

Media analysis of blade runner assignment



**ASSIGN
BUSTER**

Notions of the Familiar and Unfamiliar in Blade Runner Films intend to stimulate, inform and challenge us; there are many ways, both subtle and unsubtle that filmmakers use to express ideas and information. The notions of the familiar and unfamiliar are crucial to the construction of the science fiction film. The familiar is used to connect the viewer, while the unfamiliar is used to create a comfortable distinction between the film and reality and to show grand ideas that may not be expressed without far out imagery or iconography.

The film Blade Runner directed by Riddle Scott shows many notions of the familiar and unfamiliar for effect, hose notions in many ways are crucial to the success of the film in expressing its message and ideas. Notions of the familiar and unfamiliar are expressed in many ways in science fiction films, a common way of doing so is through the iconography shown in the film. In the film Blade Runner directed by Riddle Scott, notions of the familiar are important in creating a relationship between the world of the viewer and that of the film's creator/creators.

One way this is done in the film is through the many example of religious symbolism. This symbolism is shown in a very direct visual ay, creating a strong impact on the viewer and is expressed as one of the main reference between reality and the film (Mimic. Catch. Du, 2013). The Utterly Corporation is in many ways symbolic of religion. Utterly can be seen as a metaphor for religion as it is the creator of the replicates, humanoid cowboys who have a dominant presence in the film.

Utterly and the replicates however seem to express the religious ideals of both good and evil, this is shown especially by Roy who is shown to represent Christ as well as Lucifer, he represents the leader of the fallen angels, who in Christian agene were expelled from heaven by God (Fried, 2004). Like the fallen angels expelled from the Lord's kingdom, Roy and the replicates are doomed to a life of eternal suffering, where they only experience a hollow shell of human existence for a measly four years.

This shallow experience is expressed by Loon's statement that there is "Nothing is worse than having an itch you can never scratch" (Blade Runner, 1982). This shows how unsatisfied he is with his shallow illusion of human experience of being a replicate, the same lack of satisfaction that causes Roy to rise up against he creator, Utterly. Roy also in many ways represents a Christ-like figure; this is shown through iconography and religious symbolism (Martin, 2005). Since Utterly represents God or the creator is symbolic when he says to Roy "Look at you.

You're the prodigal son". This shows both Trestle's son-like reverence and pride with Roy as well as Rosy position in the hierarchy of the Replicates, Utterly is God while Roy is Christ. This standing is further expressed in Declared and Ray's final confrontation. As Roy is beginning to expire due to his four year lifespan he violently thrusts a nail into his alma, an obvious piece of religious iconography representing Chrism's crucifixion. Just before his expiration is complete Roy saves Declared from death, making him his savior, Just as Christ was the savior of humanity.

This can be seen as a final sacrifice and Rosy redemption, his final transition from Lucifer to Christ. Then to complete the Biblical trinity shown in the film with Utterly and Roy, he releases a dove, iconography is a direct link between the fantasy world of the film and reality. The notions of the familiar implied by religious symbolism gives the viewer an understanding of the unfamiliar notions of the replicates and the strange futuristic world of the movie. The iconography is one way in which science fiction differs from many other genres.

Swayback says in his article Screening Space: The American Science Fiction Film that " One approach to the images in genre films (most often the Western and Gangster film) has been iconographic" (1987, up. 64-65) but this he says does not apply to science fiction, he later says that a " crucial issue regarding any iconographic consideration of the SF (science fiction) film" is that " One could create a sit of such SF " objects" as the spaceship which do indeed evoke the genre, but which are-specifically and physically-not essential to it" (1987, up. 5). Because Science Fiction has no distinct iconography that is necessary to create a film of the genre, it has more freedom to express notions of both the unfamiliar and the familiar as it has no set context, setting or ideals. This makes these notions much more important to Science Fiction than other genres as in the genre they are unnecessary and completely unregimented, therefore expressing the creator's direct ideas in a clear ay as nothing has to be there.

By combining notions of the unfamiliar and familiar, Riddle Coot's Blade Runner creates a strange world which at a shallow level of analysis may seem UN-relatable but has many aspects that are familiar to the viewer. One

way a relationship between our world and the unfamiliar new technology of the film is created is through the use of miss-en-scene. An example of this is when Rachel travels to Decker's apartment to question him. In the scene the camera begins with an establishing shot as we enter the apartment, showing of its contents ND revealing the complex use of miss-en-scene which is both familiar and alien to the viewer.

Placed around the apartment are many familiar objects such as the kitchen and the cupboards, these are easily recognizable to the viewer creating a sense of familiarity in the abstract world (Ductwork, 2008). However the presence of recognizable iconography from the world of the viewer makes it difficult to truly understand the historical context of the film. We have no clear idea of how society has advanced due to the melting pot of time periods that the iconography represents Ductwork, 2008).

This makes the seemingly familiar somewhat abstract and unfamiliar, placed out of context these objects have no clear relevance to us. This combination of notions is important to creating an intriguing and exciting world that the viewer can both relate to and find interesting due to its abstract and strange iconography and setting. This idea is also supported by Michael Martin's Meditations on Blade Runner which is featured in his Journey of Interdisciplinary Studies. He says that " Part of Blade Runner's power arises from its ability to captivate audiences with TTS pastiche of strangeness and familiarity' (2005, up. 105-122).

This expresses the importance of the interweaving of the familiar and unfamiliar in the science fiction genre, this relationship is crucial to

expressing the ideals and messages of the film in a way that is relevant and intriguing to the viewer. Paranoia is an important theme in the film Blade Runner, it is a familiar idea that is relevant to the viewer but is presented in an unfamiliar way and setting. This paranoia and fear is expressed in many ways throughout the film, one example is the police presence that dominates mooning over the public windows; this seems to portray the people in the film as being in a constant state of fear (mimic. Tech. Du, 2013). This paranoia and lack of privacy is relevant and familiar to the viewers of the film as it is a very common concern in modern society as well as at the time of the film's release in 1982. This invasion of privacy and domination by the government and organizations is also shown by the power of the Tyrell Corporation. Tyrell represents corporate power and domination, an example of a ruthless corporation having huge power in the world (mimic. Catch. Du). Due to both the dystopian and uninviting setting of the film, the viewer associates this dominant corporate power with paranoia and control.

Not only does Tyrell show domination over the corporate world, they also show domination over the world of genetics. The idea that Tyrell can create replicants that can surpass humanity in many aspects is something else to be fearful of (mimic. Catch. Du). The viewer can relate to the paranoia and fear of the world even though it has many unfamiliar aspects such as replicants and the kind of surveillance shown. This is because the raw emotions and underlying issue are often similar to that of the viewer's world.

They are scared of the power of corporations as well as being worried and vigilant about invasion of privacy and surveillance. Science fiction often successfully interweaves the familiar and unfamiliar to the point where the

mundane aspects of the familiar are changed by their context without losing their innate appeal and relevance to the viewer. As well as this the combination of the two adds an extra layer of intrigue and fascination. In conclusion notions of the familiar ND unfamiliar are an important aspect of the science fiction genre.

The interweaving and relating of these notions is often the crux of science fiction films such as Riddle Coot's Blade Runner. These notions of the unfamiliar and familiar are shown through religious symbolism and iconography, the use of miss-en-scene to reflect relationships between the world of the film and that of the viewer and the use of relatable themes such as paranoia and fear in familiar and abstract ways. Through the interrelation of unfamiliar notions such as the replicates and technology of Blade

Runner as well as familiar notions, science fiction films create a world that is on a shallow level abstract and unapproachable but deep down has many ideas and messages relevant to a present day viewer. The presentation of ideas that could be seen as somewhat mundane in our society in the context of science fiction creates a new level of engagement and intrigue for the viewer. Overall unfamiliar and familiar notions as well as the relationship between the two are an extremely important aspect of science fiction and contribute strongly to its success as a genre. Word count: 1684 Blade Runner, 1982 Prod.