

HUMANITIES INSTITUTE
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Themes in Antonioni's Films

Marriage

The Night The theme of marriage is most fully explored in *The Night*, a film dominated by the relationship between Lidia and Giovanni. The partners are miles apart from the beginning, when Giovanni has casual sex with a woman in a hospital and then shows no sexual desire for his naked wife at home. Both he and Lidia are drawn to strangers during a night-long party at an expensive villa, but even those flirtations lack any real passion. Their loss of love is dramatized in no uncertain terms at the end of the film, when Lidia explains why she married him in the first place. Unable to comprehend, Giovanni makes a half-hearted attempt to win her back, but the gulf between them is already too great.

The Story of a Love Affair Another dysfunctional marriage is portrayed in this film. Paulo married Enrico for his money, while he only values her beauty. Neither really loves the other. Paulo embarks on an adulterous affair with a man she knew in secondary school, while Enrico becomes jealous of her independence and wants to possess her, like another one of his assets. Wealth and distrust poison their marriage, and the story concludes with his death and her loneliness.