

Campbell john a hero
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2001: A Space Odyssey is a Stanley Kubrick movie that came out in 1968. The movie is widely regarded as one of the best science fiction movies of all times. The movie is much more than just science fiction story with breathtaking visuals (for its time) and action sequences that are now so commonly associated with such cinema. Since its release, 2001 has been a subject for forum discussion of many thinkers and philosophers, talking about the hidden meaning and message imparted by the movie. Kubrick had also famously said “ You're free to speculate as you wish about the philosophical and allegorical meaning” . The purpose of this essay is to briefly discuss an assumed crime that is the movie hints at. The interpretations of 2001 are widely different among different individuals. Thus even before making any inference, I state that the conclusions and inference drawn by me are my own thoughts and can be different from others.

The hero in our movie is the man himself. He first learns to use basic tools and ultimately be able to build very advanced technological devices like the space ship and the supercomputer. This enables him to embark on a journey to meet his maker, which mankind does not know yet. The movie shows the eternal struggle of man against everything inside and outside himself just to learn who in the hell he is. In many sense, the whole movie very closely relates to John Campbell's definition of a mythological hero. In his book ‘ A hero with a Thousand faces’ (1949), he talks about many stages in an ordinary man's life that transforms him into a hero. In Space Odyssey, the man evolves and learns to use tools in the “ Dawn of Man”. He undertakes many adventurous journeys and survives the “ belly of HAL” to leave behind the world as known to him and embarks toward the metamorphosis. He

confronts his mentor or father-figure (the monolith itself or the god or alien race that placed it) and returns home to Earth, reborn as a Star-Child. The whole cycle of events is just as Campbell describes his hero.

Now again coming back to the central question of our discussion, crime/evil and the development of our hero, the evil stays inherent and closely related with the progress of civilization all throughout the movie. The real criminal in the movie comes in the form of artificial intelligence found in HAL 9000. It is only when Dave Bowman shuts HAL down, which symbolizes his complete detachment from the dependence on Artificial Intelligence and his metamorphosis is complete, that he qualifies for being the hero (star-child). Artificial Intelligence and technology as a criminal has since this instance had a lot of appearances in popular culture and cinema. The matrix trilogy and the whole Terminator series are based on robots and computers taking over the mankind in an attempt to stay alive after becoming self-aware.

The evidences of technology as the carrier of evil are littered across the movie. The first tool, the bone was used by the prehistoric man to kill is the first philosophical question posed by the film Also the showing of the bone and a satellite also suggest at it being weapon. The period in which the movie was made was also the time of the cold war and the space race. The symbolism in the movie that the mad space race might be harmful to us considering the man's inclination of to use technology as evil is therefore apparent.

References

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