

Gattaca viewing essay

[Linguistics](#), [Language](#)



Gattaca Viewing Essay Themes in texts are what make them interesting and engaging. A text which has a number of intriguing themes is the feature film Gattaca, written and directed by Andrew Niccol, and released in 1997. One particular theme which is evident in Gattaca is the idea that the most important key to a person's success is not their genetic material but their ambitions, drive and determination. This theme is explored in the film through the conventions of performance and characterisation, camera angles, camera shots and by music/sound.

Early in the film Gattaca, Vincent undergoes a transformation. Prior to the transformation Vincent is seen as an unconfident person with bad body language, baggy clothing and glasses which all indicates that Vincent is inferior. Vincent wants to be able to work at Gattaca but he knows that he can't make it in because of his genetic material (heart problem), so he meets German (broker) who helps Vincent undergo the transformation. When German asks Vincent how committed he is to the project; Vincent says " I'd give 100%," to which German replies, " That'll get you halfway there".

This shows you how much effort Vincent has to put in to get into Gattaca, but with drive and determination on Vincent's side he not only gets into Gattaca but one of their elites. After Vincent's transformation from a " borrowed ladder" to a valid his attitude and looks had changed completely. His posture and body language had become almost perfect and his attitude to life had also transformed completely; making him look like a professional. You can finally see the complete transformation when Vincent has his interview at Gattaca, when he looks into the mirror.

You can see that Vincent is impressed with what he has transformed into. During the film *Gattaca*, the mission director at Gattaca was brutally murdered, in which Investigators took control of Gattaca and checked everything, everywhere and everyone, gene to gene. When Vincent sees all of these people searching for clues and evidence he slightly loses faith and starts to rethink his whole dream. The investigators find a suspect, but no details are given except a picture (of Vincent) and the fact that the suspect is an invalid.

There are many different scenes in which Vincent almost gets caught, but one of the tensest scenes was when Vincent went on the treadmill for his training. Prior to this scene we see Jerome clip a heart rate monitor onto himself and we see him ride his wheel chair so they can record his heartbeat, which we figure out that Vincent is going to end up using it. When Vincent goes onto the treadmill we see him quickly switch heart rate monitors and then we see him jogging. Then we see two investigator walk into the gym facility where everyone is getting there heart rate checked, including Vincent.

While the investigators are talking to the doctors we, the viewers can hear Vincent's heart beat (non-diegetic), which slowly builds up the tension. Then when the investigators and the doctor are talking about Vincent, his Heart beat monitors recording finished early so we can hear his real heartbeat which is going really fast so he quickly unclipped his heart rate monitor and walked off. This shows you the risks and challenges that Vincent faces every day and the ways he deals with them.

At the beginning of Gattaca Vincent and his brother Anton play a dangerous game called “Chicken”. Chicken involves Vincent and Anton battling against each other and against the great force of nature as they swim out into the ocean as far as they possibly can until one gives in or turns back. Both Anton and Vincent are presented through high angles to show their inferiority and insignificance compared to rough and wavy ocean. There are also scenes in which they are displayed through eye level shots to show that the conditions are equal to both of them.

Later on in the film Vincent and Anton go back out into the ocean and have another game of Chicken in which Vincent, against all odds beats Anton. This is a significant part of the film because Vincent finally realises that he can achieve anything and he can finally travel into space. “It was the one moment in our lives that my brother was not as strong as he believed, and I was not as weak. It was the moment that made everything possible”. Camera angles help support the theme that the most important key to a person’s success is not their genetic material but their ambitions, drive and determination.

At the end of Gattaca, Vincent was only moments away from achieving his goal to go to Gattaca. At the same time Jerome is preparing to end his life. These two scenes are intercut so we can see Vincent finally getting onto the rocket and achieving his goal while Jerome is stepping into the incinerator preparing to kill himself because he lived a miserable life, having perfect genetic material but a lack of determination and drive. This scene is extremely tense because we feel emotionally overwhelmed; happy for Vincent and sympathetic for Jerome.

We also feel quite emotional because we know Jerome is going to die happy and we know that he was happy to be part of Vincent's transformation: "I got the better end of the deal. I only lent you my body ... you lent me your dream". This is the final scene of the film that completes the theme. Vincent made his dream come true, not because of his genetic material but because of his ambitions, drive and determination. It is evident in the feature film Gattaca, by Andrew Niccol that the key to a person's success is not their genetic material but their ambitions, drive and determination.

Gattaca is full of interesting ideas and themes which are explored throughout Vincent's journey. The conventions of performance and characterisation, camera angles, camera shots and music/sound all help develop the theme. I believe that this would have to be one of my favourite movies because of all of the representations and because the story behind it inspired me to become a better person. I would also recommend this movie to anyone because it reaches out to a wide target audience and I would definitely rate it a 10 out of 10. By Anthony (hshs)