

*A Literal Queer Eye: Queering Replicants in Blade Runner*

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The American standard of a happy household used to be 2.5 children, a domestic mother, a working father, and a white picket fence. As technology has evolved, the ideas regarding the underlying social norm for family structure have adapted as well. The legalization of gay marriage, the emerging female domination of the work force, and the new overwhelming male support for the pro-choice movement are all arguably signs of progression in regards to marginalized individuals such as women and the queer community. Underlying this seemingly more accepting and progressive society, the social control of sexuality by the media, especially within the film industry, reinforces the ever prevalent themes of heteronormativity and female subservience. Additionally, the cyborg figure within the media represents an aversion to the normative societal standards. Because the cyborg figure invokes hybridity, the cyborg is described as “not completely the Other. Rather, its narrative power comes from its ability to blur boundaries by blending the Other and the human” (Nishime 35). This liminal space of a non-human, passing as human, allows the marginalized minority to mimic characteristics of the overwhelming social majority. By utilizing the queer studies lens to examine societal barriers and social control, the film *Blade Runner* by Ridley Scott contains the cyborg figure of replicants that represent a queer figure passing as straight in a heteronormative post-apocalyptic world. The ability of the replicant to pass as an actual ‘human’ in this technologically driven version of Los Angeles, portrays the ability for a queer person to pass as a heterosexual individual in actual society. Through the alternate world that the film *Blade Runner* creates, ‘human’ passing replicants are a metaphor for straight passing members of the queer community, and the replicants embody the repercussions of violating the typical societal sexuality norm. Additionally, this alternate reality of a society uses a police force and the special guidance of Deckard to maintain this social control on the standards of sexuality.