Video Assignment #3

Student's Name

Institutional Affiliations

8,9,10-1 Video Assignment#3

Character Summary and Role Throughout the Movie

Officer John Ryan, portrayed by Matt Dillon, is a complex character in the film "Crash."

As an LAPD police officer, Throughout the film, his actions and attitudes paint a vivid picture of

a conflicted individual struggling with personal and professional challenges. The movie opens

with Ryan making racially charged comments and performing a humiliating search on Cameron

and Christine Thayer, an African American couple, during a traffic stop. This scene sets the stage

for his controversial role in the narrative, where he oscillates between reprehensible behavior and

moments of redemption.

Stereotypes and Subjectivity

Ryan is subjected to several stereotypes. As a white police officer, he is seen both as a

protector and as a figure of authority and power. However, his overtly racist actions and attitudes

expose him to stereotypes of being a bigoted and corrupt cop. His treatment of African American

characters, particularly during the traffic stop, reinforces negative stereotypes about police

brutality and racial profiling.

Privileges and Usage

Ryan wields manipulates situations to his advantage, as seen when he requests a favor

from a health insurance employee over the phone and uses his badge to exert influence and

control over others. His ability to navigate the system to get what he wants, even if it means

abusing his power, highlights the problematic aspects of his privilege.

Impact of Identity on Behavior and Interactions

Ryan's identity as a white male police officer deeply impacts his behavior and

interactions. His racial prejudices and sense of authority influence how he perceives and treats

people of color. The film illustrates this through his interactions with the Thayers and his

treatment of Shaniqua Johnson, the insurance representative. However, his identity also leads to

complex interactions, such as when he rescues Christine Thayer from a car accident, showing a

capacity for heroism that adds depth to his character.

Personal Thoughts and Feelings About the Character

John Ryan is a character that elicits strong emotions, from disdain for his racist behavior

to a complicated empathy following his acts of bravery. He does not represent a group I hold bias

towards, but his portrayal challenges viewers to consider the complexities of each individual

beyond their worst actions. Ryan's character forces audiences to confront uncomfortable truths

about racism, bias, and redemption.

Role of Neuroscience in Behavior and Perceptions

From a neuroscience perspective, Ryan's behavior and perceptions can be analyzed

through the lens of implicit biases that operate subconsciously. Neuroscience suggests that these

biases are rooted in the brain's fundamental mechanism for categorizing information and

experiences. These automatic processes can influence decision-making and interpersonal

interactions without conscious awareness. Ryan's actions, particularly his discriminatory

practices, can be partially attributed to these ingrained neural pathways that have developed over

time through exposure to societal norms and personal experiences.

Overall Thoughts and Feelings About the Movie

"Crash" is a powerful film that challenges viewers to reflect on their prejudices and the

societal structures that perpetuate racial tensions. It provides new perspectives by interweaving

stories of multiple characters, each contributing to a broader dialogue about race, identity, and

human connection. The film encourages introspection and empathy, urging viewers to look

beyond superficial interactions and consider the deeper human experiences connecting us all.

Value of Viewing Movies Like "Crash" in Decreasing Bias

Viewing movies such as "Crash" is invaluable in efforts to decrease bias. They foster a greater understanding of diverse perspectives and experiences, serving as catalysts for dialogue and reflection. By exposing viewers to the complexities of identity and bias through relatable narratives, films like "Crash" can promote empathy, awareness, and a willingness to challenge personal prejudices. This cultural exposure is essential in education and can be a transformative tool in combating bias and fostering a more inclusive society.