Blade Runner Essay, Research Paper

English essay qu1Jacqui Cook Blade Runner has mass appeal and simultaneously addresses complex issues, with use of film settings, science fiction genre, issues of what is it to be human, and Christianity. The art of the film maker is to use the audiences attention to suggest his/her views of society. That is why films like Blade Runner, directed by Ridley Scott, have mass attraction but at the same time address critical and complex issues. Blade Runner was brought to America s attention, perhaps in an unfortunate context, about the time when Ronald Reagan was promising a very bright but perhaps false future, (1982). The idea of the future culture clashed with Scott s, but there is something about the rain soaked Los Angeles that suggested more truth. Scott s views of the future fit in with the expected contexts science fiction displays, and therefore half of the narrative comes from our own ideology as readers. A perception of the future already exists once people have watched just about any science fiction movie, that the world to come will be dark, misty, and horrible. The other half was to do with the environment in Blade Runner, and how well it compliments and carries the weight of the film. It is all dark and dingy with a suggestive Gothic feeling due to the ideas we have of dark alleys, sinister rooms and smoke. The smoke is a richly suggestive idea of Scott s, with everyone in the movie smoking, this perhaps issues ideas which co-relate to the anti smoking campaigns which became popular around the beginning of the 80 s. Times when smoking has become anathema, and a universal symbol of dissipation, perhaps it is an echo, or reminder of the poisonous exhalations of a capitalist society, and how this may well be a voluntary act which is undoubtedly bad for you. Science fiction movies do so well because they are dealing with the unknown and Scott uses this to explore possible outcomes of Japanese world domination. Science fiction allows creativity to exist without messing with what people know as reality. This type of movie is one of the only sources for society to explore what the future will be. After seeing Blade Runner viewers can conclude that the future looks grim. Scenes of the city streets being more crowded than anyone can imagine, noisy, and populated with Japanese, suggest that the Japanese have taken over the world. If the Japanese take over the world the movie suggests it won t be a pleasant place. This creates racial tension because it was written by white westernised Americans. This would complement the ideas that western people previously had imagining if the Japanese took over the world. These racial conclusions are apparent at the time of making the film, and would of been deliberately placed by Scott. Science Fiction films with futuristic concepts provide the base for the story, but do not dominate the more universal themes like what is humanity? What s the difference between humans and replicants? When does a replicant become human? A replicant is controversially a robot, which thinks, moves and to a degree feels like a human. The main question Scott poses, is how could we call some brain dead drug addict who spends ninety percent of the time without human consciousness a human, and decide that a replicant is not. The only way you can tell replicants apart from humans is the Kemp -Voigt test, this is a process of multiple questions which determines replicants by their lack of feelings and emotions to events, comparing it to the ideal feelings which humans should feel. It was hinted that this test was not completely fool proof. This was explained during the conversation between Deckard and Tyrll, and how it took over one hundred questions to determine that Racheal was not human. Quite possibly the drug addict mentioned before wouldn t pass the test for humanity with flying colours either.

Christian issues are raised and many feelings are evident in the replicants, which hint that they think along the same way as humans do. Acceptance of death is a big issue. Roy and his followers main purpose was to delay death which appears to be most humans idea as well. Roy makes a speech just before he passes away- ” I ve seen things you people wouldn t believe, attack ships on fire on the shoulder of Orion, I ve watched sea beams glitter in the dark near the Tannhauser Gate. All of these moments will be lost, like tears in the rain, Time to die.”He comments that even though we may have things he doesn t, we could learn many more things from him, just through our differences. At the end of Roy s life he was holding a dove which was let go once his life left him. This was obviously symbolism explaining the religious aspect to the film. This raises a Christian question that perhaps the difference between us and them is that we have a soul. A reader likes to position him/herself on either side of the main conflict, in this case for the humans or for the replicants. Initially you would feel for the humans. Surprisingly to further muddle up the question about who s side the viewer will take, in film noir usually the bad guys are dark and the good guys are white. In Blade Runner the lighting is reversed, especially in the case of Roy, who is very white, with white hair, and often in much clearer lighting. Scott is perhaps trying to share an idea that, there is not necessarily a wrong and right which is so straightforward as we would like it to be. Deckard s last and most poignant conflict arises because he falls for Racheal, a Replicant. This was cut short in the directors cut. At the beginning of the film, the questions where answered easily, replicant bad, and humans good. But as time develops the line beckoning the difference between both becomes blurred and then an important question is asked, could it possibly be that these replicants are better people than humans are? That last question is at its peak when Roy, a Replicant, saves Deckard, even after Deckard has killed all the other replicants and was trying to murder Roy himself. Mass media degrading of a particular group, and the effects of unbridled capitalism contributes to the development of racism. Therefore we could quite easily say that looking at the Blade Runners, could be looking at any discriminated group for example aboriginals. Aboriginals like Blade Runners were discriminated against because of there differences to the average person/dominant race. Bladerunners are hunted and “retired”, whilst aboriginals were taken away and “educated”. Racheal is a pretty replicant who was unaware that she was one, till Deckard pointed it out. Deckard fell for her at the end of the film, which makes it bluntly obvious that the differences between them and humans were pretty small. Blade Runner is a valuable film which helps people create perceptions about the future, and how they will fit in. Scott explains the future pessimistically like a dark nightmare. But these explanations are his views and he manages by the use of film techniques to display his views of society in an interesting way, which keeps the readers attention.