

# District 9: scene analysis essay sample

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The 2009 film, District 9, directed by Neill Blomkamp is a direct comparison criticizing the actions of the South African apartheid, about a community of aliens from another planet whose mother-ship has broken down over the city of Johannesburg in South Africa and is forced into living on another life forms territory until they can fix their ship. The Aliens, after the government of South Africa put them under control of the power-abusing corporation of MNU, were viewed as a threat to society and contained in a slum outside of town in hope of separating the aliens from the rest of society. Blomkamp's film uses a simple yet conclusive theme: What goes around comes around, which comes into play when one of the corrupt officials who discriminated against the aliens unexpectedly transforms from the dominant race into one of the outsider's. The film depicts racial profiling and an abuse of power, which directly resembles the actions of the South African Nationalist Party in the mid to late 1900's.

The corrupt government force of MNU in District 9 viewed the aliens as worthless beings who have no right to be a part of their community, as the South African Nationalist Party viewed the black community of their country during the apartheid. An article written by Stanford University students analyzes the South African apartheid stating, “ Strategists in the National Party invented apartheid as a means to cement their control over the economic and social system. Initially, aim of the apartheid was to maintain white domination while extending racial separation. Starting in the 60's, a plan of `Grand Apartheid' was executed, emphasizing territorial separation and police repression.” (Chokshi) The laws conducted during the apartheid touched on every aspect of social life, including the prohibition of inter-racial

marriage. Blacks during the apartheid were viewed as worthless “ Aliens” to the rest of the white community and were treated as if they were not even part of the same species.

The scene in District 9, which best shows the overall scheme of the film and confirms the similarities between the actions of MNU and events which took place during the South African apartheid is the scene when the main character, Wikus, and MNU begin the process of evicting the Aliens from the slum they were placed in and force the aliens into signing eviction forms so that the government could move the community of aliens much farther away from the community of Johannesburg. Once Wikus and his crew enter the slums, MNU’s absurd cruelty towards the aliens begins to stand out. The aliens are forced into signing their eviction forms while being held at gun-point without any explanation, as if the aliens had no control over their own lives. Homes of the aliens are raided and destroyed because the government wants to obtain the extraordinary weapons the aliens yield. During the process Wikus stumbles upon a building filled with developing alien fetuses, and begins to abort them one-by-one while finding humor in killing the defenseless offspring. The unnecessary and unusual amusement Wikus and the MNU officials find in punishing the innocent community of aliens is like watching young children find enjoyment through stomping on insects. Children do not think of insects having life qualities so they view them as pointless objects, similarly to how MNU views the aliens. Towards the end of the scene District 9’s karma-orientated theme comes into play. Wikus discovers one of the biggest weapons finds yet and after handling an unknown chemical that he accidentally sprays in his face, he learns how the

other half lives. After a few days of being sick, Wikus finds himself in the hospital to the surprise of himself transforming into one of the aliens.

From this point on Wikus is instantly disregarded as a human being, and he finds himself victim of a much more cruel treatment in which he was a part of until his transformation. Wikus manages to escape before his used-to-be colleagues take his life, but has to leave his wife to live with the aliens once he starts becoming one of them. Neill Blomkamp's film, District 9, is not strictly limited to its similarities of the South African apartheid but the issue of racial profiling as a whole. His symbolism of Aliens as the victims of racial profiling perfectly shows that victims of racism are typically not viewed as human beings but as Aliens, or outsiders.