

Ethics Disability and Sacrifice in Million Dollar Baby

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The time frame in which the film takes place:

The movie “Million Dollar Baby” took place in the time frame of 1940-2004. (Wasserman et al., 2016)

How are we introduced to Maggie? Why does she have such a passion for boxing?

Maggie is a 31-year-old waitress who grew up in poverty. She lived in Theodosher, and her family never paid any attention to her. As her childhood was spent in misery, she developed the thought of herself as a useless person. To overcome this thought, she found boxing as a source by which she could truly prove herself to be worthy of something.

How do you describe Frankie’s relationship with God? What do you think he is praying for?

Frankie is a faithful Catholic who prays that God protects his wife and daughter. However, he does have questions about the religion, and he is repeatedly seen asking his friend the questions about religion.

Do you think Scrap’s narration/voice-over is an effective method for telling Frankie’s and Maggie’s stories?

Scrap’s narration in describing the story of both characters is lyrical but does not discuss his own opinions about the events of the movie. He prefers to be real and describes what actually happened rather than its possible causes. Therefore, his narration effectively tells us the actual story of Frankie and Maggie as it is explanatory but without personal opinions.

What was Frankie's rule in boxing? Who does it apply to?

The rule of boxing, as defined by Frankie's, is to "always protect yourself". This lesson he teaches all of the boxers he trains and considers the most beneficial and important rule to succeed in the ring.

Describe the relationship between Frankie and Scrap.

Scrap's relation to Frankie is of a helper, friend, and advisor. He helped Frankie run the gym operations and advised him whenever he needed it. His character is portrayed as a calm man who controls himself and makes decisions intelligently, as he forgave Frankie when he blamed him for Maggie's accident and motivated him.

Are some wounds too deep and too close to the bone to stop bleeding? Comment

In the movie, this quote may refer to the fact that you cannot control everything, no matter how hard you try. We see that Maggie had an accident. Frankie's lost all hope, but he couldn't do anything to relieve her of her agony and had to finally end her life.

Describe the relationship between Maggie and her family.

The only person in the family that Maggie considers her own is her father. His father was the only one whom she got true love from, and she had no family left when her dad died.

How does the movie use boxing as a metaphor for life?

The movie describes boxing as the motivation that is needed in life to perform bigger tasks. It explains that boxing, like life, needs a person to be strong and focused to achieve his goal, but there are also failures that devastate the person and injure him with wounds he may never recover from.

What qualities do you see in Frankie?

Frank has the high virtue of honor, and he puts his faith as a priority. As a father, he is seen to be caring and loving and determined to do what is best for her family. For Maggie, Frank proved to be a motivator and determined person who tried his best to train and motivate her.

What are some of the themes in the film? Pick one and discuss it with an example.

The movie has several themes like strength, respect, and perseverance, but the most dominant one is about family. The story opens with a bad treatment of Maggie's family and how her family demotivated her. Frank is also troubled by his decisions for her daughter, and he is haunted by the consequences of them.

What advice does the priest give Frankie?

Frankie asks the priest's advice when Maggie meets an accident and asks Frankie to end her life. The priest advised Frankie not to intervene in God's decisions and that it is a sin to kill a person, even if to relieve his pain.

What do you think happens to Frankie as he walks out of the hospital?

No definite answer can be given to this question. But judging from his previous dialogues and what he said in the bar, it can be claimed that he was finally convinced he had done well in life and that his efforts would eventually become a cause of his forgiveness.

Did this film change you in the way you think about boxing?

After watching this movie, I have understood that boxing is a game in which trying hard and hard will give results, but the game depends on luck, and boxers, no matter how hard they try, may experience different results as a matter of luck.

What is the key message of the film?

The key message of the film is that “seeing your dreams getting shattered is a bigger pain than the one death brings to us.”

How did this film compare with “Secret Life of Bees”? (Rachels, 1975)

Both films have characters who are responsible for any person’s death. In “Secret Life of Bees,” Lily suffers from the guilt of killing her mother, but her pain is not so expressive and overcoming part of the film. However, Frank’s guilt for her daughter and Maggie is more objectified and prominent in the movie.

What questions did the film leave you with?

The film leaves several questions to the viewer, like is it justified to kill a person if he is willing to die? Is changing faith in God based on any sad event in life justified? Is it okay to lose hope and give up when life hits you hard?

How is this a religious film?

The film has several mentions of religion. Frank is described as a religious person who goes to church and bases his actions on the will of God, though, in the end, he acts against it. He also is seen praying to God to protect his wife and daughter, and his actions prove that he is a believer of faith.

References

Wasserman, D., Asch, A., Blustein, J., & Putnam, D. (2016). Disability: Definitions, models, experience. In E. N. Zalta (Ed.), *The Stanford encyclopedia of philosophy*.

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