. He had a violent allergic reaction to it and was told never to take it again.

While attending high school in Cheery Point, he fell in love with a girl named Caroline Bennett. He kissed her after a dance freshman year and gave himself to her after prom junior year. During that summer the only real friend he had made in Cheery Point, Matthew, died from an allergic reaction. He became dependent on Caroline for support and gave her the ultimatum: college or him. She choose college. He’d never wanted to be able to take torpase so badly...

He understood why some would not want to take torpase—they’re lives may have simplicity and joy...but they would all end in suffering and would go through hardships. Not only this, but this happiness couldn’t only be ignorance of other’s suffering, which is a complete travesty.

He left the town for a while and tried to gain a foothold with politics in other towns, especially those accepting of torpase. His father died and he decided to return to Cheery Point. Caroline had moved back and was pregnant. He stayed and began to claw his way into the Mayor’s seat. Torpase became mandatory soon after...And then came the “bomb”.

He knows it is likely a hoax by the government, he knows their game: test to see the potential of a drug in a post-apocalyptic society. As far as he was concerned, he had been given a paradise, and it didn’t really matter whether it was through the US Government’s manipulation or by nuclear weapons from Russia. Cheery Point is home. It’s the promised land. It’s a new beginning, and he’ll see to it that suffering is ended once and for all.

Torpase is the numbness for those who suffer, the equalizer for those don’t, and the water that quenches the fires of war, murder, and prejudice. Objective: End the pain and suffering of the human race.

Motivation: He has felt and seen pain. Animals don’t suffer from organized crime, war, lost love, or the greed of corporations—and what are humans but nature’s advanced animals? Torpase brings us to where we should be.

Corey Analysis

Age: 30

Background:
Corey Satre was born and raised in the deep hills of southern Kentucky to a very poor mother and father. They owned a small cabin in the woods with a small garden, a couple of cows, and a black Labrador named Jenkins. Growing up wasn’t too tough for him, though. He was homeschooled by his mother while his father desperately tried to find a job “in town” 30 miles away. He enjoyed learning, but loved the stories his mother would read from books (and even more, the ones she told from memory or made up). Stories quickly became his obsession, and by 7 years old, he already lived in a fantasy world of endless possibilities.

When he turned 4 years old his father had found a job as a dairy farmer’s assistant. It paid next to nothing, but it was better than nothing. At least that’s what his father told him...He didn’t quite understand the full extent of it at that point, but was happy that his mother was happier.

He learned to speak from his mother, who had a much different accent from his father. When he turned 8, He became so bold as to ask her if she had lived in a big city at one point. She looked at him with an odd spark in her eye, “No...It never happened.” She didn’t talk to him the rest of the day, so it was a topic he avoided altogether after that.

Winter would always be hard on he and his parents, but they’d always make it through somehow. Corey never really understood that they were poor, just that his parents loved him and that they could survive together...

When he turned 9, his mother started going into town to find work also. A few months later, his father and mother got into a huge argument over money and certain people in town. The next day, he watched his father shoot both cows in front of him. Other people were there to take them away and paid his father in cash...One month later his mother came home to he and his father late and in a panic. After frantically telling his father what happened, that people she’d been running favors for and borrowing money from in town were coming after all of them, they decided they had to run away from their home...As well as find a safe place for Corey to stay...Neither of them had any family they could contact.

They drove north for quite a few hours to a place somewhere around Indiana, Illinois, and Kentucky—Cheery Point. His father said it was the most hidden small town they could find that wasn’t a ghost town. They abandoned Corey at a gas station, giving him his father’s wallet with $5 in it and telling him to find someone to help him.

He wandered away from the station, shocked, hurt, and inconsolable. A car finally drove by and stopped to help him. A young man about 25 years old stepped out and asked to help him, he was wearing a suit and sunglasses. Introduced himself only as friendly stranger. He drove Corey the rest of the way into town, asking about his story the whole time. The stranger became suddenly curious after he described his mother and asked her name. Corey told him Nancy Satre, which intrigued the stranger more. Corey then showed him a picture of his parents he had in the wallet they had given him. Right after that, the stranger let him know that he actually worked for the government, more specifically social services (“for now”, he made sure to mention) and that an older man named Greg who needed help hunting the game in the woods and that it could be the perfect place for Corey...Later that day the Russians’ bombs made everywhere but Cheery Point
and a couple other places uninhabitable. So Corey went to live with Greg. He never saw the stranger again.

Torpase became mandatory, but it was difficult to stay on dose when they were relatively far from town when on the hunt. Greg had arthritis, so Corey would always lend Greg more torpase...Because of this, Corey grew used to having no more than half the recommended dose and so was in a constant state of awareness, but no pain. He could concentrate and stand in one place for hours. He became the perfect hunter.

When Corey was 24, Greg died and he took over the position. He was forced to find a new person to “engage socially” with, and stumbled upon Joshua Barrett at the “bars” who was waiting alone by himself for the rest of his friends. None of the three saw it as detrimental to have Corey join them, so he became a part of their group.

A month before recent events, Corey had a moment of sloppiness. He took more torpase than he usually does. He followed and tried to shoot a deer that ventured too close to the road...He shot and instead hit an oncoming car. The tire exploded and the car ran into a tree. It happened on the turn into town, so help arrived soon. He crept away, only to find out a few days later that the man in the truck had survived, but was unable to work and would be for months. The “Cheery Circular” said his name was Martin Sanders.

Albert Analysis:

Age: 61

Background:

Albert Camus had never intended to be a priest. He had never intended to be much of anything. And he certainly had never intended to live past the age of fifteen...

Albert was raised by his single mother in an apartment in Chicago. Her name was Ruth Camus, and she was as atheist as they came and the most kind and loving human being imaginable to Albert. Ruth worked as a gas station clerk and provided enough for them to get by. When he was 8, he had asked her about his father. She only laughed and told him not to worry about him and that maybe he’d have a new daddy soon, “But, if you must know, your father was an unbearable man who, in the end, loved his chemistry lab and experiments more than people.”
Cheery Point website: www.cheerpoint.com