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Say Something

John C. Lyden

University of Nebraska Omaha, johnclyden@gmail.com

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Abstract

This is a film review of *Say Something* (2023), directed by Agustina Aranda.

Keywords

Father Daughter Relationship

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Author Notes

John Lyden is the Department Chair and Blizek Professor of Religious Studies at University of Nebraska Omaha. He has been the Editor of the Journal of Religion & Film since 2011. He is the author of *Film as Religion: Myths, Morals, and Rituals* (NYU Press), and the editor of the Routledge Companion to Religion and Film and co-editor (with Eric Michael Mazur) of the Routledge Companion to Religion and Popular Culture. He also co-edited, with Ken Derry, *The Myth Awakens: Canon Conservativism, and Fan Reception of Star Wars* (Wipf and Stock 2018).



Say Something (2023), dir. Agustina Aranda

In this short film, Katie Agustina Aranda reflects on her relationship with her father through the course of her life. Her father, an immigrant from Paraguay, has himself made home videos for decades, and so she has the ability to use this material to document his life and her life with him. She has found that their relationship has become strained over the years, and the poignant videos of herself as a child with her father contrast with the silence that exists between them now.

The film juxtaposes past and present footage, and also uses animation, to suggest the distance between them that exists. There is also a confrontation as she reminds him that he said she was ugly as a teenager when she experimented with her hair; he does not remember, and he then becomes angry. At the Slamdance Festival screening, she was clearly emotional as she indicated that she made this film to articulate her frustration and pain—but there is no revelation or happy resolution. Relationships with parents can be hard, but they form part of who we are, and this short film packs a lot of reflection on that into its ten minutes.