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Dave Made a Maze

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Dave Made a Maze

Abstract

This is a film review of *Dave Made a Maze* (2017), directed by Bill Watterson.

Author Notes

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Dave Made a Maze (2017), dir. Bill Watterson

The director of this film makes the following statement: "I wanted to explore the mad fantasy worlds and heightened realities of *Labyrinth* or a *Legend*, but to see the journey taken by foul-mouthed adults rather than a band of plucky tweens." Given that description of the film, I am confident that this movie was not seen as a metaphor for religion. But, the movie is also described as one in which Dave makes a maze that includes a variety of booby traps that prevent Dave from escaping the maze. I was struck by this description. It sounded as though the movie might be interpreted as a metaphor for religion--not any particular religion, but religion in many of its various forms. Having seen the movie, I think the idea of it as a metaphor works.

Dave makes a maze, in part to give some meaning to his life. Similarly, people create their own religions and often this is a matter giving their lives meaning. When they make their religions,

however, they often fail to see the consequences of their construction. We become trapped, then, in our religions in the same way that Dave is trapped in his maze. Dave's maze includes violence, even beheading and impaling, and we see versions of religions that call for violence, including beheading. Dave's girlfriend, Annie, and other friends enter the maze, intending to rescue him. I'm reminded here of deprogramming efforts on behalf of believers involved in cults. Dave cannot break out of the maze, because he has become attached to it. Habits of behavior are hard to break, even when the habits are harmful to us. At one point in the film, the characters become puppets, indicating a transition of the self from one kind of being to another—not unlike the transformation expected for ourselves when we create our religions.

You may very well enjoy the journey of the foul mouthed adults, but see if you don't find a parallel between Dave's making of the maze and the creation of religions.

(Note: *Labyrinth* is a 1980s fantasy/action film directed by Jim Henson, of Muppet fame, starring David Bowie and Jennifer Connelly. *Legend* is an American dark fantasy, adventure film (also from the 80s) directed by Ridley Scott, starring Tom Cruise, Mia Sara, and Tim Curry.)