

Jesus of montreal essay



**ASSIGN
BUSTER**

In the movie, *Jesus of Montreal*, Daniel experiences conflict between the institutional church and commercial media culture. The film parallels the life of Jesus, as the Passion Play and the film itself overlap. One of the major themes in the film is the decrease in traditional and spiritual culture in Quebec, and the increase in consumer culture where relationships don't hold enough self-gratification and where human beings, especially artists, are turned into a world of consumption.

Arcand, director of the film stated " Consumerism may be the legacy of the eighties but there has got to be more to life than that. *Jesus of Montreal* is about a yearning for something else, a search for a sort of meaning." The film shows the effects of Hollywood on Canadian culture. This can be seen in a scene when a lawyer/agent tempts Daniel to risk his artistic strength in order to " possess the city," and uses Ronald Reagan, as an example of Daniel's prospects. The commercialization of culture is something that is seen as overtaking the human spirit, something that will lead to the destruction of society. In one of the final scenes, after Daniel has been wounded in an accident on set, he stumbles out of the hospital and begins to speak of the destruction of the city of Montreal, quoting from the Olivet Discourse.

I think what he meant was that society is destroyed by humanity itself, in its desire for instant gratification, consumerism. This search for truth, for something beyond what the commercial culture says is all that is left. The meaning of Daniel's death confirms the truth Daniel had to resist; that we cant survive in a world dominated by institutions, media, and consumption. We learn who " Jesus really was" as Daniel really starts to overlap with the

role he's playing. While we are told about Jesus' origins, Daniel's background is a complete mystery. We know less about his background than most characters.

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The film tracks the life of Christ in several ways. The actor at the beginning, praised for his performance, turns and says that Daniel is a much better actor. This is a reference to John the Baptist as the herald of Christ.

A woman producer says she wants the same actor's "head" for her magazine, a reference to Herodias wanting John the Baptist dead. His head then appears in a poster ad in a subway where Daniel dies. Daniel overturns the equipment at the commercial shoot, a reference to Christ's cleansing of the temple. He is arrested and the indecisive judge cannot find anything wrong with him, a reference to Pilate's judgment. A lawyer plans great things for Daniel and shows him the world from a skyscraper, a reference to the temptation in the desert.

Finally, Daniel gives life to at least three people after his death when his organs are transplanted into a heart and eye patient, a reference to Christ as the redeemer. However, I concluded that the movie made us think that Jesus was just a product of his times. And I thought the main just of the film mainly gave us commentary on contemporary society; that we are on a path of self-consumption, and that the world "began without man and will end the same way."