

Philosophy and Blade Runner

T. Shanahan

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#125578 in Books Timothy Shanahan 2014-06-25 2014-06-25 Original language: English PDF # 1 7.80 x .58 x 4.99l, .0 #File Name: 1137412283217 pages Philosophy and Blade Runner | File size: 59.Mb

T. Shanahan : Philosophy and Blade Runner before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Philosophy and Blade Runner:

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Thinking Deeply About Blade Runner By Clay DOH! NOTE: Spoilers ahead for Blade Runner 2049. Why write a little bit about Blade Runner 2049 in a book about the original Blade Runner? Because this book has the resources to shed light on both films. Blade Runner 2049 is a lot to take in

and I've only seen it once. I'll update this review should repeated viewings change my mind. This is a very good book. If you have thought a lot about the film Blade Runner, this book is for you. If you find the word "Philosophy" in the title worrisome, don't be worried. This book could have been easily called "Thinking Deeply About Blade Runner". The author pulls in philosophical resources to help, but you don't need to take a philosophy class to understand what is going on. The author is very clear and pulls in Sarte, Camus, Nietzsche, Descartes, Kant, and others to help make interpretative points. He also is knowledgeable about various Blade Runner versions and pulls from deleted scenes to help as well. I found this book and the essay Blade Runner and being-towards-death by Peter Atterton in the book Blade Runner (Philosophers on Film) to be very illuminating. The chapters are broken down: Being Human, Persons, Identity, Consciousness, Freedom, Being Good, God, Death, and Time and Meaning. All of these chapters are extremely thought provoking. All of them reward both Blade Runner and Blade Runner 2049. For example in Blade Runner 2049, Officer K goes through an Identity crisis and the Identity chapter in this book is very helpful to use when thinking about what Officer K is going through.

0. Interpretation and Versions Remarkably, in footnote 6 for Chapter 8 God, there is an anticipation of the theme of Blade Runner 2049: "The poem's [Milton's Paradise Lost] second story arc, centering on Adam and Eve, is concerned with their relationship to one another. Their disobeying of God's command not to eat from the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil, and their consequent expulsion from paradise. Eve is presenting as deferring to Adam's greater knowledge and authority. Adam is present as a heroic figure, but at the same time as a greater sinner than Eve because he is aware that what he is doing is wrong. This second story arc also has resonances in Blade Runner although they are less pronounced and detecting them requires taking greater interpretive liberties. Rachael defers to Deckard's greater knowledge and authority. Deckard is a heroic figure in protecting Rachael, but is a great sinner because he comes to realize that what he has been doing, namely killing synthetic people, is wrong. David Desser (1997, p 56) observes that 'Milton's Paradise Lost ends with the promise of redemption to come for future generations of Mankind; Blade Runner ends with the redemption of one man who will perhaps, like Adam, bring forth a new race upon the Earth'. There is some merit in this interpretation. At the end of the Theatrical Version Deckard flees Los Angeles with Rachel to a sunny, verdant landscape that seems like paradise compared to the decaying squalor of the city. By rescuing rather than retiring Rachael, despite Bryant's orders, Deckard has begun to redeem himself. Supposing that he and Racheal will literally bring forth a new race upon the earth, on the other hand, requires inferences than none of the versions of the film licenses us to make "However, Blade Runner 2049 does allow us to make this inference as Rachael and Deckard have a child and the search for this child drives that film. The main story arc of Paradise Lost where Roy Batty takes on the role of Lucifer is also interesting and discussed by the author. If we let the Paradise Lost interpretation influence us, it is interesting to think that Blade Runner 2049 actually prefers the US Theatrical Release of Blade Runner over other versions as the prequel to it.

1. Deck-a-Rep Prior to Blade Runner 2049, my stance on Deckard being a replicant was similar to the author's stance: "[...A]n interpretive principle that permits a film to be as rich, deep, and interesting as possible is, all other things being equal, preferable to one that trivializes it for the sake of being merely clever. Viewing Deckard as a replicant violates this principle. Viewing him as a human honors it. That is a powerful reason for viewing Deckard as a human." Blade Runner 2049 does not answer the question about Deckard. It drops some crumbs suggesting Deckard is a replicant, much like Blade Runner. Officer K's meeting with Gaff in the rest home where he says "Deckard was not of this world" and "Something in his eyes" provide clues. The gas masks being worn by humans(?) in the Vegas attack while no replicants wear them (Deckard also does not wear one) seem to be a further clue, the fight between Officer K and Deckard, and finally Wallace's speech about Rachael to Deckard yet another one. I'm sure there are dozens more I missed. However, what seems to matter in Blade Runner 2049 is whether the child is Human/Replicant or Replicant/Replicant. If Deckard's status is unknown, then the child's status is also unknown. Lieutenant Joshi seems to believe the child is Human/Replicant based upon her concern about society. However, Wallace seems to believe it is Replicant/Replicant. It isn't clear what the replicants believe as either choice seems good for them. In footnote 9 to Chapter 3 Persons: "In the film Leon's remark about 'having an itch you can never scratch' is obscure. A clue to what he means is provided in BR 2-81 where he explains more fully: 'Sex, reproduction, security, the simple things. But no way to satisfy them. To be homesick with no place to go. Potential with no way to use it. Lots of little oversights in the Nexus 6. I tell you, nothing is worse than having an itch you can never scratch'. Replicants believe being able to reproduce is a key ingredient based on Leon's remark. Unfortunately, the replicants may be misguided here as human history shows that slaves that can reproduce are still slaves, so while they may gain from reproduction, it isn't clear that they will be free from the society that binds them to slavery. Wallace certainly believes that they will still be slaves even if they reproduce. Of course, if human society is better in Blade Runner 2049 than in Blade Runner, we may be headed in the right direction where replicants are treated like persons. Sadly, replicant racism is worse in Blade Runner 2049 than in the original Blade Runner. Wallace's replicants are incapable of hurting humans (except for his assistant/assassin Luv) and this known fact seems to fuel the direst human behavior towards replicants. Essentially, be as racist as you like - there will be no consequences. Lieutenant Joshi seems to view Officer K as a great officer one minute and the next minute as a vibrator disguised as an attractive male (depending on how much alcohol she drinks). Unless reproduction is a modification that can be given to existing replicants, it would be a false prophet

because it would have to be designed and included with new replicants. Reproduction capability designed for Rachael by Tyrell has been lost and Wallace does not have it. If Wallace discovers it, he could probably modify it so that replicants could still easily be controlled as slaves. Unless Wallace is the sole father, I can't see him wanting Human/Replicant reproductive capability. I certainly see him wanting Replicant/Replicant reproductive capability as long as they can still be slaves. I certainly feel that the Paradise Lost interpretation to be a powerful one and that both Blade Runner films benefit the most by presuming Deckard is human, thus the child to be Human/Replicant. A Human/Replicant child would indeed rupture the social fabric of Earth in Blade Runner 2049.2. Beyond the "Physical" Many of the same questions regarding replicants in Blade Runner are also present in Blade Runner 2049 but with an additional twist - the AI hologram Joi. This book provides considerable resources for replicant/human comparisons and in doing so helps us with Joi too. Joi is an AI hologram designed to understand its owner and do what the owner wants it to do. The owner in question is Officer K. Officer K is clearly in love with Joi. Using the bonus he received from retiring Morton, he buys a device that allows him to take Joi out of his apartment and "experience" things like rain. It is never clear whether Joi is experience rain or acting in such a way to please Officer K who would love to see Joi experiencing something she never had before due to his actions. Every once in a while the K/Joi interactions reminded me of Butters in the South Park episode where Butters falls for the Hooters/Raisins girl because he thinks she is nice to him because she likes him. Philosophically, you can use Searle's Chinese Room thought experiment and ask if it is possible at some point in the manipulation of symbols, one can acquire meaning about those symbols. Here, Joi is always doing what she predicts K wants/needs. If her algorithm for prediction is 100% accurate, then we are left with whether she is just manipulating symbols to convey those to K or if those symbols have meaning for her. We cannot really know. A key point in the film is when junkyard raiders harpoon K's spinner and send it an EMP bringing it down. K is knocked out in the crash. The EMP subsides and the computer equipment come back online including Joi. Joi is struggling because of the EMP and she her senses may not be accurate. However, with K knocked out, she appears to be expressing deep concern over his well-being - something not needed by her programming if he is unconscious. However, if her senses were malfunctioning and couldn't tell if K was completely unconscious, K certainly would appreciate her concern and maybe her programming is hedging her bets. There are many other scenes with K/Joi, some of them very poignant. However, K is always conscious so one can never be sure if Joi is simply following her programming (manipulating symbols) or whether those symbols have taken on meaning for her. 11 of 12 people found the following review helpful. Very good Pris, now show him why By Arnold Next to Alien, Blade Runner is probably subject to more philosophical analysis than any other science fiction movie. And Timothy Shanahan's book makes clear why. It's an incredibly deep film that - intentionally or not - engages with many important philosophical questions. Shanahan's book explores several of these topics, combining a deep knowledge of the movie with hardcore philosophy. He manages to balance the two such that the book never feels like a philosophy textbook in Blade Runner guise. I had encountered some of these philosophical arguments before, but I also learned quite a bit. For example, Shanahan provides a fascinating explanation for why Roy says, "We're not computers, Sebastian, we're physical." It's given a whole new meaning to what I'd previously thought was sloppy dialogue - and immeasurably increased my enjoyment of the film. Definitely recommended. 9 of 12 people found the following review helpful. Some theories fall flat By max Been reading this for a while now and its okay. The author is a bit biased however on how he explains that Deckard is NOT a replicant. He gives his theory and although makes some valid arguments several of his ideas just fall flat. For instance he makes reference to how replicants are all so much stronger than humans and Deck is weak, therefore he must be human...yet the author makes no reference to RACHEL the most advanced replicant and yet shes utterly WEAK. She is scared she cries and gets the shakes after shooting Leon..so that right there proves not all replicants are strong..he also does not mention that Roy and Zora are basically trained combat models as explained by Bryant so of course they are already stronger even for basic replicants and don't forget Leon, "The only way to hurt him is to kill him". Another theory he has is that Gaff leaves the unicorn outside of Decks apartment just out of sheer coincidence implying that Decks escape is a "Fantasy" which again just makes no sense. Many many other clues are never touched on but hey IM not writing a book here..

Philosophy and Blade Runner explores philosophical issues in the film Blade Runner , including human nature, personhood, identity, consciousness, free will, morality, God, death, and the meaning of life. The result is a novel analysis of the greatest science fiction film of all time and a unique contribution to the philosophy of film.

About the Author Timothy Shanahan is Professor of Philosophy at Loyola Marymount University, USA. He is the author of Reason and Insight (2003), The Evolution of Darwinism (2004), Philosophy 9/11 (2005), The Provisional Irish Republican Army and the Morality of Terrorism (2009), and over two dozen articles in scholarly journals.