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Terminator (1984)

When *The Terminator* (The Terminator 1984) was released in 1984, the movie was groundbreaking. The genre of the movie is sci fi and is borderline on horror at times. The Terminator introduces the audience to the T800, a cybernetic organism sent from that future that is designed with to kill people. In other words, the terminator T800 was very scary. A humanlike robot that is a master assassin. The goal of the film is to question what it means to be human and terrify the audience.

So, what exactly makes the Terminator so scary? The T800 has a scare factor that separates itself from normal horror such as the slasher genre. For starters, what is a T800 modivation? The terminator was designed with one specific purpose in mind, which is to terminate its victim. It is programed with this specific task and will not stop until its victim is terminated. In the movie *The Terminator* (The Terminator 1984), the T800 mission is to Kill Sarah Connor, in a mission to prevent Jon Connor from ever being born. The Terminator doesn't care what happens itself. Terminators feel no emotions sense of emotions such as happiness or pain. Whether the machine gets hurt, lives, dies, it will kill anyone in its way to accomplish its mission. It is truly a killing machine and will do anything to terminate its victim and accomplish its goal. It is also scary because of its inability to be stopped. Modern weapons are ineffective to the terminator. It has been demonstrated brutally murdering its victims with no care. If someone

stands in the way of the T800 they will be terminated. Ultimately this results in a very smart, killing weapon, that is nearly impossible to take down.

Secondly, is the human-like ability that the terminator has. The question that the movie poses is whether AI is so advanced that it is more human or more robot? The T800 truly walks a thin line of what a human due to it being a master in disguise. On the surface, T800 can mimic human behaviors and features such as breathing and has a specialty of blending in with the outside world. The appearance alone allows for the T800 to infiltrate bases and take out people instantly. The T800 has a built in CPU that contains information that allowed for learning on its own to help mimic human interaction. This concept of AI adaption adds to another layer of disguise allowing for the robot to get in and terminate its victim. This makes it very difficult to differentiate between a killing machine and a human. On the surface is an everyday human. Underneath everything, when the skin and bone is removed, the T800 looks like it came from another dimension. It is a robot with glowing red eyes and mixed with the 1980s CGI, looks horrifying. Ultimately, the T800 is a master of disguise which is terrifying.

The machine itself threatens the very existence of humanity. The terminators want to live however, cannot live with humanity. In the distant future of 2027, the AI has gotten so advanced to the point where it would lead to the near extinction of humanity. Although, only briefly touched upon in the movie (The Terminator 1984) we see glimpses of a future post-apocalyptic future with many terminators. In this scene, we are shown the brutal war between humans vs machines, while demonstrating the struggle. Humans are at war with these advanced AI terminators, and they are struggling to win the fight. In later movies, it would elaborate further to discuss the details of a full-scale nuclear war battle with humans and the terminators. Overall, the

message that the movie tries to send is to demonstrate the capabilities of machines and to question whether they can one day take over which is very scary.

Overall, the Terminator by itself is very scary for what it is physically and what it represents. On the surface it is a highly intelligent killing robot, with superstrength, and is a master in disguise. By itself it is physically terrifying due to its raw power. On the other hand, the idea of it being a machine is also terrifying. It makes you question what it means to be human. It also poses the question if all technology would be a good thing. It toys with the idea of how human like AI could become one day and whether AI could be advanced enough to lead to the extinction of humanity.

Citations

- Cameron, James, director. *The Terminator*. 1984.