

Avatar film essay



**ASSIGN
BUSTER**

" We must change what we want to see. " In James Cameron's " Avatar, " we see Jake Sully—the protagonist—fighting in the imperialistic battle between the Na'vi: the natives and the Sky People: the greedy humans. Jake is important because he shows the audience the importance of where to put your loyalty and how much it can change a person. He transforms from a bitter, strongly-opinionated jarhead –with no respect for the foreign planet's land or inhabitants—to a warrior loyal to his clan that he will fight for and defend. We are introduced to Jake Sully as a paraplegic ex-marine with strong military values. Jake's brother was one of the scientists about to begin exploring the densely forested moon named " Pandora" with an Avatar—genetically matched to him—of the Planet's inhabitants: The Na'vi. A mugging resulting in Jake's brother's death ensued Jake to be flown to Pandora for his brother's replacement. Jake's first link with his avatar shows us his ignorant, impulsive and instinctive behaviour and furthermore, how little respect he has for the environment or wildlife. We begin to see Jake's arrogant attitude fade and his loving and sensitive side brought out by Neytiri with his total involvement with the Omaticaya. Through Jake's immersion into the Na'vi's culture and growing relationship with Neytiri, his loyalties move away from the RDA: the race he was born to, and begins to sympathise and lie with the Omaticaya clan: the race he has been accepted into. " Everything is backwards now, like out there is the true world, and in here is the dream. " " I see you. " This short but very significant sentence spoken amongst the Na'vi shows trust and loyalty — " It's not just, I'm seeing you in front of me, it's, I see into you. " Jake is an important character for the reason that the loyalty he establishes with the Na'vi—abandoning his race—helps the Na'vi to keep their land and sacred home. We start to see Jake's shifting allegiance when he sabotages

the RDA's bulldozers that were set to destroy one of the Omaticaya's sacred places. However he betrays the Na'vi's trust in him—especially Neytiri's—when he reveals that he is one of the sky people that are coming to destroy Hometree. To earn the Na'vi's trust back, Jake tames and connects to the huge, legendary Toruk: “ the baddest cat in the sky. ” And with support from the new chief Tsu'tey — he declares his loyalty and his willingness to not let the Na'vi go down without a fight: “ We will show the Sky People that they cannot take whatever they want! And that this, this is our land! ” In the undershot of Quaritch in his machine suit holding Jake up by his ponytail — we see Jake staying loyal to the Na'vi. The undershot gives Quaritch a sense of power and dominance over Jake and the audience who feel a sense of hopelessness for Jake. Also the low angle gives Quaritch a sense of importance — intimidating the audience. Jake putting his life on the line in order to protect the Na'vi shows us how important they—especially Neytiri—have become to him. “ All I ever wanted was a single thing worth fighting for. ” And for the Na'vi—for Neytiri—Jake has. Jake is an important character because he helps the audience to understand the effects of imperialism on Pandora and the Na'vi. The RDA want the very expensive mineral that is largely deposited under Hometree and they are going to get the unobtainium one way or another — no exception to the cost of the planet's people or land. The RDA bomb Hometree with a rain of firepower, and finally Hometree collapses in a blaze of fire. Close ups on the Na'vi's faces—while this is happening—reveal the impact the loss of Hometree has on them; the slow motion also adds to emphasise this. The close up shots expose their emotions of anger but most of all, great sadness. Hometree is where the Omaticaya gather together as a clan, where they raise their future;

Hometree is their life. Jake progresses from an RDA spy, to a loyal leader willing to fight for the Na'vi's world. " I was a warrior who dreamed I could bring peace. " The low angle shot of Jake flying into the crowd of Na'vi, portrays him as the saviour with the sun beaming behind him to accentuate his heroism. The low angle further enforces Jake's importance to the audience giving him a sense of superiority. " The Sky People have sent us a message... that they can take whatever they want. That no one can stop them. Well, we will send them a message. " Jake leads the battle between the Na'vi who fight to protect their sacred lands, and the humans who are fuelled by the riches the Na'vi's lands hold. This imperialistic battle is similar to the conquering and settlement of North America by European countries resulting in the destruction and decimation of the Native Americans way of life. The Mighty Europeans used military force to upheave the indigenous civilizations in North America. Driving the Natives away for the plentiful land, Europeans colonised what is now the Americas. Cameron wanted to expose us-the oblivious communities-to imperialism at its simplest: destroying one group's livelihood for another's own greed and wealth. In James Cameron's film " Avatar, " Jake Sully is the protagonist and an important character for the reason that his newly established loyalty with the Na'vi helps them to keep their sacred land and home. He is important because he stands up for the underdogs: the Na'vi, instead of encouraging the destruction of the indigenous civilization's home. James Cameron's intentions to expose imperialism through the RDA and the Na'vi in Avatar, helps the audience understand the effects of it and how easily it has occurred AND could occur on our home: Earth. " Avatar" helped me to understand and grasp the fact that we are slowly destroying Earth's natural resources and wonders for our

desires and self-indulgences. If we do not stop our gluttonous ways, our planet could become the earth that is portrayed in the Film: “ They killed their Mother. ” – Rachel Liao