Heather Romano

Professor Murray-Resente

English Composition 102 ONL02

20 April 2023

<p align="center">The Star Wars franchise and how it has relevance in everyday life</p>

The iconic space opera franchise, Star Wars, created by George Lucas, has captivated audiences for decades with its epic battles between the forces of good and evil, memorable characters, and deep philosophical themes. Beyond its status as a pop culture phenomenon, Star Wars has also found relevance in everyday life. In this paper its impact on society, culture, and individuals in various ways will be explored, along with the many ways Star Wars continues to be relevant in everyday life and has influenced diverse aspects of modern society. "Star Wars is not just a movie franchise, but a cultural phenomenon that has captivated audiences for generations. It has become a modern-day myth, with its iconic characters, epic battles, and timeless themes of good versus evil, hope, and resilience. Star Wars has transcended its status as a mere piece of media and has become deeply ingrained in our culture, shaping our collective imagination and influencing how we perceive and interpret the world around us." (Brode "Myth").

The prequel trilogy of Star Wars, consisting of Episode I: The Phantom Menace (1999), Episode II: Attack of the Clones (2002), and Episode III: Revenge of the Sith (2005), provides a complex narrative that sets up the events of the Clone Wars and ultimately leads to the downfall of the Galactic Republic, setting the stage for the original trilogy. This storyline is rich with political intrigue, manipulation, and the tragic fall of characters, providing a thought-provoking

exploration of power, corruption, and the consequences of one's choices. It delves into the origins of the Clone Wars, a major conflict that serves as a backdrop for the events of the entire trilogy. In Episode II: Attack of the Clones, the Republic, led by Chancellor Palpatine, approves the creation of a clone army to counter the growing threat of the Separatists, a multiplanet confederacy consisting of star systems who chose to withdraw from the galactic federation led in part by the Sith, Count Dooku. This sets the stage for the Clone Wars, which erupt in Episode III: Revenge of the Sith as the Republic clashes with the Separatists in a large-scale galactic conflict.

The Star Wars saga is filled with moral and ethical dilemmas that parallel real-life situations. The conflict between the light side (the Jedi) and the dark side (the Sith) presents a constant struggle between good and evil, with characters facing decisions that often test their values and principles. "With each victory of the light it is the dark that wins." (Stover 605). This eternal battle between opposing forces is a central theme in the Star Wars saga, and it resonates with audiences because it reflects the timeless struggle between right and wrong, and the choices individuals face in their own lives.

Through the Star Wars saga, characters are often faced with difficult decisions that test their values, principles, and beliefs. For example, Anakin Skywalker, the chosen one destined to bring balance to the Force, is tempted by the dark side and ultimately succumbs to it, becoming the Sith General Darth Vader. His internal struggle between the light and dark sides of the Force is a poignant portrayal of the moral dilemmas individuals can face in their own lives. It raises questions about the consequences of one's choices, the seduction of power, and the moral complexity of decision-making. The characters are forced to confront their own weaknesses, fears, and desires, and make choices that shape their destinies. "In their spectacular duel over the

lava, they are evenly matched. Symbolically the light-dark battle for the galaxy could go either way…" (Frankel). This was a common theme, truly showing that there is a balance needed from both sides.

This portrayal of internal struggle and the moral ambiguity of decision-making is relevant to everyday life, as individuals often face choices that may not have clear-cut answers and require careful consideration of their values and principles. Star Wars also highlights the importance of balance in life. The concept of balance in the Force, where neither the light side nor the dark side should dominate, resonates with the idea of finding harmony and equilibrium in one's own life. It emphasizes the need for individuals to find a balance between their emotions, desires, and responsibilities, and make choices that align with their core values and principles. This theme of balance, and the consequences of imbalance in the Star Wars saga can serve as a reflection of the choices individuals face in their own lives and the need to find a sense of equilibrium.

The conflict between the light and dark sides in Star Wars also touches on the broader philosophical concept of good versus evil. It raises questions about the nature of morality, the complexities of ethical decision-making, and the consequences of actions. It prompts viewers to reflect on their own values, beliefs, and the choices they make in their everyday lives, and encourages critically thinking about the concepts of right and wrong, and the implications of one's actions. The conflict between the light and dark sides in Star Wars, as represented by the Jedi and the Sith, presents a constant struggle between good and evil that resonates with audiences because it reflects the timeless themes of morality, ethics, and the complexities of decision-making.

The internal struggles and choices faced by the characters in Star Wars serve as a metaphor for the moral dilemmas individuals encounter in their own lives. The themes of balance, decision-making, and the nature of good and evil in the Star Wars saga are relevant to everyday life, inviting viewers to reflect on their own values and principles, and encouraging critical thinking about the choices they make in their own lives. "…invites us to explore the multifaceted nature of human experience, and how these fundamental aspects of our lives shape the narratives and dynamics within the Star Wars universe, making it a thought-provoking and multi-layered saga..." (Brode "Sex").

Similarly, the prequel trilogy sheds light on the flaws and challenges faced by the Jedi Order, once the guardians of peace and justice in the galaxy. They highlight the dangers of dogmatism, overreliance on prophecies, hubris, lack of adaptability, and ethical dilemmas. The Jedi Code emphasizes detachment from all emotion, which can lead to dogmatism and, obviously, a lack of emotional balance. Jedi are often discouraged from forming personal attachments, which can result in stunted emotional growth, a suppression of what emotions they do have, and a denial of their natural human feelings. This can lead to a lack of empathy and understanding of the thoughts and feelings of others. In real life, this can relate to the challenges of balancing emotions in relationships and navigating personal connections. "Obi-Wan Kenobi, despite his wisdom and skill as a Jedi Master, presents an intriguing conundrum as a flawed mentor in the Star Wars saga. While he serves as a guiding figure to young Jedi like Anakin Skywalker and Luke Skywalker, his own struggles with attachment, hubris, and adherence to the strict Jedi code highlight the complexities of mentorship and the challenges of navigating moral dilemmas. Obi-Wan's imperfections and failures raise thought-provoking questions about the limitations of mentors and the ethical quandaries they may face, adding depth and nuance to his

character and underscoring the complexities of the Jedi Order's teachings and practices."

(Martín). It serves as a reminder that emotions are an integral part of the human experience and

suppressing them entirely can have devastatingly negative consequences.

The Jedi Order places a significant emphasis on prophecies and the concept of chosen

ones, such as Anakin , Luke, and much later Rey Skywalker. This reliance on prophecies and

destiny can result in a narrow and limited view of the future, leading to complacency and

overlooking other possibilities. In everyday life, this can reflect the dangers of relying solely on

fate or external forces and neglecting the importance of personal agency and decision-making in

shaping one's own destiny. The Jedi are depicted as powerful and skilled warriors, but their

power can often lead to hubris and a sense of superiority. This can result in a disconnect from the

needs and perspectives of ordinary people, and even lead to corruption, as seen with the fall of

the Jedi Order and the rise of the Sith. In real life, this can be a cautionary tale about the dangers

of unchecked power, the importance of humility, and the need to stay grounded and connected to

one's community.

The Jedi Order's strict adherence to their Code and traditions hindered their ability to

adapt and evolve in the face of changing circumstances. They often reject unconventional or

alternative methods, which can limit their effectiveness in dealing with complex situations. This

can serve as a reminder that rigidity and inflexibility in one's beliefs or approaches can hinder

growth and progress, and the need to be open to new perspectives and ideas. The Jedi often face

difficult moral choices and ethical dilemmas, such as the use of force, the balance between

personal freedom and societal order, and the limits of their authority. These dilemmas reflect the

complexities of decision-making in real life, where individuals often face situations with no

clear-cut answers and must navigate moral ambiguity. It serves as a reminder that ethics and

morality are complex issues that require critical thinking, reflection, and careful consideration of the consequences of actions. By examining these challenges faced by the Jedi, viewers can reflect on their own beliefs, choices, and actions, and consider how to navigate similar challenges in their own lives. It serves as a reminder of the importance of self-awareness, adaptability, humility, and critical thinking in making ethical decisions and facing challenges in everyday life.

The "found family" trope is a common storytelling device in which a group of individuals who are not related by blood form a close-knit family-like bond through shared experiences and mutual support. Anakin Skywalker was taken in by the Jedi Order as a young boy and becomes a Padawan learner under the tutelage of Obi-Wan Kenobi. In the early years, Obi-Wan acts as a father figure to Anakin, guiding him in his Jedi training and trying to instill in him the teachings of the Jedi Order. Obi-Wan is patient and caring towards Anakin, but he also tries to temper Anakin's impulsive nature and recklessness, often scolding him for his impatience and disobedience. As Anakin grows older, their relationship becomes more complicated. This reflects the importance of mentors and role models in our lives, who can provide guidance and support as we navigate challenges and make decisions.

Obi-Wan represents adherence to the rules and teachings of the Jedi Order, while Anakin struggles with his emotions and desires. This highlights the ongoing struggle many people face in finding a balance between rules and emotions in their own lives, such as navigating societal expectations while staying true to their personal feelings and values. Obi-Wan and Anakin's relationship shows that relationships can be complex and multifaceted, with moments of camaraderie and conflict. This reflects the reality of human relationships, where conflicts and disagreements can arise, but there can still be deep bonds of friendship and love that transcend

those challenges Despite their conflicts, Obi-Wan still cares deeply for Anakin, and Anakin's fall to the dark side is a source of immense grief for Obi-Wan. "You were my brother Anakin… I loved you, but I could not save you." (Stover 981). Even after their final battle, Obi-Wan still refers to Anakin as his brother, showing that their bond as mentor and apprentice, and as a found family, is not entirely severed. While Obi-Wan and Anakin's relationship is a fictional one, it can still offer valuable insights and reflections such as the importance of mentorship, balancing rules and emotions, navigating complex relationships, and being mindful of our choices. The found family trope is a significant theme in the prequel trilogy, emphasizing the importance of relationships and human connection.

Star Wars has transcended its status as a popular entertainment franchise and has found relevance in influencing society, culture, and individuals in various ways by prompting discussions, fostering creativity, inspiring action, and encouraging individuals to reflect on important aspects of life. But it also portrays political intrigue, manipulation, corruption, and the consequences of choices. From its humble beginnings in 1977 to its continued success and evolution in the modern era, Star Wars has left an indelible mark on popular culture, influencing not just movies, but also literature, art, technology, and even real-world philosophies. One thing is certain: the Force of Star Wars will continue to be a powerful presence that will captivate audiences and spark our imaginations for years to come. May the Force be with us, always.

Works Cited

Brode, and Deyneka. *Myth, Media, and Culture in Star Wars: An Anthology*. Scarecrow Press,

    2012. *EBSCOhost*,

    search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx?direct=true&db=nlebk&AN=473796&site=eds-

    live&scope=site.

- - - *Sex, Politics, and Religion in Star Wars: An Anthology*. Scarecrow Press, 2012. *EBSCOhost*,

    search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx?direct=true&db=nlebk&AN=469678&site=eds-

    live&scope=site.

Frankel, Valerie. *Star Wars and the Hero's Journey: Mythic Character Arcs Through the 12-*

    Film Epic. McFarland, 2021. *EBSCOhost*,

    search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx?direct=true&db=nlebk&AN=2888623&site=eds-

    live&scope=site.

Martín, Sara. "Obi-Wan Kenobi and the Problem of the Flawed Mentor." *Foundation: The*

    International Review of Science Fiction, vol. 48, no. 132, Jan. 2019, pp. 37–

    53. *EBSCOhost*,

    search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx?direct=true&db=edo&AN=136082750&site=eds-

    live&scope=site.

Stover, Matthew, et al. *Star Wars: The Prequel Trilogy*. Random House Worlds, 2007.