

Popular culture themes in the matrix

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Popular Culture Themes in The Matrix Teacher

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Themes in The Matrix The film The Matrix is presented in sequential form but in two different settings – one where characters act in the matrix or the world as we know it, and the other which is the so called “ real world” where there is nothing but a dark, desert-like environment. The only connection between these two worlds is a set of chairs attached to a computer that transports the characters from the real world into the matrix and back. The intention of the filmmaker seems to be the portrayal of particular concepts concerning society and human life. The excellent cinematography, the superb action sequences, the digital special effects, and the intelligent screenplay all contributed to the success of the demonstration of the main concepts that the film wanted to convey. Among the major points that the movie emphasized included the concept of the dangers of technology to human life, free will and choice, the interdependence between body and mind, and the role of love. One of the concepts portrayed by The Matrix is the idea that man-made technology had a tendency to endanger the very lives of their human creators. Perhaps, what is emphasized in the film is the idea that humans cannot play God for when he does this, he naturally fails in his creation. This is very much like what is demonstrated by Mary Shelley’s 1818 novel Frankenstein where the monster created by Dr. Frankenstein goes berserk and murders his creator’s family. In The Matrix, Morpheus told Neo that the machines have overpowered humans, and so as a result of the war where the machines triumphed, the real world in the 21st century actually already looks like what Morpheus calls “ the desert” (Berman & Wachowski, 1999). This is somehow a message to the viewer that all human creations involving humanlike beings such as machines and robots will

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always eventually have its drawbacks. Although *The Matrix* somehow exaggerated this concept by turning it into a war between machines and humans, one very good practical example of the evil of technology is the possible DNA damage that cell phone radiation may cause (Healy, 2011). Another particular concept that the movie demonstrates is the power of free will and choice. The scene where Morpheus offers Neo two pills – one blue and one red – is one scene that perfectly shows the power of man to make his own choice. Had he taken the blue pill, the movie would have ended. Neo chooses the red pill or the pill of enlightenment, thus bringing to the viewers the idea that even enlightenment does not come to an individual by chance but by choice. Moreover, although, in the movie, it is emphasized by Agent Smith that a human being is a mere “virus, a disease, a cancer of this planet” and “a slave born into bondage,” Neo freely makes the decision that he is above this description (Berman & Wachowski, 1999). Moreover, although the Oracle hints at Neo not being *The One*, he still chooses to be *The One*, and perhaps he got this from Morpheus himself, who told him, “Don’t think you are, know you are” (Berman & Wachowski, 1999). The particular scene where Neo rescues Morpheus from the agents through a helicopter is one of the turning points of the movie where Neo decides to be *The One*. Despite what the Oracle told Neo, he decides to save Morpheus from the agents in an almost unbelievable scene which convinced Tank back at the base: “I knew it; he’s *The One*” (Berman & Wachowski, 1999). The message of this particular scene is simple – despite the idea of destiny or fate, every human being has the right and freedom to be whatever he wants to be. This is the concept that guides all human beings towards their own personal goals and towards their own individual ideas of success. This is also <https://assignbuster.com/popular-culture-themes-in-the-matrix/>

the basis of all quests for independence and all fights for individual or national freedom. Moreover, an implication of this is the idea that the human mind is independent of its own external environment. Nevertheless, despite the independence of the mind, it still cannot live without the body, or, as what Morpheus says, that “ the body cannot live without the mind” (Berman & Wachowski, 1999). This means that, based on the concept illustrated by the film, if one dies in the matrix, then his real self or “ mind” in the real world dies in a similar way. This interdependence between body and mind is the core principle behind most kinds of mind-body therapies that to which the modern world is gradually being exposed such as Reiki, Yoga, and meditation. Moreover, the same principle of mind-body interdependence is the basis of psychology and psychiatry, where the mind is healed so that both body and mind may be able to function well. The applications of the mind-body connection in medicine actually also implies that whatever is done to the mind, it is the body the experiences it. Similarly, whatever the body experiences may have its reverberations in the mind, regardless of whether such effects are positive or negative. One last concept that the film portrays is the one that perhaps makes possible the interaction between mind and body and one that unifies both destiny and free will – this is the redeeming power of love. In one of the final scenes of the film where Neo dies from Agent Smith’s gunshots, it was Trinity’s love that revived him. In the Nebuchadnezzar, we hear Trinity saying, “ Neo...the Oracle told me that I would fall in love and that that man...would be the One...so you see, you can’t be dead...you can’t be...because I love you” (Berman & Wachowski, 1999). Then Neo breathes back into reality and destroys the agents with renewed power – all despite the fact that the Oracle said he is not The One.

The concept is clear and the message is simple – love is the key to the impossible. Love is the basis of almost all positive ideas that society has adopted regardless of place and time. Love is the basis of peace, politics, charity, environmental protection, and even war, and everything else that the governments and organizations of the world have done for the sake of humanity. References Berman, B. (Producer), Wachowski, A., & Wachowski, L. (Directors). (1999). *The Matrix* [Motion Picture]. United States: Warner Home Video. Healy, M. (2011, May 23). Cellphones may harm memory, pregnancy, brain cells – in rats, mice and rabbits. Maybe. Retrieved August 17, 2012, from the Los Angeles Times: <http://articles.latimes.com/2011/may/23/news/la-heb-cellphones-pregnancy-teens-20110523>