

CARROLL COLLEGE

THE REALITY OF UNREALITY: ALTERNATE HISTORY SCIENCE FICTION OF
THE COLD WAR AS A BAROMETER OF HISTORICAL AND PHILOSOPHICAL
CONSCIOUSNESS IN AMERICAN POPULAR CULTURE

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Reality is that which, when you stop believing in it, doesn't go away.

—Philip K. Dick

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ABSTRACT

The study of science fiction is a recent phenomenon. While the fictional genre has permeated American popular culture since the early twentieth century, it was not until the postwar and Cold War eras that it experienced vitality as a subject of academic study. Sub-genres of science fiction, however, remain relatively untouched in critical analysis. While science fiction's value as a barometer of popular culture is widely recognized today, its subcategories can offer unique insight into facets of the field that comment, either peripherally or directly, upon American popular consciousness. Alternate history science fiction is particularly valuable as a subgenre because of its attempt to answer “what if” questions about history, and while American alternate history science fiction does not strictly represent counterfactual analysis of a historical time period, it nevertheless can offer valuable insights into meaningful subjects within American popular culture. Alternate history science fiction of the Cold War period, including Philip K. Dick's *The Man in the High Castle* as well as Gene Roddenberry's *Star Trek* series offer peripheral insights into the lives of their authors and, perhaps more importantly, correlations with historical events and philosophical schools of thought from their respective time periods: the early and late Cold War. The development of alternate history science fiction experienced new vitality with Cold War developments, including the birth of atomic technology and tension with the Soviet Union. A study of alternate history science fiction's development as a consequence of the postwar and Cold War eras, coupled with case studies, including *The Man in the High Castle* and *Star Trek: The Next Generation* episode “Yesterday's Enterprise”, reveal that real historical events and schools of thought are never beyond the pale of science fiction.

PREFACE

My professors have always insisted upon the importance of engaging a research project that piques one's interest. As an avid fan of science fiction, most notably including Roddenberry's *Star Trek* series and B-grade science fiction films from the 1950s and 1960s, my initial idea to write about the history of science fiction from an American context felt natural. It was easy for me to get excited about this research project. However, as I quickly discovered, the novelty of writing about science fiction broadly is not as great as I had originally thought. Considering the breadth of academic material, from historians and literary scholars alike, about science fiction, I realized early into the project that I would have to find another avenue for original work within the field of science fiction.

Working with alternate history science fiction offered a refreshing alternative to writing solely about its broad parent genre. A friend suggested that I look at a work by Philip K. Dick, *The Man in the High Castle*, as a launching point for familiarizing myself with alternate history science fiction. While I had long been a fan of film adaptations of Mr. Dick's work, including *Blade Runner*, *Total Recall*, and *Minority Report*, I was surprised to learn that Dick originally came to fame because of his little novel about an alternate ending to World War II. As I read the work, I wondered to what extent Dick's experiences during the Cold War had upon his construction of the novel. My "eureka" moment came when talking with Dr. Gillian Glaes about the relationship between fiction and fact. I arrived at the conclusion that what other scholars had done for the Cold War and science fiction broadly should be done specifically for alternate history science

fiction. Thus was the project of examining American alternate history science fiction from the Cold War born.

I embarked upon analysis of the relationship between American perceptions of the Cold War and alternate history works through examining two case studies from the early and late Cold War periods. The problem with alternate history science fiction is that it can be difficult to concretely define. As such, finding a “list” of alternate history science fiction works from the Cold War era proved elusive. Again upon the suggestion of Carroll professors, including Drs. Glaes and William Parsons, I chose to examine two case studies of alternate history science fiction instead of engaging a macro-approach. I chose Dick’s *The Man in the High Castle* because it fit cleanly into the category of alternate history science fiction undoubtedly affected by Dick’s experiences during the height of the Cold War. However, one case study is not enough, and choosing my second example of alternate history science fiction proved more elusive.

Carroll’s Dr. William Parsons suggested that, as a *Trek* fan, I engage the series if at all possible. While a plethora of episodes from *Star Trek: The Original Series* concern time travel, the series’ proximity to Dick’s *The Man in the High Castle* was unhelpful for my task of examining changing American popular perceptions of the Cold War within alternate history science fiction. I remembered watching an episode from *Star Trek: The Next Generation*, “Yesterday’s Enterprise,” that deals with an alternate timeline, however, and I chose it as my second example of alternate history science fiction. I then embarked upon the task of examining American popular culture through the vehicle of alternate history science fiction during two periods of the Cold War: the 1960s and 1980s, respectively.

Working on this project was a tremendous experience. It imparted to the importance of writing a thesis earlier rather than later, which is a lesson that I will carry into my eventual graduate studies. (No more procrastinating!) I was fortunate to have spoken with Professor Darko Suvin and Eric Stillwell, from the field of science fiction studies and *Star Trek* production, respectively, during my research. Discussing my favorite form of literature and film with two of its experts was, perhaps, the most rewarding part of the project.

I am not sure that I have done alternate history science fiction justice in my thesis. However, writing about science fiction was a marvelous experience. Perhaps I can even find avenue by which I can turn my love for science fiction into an eventual career at the graduate level. This project ultimately imparted to me the importance of connecting popular culture to historical reality. I am simply glad to learn I could put my love affair with science fiction to work toward a productive end.

AKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Starting a thesis is an impressive undertaking, and finishing one is even more difficult.

Given my longstanding propensity for tackling projects at the last possible moment, which, sadly, was a technique that I employed for even the thesis, a great deal of credit is due to people who patiently guided (and eventually prodded) me toward the finish line.

Thank you, first and foremost, to my director, Dr. Gillian Glaes. You have the patience of Job. I think that it is safe for me to admit that I would not have finished this project or, for that matter, my research seminar paper without your understanding and an occasional, gentle nudge in the direction of the much-loathed but inevitable “due date.” I will eventually have to reimburse you for some tissue boxes.

Thank you to Professors Robert Swartout and William Parsons for serving as readers. I know that you both have had to read many a paper of mine, so you are both well-versed in my writing weaknesses as well as the fact that I am deadline-challenged. And yet, you still chose to be my thesis readers. You both deserve a hearty “hats off!”

Special thanks to Kathy Martin and Heather Navratil from Carroll’s Corette Library. You are library goddesses.

Thanks to Professor Darko Suvin and Eric A. Stillwell for answering my nerdy science fiction questions. Talking about experts within a field is laudable, but engaging them in conversation and critical inquiry is another enterprise entirely. I am so grateful to have had the chance to “butt heads” with two experts from the fields of literary theory and television production, respectively. (And now I can gloat to my *Trek* buddies that I have debated with the guy who *defined* science fiction and a producer from *Star Trek*!)

Finally, thanks to Mom and Alex for purchasing many a late-night latte for me while I worked on this project and putting up with my shenanigans. Perhaps I will make it up to you one day. I am not exactly sure how, but feel free to call in my debts. Eventually.

INTRODUCTION

Humankind cannot bear very much reality. — T.S. Eliot

Little kids are that way; they feel if their parents aren't watching what they do then what they do isn't real. — Philip K. Dick, *The Man in the High Castle*

Orson Scott Card remarks in *Xenocide* that science fiction represents “madness, and then illumination.”¹ However, the “madness” of science fiction long stood as grounds for its wholesale dismissal within the academic community, and it has only been within the past few decades that the genre has burgeoned as an area of critical analysis. While a wealth of theories pertaining to science fiction studies have been introduced of late, including those of scholars Darko Suvin, Carl Freidman, Keith Booker, Hugo Gernsback, and Peter Nicholls, the genre remains a relatively new field for critical inquiry. The birth of science fiction as a popular field of academic discourse corresponds with the increasing breadth of cultural histories, and the formerly nascent discipline has found itself enjoying new credibility on the coattails of film studies and new directions in the study of history. While science fiction at large is a popular field for analysis, its study has, perhaps surprisingly, been comprehensive, and very few subfields of the discipline, with some notable exceptions, have spawned out of its research.* The study of specific facets of science fiction offers unique, detailed insights into the field at large, and, furthermore, can augment our understanding of the cultural context in which a work was composed. Therefore, a focus upon science fiction subgenres is key to fomenting a

* The exceptions to this rule are worth noting, and the general breadth of science fiction studies does not preclude a few outstanding works that focus upon particular aspects of the field. For example, the work of Walter E. Meyers in language analysis within science fiction offers a spectacular look into one facet of the field, and a wealth of feminist studies concerning science fiction demonstrate that science fiction studies has recently been augmented by specificity.

deeper understanding of the historical and philosophical precedent for its development in a particular context.

One subgenre of science fiction that has remained almost untouched by academic inquiry is science fiction *uchronia*, or alternate history science fiction.[†] Providing a comprehensive definition of science fiction, as broadly construed, is a point of contention among science fiction critics of the past century, and the task proves equally difficult, if not more so, for its subcategories. Recent scholarship has sought to define science fiction more broadly than popular cultural images portend; renowned literary scholar Darko Suvin, in his landmark *Metamorphoses of Science Fiction*, laments that the twentieth century relegated all works with aliens or foreign technology into the realm of science fiction. He seeks to “cleanse our perception” of what can be included in the genre. Suvin argues that science fiction “is a literary genre whose necessary...conditions are the presence and interaction of estrangement and cognition, and whose main...device is an imaginative framework alternate to the author’s empirical environment.”² While estrangement is present in all fictional works, the role of cognition is important in defining science fiction from fiction alone. From the standpoint of science fiction, cognition is the ability of a character to rationally articulate and question its surroundings in a contextual fashion, in which the work’s author either directly or peripherally incorporates his or her background and historical framework into the story.

Estrangement and cognition, though certainly not arbitrary in a formulation of what constitutes “science fiction” as a genre, nevertheless represent a subjective

[†] The word *uchronia* is a neologism from the Greek word *utopia*, meaning “not land.” The Greek word for “land,” *topos*, is replaced with the root *chronos*, meaning “time.” French philosopher Charles Bernard Renouvier coined the term in his work *Uchronie* from 1876.

interpretation of the subject. However, Suvin's interpretation of science fiction offers a bold, encompassing definition that I apply in my exploration of alternate history science fiction. His approach informs my evaluation of the category's subgenres, including alternate history science fiction.

While Suvin does not baldly suggest considering all science fiction as alternate history science fiction, his new interpretive framework for defining science fiction allows for a broad consideration of this subgenre. Distinguishing the two categories is difficult, and the boundary defining alternate history science fiction from its broad general group is often flexible. If science fiction includes, as H.G. Wells famously indicated, a "strange property in a strange world," then an element of the fantastic, divorced but by shades of the familiar from the real world, is certainly present in alternate history science fiction.³ I propose that this genre be defined along the same lines as Suvin's general definition of science fiction but with a few caveats. For example, Suvin argues that alternate history science fiction is a subgenre of science fiction whose conditions include the presence and interaction of estrangement and cognition, and whose main, formal device is an imaginative framework alternative. When applying Suvin's definition to alternate history science fiction, however, one must be more specific in situating the alternate framework within the author's empirical environment. What drives the plot's significance, I argue, is that there is a tension between the author's world and the world that he or she creates within the fictional realm. In fact, more tension than usual exists within the plot because the author uses alternative history science fiction to critique the world that informs the story itself.⁴

Alternate history science fiction is historically valuable because of what it conveys about the real world of its creators. In addition, alternate history science fiction benefits from the same broad creative definition of estrangement and cognition as science fiction generally with the added component of freeing the author from a traditional historical narrative. This literary genre can represent a narrative critique upon the concept of historical progress precisely because of its unique position as a potential real or imaginative counterfactual analysis. Rather than prescribing to a definite, forward march of history, alternate history science fiction presents two imaginative frameworks: one that incorporates the author's original science fiction premise, founded upon the components of estrangement and cognition in an environment empirically different from the author's own, as well as a second layer of historical restructuring. Alternate history science fiction is worth examining for its contextual and prescriptive value, and Suvin notes that "twentieth century [science fiction] has moved into the sphere of anthropological and cosmological thought, becoming a diagnosis, a warning, a call to understanding and action, and- most important- a mapping of possible alternatives."⁵ The value of alternate history science fiction derives from its close relationship to the real world.

Twentieth century science fiction, especially from the Cold War period in an American context, is particularly valuable because of its position within American popular culture. Science fiction began to emerge as a serious form of literature around the postwar period during the Cold War. Until that time, science fiction remained a low, plebeian literary production enjoyed by the masses via dime-store comics and the occasional straggler that sought to convey serious, and often reactionary, social criticism, as in the instance of many of H.G. Wells' works, including *The World Set Free*.⁶

However, the technological seriousness brought about by the development of atomic bombs and two world wars influenced a rise in serious science fiction works, including the birth of its subcategory, alternate history science fiction, through authors such as Philip K. Dick. The subsequent academic study of science fiction as an empirical example of “popular culture” from the Cold War era as well as, in its own right, a barometer of American philosophical and historical events contemporary to its time, testifies to its cultural and historical importance. Alternate history science fiction, however, has little been examined within an historical context from the Cold War era by literary scholars or historians who, instead, have largely focused upon the general breadth of the genre. Analysis of the origins of postwar and Cold War alternate history science fiction, spurred by atomic technology and Cold War developments, led to the emergence of critical works of alternate history science fiction. A look at two case studies of alternate history science fiction from separate periods of the Cold War, including Philip K. Dick’s *The Man in the High Castle* and the *Star Trek: The Next Generation* episode “Yesterday’s Enterprise” shed valuable light upon the role that science fiction and historical context play in shaping a powerful vehicles of popular culture: science fiction.

NOTES

- ¹ Orson Scott Card, *Xenocide*, 4th ed. (New York: Tor Books, 1992).
- ² Darko Suvin, *Metamorphoses of Science Fiction* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1979), 8.
- ³ Patrick Parrinder, *Learning from Other Worlds: Estrangement, Cognition and the Politics of Science Fiction and Utopia* (Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 2000), 37.
- ⁴ Suvin, *Metamorphoses of Science Fiction*, 8.
- ⁵ *Ibid.*, 12.
- ⁶ Herbert George Wells, *The World Set Free: A Story of Mankind* (Boston: E.P. Dutton & Company, 1914).

CHAPTER 1

TAKING ON CULTURAL SERIOUSNESS: ATOMIC AND COLD WAR HISTORICAL DEVELOPMENTS AND THE RISE OF ALTERNATE HISTORY SCIENCE FICTION WITHIN AMERICAN POPULAR CULTURE

Introduction

Images of atomic technology, nuclear war, and Cold War era fears of communism pervade science fiction of the 1940s through 1960s. The development and impact of the atomic bomb in the late 1930s and early 1940s and, in turn, usage at Hiroshima and Nagasaki in 1945, spurred a wealth of science fiction writings, movies, and television series, including works from Ray Bradbury, Robert Heinlein, films such as *When Worlds Collide* and *The Day the Earth Stood Still*, and shows including *The Atom Squad*, *The Twilight Zone*, and *Star Trek: The Original Series*. In addition, international science fiction was prompted by technological breakthroughs of the era and atomic technology. Godzilla, the recognizable archetype of Japanese horror cinema, is widely interpreted as a metaphor for the atomic bomb. Chon Noriega posits that Godzilla emerged in 1954 as a result of Japanese culture's Westernization in the wake of World War II and simultaneous attempts to come to terms with the horror of their experiences in 1945 with atomic technology.¹ Concerns about the use of nuclear technology on an international scale tempered Cold War fears of communism after World War II and into the 1950s and 1960s. Science fiction revolving around doomsday scenarios widely incorporated images of atomic technology. However, alternate history science fiction, a subgenre of science fiction broadly, including works by renowned science fiction authors Ray Bradbury, Robert Heinlein, Philip K. Dick, and L. Sprague De Camp, adopted a markedly darker

tone following the introduction of nuclear technology. Prior to the use of atomic bombs in World War II, alternate history science fiction was not well distinguished from its progenitor, science fiction. Periods of war coincided with the release of alternate history fiction, including a wealth of British alternate history works released in the wake of German aggression during the Franco-Prussian War and World War I, such as George Chesney's 1871 work *The Battle of Dorking*. But alternate history science fiction remained a fringe genre of general fiction undistinguished from science fiction.²

While alternate history science fiction was not unheard of at the time of atomic technology's development, the introduction of nuclear technology as a new mode of waging warfare, coupled with Cold War fears of communism, resulted in the science fiction subgenre displaying distinctly political, and often pessimistic, overtones. Alternate history science fiction preceding the 1940s typically dealt with historical counterfactuals. Livy's *Ab Urbe Condita*, composed around 324 BCE, includes a section that examines a world in which Alexander the Great lives to turn west and attack Rome.³ Alternate history fiction, or allohistorical fiction, continued to pervade Western literature, and it experienced a surge within the eighteenth century through the work Alain-René Lesage, Jean-Baptiste-Claude Delisle de Sales, and, in the mid-1800s, even British Prime Minister Benjamin Disraeli. Disraeli's 1833 work *The Wondrous Tale of Alroy*, which imagines 12th century England conquered by a Jewish false messiah.⁴ However, the genre of alternate history science fiction did not emerge until science fiction became popular during the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, especially within the United States.

As science fiction emerged as a genre during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, it remained largely separate from fictional alternate history works.

However, as science fiction grew in popularity in the United States during the 1920s, spurred in large part by technological developments, historical counterfactuals began to find a new home in the budding genre.⁵ While the salience of science fiction coincided with technological developments, including those from the nineteenth century industrial revolution as well as early twentieth century breakthroughs in the fields of physics, chemistry, mathematics, and biology, it did not come into wide popularity until the World War II era. Conversely, alternate history science fiction did not adopt political potency until the atomic age.

Science fiction is often defined by its incorporation of rationality as a justification for alien constructs. Literary scholar Darko Suvin emphasizes the importance of delineating between fantasy and science fiction as literary genres. He states, “[Science fiction] is, then, a literary genre whose necessary and sufficient conditions are the presence and interaction of estrangement and cognition, and whose main formal device is an imaginative framework alternative to the author's empirical environment.”⁶ Suvin acknowledges the difficulty with which critical theorists examine science fiction, as its contents need not rely solely upon the vehicle of technology to set it apart from other literary forms. Science fiction has only recently emerged as an area of academic inquiry and critical analysis; therefore, any definitions of its sub-categories are equally ephemeral. Alternate history science fiction represents Suvin’s characteristic “dialectic between estrangement and cognition:” where the character(s) at hand are subject to the tension between reality and the fantastic, between rational explanation and the presently impossible, and along a fictional, alternate timeline to the present.⁷ Suvin describes Alternate history science fiction from the atomic age offers insight into both the historical

and philosophical conditions of the time period. The fictional genre burgeoned in direct response to the atomic bomb, and alternate history science fiction served as an excellent vehicle for authors to critique real world developments, especially pertaining to Cold War tensions.

Philip K. Dick, in particular, represents a Cold War-era product of atomic technology and its corresponding effects upon American popular culture. However, while American Cold War science fiction and alternate history science fiction ballooned during the late 1940s to 1960s, late-Cold War developments, including the Strategic Defense Initiative under U.S. president Ronald Reagan, also tempered some alternate history science fiction of the late twentieth century. For example, *Star Trek: The Next Generation*, a re-imagining of the late 1960s' science fiction series, is often interpreted as a critique of the United States during the Cold War. The series includes an alternate history episode, "Yesterday's Enterprise," which bears strong resemblance to Cold War allegories found within the show's predecessor. Alternate history science fiction from the Cold War influenced later examples of the genre, in part due to the impact of atomic technological development upon the American popular imagination.

An examination of atomic technology upon the development of science fiction, specifically the sub-category of alternate history science fiction, sheds lights upon the powerful relationship between real world events and popular culture in an American context. Science fiction is both harbinger of, and reactionary toward, real world events. As such, its comprehensive analysis is critical to understanding direct and implicit effects of historical events. Moreover, Alternate history science fiction is particularly useful as a barometer of popular consciousness because of its necessary element of alternate time:

what possibilities await a culture that has been offered glimpses of “what might have been,” or “what will be, unless x ,” are especially prone to serving as direct reflections of the times in which they were composed. Alternate history science fiction, and science fiction broadly, offers unique insights into popular culture’s response to technological and social concerns.

Understanding of the empirical world often requires understanding those that represent perfect “mirrors” to it, as they serve as glimpses toward, and away from, reality. Western alternate history science fiction often serves as a critique of real conditions in Western society, especially during the late World War II and Cold War eras. Philip K. Dick’s *The Man in the High Castle* serves as an example of alternate history science fiction intended to critique the real world of the time period in which it was composed, the early 1960s in the United States during the Cold War. Fiction often says more about reality than non-reality, as exemplified in the impact of, and between, atomic technology and science fiction of the Cold War.

Developments in Atomic Technology

Any understanding of Cold War-era science fiction and alternate history science fiction must be preceded by one of atomic age technological developments. The development of the atomic bomb deeply affected science fiction and sparked a field of academic inquiry concerning the genre. American literary theorist M. Keith Booker argues that the “overt doubleness of American culture in the 1950s can be taken as a reflection of the increasing ideological hegemony of capitalism in the decade,” especially as related to the development of the atomic bomb shortly before.⁸ The psychological

impacts of “The Bomb,” as colloquially dubbed within Cold War Western popular culture, shocked American consciousness and culture during the 1940s and 1950s. “The Bomb” introduced strong veins of pessimism into popular culture that reverberated into the Cold War era, including, as science fictions scholar and historian Cynthia Hendershot notes in *Paranoia, The Bomb, and 1950s Science Fiction Films*, hypersensitivity to a potential atomic attack.⁹ However, the lingering impact of the United States’ victory in World War II also tempered attitudes of nationalism and giddy hopefulness in the United States during the same period. Economic expansion within the United States during the wake of World War II also influenced a culture marked by optimism. However, economic and military successes in World War II also impacted United State foreign policy, culminating in the Korea War in 1950. Thus, Suvin and Booker’s narrative of “dialectic” emerges as science fiction’s attempt to consolidate issues with and praise for American decisions before, during, and after the Cold War. While American culture was initially marked by immediate optimism in the wake of World War II victory, its strong veins of self-assurance waned with increasing East-West tensions and early signs of the Cold War. Elements of science fiction and alternate history science fiction literature often incorporated language popularly found within the United States’ Cold War lexicon, and words increasingly dealt with defensive, pessimistic imagery as the memory of World War II’s victory waned while fears of Communism expanded.¹⁰ While perhaps no one within the United States wanted the Cold War, collective fear of communism outweighed fear of war. For example, Cyndy Hendershoot’s *Anti-Communism and Popular Culture in Mid-Century America*, though not specifically about science fiction of the era, extrapolates how the “feelings of hysteria” that dominated American popular culture of

the 1950s and 1960s spilled into science fiction literature, as the subject sought to accommodate themes of disaster stemming from atomic technology and the Cold War.¹¹

Despite collective fear of the United States' use of atomic technology as a deterrent, there is little evidence to suggest that atomic bomb usage at Hiroshima and Nagasaki was intended to do any more than bring a swift conclusion to the Pacific theater of World War II. For example, while Cold War historian Lori Lynne Bogle maintains that the atomic bomb was used as an element of threat rather than actual policy measure as early as World War II, Nuclear Age Peace Foundation scholar and founder David Krieger argues that "the Bomb" was a nuclear reality rather than threat intended strictly for deterring Soviet aggression. The question of whether atomic bomb use at Hiroshima and Nagasaki was done out of necessity or as a preemptive measure continues to produce fruitful historical debate; however, science fiction works from the Cold War era tend toward supporting the latter assumption.

Narratives of preemptive violence figure prominently in the Therefore, its eventual usage at Hiroshima and Nagasaki in 1945 sent shockwaves through American and worldwide consciousness because it explicitly represented the difference between The Bomb in theory and practice.¹² While the theoretical use of nuclear weapons was not unheard of in American popular culture, The Bomb was not seen in practice until World War II. The technological tension between ideas and practice are fleshed out in science fiction literature of the era. For example, Philip K. Dick's *The Man in the High Castle*, an alternate history science fiction in which 1963 America is imagined if the Axis Powers had won World War II, is replete with overt references to the contentious relationship between truth and falsehood. United States' government secrecy concerning the

development of the atomic bomb contributed to themes of surveillance in science fiction literature, and these were further exacerbated during the Cold War. Cold War era spy fiction was heavily influenced by surveillance during the period, and the work of spy fiction authors Desmond Cory and Ian Fleming, though not strictly science fiction, affected popular cultural perception of such issues.

In 1939, the United States launched the world's first comprehensive nuclear weapon programs. The United States' top-secret Manhattan Project represented the first undertaking of a nuclear program, and it was intended to combat a potential German nuclear attack. In December of 1938, German chemists Otto Hahn and Fritz Strassmann reported witnessing nuclear fission to the publication *Naturwissenschaften*.¹³ Marie and Pierre Curie elucidated the nature of atoms a few short decades previously, in 1898. New Zealand physicist and Nobel Prize winner Ernest Rutherford demonstrated, in 1902, that radioactivity represents a spontaneous event that expels different kinds of particles, which he dubbed "alpha" and "beta." Rutherford and associates Hans Geiger and Ernest Marsden surmised that atoms are comprised of different parts, including an orbiting charged particle that Rutherford dubbed the "electron."¹⁴

An atom was "split" for the first time in 1911 by physicists John Cockcroft and Ernest Walton. * Medical studies of radiation as a potential form of disease treatment spawned out of the Curie's work. Radium became a common form of medicinal treatment following physicist and Curie associate Henri Becquerel's famous experiment in which he placed a radium block in his pocket for one week and experienced it burn his underlying skin. The medical community within the United States adopted Radium as a treatment for

* "Splitting the atom" is a misnomer. Rather than simply breaking atoms apart into their constituent components, Cockcroft and Walton obtained nuclear fission by bombarding lithium with protons, neutrons, and electrons to transmute it into helium.

long-term ailments, including arthritis, gout, and neuralgias, in the vein of x-rays treatments, discovered in 1895, and used in medical treatment and diagnosis.¹⁵ Radiation developed a positive reputation in the years preceding World War II as a viable brand of medical treatment for its potential uses as a method of early disease detection through x-rays.

In 1933, a young Hungarian Jewish physicist, Leo Szilard, read an article in the London *Times* outlining Rutherford's suggestion that atomic technology could be used for practical ends. Szilard, whose studies focused upon particle physics, invented a particle accelerator called a cyclotron in 1923. Szilard was also well-acquainted with Albert Einstein and the two collaborated in the period from 1926 through 1930 to develop a refrigerator free of moving parts. Spurred by his belief that a strong elite structure was necessary for the improvement of humanity, a theoretical group whom Szilard dubbed *Der Bund*, an energized Szilard sought a means of perfecting nuclear technology.¹⁶ Szilard, a longtime friend of science fiction author H.G. Wells, sought to develop a method of nuclear fission as a partial consequence of Wells' *The World Set Free: A Story of Mankind*, a prophetic novel from 1914 that details a hypothetical world dominated by the large-scale, liberal use of atomic technology.¹⁷ Wells dedicated *The World Set Free* to English radiochemist Frederick Soddy, whose work *The Interpretation of Radium*, from 1909, greatly influenced Wells' perception of a potential world replete with atomic technology.¹⁸ Wells' book eerily predicts a world in which atomic bombs explode for long periods of time, are dropped from planes, and will eventually cause the collapse of all societies in possession of them. While atomic bomb historian Richard Rhodes argues in his landmark *The Making of the Atomic Bomb* that *The World Set Free* had less of a

direct impact upon Szilard's development of atomic fission than some scholars would portend, it stands as a definitive example of science fiction influencing, at least peripherally, science fact.¹⁹

In the late 1930s and early 1940s, the United States and Britain feared rumors of a German nuclear program. While Germany did engage in a classified uranium enrichment program, *Uranverein* or "Uranium Club" in the late 1930s, it never expanded to the point of representing a viable threat during World War II, as the Allied powers surmised, primarily because Germany's wartime resources were diverted to more salient purposes than theoretical weapons research. The world of Hahn and Strassmann informed the Nazi creation of the *Uranverein*, which was tasked with developing a workable nuclear weapon; however, a mass exodus of physicists from Germany during the era stymied the organization's efforts. The virulent politicization and cooption of Germany's postsecondary and early educational systems, coupled with the fact that many of Germany's top nuclear physicists were of Jewish descent, resulted in the departure of talented individuals such as Albert Einstein, Erwin Schrödinger, Viktor Weisskopf, and Max Born through migration to the United States following the Nazi rise to power in Germany in 1933.²⁰

Many German physicists contributed to the United States' Manhattan Project, including Max Planck and Max Born. Planck, a German physicist who developed quantum theory, expressed concern, along with Hahn, directly to Hitler in 1933 about the expulsion of Jewish intellectuals from Germany. Hitler did not respond kindly to Planck's concern.²¹ Planck eventually left academia as World War II produced increasing militarism within Germany. Planck experienced great tragedy during the war, and his

oldest son died in combat. Planck died in 1947.²² The Manhattan Project, devised in 1939 as a joint venture by the United States and Britain, was partially spurred by a letter drafted by Einstein and Szilard in 1939 to President Franklin D. Roosevelt outlining the potential danger of German nuclear weapons development.²³ In 1942, U.S. Army General Leslie Groves was chosen to head the top-secret development of an atomic weapon. Robert Oppenheimer, an American theoretical physicist and professor of physics at the University of California, was placed in charge of the project's day-to-day operations in Los Alamos, New Mexico, which was chosen because of its remote location.²⁴

Japan developed its own nuclear weapons program alongside that of the United States and Germany. However, much like the German nuclear program, it failed to garner the support of the Japanese military due to Japan's focus upon direct military rather than theoretical weapons development. Dr. Yoshio Nishina, Japan's chief atomic expert and head of its short-lived nuclear weapons project during World War II, was a close associate of esteemed nuclear physicist Niels Bohr and contemporary of Albert Einstein before the war.²⁵ However, staunch opposition from Japanese Emperor Hirohito toward the development of atomic weaponry, coupled with the United States' deployment of atomic bombs at Hiroshima and Nagasaki in April of 1945, permanently ended the project. Despite a perhaps misguided expectation that Japan would use atomic technology, United States' nuclear development came alongside that of an unexpected World War II ally: the Soviet Union.

The Soviet Union developed a keen interest in producing atomic technology after learning of the United States' nuclear program in the 1930s. However, initial Soviet interest in atoms began at the end of the February Revolution thanks to the efforts of

mineralogist Vladimir Vernadsky, who posited that the Soviet Union's vast uranium deposits could be tapped to produce nuclear power.²⁶ In 1940, Yakov Frenkel studied fission and atomic nuclei, and the same year, Stalin and Soviet foreign minister Vyacheslav Molotov requested that the USSR Academy of Sciences commission a nuclear physics department to begin research on atomic weapons development.²⁷ The U.S.S.R.'s atomic energy project was well-informed, thanks to an intricate espionage network that included agents on the Manhattan Project. For example, Klaus Fuchs kept Soviet atomic project director Igor Kurchatov apprised of fission techniques that could be employed to create a nuclear weapon.²⁸ The first successful Soviet atomic test occurred on August 29, 1949, four years after Hiroshima and Nagasaki, and was dubbed "First Lightning" by the United States, or Joe-1, a reference to Stalin. It was met with great anxiety in the West and prompted U.S. President Truman to inform the American public of the successful Soviet test.²⁹ The Soviet Union ultimately developed atomgrads, or contained cities set aside specifically for nuclear weapons research, to confine and conceal its nuclear research.³⁰ Fear of Soviet nuclear development helped exacerbate the initial conditions of the Cold War. U.S. entry into the Korean War in 1950 heightened technological competition and concern between the two nations.

Science fiction of the first decades of Cold War era, from 1946 through 1969, served as a peripheral, and often direct, response to the crucial developments in atomic technology of the period. The Japanese experience at Hiroshima and Nagasaki specifically tempered its vision of Godzilla and helped foment the monster as a metaphor for "otherization." Susan Napier, an expert on postwar Japanese culture, posits that Godzilla, first introduced in Japan in 1956, represents Japanese fear of the nuclear bomb.

Napier argues that the horrors Japan felt at Hiroshima and Nagasaki resulted in the country's cultural expressions being fraught with visions of dystopia and monsters in the years following 1945.³¹ Furthermore, Cold War cinema and literature from the United States during the era testifies to a prevailing atmosphere of paranoia. "The Bomb" conditioned popular culture's expressions of the Cold War, and may have helped contribute to overwhelming attitudes about the Cold War itself, divorced from the confines of fiction. The Bomb and, eventually, the Cold War pressed alternate history and general science fiction to respond to historical events from the eras. As tools of popular culture, science fiction and alternate history science fiction represented peripheral and, often, direct concerns about atomic technology and the Cold War within the United States.

Effect of the Bomb upon Cold War Expressions: Science Fiction and Perceptions of Reality

The Bomb ushered the United States into an era of potential, rather than instrumental, foreign policy, as expressed by Cold War historian Martin J. Sherwin in his 1973 article "The Atomic Bomb and the Origins of the Cold War."³² Sherwin cites Secretary of War Henry L. Stimson's memoirs, in which Stimson is purported to say, "[t]he bomb as a merely probable weapon had seemed a weak reed on which to rely, but the bomb as a colossal reality was very different."³³ In the classic metaphor for foreign relations, the potential "stick" that could be employed by world superpowers became significantly more threatening, with lasting, worldwide repercussions. Niels Bohr anticipated the potential diplomatic potency behind atomic technology before it was ever

used in war, although the extent to which its threatening appeal would be wielded during the Cold War was arguably beyond his expectations.³⁴ The term “cold war” was originally used by British author George Orwell in an October 1945 essay, “You and the Atomic Bomb,” to describe a potential chilling in relations between the United States, Britain, and the Soviet Union in the wake of World War II’s end. The essay references Wells’ *The World Set Free* when it states that “H.G. Wells and others have been warning us that man is in danger of destroying himself with his own weapons, leaving the ants or some other gregarious species to take over.”³⁵

Disagreement over how to rebuild and restructure Europe following the end of World War II signaled a rising tension between the West and the Soviet Union that continued through the latter half of the twentieth century. The use of atomic bombs at Hiroshima and Nagasaki, coupled with the United States’ refusal to allow the Soviet Union influence upon restructuring postwar Japan, events within the eastern bloc, and communist takeover of countries such as Poland and Czechoslovakia further soured relations between the two world powers. While a definitive “date” at which the Cold War began remains elusive to historians, the role that atomic technology played in exacerbating its discord is undeniable, and it had a distinctive effect upon all facets of American popular culture, most notably science fiction, of the period.

Science fiction scholar Keith Booker stresses the important role that science fiction adopted as a form of social criticism because of atomic technology and the Cold War era in his work *Monsters, Mushroom Clouds, and the Cold War*. Booker draws from the work of Carl Freedman, who in “Towards a Theory of Paranoia,” argues that Philip K. Dick’s work serves as a model for social criticism’s evolution in response to cultural

paranoia rooted in the Cold War. Freedman specifically analyzes material fetishism within Dick's works and ironically presents it alongside Marxist critiques of materialism that were staunchly feared by the United States during the Cold War.³⁶ Dick's concern with material totems is found in his 1963 alternate history science fiction work *The Man in the High Castle*, in which various characters create artificial replicas of classic American cultural artifacts. While Dick's work may or may not represent a critique of U.S. foreign policy during the Cold War, its overarching theme that reality can be open to the viewer's (or reader's) interpretation resounds of Cold War paranoia and the eventual disillusionment that marked the United States' counter-cultural movement of the 1960s.

Booker continues to examine *Time out of Joint*, from 1959, an earlier Dick work that imagines small-town American during the Eisenhower years- albeit marked by strange differences from the real United States of the time. The protagonist of *Time out of Joint* eventually comes to realize that his reality is entirely constructed; AM/FM radios are not available, Marilyn Monroe is unheard of, and Jack Daniels whiskey does not exist because he has imagined an idyllic 1950s rather than adopting reality: that it is 1998, and the United States is in a protracted war with colonists on the moon.³⁷ The book could serve as a critique of U.S. popular perception of the Soviet Union, McCarthyism, and dichotomizing the West and East during the Cold War. No matter its underlying meaning, however, Booker's point, that science fiction adopted a serious, socially relevant voice as a result of atomic technology and the beginning of the Cold War, is well taken.

The first post-nuclear holocaust work of the early Cold War era was a graphic nonfiction account of atomic bomb usage in World War II, *Hiroshima*, from 1946, by Pulitzer Prize winning journalist John Hershey.³⁸ While Hershey's work is not science

fiction, it spurred American popular culture's interest in the theme of nuclear holocaust and paranoia. Interestingly, the theme of nuclear holocaust was often spurred not by liberal fears of atomic weaponry wreaking havoc upon populations, but, rather, hopeful anticipation of an opportunity to display Darwinian strength and separation of the weak from society's strong.³⁹ Darwin's theory of natural selection factors heavily in late Cold War dystopian science fiction stories and films, including *Blade Runner*, whose chief adversary, Roy Batty, imagines android "replicants" as stronger than their human creators and, hence, more worthy of survival.⁴⁰ Science fiction's emphasis upon liberal conceptions of foreign policy is not entirely true; Booker notes that a wealth of conservative science fiction authors, including Robert Heinlein and Ray Bradbury, also wrote during the Cold War era. Nevertheless, liberal Cold War science fiction came to dominate the spectrum as a viable means of social critique during the era. Despite overarching narratives of paranoia within Cold War and, in particular, early Cold War science fiction, the genre itself experienced polarization among its authors, filmmakers, and artists.

Cold War science fiction author Richard Matheson, in his 1954 sci-fi horror work *I Am Legend*, depicts a world in which a lone scientist, Robert Neville, searches for a cure for a contagious vampirism that has swept over the world. Booker notes that vampirism was a popular metaphor for capitalism in the 1950s and draws from Marx's own work *Das Kapital*, in which he describes capitalism as "dead labour that, vampire-like, only lives by sucking living labour."⁴¹ Matheson's Neville, fearing routinization and mechanization that marked the Cold War era, comes to accept his fate as the only non-vampire left in the world, and facing execution, ironically notes that he is "legend" now

rather than the formerly-mythical vampires themselves. The reader is ultimately left to choose whether it is capitalism or communism that is represented by the former legend of the vampire that dominates the world with its monotony and homogeneity. No matter the work's interpretation, however, its widespread effect upon American popular culture is pronounced. The book was made into a film in 1971, the same year as the Kent State shootings, *The Omega Man*, starring Charlton Heston, and was revived again as a film in 2007.

Recent scholarship within science fiction studies indicates that the genre was validated by the use of atomic technology in World War II. For example, David Seed, in *American Science Fiction and the Cold War*, recalls Isaac Asimov's quip that "the dropping of the atomic bomb in April of 1945 made science fiction respectable."⁴² Seed notes that science fiction of the Cold War era also came into a state of self-awareness, in which authors sought, either peripherally or directly, to engage in "negative prophecy" through predicting frightening future scenarios and, in turn, avoiding them precisely because of the given prognostication.⁴³ While this brand of self-aware hubris on the part of Cold War science fiction authors may not have uniformly been displayed, the immediacy of concern for atomic disaster, fueled by Cold War tensions, made science fiction evolve into an oft-predictive, sometimes with serious merit, literary form. While the early Cold War period is marked by an outpouring of nuclear-themed science fiction, the late Cold War era, spanning from the late 1970s through fall of the Soviet Union in 1991, experienced a dramatic resurgence of nuclear themed science fiction as well.

Cold War era survivalism peaked in the 1980s as a popular response to economic ails in the United States as well as Reagan's controversial Star Wars defense initiative.

Felicity Meller argues that the Strategic Defense Initiative (SDI), pejoratively dubbed “Star Wars” after the Lucas film in the 1980s, sparked a popular narrative of technology as savior that dominated the time period.⁴⁴ The popular adoption of *Star Wars* terminology, applied to real defense initiatives taken in the United States during the late Cold War, highlight the strong effect of science fiction upon popular culture and then, in turn, news media. In addition, Hugo award winner Isaac Asimov’s 1983 work *Foundation’s Edge* concerns the effects of psychohistory, which Asimov conceptualized as a new form of thought that uses mathematical models technologically generated to accurately predict long-range future scenarios, including the rise and fall of empires, perhaps in reaction to 1983’s SDI.[†] Seed posits that many of science fiction author Jerry Pournelle’s works represent a direct consequence of Reagan’s SDI, including *Pulling Through* and *Footfall*, from 1983 and 1985, respectively.⁴⁵ Alternate history science fiction works from the late Cold War period, including the episode “Yesterday’s Enterprise” from *Star Trek: The Next Generation*, also represent critiques of U.S. Cold War actions and U.S.-U.S.S.R. relations during the era.

Alternate history science fiction, to a greater degree than regular science fiction, has the capacity to serve as a critique upon progress because of its alternate interpretation of a previously “concrete” set of events. Therefore, alternate history examination of the Cold War is useful when analyzing real U.S. perception of it within popular culture. This is as true during the early Cold War period as during its end. For example, Gene Roddenberry’s *Star Trek: The Original Series*, is often examined as a metaphor for the Cold War; however, *The Next Generation*, the 1987 off-shoot series from *TOS*, has little

[†] Asimov’s “psychohistory” is not to be confused with the historical term psychohistory, used within the discipline to denote the psychological underpinnings, often conducted at the individual level, behind historical events.

been examined in the context of the Cold War. However, the episode “Yesterday’s Enterprise” presents an alternate history story that harkens back to its predecessor series’ presentation of Klingon-Federation relations as a metaphor for Soviet-US tension.⁴⁶ The work of some science fiction authors of the time, including Pournelle, within government agencies further testifies to the potential the genre has for viable prediction of social scenarios given contemporary U.S. historical events.⁴⁷

Conclusion

The development of atomic technology and advent of the Cold War irrevocably affected science fiction of the era and introduced a serious tone to the genre once easily cast aside as “junk” by academics. The experience of Hiroshima and Nagasaki signaled the beginnings of the Cold War, including atomic weapons development in the United States and Soviet Union, as well as cultural phenomena including surveillance and McCarthyism. While not all science fiction of the Cold War period sought to predict the future, a wealth of earnest, socially relevant works, including those of Dick, Matheson, and eventually Pournelle, sought to marry fictional stories with genuine critiques of the United States’ Cold War reality. Ultimately, Cold War paranoia came to dominate the pages of fiction and factual sources within the United States, and science fiction, whether intentionally or peripherally, influenced rising anxiety in the U.S. during the “long Cold War era” from 1946 through 1969. However, rising concern for communism and nuclear holocaust did not cease with the end of the Vietnam War, and Reagan’s Strategic Defense Initiative marked a resurging point for pessimistic science fiction in the 1980s.

Science fiction came into popular academic discourse following, as Asimov perhaps too humorously noted, the dropping of the atomic bomb in 1945. However, it has continued to expand as a tool for examining American popular culture. While alternate history science fiction, in particular, seeks to dance away from the linear forward march of historical progression, its content can reveal just as much about the era in which it was written as that it depicts. Case studies of the early Cold War period, including Philip K. Dick's *The Man in the High Castle* and the late Cold War era, including *Star Trek: The Next Generation's* season one episode "Yesterday's Enterprise" shed light upon their respective time periods and demonstrate the value that science fiction has as a tool for historical analysis.

NOTES

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CHAPTER 2

THE MANY WORLDS OF PHILIP K. DICK: HISTORICAL AND PHILOSOPHICAL CONDITIONS OF THE COLD WAR AS IMPETUS FOR *THE MAN IN THE HIGH CASTLE*

Introduction

Illusions commend themselves to us because they save us pain and allow us to enjoy pleasure instead. We must therefore accept it without complaint when they sometimes collide with a bit of reality against which they are dashed to pieces. — Sigmund Freud

In September 1977, Philip K. Dick, during an interview at a science fiction convention in Metz, France, light-heartedly remarked that science fiction authors of the late 1950s and early 1960s were regarded writing at “the level of a janitor.”¹ The audience, comprised of French, American, and German science fiction enthusiasts, journalists, and respected scholars, including American science fiction authors John Brunner, Robert Sheckley, Harlan Ellison, and Harry Harrison, responded in laughter.² However, shifting to a more somber tone, Dick continued to say that science fiction had seldom been taken seriously until the advent of the 1960s, implying that, until the birth of the Cold War, the genre stood as a little relevant source of fictional intrigue or, at best, a vague harbinger of potential technological innovations to be undertaken somewhere in the distant future.

Philip Dick’s science fiction writing career faltered until the publication, in 1962, of his seminal *The Man in the High Castle*. The work won the prestigious Hugo award in 1963, launching Dick’s career as a definitive science fiction author.³ The book won particular attention from critics and audiences for its alternate history retelling of society in the wake of a World War II in which the Axis powers were victorious. Alternative

history fiction was nothing new to fans of fiction, particularly in the United States, as the work of nineteenth century authors Edwin Abbott and HG Wells, in *Flatland: A Romance of Many Dimensions* (1884) and *The Time Machine* (1885) demonstrate. They deal with the concepts of alternative dimension travel and exploration, themes that later would become popular in the field of science fiction.⁴ However, the genre of science fiction and, in particular, alternate world science fiction, did not burgeon in popularity until the post-war period of the 1950s and 1960s. Dick's *The Man in the High Castle* bolstered science fiction's legitimacy, including the works of Dick's contemporaries, such as Isaac Asimov and Ray Bradbury. However, *The Man in the High Castle* represented a trend toward serious political, social, and philosophical analysis in science fiction that ultimately helped establish the genre as one worthy of academic consideration.⁵ One can interpret the book, and perhaps Dick himself, as direct products of both post-World War II and Cold War historical and philosophical conditions, including cynicism of government entities, deconstruction, and postmodernism. The events of the book, overlain with actual events and schools of thought, highlight the inextricable and often eerie relationship between fact and theory. *The Man in the High Castle* stands as a palpable example of the often ephemeral relationship between fiction and reality.

Dick's Background

Any attempt to understand Dick's works within historical or philosophical frameworks must be preceded by an analysis of the author's life. Dick's writings, including *The Man in the High Castle*, are heavily emphasized by his experiences, location, and the time period in which he wrote. Dick biographer Lawrence Sutin notes in

his Dick biography, *Divine Invasions*, that, despite Dick's eventual influence upon United States' counter-culture of the 1960s as well as his later works' tendency to alienate mainstream readers for their difficult prose and heady, intellectual tilt, Dick's original writings, including *The Man in the High Castle*, were intended for broad audiences within and beyond the science fiction genre.⁶ However, although Dick's early works, including *The Man in the High Castle*, sought to draw in broad audiences, his tendency toward difficult philosophical themes eventually drove conventional readers away. Dick's obsession with the themes of consciousness, humanity, and reality would ultimately place his works beyond the scope of conventional audiences and render his works academically popular.

Dick and his twin sister, Jane Charlotte, were born into humble upbringings on December 16, 1928 in Chicago, Illinois, to parents Dorothy Kindred and Joseph Edgar Dick.⁷ Jane Charlotte died six weeks following her birth from malnutrition. Her death dramatically impacted Dick's relationship with his parents and writings later in life. The profound impact of Jane's death upon Dick is evidenced in his eventual admission to his third wife, Anne Williams Rubinstein, that he felt as if "he carried his twin sister inside of him."⁸ Dick's emphasis upon a twin motif resounds in his early works, including *Dr. Bloodmoney* and *Flow My Tears, the Policeman Said*.⁹ Following his parents' divorce in 1938, Dick and his mother moved to the San Francisco Bay area. Dick was a good student; oddly, his lowest grade, a "C", was in written composition.¹⁰ Dick briefly attended the University of California at Berkeley, although he dropped out after one semester. Dick biographer and science fiction scholar Gregg Rickman attributes his retraction from the school, based upon personal interviews with Dick, to the author's

anti-war ideologies in the wake of World War II, which conflicted with UC Berkeley's mandatory Reserve Officer Training Core instruction.¹¹ Dick withdrew from UC Berkeley in November of 1949 after only a month of classes.

Dick's staunch opposition to war and, more broadly, violence as a political tool, stands a hallmark of his writings, including *The Man in the High Castle*. The Nazis' use of genocide against Jewish and African populations is one of the work's darker odes to the potential for violence, under state control, to cause widespread calamity. Dick's deliberate depiction of the Nazis as World War II victory was, oddly, not met in great controversy, perhaps due to Dick's concentrated efforts to convey the work as metaphoric rather than hopeful. The tone of *The Man in the High Castle*, towing the line between dark humor and dream-like realism, was no doubt informed by the recommendations of fellow science fiction writer and friend Anthony Boucher. Boucher advised Dick to avoid writing strict fiction and, rather, emphasized the importance of composing works with a relevant political theme.¹² Dick's commitment to Boucher's recommendation influenced him to adopt politically charged, though veiled, critiques of the United States in *The Man in the High Castle* as well as later writings, including *The Simulacra*, *Three Stigmata of Palmer Eldritch*, and *Through a Scanner Darkly*.

Dick interpreted violence as a method of transforming humans into, as Dickian scholar Eric Rabkin notes in his analysis of Dick's assessment of post-War economies in Japan, Germany, and the former United States in *The Man in the High Castle*, "unfeeling...replicable, [and] typically identical units."¹³ Dick's hatred for organized violence stemmed from a background of domestic violence: physical, psychological, and

almost certainly sexual.¹⁴ Childhood abuse and Dick's strained relationship with his father also lent to his erratic, volatile adult relationships.

Dick married for the first of five times in 1948, at the age of 19, to Jeanette Marlin.¹⁵ His second marriage, to Kleo Apostolides, lasted from June 14, 1950 to 1959. His third wife, Anne Williams Rubinstein, was married to Dick from April 1, 1959 to October 1965. His fourth wife was Nancy Hackett. They were married from July 6, 1966 to 1972. Finally, he was married to Leslie Busby from April 18, 1973 to 1977. Dick's personal history of abuse influenced his later relationships, as Marlin cited "extreme cruelty" as her reason behind seeking divorce. Dick biographer Lejla Kucukalic posits that Dick's relationship with Doris Elaine Sauter, following his fifth, and final, divorce in 1976, was the most intimate of his lifetime, and she served as the model for the character Sheri in *Valis*.¹⁶ In 1955, during his marriage to his second wife, Kleo Apostolides, Dick was investigated by the FBI.¹⁷ Dick attributed the FBI visit to Apostolides' frequent attendance of liberal political rallies held at UC Berkeley's Sather Gate, which were regularly monitored during the McCarthy era of the mid-late 1950s.¹⁸ However, Dick believed himself to be under near-constant government scrutiny following that point, and his fear of the FBI echoes in *The Man in the High Castle*.

Dick's history of abuse, coupled with his fear of government surveillance, materialize in *The Man in the High Castle*'s emphasis upon the importance of secrecy to personal identity. For example, several characters, at the work's conclusion, materialize as more, or entirely different, than their behavior belies. Tagomi, a devout Buddhist, hates violence but ultimately kills a Nazi; Frank Frink hides his Jewish identity; and Baynes, originally self-identified as a Swedish businessman, is actually a member of the

Reich Naval Counter-Intelligence. Finally, *The Grasshopper Lies Heavy*'s enigmatic author Harold Abendsen reveals, at *The Man in the High Castle*'s close, that truth itself might be a chimera. The reader is ultimately left unsure of whether it is *The Grasshopper Lies Heavy* that is genuine, *The Man in the High Castle* itself, or, by extension, her own reality.

Dick's preoccupation with government surveillance came to a head in the 1970s, when he conducted multiple correspondences with the FBI. During the decade, he wrote several angry letters to the FBI headquarters, which were met with a "polite brush-off" in 1974.¹⁹ During the 1970s, Dick also fomented strong beliefs in Gnosticism, a subset of early Christianity that emphasizes transcendence from the body, as well as reincarnation; Dick scholar and psychologist Gregg Rickman posits that the author's correspondence with the FBI and insistence that, at one point during the 1970s, they had broken into his residence, occurred while Dick was in an altered state of consciousness.²⁰ Rickman suggests that Dick's paranoid regard for the FBI, and organized structure broadly, stemmed from his suffering from a dissociative identity disorder. While Rickman's theory is not widely accepted, it draws attention to the increasingly neurotic, inaccessible tenor that marked both his relationships and writings in his later years. Whether or not Dick suffered from "multiple personality disorder," as Rickman claims, is irrelevant: what matter is the role his undeniable paranoia played, in varying degrees, to the construction of his works.

While *The Man in the High Castle*, which Dick wrote in the early 1960s while married to his third wife, Anne Williams Rubinstein, is steeped in heavy, intellectual themes, including the fine line between the real and imaginary, its thoughtfulness and

accessibility resulted in it winning a Hugo Award in 1963.²¹ However, the popularity of Dick's later works, including the *Valis* series, paled in comparison. Sutin attributes Dick's inaccessibility to his increasing tendency, in his later years, to focus upon dense philosophical themes as opposed to character construction; rather than merely proposing the artifice of reality, Dick "ripped reality apart... [at its] seams" with *Valis*.²² Dick's unhappy fifth marriage and public dispute with fellow science fiction author Ursula LeGuin arguably contributed to his erratic works and subsequent decline in health.^{23,24} Dick suffered a stroke on February 18, 1982. He died March 2, 1982. While Dick's unhappy final years and difficult upbringing represent a personal tragedy for the author, they had a powerful influence upon his works, including *The Man in the High Castle*.

Overview of *The Man in the High Castle*

The Man in the High Castle is told from the perspective of ordinary Americans living in the United States during 1962 in the wake of Axis victory during World War II, fourteen years before. Dick invariably wrote from the perspective of the "common man" to appeal to a broad audience base, as recommended by his mentor, Anthony Boucher.²⁵ The world at large has been divided by the Axis powers into spheres of influence: the United States' eastern portion is controlled by Nazi Germany, which also retains control of the southern Africa, eastern South America, the Middle East, and vast swaths of land in the western part of the former Soviet Union. The Imperial Empire of Japan, conversely, controls the western coast of the United States, referred to as the Pacific States of America, or PSA, as well as China, and the southwestern parts of South America. Italy made territorial gains in only northern Africa in the wake of Axis victory.

Canada remains neutral, and the former American states surrounding the Rocky Mountains serve as a buffer zone between the German-controlled USA and PSA. However, the Nazi USA exercises diplomatic and social control over the Rocky Mountain States (RMS) much in the fashion of Nazi control over Vichy France during World War II.²⁶ While Dick reveals little about Japanese leadership during 1962 in the wake of Axis victory, he greatly expands upon changes in the Nazis' change of command following Adolf Hitler's commitment to an asylum following his decline in health due to syphilitic brain lesions.²⁷

The Man in the High Castle examines the changes in the Nazi administration following German victory in World War II. Dick presents Martin Bormann as Hitler's successor. However, Bormann eventually takes ill, and he is oft described by Dick's characters, including Juliana Frink, as "the Sick One" and dies.²⁸ Bormann is eventually replaced as *Reichs Chancellor* by Joseph Goebbels, Hitler's Minister of Propaganda.²⁹

An overarching theme to *The Man in the High Castle* is the power play that ensues immediately preceding and following the death of Bormann. Various characters residing in the PSA and Rocky Mountain States, including Robert Childan, Nobusuke Tagomi, and Juliana Frink, wonder who will assume Nazi high command control following Bormann's death, including Reinhard Heydrich, Baldur von Schirach, and Dr. Arthur Seyss-Inquart.³⁰ Bormann is depicted as having towed a delicate line to maintain stable relations between Germany and Japan, especially with regard to their imperial holdings over the world at large, placing Germany in a precarious international position. Goebbels is subject to the whims of Germany's police force, the *Sicherheitsdienst* (SD), and does little to prevent growing tensions between the two superpowers. Ultimately, *The*

Man in the High Castle culminates with Nazi Germany planning to launch a preemptive nuclear strike against the Japanese home islands, called Operation Dandelion, to prevent their usage of the hydrogen bomb, which Germany perceived as an inevitable consequence of heightening tensions. Dick's presentation of Operation Dandelion deliberately resembles the United States and Soviet Union's nuclear tensions during the Cold War, and *The Man in the High Castle* can be interpreted as a metaphor for US-USSR relations during the post-war period.

Dick presents the Axis victory in World War II as a result of a culmination of Allied missteps rather than remarkable action undertaken by Nazi Germany or Japan. For example, US President Franklin Roosevelt is assassinated by potential Chicago mob-hire Guiseppe "Joe" Zangara before 1936. Therefore, the United States takes longer to commit to involvement in World War II, even following the attack on Pearl Harbor in 1941.³¹ Roosevelt's successor, Vice President John Nance Garner, as well as his successor, Republican John W. Bricker*, failed to provide assistance to Britain or launch Operation Overlord in a timely fashion conducive to taking Nazi Germany by surprise. Ultimately, failure in Europe translated into minimal involvement in the Pacific; therefore, the United States was largely to blame for Allied failure in World War II within *The Man in the High Castle*.

Interestingly, Dick's inclusion of *The Grasshopper Lies Heavy* as a "book within a book" provides a hypothetical scenario in which the Allied powers had won the war, and it becomes a centerpiece of *The Man in the High Castle* for its literal and

* John Nance Garner served as Roosevelt's Vice President during his first and second terms. However, his relationship with Roosevelt soured, and he did not have the same brand of widespread appeal to liberals as Roosevelt. John W. Bricker was a United States Senator and Republican nominee for Vice President in 1944 alongside Presidential candidate Thomas Dewey.

philosophical meaning. While *The Grasshopper Lies Heavy* is read by various characters, including Tagomi and Julianna Frink, for its literary appeal and controversy, it is revealed at *The Man in the High Castle* ' close to potentially represent reality itself, although Dick's language to that end is nebulous. *The Grasshopper Lies Heavy*'s, fictional, enigmatic author Hawthorne Abendsen attributes Allied victory to the keen foresight and military strategy of Roosevelt's successor, Rexford Tugwell, after Roosevelt's decision to honor Washington's tradition and chooses to resign after two terms rather than seek reelection for a third term.³² Tugwell, according to Abendsen, wisely removed the US fleet from Pearl Harbor before December of 1941, thus ensuring that its entrance into World War II would be as a confident naval power. US assistance to Britain, in turn, resulted in Britain maintaining a strong military-industrial complex and defeating Erwin Rommel in North Africa. Abendsen goes on to note that, following the war, the United States defeated Mao Zedong's communist forces in China to bolster the western regime of Chiang Kai-shek.

The Man in the High Castle presents the United States in 1962 through the eyes of ordinary men and women residing in the Pacific States of American and Rocky Mountain States. Dick spends little time directly examining the reality of life in the Nazi-controlled eastern United States, although it is peripherally examined within his PSA chapters. Dick does spend time depicting Nazi extermination programs in Africa, the Soviet Union, and of European Jewry, and he suggests that life in the region is, at best, overwhelmingly unpleasant for "desirable" citizens with blonde hair and blue eyes and devastating for "undesirables."³³ However, while Nazi-controlled regions of the United States are ruled harshly, the Pacific States of America under Japanese imperial control fare far better.

Dick's PSA represents a tolerable brand of colonization: though under Japanese control, the PSA displays minimal enforcement of Nazi racial law. Conversely, the Nuremberg Laws are widely adopted and exercised in the Nazi-controlled portions of the United States following the war to ensure racial and political control. However, in the PSA, Americans are relatively free to operate independent of Japanese cultural and political hegemony.³⁴ However, the interactions of characters Tagomi, Childen, and Paul and Betty Kasoura suggest that the comfort of life in the PSA is artificial at best: tension is arguably at its highest when colonial and subject pretend to live peaceably in one another's company. Ultimately, tensions come to a head for individual characters and countries, and the book ends on a pessimistic, nebulous note.

While tensions mount between the PSA and Nazis at the book's conclusion, *The Grasshopper Lies Heavy* is cryptically revealed to be the "real" end to World War II. Juliana Frink consults the IChing, widely used in the PSA and Rocky Mountain territories as a predictor of the future, to determine how Abendsen composed *The Grasshopper Lies Heavy*. When Abendsen confides in her that he ignored the *IChing* when writing the book, Juliana disbelievingly consults the *IChing*, referred to as the Oracle, to determine if Abendsen is lying. Much to her dismay, the result of her inquiry reveals simply "Inner Truth," which implies to Frink that *The Grasshopper Lies Heavy* portrays reality rather than what is included in *The Man in the High Castle*.³⁵ Dick's work is fraught with pessimistic allusions to the theme of reality and artifice, rendering it a complex work rooted in historical reality as well as fiction.

The Man in the High Castle provides a complex, nuanced interpretation of a 1962 in which the Axis had won World War II. Dick's work, juxtaposed with the historical

reality of World War II and the Cold War, respectively, demonstrate the delicate relationship between facts informing alternative history fiction.

Historical, Philosophical Contexts for *The Man in the High Castle*

The Man in the High Castle's interpretation of 1962 North America, informed by the realities of World War II and the Cold War, depicts the United States in the wake of an Axis victory as a land in transition: it desperately clings to its pre-war supremacy while having to accept, in the instance of the PSA, at any rate, the humiliation of colonization. The book's strong reliance upon real historical figures as the leaders of the post-war order, furthermore, lends an air of credence to Dick's interpretation of alternate reality. It is easy for readers to imagine that, had fate unfolded differently, his vision of an Axis victory could have come to fruition. Interestingly, his characters' reliance upon the *IChing* as a tool to determine the right courses of action also speaks to Dick's belief in fate and cosmology's impact upon humanity's actions. Dick scholar Lorenzo DiTommaso suggests in his 1988 work *Redemption in Philip K. Dick's Man in the High Castle* that Dick's personal attraction to Taoism as well as dualistic-themed cosmology of Christian Gnosticism informed his construction of the world and its overarching themes. He "uses them to give shape and meaning to the redemptive journeys that the novel's major characters undertake."³⁶ While DiTommaso refers strictly to the Dick's protagonists in the context of the statement, traces of his background and his World War II research can be found in his depiction of real historical figures, as well.

Dick's depiction of the Nazi high command, including Hitler, Bormann, Goebbels, von Schirach, Heydrich, and Seyss-Inquart represent odd syntheses of reality and fiction in the context of World War II. Hitler's fate in *The Man in the High Castle* echoes strongly of popular theories concerning his health. Simon Wiesenthal, a renowned Jewish scholar and concentration camp survivor, first proposed the syphilis theory upon evidence presented to him by a doctor claiming to have known the man responsible for treating Hitler for "self-disablement" (the term used during the pre-war period for syphilitic infection), which he had caught, according to Wiesenthal's source, from a Jewish prostitute.³⁷ While Wiesenthal's work has recently been questioned, its influence upon *The Man in the High Castle* is pronounced.

Dick's interpretation of Bormann also follows closely along historical lines. While Bormann's character spends the majority of the work in the sidelines, as he is ill for most of the book, Dick alludes to his lust for power and adoption of Nazi programs directly in line with Hitler's wishes and in accordance with his character. Bormann's insistence upon technological progression in *The Man in the High Castle*, chiefly through the vehicles of space colonization and extermination of races including Jews, Slavs, and Africans, echoes of his actions during World War II. Bormann was the advocate of invariably harsh, radical measures when it came to the treatment of Jews, conquered eastern peoples, and prisoners of war. On July 1, 1943, Bormann gave Adolf Eichmann, a Nazi Lieutenant Colonel, absolute powers over Jews. Furthermore, on August 9, 1942 he wrote: "The Slavs are to work for us. In so far as we do not need them, they may die. Slav fertility is not desirable."³⁸ Finally, Dick's description religion within Nazi-occupied territories (or its lack thereof) resembles Bormann's own distaste for Christianity. Lt.

Thomas Lambert, Assistant American Council at the Nuremberg Trials, drew attention to Bormann's attacks upon the Catholic Church, in particular, during his oral arguments for the prosecution.³⁹

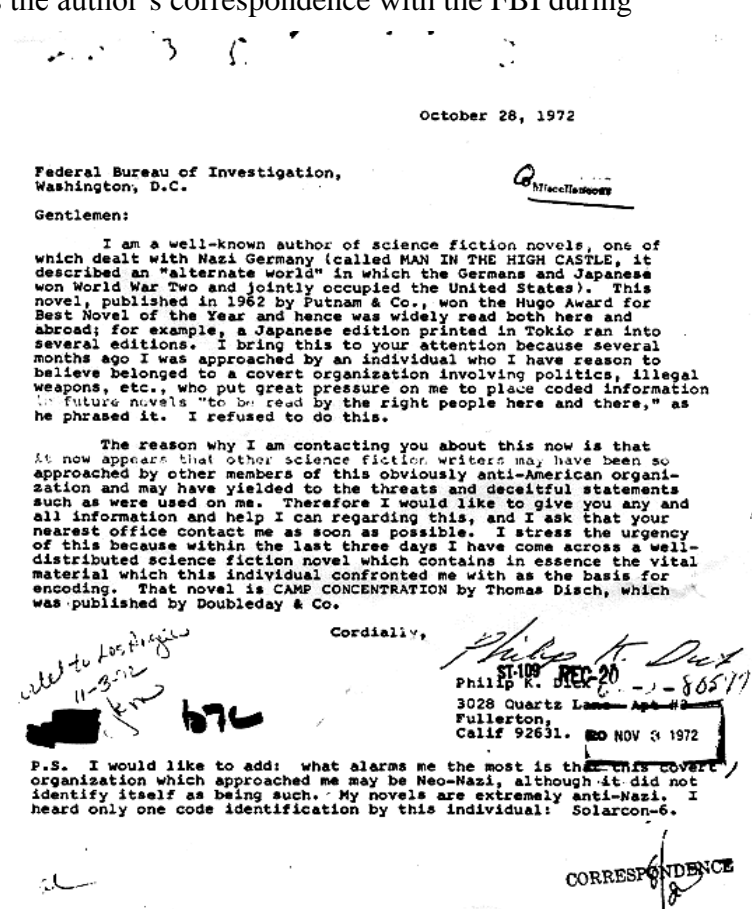
Dick's interpretation of Goebbels, von Schirach, Heydrich, and Seyss-Inquart also echo of World War II realities. Late in *The Man in the High Castle*, Goebbels is described as being "the sole intellectual of the *Partei*;" however, his lust for power cannot check him from being wielded by the SD.⁴⁰ Goebbels' sinister character but naive tendency to focus too heavily upon ideology in lieu of practicality is expounded by scholar Doris Bergen's *War and Genocide: A Concise History of the Holocaust*.⁴¹ Von Schirach is depicted by Dick as being the most sympathetic but simultaneously ineffective member of the Nazi high command. His approachable outlook and humanist bend, though popular with moderates in Germany as well as the Nazi-occupied US territories, results in his murder following the power struggle created by Bormann's death. In reality, Schirach was one of the few Nazi high command members (as founder of the Hitler Youth) to avoid execution or long-term imprisonment for war crimes, and he expressed discontent with Nazi extermination policies while effectively demonstrating his relative lack of involvement in constructing the Final Solution.⁴²

Dr. Seyss-Inquart is described as being the "most hated man in Reich territory" by Dick. In reality, Seyss-Inquart's duplicitous tendencies became clear when he presented an olive branch to Austria as Germany's Federal Minister of the Interior and Security in order to collect secret details that would prove useful in Germany's eventual execution of the *Anschluss*, as evidenced by an OSS dossier from August 27, 1945.⁴³

Finally, Dick's presentation of Heydrich proves arguably the most useful synthesis of real World War II history with a 1962 interpretation of alternate reality; he is described as an unabashed technophile who dispenses with nostalgic cultural practices in favor of an efficient world order.⁴⁴ Interestingly, later in the work, Schirach is one of the few Nazi officials who opposes nuclear action against Japan. During World War II, Heydrich was an early proponent of the Final Solution, and he signed the 1938 order for *Kristallnacht*.⁴⁵ Dick departs from traditional associations with Heydrich as a blind promulgator of Nazi extermination programs insofar as he is, in *The Man in the High Castle*, reluctant to engage in a wholesale extermination of the Japanese people. However, Dick does not elaborate upon why this is the case. Furthermore, in a holistic sense, Dick's background as a science fiction writer during the Cold War era influences his interpretation of World War II history. The marriage of Dick's vivid imagination, coupled with his interest in historical fact, resulted in his construction of *The Man in the High Castle* as a believable, researched alternate history to World War II.

Dick's personal experiences, including his propensity for anti-government activities during his Berkeley campus days, shine through *The Man in the High Castle*. Dick's Cold War activism and anti-government sentiments directly influenced his construction of the book as well as his later works. Dick's hatred of institutions, fed by his relationship with his free-spirited second wife, Kleo Apostolides, and tempered by his negative relationship with his father, a civil servant, is a critical theme in *The Man in the High Castle*.⁴⁶ Nazi spy networks in the former United States, occupied by Nazi Germany within the work, strongly resemble Dick's own perceptions of US government organizations such as the FBI and CIA during the 1960s and 1970s.

Dick biographer Rickman cites the author's correspondence with the FBI during 1972 through 1974 as evidence of his fear of government entities. For example, during a 1972 correspondence with the FBI, Dick is careful to note his anti-Nazi views in the letter's post-script as well as drawing attention to his concern that "other science fiction writers... may have yielded to the threats and deceitful statements" of anti-government agencies (see fig.



1).⁴⁷ Dick's concern for distancing himself from neo-Nazi activities may have been fueled by the controversial

Figure 1. Philip K. Dick, Letter to Federal Bureau of Investigation, in the *Letters of Note Online Library*, <http://www.lettersofnote.com/2010/07/neo-nazis-syphilis-and-world-war-iii.html> (accessed November 17, 2011).

contents of *The Man in the High Castle*, which, in an unprecedented move in 1962, depicted the Nazis as World War II victors. Furthermore, his decision to scapegoat other science fiction authors, though avoiding inclusion of specific names, testifies to his paranoia: Dick's fear was so great that he risked isolation within the close-knit community of science fiction writers rather than face government scrutiny. While World War II histories began to emerge during the Cold War era, including William L. Shirer's seminal *The Rise and Fall of the Third Reich* from 1960, which Dick acknowledged as a

source of inspiration for *The Man in the High Castle*, alternate history depictions of the war were nonexistent at the time of the book's publication in 1962.⁴⁸ The book's contents can best be interpreted as a thinly-veiled critique of the United States based upon Dick's interpretation of Cold War history.

Dick's calculated choice to depict the Axis powers as World War II victors within *The Man in the High Castle* did not represent an attempt to laud Nazis and imperial Japan but, rather, a thinly veiled critique of the United States' foreign policy decisions during the Cold War era. Dick's friendship with renowned science fiction author Anthony Boucher during the late 1950s and early 1960s affected the contents of *The Man in the High Castle*. Boucher warned Dick against writing "strict" science fiction and instead lauded and encouraged Dick for his tendency toward abstract metaphorical themes with strong political undertones.⁴⁹ Dick took Boucher's advice to heart when he composed *The Man in the High Castle*, and he lent authority to the work by undergoing extensive research of World War II beforehand. Dick cited *The Goebbels Diaries* as a source for his depiction of Nazi characters, explaining why Goebbels is introduced and extrapolated in fascinating detail within *The Man in the High Castle*.⁵⁰

Dick's Cold War political views are evidenced in his other works from the Cold War era. For example, in *Dr. Bloodmoney*, a successor to *The Man in the High Castle* written in 1965, introduces a world in which the United States contemplates nuclear war with China and the Soviet Union. The main character, a German scientist working for the United States (calling back to comparisons between Nazi Germany and the United States in *The Man in the High Castle*), suffers from paranoia and a lost twin, much like Dick

himself.⁵¹ The work's scathing treatment of United States' international involvement resounds of Cold War realities of nuclear competition and tension with the USSR, which came to a head with the Cuban Missile Crisis of 1962. During the Cuban Missile Crisis, President Kennedy ordered a naval blockade of Cuba despite Soviet leader Nikita Khrushchev's stockpiling of nuclear weapons.⁵² Dick was an avid critic of Kennedy's decisions during the Cuban Missile Crisis, and while *The Man in the High Castle* was not published during the Crisis itself, it was composed in the immediate wake of the Bay of Pigs invasion.⁵³ Dick addresses spy networking both in *Dr. Bloodmoney* as well as *The Man in the High Castle*; for example, in the latter, the character Joe Cinnadella is a Nazi spy.

In *The Simulcra*, from 1964, Dick portrays a totalitarian society similar to Nazi Germany, though headed by a matriarch.⁵⁴ Dick's difficulties with women coupled with his fears of government surveillance and censorship shine through *The Simulcra*, and echo of similar themes in *The Man in the High Castle*. For example, the matriarch, Nicole Thibodeaux, is supported by the Sons of Job, a religious paramilitary group akin to Hitler's own *Sicherheitsdienst* within *The Man in the High Castle*. Furthermore, Dick presents the theme of reality and artifice within *The Simulcra* in the context of the media and propaganda. In the work, media propaganda has a physical effect upon people's memory cells, literally rendering the artifice of media bias a reality if given attention by US audiences.⁵⁵ Dick scholar Umberto Rossi posits that this represents Dick's personal dissatisfaction with Kennedy's media presentation of the Bay of Pigs invasion and Cuban Missile Crisis, and it bears similarities to Dick's presentation of censorship and propaganda in *The Man in the High Castle*.⁵⁶ For example, just as watching the news in

The Simulcra makes propaganda real, so reading *The Grasshopper Lies Heavy*, as evidenced in *The Man in the High Castle*'s ending, could affect reality. Ultimately, Dick's belief in limited government surveillance and his hatred of media bias shines through the majority of his Cold War works.

The Man in the High Castle's focus upon historicity, artifice versus reality, and cultural relativism echo Cold War era themes in philosophy and political theory. Dick's focus upon Japanese cultural influence and the "give and take" between Americans and their Japanese colonial overlords echo of the United States' own policies internationally during the Cold War era. US intervention in the domestic affairs of foreign states, as outlined in Cassie Carter's article about metacolonization in the context of *The Man in the High Castle*, can be interpreted as Dick's commentary Cold War involvement, on the part of the United States, during the Cold War in regions including Korea, Vietnam, Panama, Chile, and the Persian Gulf.⁵⁷ Carter's article continues by noting that "Dick's emphasis upon the Japanese-occupied PSA reveals that he is interrogating *Americanism* as a world view along with the others."⁵⁸ Dick's PSA, though a palpably more comfortable environment for Americans than the United States under Nazi control, nevertheless represents an exercise in cultural hegemony and irony.

Japan's adoption of US cultural artifacts as kitschy forms of art in the former western portion of the United States serves as Dick's commentary upon US colonial intervention during the Cold War era. Dick openly criticized US foreign policy during the Cold War in an interview for a French science fiction convention in 1977. He remarked that, a few short years earlier, his home had been broken into, which his attorney

suggested was action undertaken by the US government in response to overly critical writings concerning US intervention in Chile.⁵⁹ While Japan's colonial control over the PSA resounds of Cold War-era critiques of US involvement internationally, Dick's treatment of Nazi occupied territories also represents a metaphor for US Cold War action.

Dick's focus upon the illusory nature of World War II's victory can be interpreted as an allusion to the Cold War's deadlock of the 1960s. John Reider's 1988 analysis of Dick's work, *The Metafictive World of High Castle*, argues that the book does not clearly define who really "won" World War II, as its anticlimactic ending and cryptic allusion to *The Grasshopper Lies Heavy* as the real conclusion to the war indicate that truth is not as black and white as the reader may presume.⁶⁰ The use of overt comparisons between totalitarian regimes in Dick's later works, including *The Simulcra*, was first employed in *The Man in the High Castle*. The Nazis' use of extensive spy networks and tendency to backstab former allies through nuclear technology deliberately resemble the United States' CIA as well as its operations in Chile, which Dick had criticized during his early career. In addition, the Bay of Pigs invasion and Cuban Missile Crisis may have influenced Dick's presentation of Nazis in *The Man in the High Castle*. While the Nazis from *The Man in the High Castle* do not definitively represent American government action during the Cold War, Dick's anti-government fervor may have influenced his construction of the work's "bad guys."

The Man in the High Castle's overarching tone of pessimism stems from Cold War era dissatisfaction with US international involvement. In 1962, on the cusp of the Vietnam War, US counterinsurgency forces under the Kennedy administration expanded

dramatically.⁶¹ The Cold War blossomed as both an exercise in hard power muscle flexing as well as, perhaps more importantly, an ideological undertaking. The zeal of Nazi sympathizers in *The Man in the High Castle*, including Joe, a Swedish Nazi assassin masquerading as an Italian truck driver, is depicted as a dangerous exercise in cosmic abstraction: what may have originated as realistic, technologically-driven undertaking in world domination evolved into a pseudo-religious, blind lust for swallowing up *Natur* itself.⁶² Just as Joe lusts for power, so, too, did the United States and, to be fair, Soviet Union during the height of the Cold War. Dick's commentary upon Nazi power could thus represent a veiled critique upon US and Soviet action in the Cold War.

Cold War era philosophies including postmodernism and deconstruction are palpable in *The Man in the High Castle*. Dickian scholar Christopher Palmer's detailed analysis of postmodern philosophy in the context of the author's lifetime of works presents postmodernism as an inherently pessimistic school of thought directly stemming from the pessimism that accompanied the late nineteen fifties and early sixties.⁶³ Palmer notes that "the term 'postmodern' is introduced partly in response to the preoccupation of late capitalism with the fabrication, exchange, and sale of images rather than artifacts; the commodification of culture. The economic and the cultural have become intermingled."⁶⁴ *The Man in the High Castle's* heavy emphasis upon the themes of artifice versus reality and historicity, the quality of being a part of recorded events, represents a direct link to postmodern philosophy of his day. Character Robert Childen's preoccupation with the reality of the artifacts that he sells in the PSA is ultimately shattered when he sells a replica Colt .44 revolver, and antiques dealer Wyndham-Matson serves as Dick's mouthpiece when he proclaims that there is "no mystical plasma presence" to delineate

whether something is genuine or false.⁶⁵ It is in this context that Dick presents his alternate history within an alternate history work, *The Grasshopper Lies Heavy*, indicating that even historical facts themselves cannot objectively stand.

The dissatisfaction with historical interpretation echoes theories of linguistic deconstruction that emerged during the 1950s and sixties; for example, Dick scholar N. Katherine Hayles observes that “the characters within *High Castle* are forced to confront their fictionality...[and] [e]vil is ultimately unreal.”⁶⁶ French philosopher and father of deconstruction Jacques Derrida likewise argues against the existence of genuine evil, as it stands as a linguistic construct, or societal artifact itself, in his work *Acts of Religion*.⁶⁷ Dick’s preoccupation with drawing attention to the ephemeral nature of reality influenced deconstructivist philosophy during the Cold War era, and, in 1975, deconstructivist science fiction analyst Peter Fitting argued, using Dick’s work *Ubik* as an example, that the author’s liberal political ideologies, tempered by Marxism, focus upon a “reality problem” critical to all deconstructivist philosophy.⁶⁸ *The Man in the High Castle* represents a melding of World War II and Cold War historical context with Dick’s personal views and paranoia as well as a preoccupation with and precursor for postmodern and deconstructivist philosophy. Its effective marriage of historical and philosophical fact and fiction, and its philosophical relevance within the fields of postmodernism and deconstruction render it a precursor of future science fiction works.

The Man in the High Castle offers valuable insights into American postwar and Cold War historical and philosophical thought. Although it is merely an alternative history science fiction work, it spurred a wealth of science fiction works in its wake,

including those of William Gibson, Jonathan Lethman, and Ursula LeGuin.⁶⁹ Furthermore, Dick's anti-government views and his interpretation of transhuman postmodernity influenced philosophers including Jean Baudrillard, Fredric Jameson and Slavoj Žižek.⁷⁰ Žižek, in particular, developed his interpretation of reality based, in part, upon Dick's works. Žižek lauds *The Man in the High Castle* as a model for an existential reality, where "truth" is at once nebulous, volatile, and complicated. Žižek contributes to the postmodern body of philosophical work that Dick influenced, and his chief philosophical contribution is extrapolation of reality and imagination as philosophical constructs.⁷¹ His contention that the "real" and "imaginary" are political, social, and pervasive constructs echoes of Dick's preoccupation with reality and artifice, as expressed within *The Man in the High Castle*, especially in its inclusion of the book-within-a-book *The Grasshopper Lies Heavy*, which ultimately presents reality as artifice both within the *The Man in the High Castle* as well as the world of the reader. Žižek used the book as a model for comparison to the 1999 film *The Matrix*; Žižek criticizes the film for failing to, as Dick had done in *The Man in the High Castle*, leave the audience wondering if the "very alternative [reality] itself" is false.⁷² Marxist scholar Carl Freedman attributes Dick's background in psychological problems and anti-government action- recall his vitriolic correspondence with the FBI- to his establishment as an augur of the paranoid modern relationship between technology and humanity.⁷³ Dick's complicated history ultimately informed his equally complicated writings. *The Man in the High Castle*, in particular, has proven its merit through its broad consideration as both a good read and, more importantly, harbinger of present and future political and philosophic consciousness.

Conclusion

The Man in the High Castle, Dick's seminal alternate history science fiction work from 1962, is a powerful examination of a world in which the Axis powers had won World War II. While its careful analysis of Nazi high command juxtaposed in a fictional 1962 setting resounds of both Dick's thorough research as well as influence of Cold War historical developments, the work's overarching tone of pessimism represents a direct link to postmodern and deconstructivist philosophies from the post-World War II era. *The Man in the High Castle* represents a powerful work that put alternate history science fiction on the map as a genre of fiction worthy of academic consideration not only for its literary merit, but also because of its cultural relevance and counterfactual potency.

NOTES

¹ *Philip K. Dick Rare Interview in France, Part 1 - 1977*, 2009,
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0s23dZCZ2k&feature=youtube_gdata_player.

² Anton Uwe and Werner Fuchs, "So I Don't Write About Heroes: Interview with Philip K. Dick," transcribed by Frank C. Bertrand, *SF Eye* (Spring 1996),
http://www.philipkdick.com/media_sfeye96.html. (accessed October 09, 2011).

³ The Hugo Award, established in 1953 and named after *Amazing Stories* pioneer Hugo Gernsback, is bestowed upon a variety of works, and categories, within the science fiction genre. *The Man in the High Castle* won in the category of "Best Novel" for 1963. Although criticized for failing to serve as a barometer of literary merit to the extent of the Nebula Award, the Hugo Award nevertheless represents, according to renowned science fiction author and anthologist James Gunn, a good "measure of reader popularity" and dramatically increases book sales, as quoted in *The New Encyclopedia of Science Fiction*, p. 32.

⁴ Henry Gee, "That Extra Dimension," *Natural Physics* 4 (May 2008): 341.

⁵ *Rare Philip K Dick interview*, 2006,
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7Ewcp6NrQ&feature=youtube_gdata_player.

⁶ Lawrence Sutin, *Divine Invasions: A Life of Philip K. Dick* (Cambridge: Da Capo Press, 2005), 3.

⁷ Lejla Kucukalic, *Philip K. Dick: Canonical Writer of the Digital Age* (Jefferson, MC: Taylor & Francis, 2009), 27.

⁸ Ibid.

⁹ Ibid.

¹⁰ Ibid.

¹¹ Gregg Rickman, *Philip K. Dick: In His Own Words* (Essex: Fragments West/Valentine Press, 1988), 195.

¹² Kucukalic, *Philip K. Dick: Canonical Writer of the Digital Age*, 32.

¹³ Eric S. Rabkin, "Irrational Expectations; or, How Economics and the Post-Industrial World Failed Philip K. Dick (Les espérances irrationnelles ou comment l'économie et la société postindustrielle ont trahi Philip K. Dick)," *Science Fiction Studies* 15 (July 1, 1988): 163.

- ¹⁴ Rickman, *Philip K. Dick: In His Own Words*, 291.
- ¹⁵ Kucukalic, *Philip K. Dick: Canonical Writer of the Digital Age*, 28.
- ¹⁶ Ibid.
- ¹⁷ Sutin, *Divine Invasions: A Life of Philip K. Dick*, 83.
- ¹⁸ Ibid.
- ¹⁹ Rickman, *Philip K. Dick: In His Own Words*, 291.
- ²⁰ Ibid.
- ²¹ Sutin, *Divine Invasions: A Life of Philip K. Dick*, 118.
- ²² Ibid., 119.
- ²³ Ibid.
- ²⁴ Ibid., 276.
- ²⁵ Kucukalic, *Philip K. Dick: Canonical Writer of the Digital Age*, 33.
- ²⁶ Cassie Carter, "The Metacolonization of Dick's 'The Man in the High Castle': Mimicry, Parasitism, and Americanism in the PSA," *Science Fiction Studies* 22, no. 3 (November 1, 1995): 333-342.
- ²⁷ Philip K. Dick, *The Man in the High Castle* (New York: Vintage, 1992), 36.
- ²⁸ Ibid.
- ²⁹ Ibid., 151.
- ³⁰ Ibid., 94.
- ³¹ Ibid., 66.
- ³² Ibid., 67.
- ³³ Ibid., 25.
- ³⁴ Carter, "The Metacolonization of Dick's 'The Man in the High Castle': Mimicry, Parasitism, and Americanism in the PSA," 335.

- ³⁵ Dick, *The Man in the High Castle*, 285.
- ³⁶ Lorenzo DiTommaso, "Redemption in Philip K. Dick's 'The Man in the High Castle'," *Science Fiction Studies* 26 (March 1, 1999): 91.
- ³⁷ Ronald Hayman, *Hitler and Geli* (London: Bloomsbury Publishing USA, 1999), 40.
- ³⁸ Robert S. Wistrich, *Who's Who in Nazi Germany* (London: Routledge, 1997).
- ³⁹ *Nuremeberg Day 35 Borman*, 2009, http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=a9T65zhyhJk&feature=youtube_gdata_player.
- ⁴⁰ Dick, *The Man in the High Castle*, 93
- ⁴¹ Doris L. Bergen, *War and Genocide* (Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield, 2009), 42.
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- ⁴³ Donovan Nuremberg Trials Collection, "OSS Research and Analysis Branch Biographical Sketch on Seyss-Inquart", Cornell University Law Library, http://library2.lawschool.cornell.edu/donovan/pdf/Batch_7/Vol_XVI_50_02.pdf. (Accessed 28 September 2011).
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CHAPTER 3

CARD-CARRYING SOCIALISTS AND BLEEDING HEART LIBERALS: *STAR TREK: THE NEXT GENERATION* AND LATE COLD WAR HISTORICAL DEVELOPMENTS

Introduction

In 1991, *Star Trek VI: The Undiscovered Country*, was released by Paramount Studios. The film was intended to serve as a swan song for the original series' cast in the wake of *The Next Generation*'s 1987 release following a twenty six year *Trek* hiatus after *Star Trek: The Original Series* ended its three year run in 1969. Included in a scene of the film, set on the Klingon planet of Kronos, are two Klingon extras, portrayed by Trent Christopher Ganino and Eric A. Stillwell. While Ganino and Stillwell received no attention for their nominal role in an otherwise poorly received film, their contributions to *Star Trek: The Next Generation* are considerable. As co-writers for the episode "Yesterday's Enterprise," the team received national attention for authoring one of the most beloved and praised episodes of the science fiction series.^{1*}

The episode "Yesterday's Enterprise" from *Star Trek: The Next Generation*, which depicts an alternate history reality for the Enterprise crew, was well-received by critics for its intelligently acted execution of a complicated story involving the effects of alternate timelines upon one another. It was released on February 19, 1990, and it was nominated for three Emmy awards. It won two.² The episode is widely beloved as a fan favorite and among *Trek* cast and crew, including head writer Mark Piller. Piller

* The *Star Trek* franchise, begun in 1966 with *Star Trek: The Original Series*, today includes five television spinoffs, eleven feature films, games, fan fiction novels, production journals (including Stillwell's *The Making of Yesterday's Enterprise* from 2007, and a themed attraction in Las Vegas.

encouraged an open submission scrip policy for *Star Trek*, which resulted in his consideration of Ganino's original idea behind "Yesterday's Enterprise" for production.³

The Next Generation, specifically through the case example of "Yesterday's Enterprise," reflects predominant American values, both political and philosophical, of the era. While *Star Trek: The Original Series*, aired from 1966 until 1969, has been widely examined academically for its contributions to race relations and as a backdrop for gender studies reflective of American culture during the time, comparatively little has been said concerning its *Trek* successor.⁴ The importance of Roddenberry as well as fellow *Trek* contributors, including cast, crew, and writers, for *The Next Generation* echo issues of historical and philosophical importance contemporary to the late 1980s and early 1990s, including fear of a reprisal in Cold War tensions spurred by the Strategic Defense Initiative, as well as postmodernism and .

An examination of the historical and philosophical conditions contemporary to Ganino and Stillwell's crafting of "Yesterday's Enterprise" shed light upon its importance as a more recent example of alternate timeline science fiction. The genre of science fiction, and specifically alternate history and alternate timeline science fiction, ballooned in the wake of Philip K. Dick's seminal *The Man in the High Castle*. Science fiction authors increasingly sought to incorporate a firm grasp of historical, philosophical, and scientific issues relevant to the time of their works' construction. Ganino and Stillwell's "Yesterday's Enterprise" is no exception: the episode reflects historical concerns tied to Reagan-era economic and international policies as well as the post-Cold War American philosophical movements of New Traditionalism and post-feminism. The episode highlights the relationship between late Cold War tensions between the Soviet

Union and United States and alternate history science fiction's role as a tool of political commentary and social discourse.

Background and Production of "Yesterday's Enterprise"

Any understanding of the historical and philosophical significance of "Yesterday's Enterprise" must be preceded by an analysis of the authors' backgrounds during the episode's construction and production. The life experiences of co-writers Trent C. Ganino and Eric A. Stillwell lend understanding to their perspectives on American political and historical events that, in turn, contributed, either directly or peripherally, to their construction of the seminal episode "Yesterday's Enterprise" for *Star Trek: The Next Generation*.

Eric A. Stillwell, a native of Oregon, was three years old when *Star Trek: The Original Series* aired in 1966. Stillwell was born in the Kadena Air Force base in Okinawa, Japan during the United States in 1972. He describes himself as "a child of the Cold War," and notes that it affected his outlook as a young person who avidly watched *Star Trek: The Original Series*.⁵ He watched re-runs "religiously" as a young person, and the show helped foment his early interest in science fiction.⁶ Nonetheless, it was the film *Star Wars*, "ironically," as Stillwell notes in his work *The Making of Yesterday's Enterprise*, which solidified his interest in working as a script writer in the entertainment industry. Stillwell graduated from the University of Oregon in 1985 with a degree in political science and thereafter moved to Hollywood. Stillwell acknowledges that, while *Star Wars* fueled his interest in writing for Hollywood, it was *Star Trek* that "played a significant role in shaping [his] lifelong social and political values."⁷ In a personal

correspondence with Stillwell, he further acknowledged that the “dreadful film” *Star Trek V: The Final Frontier*, directed by William Shatner, inspired him “to write something better” for the *Trek* franchise.⁸ In addition, Stillwell notes that his Cold War perceptions of US and Soviet relations influenced his opinion of *Star Trek: The Original Series*:

To me, the futuristic Star Trek was a reflection of the Cold War archetypes with the United States (United Federation of Planets) vs. the USSR (Klingons) and China (the Romulans). In hind sight, I image our European allies might have best been represented by the Vulcans.⁹

Stillwell’s first attempt at making a Hollywood career failed, and he returned to Eugene, Oregon, for a year to reside with his parents. While in Oregon, Stillwell was hired as a scriptwriter for a Hallmark Hall of Fame movie, *Promise*, starring James Woods and James Garner.¹⁰ *Promise* proved surprisingly successful, winning five Emmy awards and helping launch Stillwell into a successful Hollywood career as a television series producer. Shortly thereafter, Stillwell heard a radio announcement by Paramount Studios concerning its prospective release of a reprisal of the *Star Trek* series, *The Next Generation*, and he moved to California to seek a career with the project.

Susan Sackett, Gene Roddenberry’s longtime secretary and occasional lover, helped Stillwell obtain an interview with Paramount Studios’ *Star Trek* producer, Robert Justman.¹¹ Despite having Sackett’s approval, Stillwell failed to land a job with *The Next Generation*. He instead worked as a page for Paramount, giving studio tours to visitors and helping coordinate live audiences for television series, including *Cheers*, *Family Ties*, and *The Arsenio Hall Show*.¹² In 1987, Stillwell was invited to serve as a page for the premiere of *The Next Generation*’s pilot episode, “Encounter at Farpoint.” While

working, Robert Justman recognized Stillwell and introduced him to his wife. As impressed as Stillwell was by Justman's recollection of his name, "nothing compared to receiving a job offer from Justman" shortly thereafter, and it launched Stillwell's Hollywood career.¹³

Stillwell was promoted to script coordinator toward the end of the second season of *The Next Generation*, in 1988. Stillwell was responsible for "overseeing the typewriting, printing, and distribution" of prospective *Trek* scripts while working in this position.¹⁴ However, Stillwell still yearned to work as a scriptwriter for the series. Stillwell, as a longtime *Trek* fan, desired to write for the latest installation of the beloved original series. While at Paramount, Stillwell maintained a good relationship with the show's creator, Gene Roddenberry, whom Stillwell refers to as "a card-carrying socialist."¹⁵ Stillwell recounted in a personal correspondence that:

I was a huge, huge fan from age 12 onward, so everything in my life was informed through the original *Star Trek*, including many of my political and philosophical views. Gene Roddenberry was a secular humanist (which I am also) and wasn't embarrassed to say that he was a card-carrying socialist. I will settle for "bleeding heart Hollywood liberal" for myself.¹⁶

Stillwell finally received the opportunity to write for *Star Trek: The Next Generation* in 1989, when he was introduced to fellow scriptwriter Trent Christopher Ganino.

Ganino, a freelance scriptwriter, submitted a 106-page manuscript to Paramount's studio offices during the third season of the series. At the beginning of the third season of *The Next Generation*, Roddenberry hired Michael Piller as its head writer. Piller

immediately opened *Trek* script submissions to the public, eschewing the typical prerequisite that all submitted scripts to be written by professional authors represented by Hollywood agencies.¹⁷ Piller's egalitarian policy was unheard of in Hollywood at the time of its establishment. As a result, Paramount's *Trek* offices were flooded with over 5,000 script submissions in 1989 due to the show's rapidly increasing popularity. Ganino's work, "Yesterday's Enterprise," was received by Stillwell, working as a pre-production associate at the time, in April of 1989. Stillwell initially paid no attention to the script other than to take note of the fact that it exceeded the usual requirement that scripts not exceed 65 pages. "Yesterday's Enterprise," however, received an exception to the condition because it was double-spaced.

"Yesterday's Enterprise" was ignored during the month of April because of Paramount's backlog of scripts. Finally, in May of 1989, Richard Manning, a co-producer of *The Next Generation*'s writing staff, read the script. Manning was impressed with "Yesterday's Enterprise." However, he noted that the draft was "not particularly original" because the idea of time travel was used in previous *Trek* episodes, including "City on the Edge of Forever" from *Star Trek: The Original Series*, which Ganino cited as a source of inspiration for "Yesterday's Enterprise" in his initial script submission.¹⁸ A post-script on the final page of the script questioned the value of exploring time travel and alternate reality in *The Next Generation*, as time travel was a trademark of the original series, from which *The Next Generation* sought to distance itself as an independent series..

Ganino and Stillwell became friends between the time of Ganino's submission of "Yesterday's Enterprise" and June, 1989, when the draft was reviewed by *Trek's*

executive script consultant, Melissa Snodgrass.¹⁹ Snodgrass found the story a fascinating idea, although she chided its frequency of “poorly set up plot points.”²⁰ Snodgrass submitted coverage of the draft to Stillwell and Ganino.[†] Both expressed interest in dealing with the subject of alternate reality, and Ganino’s draft was given to Piller for review in September 1989. Piller was pleased with “Yesterday’s Enterprise”, as it offered a refreshing take on anti-war sentiment and although he suggested buying the idea, rather than the script itself, from Ganino for eventual production.²¹

In late of September 1989, Ganino and Stillwell began construction of a formalized script. Interestingly, Rick Berman, the series’ executive producer, was loath to produce an episode that dealt with alternate reality; however, he made an exception for Ganino and Stillwell’s idea.²² Stillwell originally thought about seeking to modify Ganino’s draft so that it would include the Guardian of Forever and incorporate Spock, a leading character from *Star Trek: The Original Series*, portrayed by Leonard Nimoy.[‡] However, Berman and Roddenberry opposed this idea primarily because of the extraordinary costs of hiring Nimoy and the fact that, in using The Guardian of Forever, *The Next Generation* would be tied to *The Original Series*. Berman and Roddenberry preferred that *The Next Generation* avoid all association with *The Original Series* so that it could establish its own reputation.²³

Stillwell and Ganino collaborated for one week in October, 1989 to produce a team draft of the script for “Yesterday’s Enterprise”. Stillwell admits in *The Making of Yesterday’s Enterprise* that he was apprehensive about submitting even a finalized draft

[†] “Coverage” is a film industry term used to describe the process of analysis and grading of screenplays.

[‡] The Guardian of Forever is a *dues ex machina* from *Star Trek: The Original Series*. Created by an unknown, ancient alien race, it functions as a time portal, allowing access to alternate time periods and dimensions. Piller hated The Guardian, referring to it as a “gimmick” from *The Original Series*.

to Piller for review, as Piller tended to shy away from using scripts themselves for production but would, rather, rely upon teleplays made by professional writers after final drafts of original scripts.²⁴ Neither Ganino nor Stillwell were professional writers. Stillwell submitted a script entitled “Shattered Time” to Paramount’s *Star Trek* studios around 1988. It was an allegory about the dangers of a missile defense system, modeled after the “Star Wars” defense initiative undertaken by Ronald Reagan’s administration in 1980, adopted by an alien civilization, with catastrophic results.²⁵ While some senior members of *The Next Generation* production team, including Tim Iafoco, a studio producer, enjoyed the script, it was unceremoniously dismissed by Roddenberry. In the wake of the experience, Stillwell proceeded with “Yesterday’s Enterprise” cautiously and thoroughly.

Stillwell and Ganino finished a collaborative draft of “Yesterday’s Enterprise” on October 10, 1989. They then met with Piller to review the updated version of the story. Piller was uncompromising in his analysis of their work. Stillwell reports that he “wasn’t particularly fond” of some elements of the story, including a romantic story arc that they had developed for the character of Data, an android.[§] According to Stillwell, Piller was adamant that “androids do not have feelings;” therefore, Ganino and Stillwell’s arc involving Data’s romantic attachments was immediately rejected.²⁶ Piller was also careful to emphasize to Ganino and Stillwell that audiences would not be “as forgiving” of plot holes and the wanton use of *dues ex machinas*, specifically when applied to the subject of alternate reality and time travel, as they had been during *Star Trek*’s original series.²⁷

[§] An android is an advanced form of robot designed with self-aware artificial intelligence and a close approximation of human appearance.

Disillusionment with television could partially stem from images of war shown on American television for the first time during the Cold War, especially within the context of the Vietnam War. American cultural historian Julia Taddeo argues in her work *The Tube Has Spoken: Reality TV and History*, that the disillusionment of returning Vietnam veterans to the United States in the 1970s influenced a rise in general disillusionment found in American popular culture, including its television series.²⁸ Thus, while audiences of *Star Trek: The Original Series*, may have been forgiving of plot holes, viewers of *The Next Generation*, according to producer Piller, were more likely to question the series' portrayal and explanations for plot elements and narrative devices.

Following Piller's commentary, Ganino and Stillwell submitted a finalized draft of "Yesterday's Enterprise" on October 29, 1989.²⁹ Piller thanked them for their services, and Ganino and Stillwell were effectively removed from the show's production process. The episode was filmed in early December of 1989 following its hasty transcription into a teleplay by *The Next Generation* staff writer Ronald D. Moore.

Stillwell and Ganino parted ways following their collaboration on "Yesterday's Enterprise." The episode aired on network television February 19, 1990, with the highest rating for *The Next Generation's* third season, and its third highest for the series overall.³⁰ Stillwell remained good friends with Piller until the Piller's death in November of 2005 from neck cancer.³¹ Following his work on "Yesterday's Enterprise", Stillwell obtained a nominal role in *Star Trek VI: The Undiscovered Country*, and he went on to write a number of books, including his memoirs about the production of "Yesterday's Enterprise," *The Making of Yesterday's Enterprise*, as well as a book about *Deep Space*

9, the third installation of a *Star Trek* series.³² He currently lives in Burbank, California, with his wife, Debra, and they help operate Disney's Family Cancer Center.

Overview of "Yesterday's Enterprise"

"Yesterday's Enterprise" is fundamentally a story about the veritable ripple effect that occurs when the thread of history is altered. The episode entertains theoretical possibilities within a scientific framework while simultaneously weaving in philosophical questions including the difference between restoring and altering reality, the nature of fate and free will, and whether one life, or perhaps hundreds, is worth more than millions. *The Next Generation's* familiar cast of characters, including Captain Jean Luc Picard, first officer William Riker, chief engineer Geordi La Forge, Lieutenant Commander Data, and Guinan, play into the action and questions of morality raised within "Yesterday's Enterprise." In addition, the character Tasha Yar, portrayed by Denise Crosby, plays a pivotal role in the episode. Yar was killed in *The Next Generation* episode "The Skin of Evil" from its first season upon Crosby's expression of dissatisfaction with the character.³³ Crosby was a friend of Stillwell's, however, and she privately had mentioned interest to him in having Yar revisited within the series. Stillwell sought to honor her request, and so he and Ganino incorporated her into "Yesterday's Enterprise."³⁴

The episode begins with the characters Guinan, a bartender on the Enterprise-D, and Worf, the ship's Klingon security chief, engaging in light-hearted banter. ** They are interrupted by a strange phenomenon outside of the ship's window, and Worf is called to

** The Klingons are a humanoid warrior race depicted in all of the *Star Trek* series.

the bridge. Upon arriving at the bridge, Worf is informed that the phenomenon outside of the Enterprise-D is a temporal rift, a symmetrical tear in the fabric of space-time that allows for the intersection of alternate realities. Captain Jean Luc Picard orders that commander Data scan the temporal rift after the Enterprise-D experiences a rapid change in sensor readings. Suddenly, a starship emerges from the temporal rift. As the cameras pan upwards from the main deck's sensor array, the Enterprise-D bridge is dramatically in appearance: the crew's uniforms bear a distinctly militaristic appearance, and Worf is no longer present but, rather, Tasha Yar mans the ship's chief security post. She reports to Picard that the ship that has emerged from the temporal rift is the Enterprise-C, which was reported missing twenty two years before.³⁵

Data informs Captain Picard that the Enterprise-C near the Klingon outpost of Narendra III twenty two years in the past when it responded to a distress call from the station during an attack by Romulan forces.^{††} Data surmises that the badly damaged Enterprise-C accidentally traveled through the temporal rift during its battle with Romulan forces at Narendra III in defense of the outpost's Klingon inhabitants. Picard's first officer, William Riker, reports that the vessel shows signs of life, and the captain orders an away team, or group of Federation officers chosen to work off ship for specific assignments and missions, to bring the wounded back to the Enterprise-D for treatment. However, he warns the crew not to reveal their identity or the time to Enterprise-C survivors lest the course of history be compromised.

^{††} The Klingons, Romulans, and Federation had a tumultuous relationship during the decades preceding when *The Next Generation* occurs. During the time period in which the show is set, however, the Klingons and Federation have established an alliance while mutually maintaining frosty relations with the Romulans.

Enterprise-D chief medical officer Dr. Beverly Crusher and commander Riker board Enterprise-C and find that the majority of its crew is dead. They transport 125 survivors, including its captain, Rachel Garrett, and a helmsman, Lt. Richard Castillo, aboard the Enterprise-D. When the crew is medically stabilized, commander Riker reports that the Enterprise-C is badly in need of repairs. Picard is hesitant to remove the Enterprise-C from the area, as he is concerned about disturbing the temporal rift.³⁶

A disoriented Guinan approaches Picard on the bridge, an oddity for her, as she almost always stays in the Enterprise-D bar, Ten Forward, and she reports feeling “strange.” When Picard privately asks her what is wrong, Guinan firmly responds that the ship, and reality itself, is “not the way [it is] supposed to be.”³⁷ Picard becomes vexed with Guinan’s prescription that Enterprise-C be returned through the rift to face certain death at the hands of its Romulan attackers because of a vague “feeling”; however, he acknowledges that Guinan’s intuition is seldom incorrect.^{‡‡} Picard then visits Captain Garrett in Enterprise-D’s sick bay, and upon her insistence, reveals the truth: that Enterprise-C is now twenty two years into the future.

Picard confers with his senior crew to discern a course of action. Picard expresses concern that sending the Enterprise-C back through the temporal rift may not alter history. Data retorts that, because the Federation and Klingon Empire are currently at war, sending the Enterprise-C back in time to save the Narendra III outpost would be viewed by the Klingon Empire as an extraordinary act of bravery and honor.^{§§} This, in turn, might result in a Klingon-Federation alliance against their mutual enemy, the

^{‡‡} Guinan, though a simple bartender aboard the Enterprise-D, is revealed within *The Next Generation* to be a member of the El-Aurian race, a people noted for their longevity, excellent listening skills, and eerie penchant for predilection, or sixth sense.

^{§§} Klingon culture values honor above all other virtues.

Romulan Empire. Picard reports back to Captain Garrett, who maintains that the Enterprise-C crew will do everything within their power to serve the Federation, including sacrificing themselves by returning through the temporal rift to face inevitable death at the hands of the Romulans. Nevertheless, just as Garrett resolves to return through the anomaly, two Klingon Birds of Prey appear on the Enterprise-D's horizon and attack, killing Captain Garrett.*** Garrett's helmsman Lt. Castillo takes command of the Enterprise-C. Picard worries that Garrett's premature death may have irrevocably altered history's course, as she was "supposed" to die in battle at Narendra III, rather than twenty two years into the future aboard the Enterprise-D.³⁸

Castillo and Yar quickly become friends as they attempt to repair the Enterprise-C. Castillo resolves that, despite Garrett's death, he and his ship's crew will return through the temporal anomaly to fight, however dismal their chances, Romulan forces at the Narendra outpost. Yar and Guinan occasionally interact over the course of the repair process, although Yar is unnerved by these interactions. Guinan eventually reveals to Yar that she died meaninglessly in the original timeline, a reference to her senseless demise in season one of *The Next Generation* episode "The Skin of Evil," and she has, in alternate reality, never met Guinan. Yar, disconcerted by Guinan's revelation, asks Picard to transfer aboard the Enterprise-C.³⁹

Picard initially does not grant Yar's request. But Yar's passionate defense of her right to die in a meaningful fashion softens his resolve, and he allows her transfer. Repairs on the Enterprise-C are completed just as the temporal rift begins to destabilize; as the Enterprise-C returns through the anomaly, three Klingon Birds of Prey attack the

*** The Bird of Prey is the preferred warship of the Klingon Empire during *The Next Generation*.

Enterprise-D. Picard commands his crew to defend the Enterprise-C at any cost, as he recognizes that the Klingon-Federation War, which has cost over forty million lives, will be avoided if the ship successfully returns to the Battle of Narendra III to defend its Klingon inhabitants. As the Enterprise-D protects the Enterprise-C, the ship sustains heavy losses, including the death of commander Riker. However, the Enterprise-C successfully enters the temporal anomaly.⁴⁰

As Enterprise-C passes through the rift, the bridge on Enterprise-D returns to its condition at the beginning of the episode. Commander Riker is alive again, and Klingon Chief of Security Worf is positioned where Tasha Yar had briefly been stationed. None of the ship's crew are aware of the alternate timeline events, although Worf mentions that something like a ship appeared briefly within the anomaly. The temporal rift quickly dissipates. Guinan, subtly aware of what has transpired, calls to the bridge to ask if everything is alright. Picard assures her that all is well, and she then sits with Chief Engineer Geordi La Forge in Ten Forward. She cryptically inquires about the life of Tasha Yar, whom she has never met.⁴¹ The episode's scenes of violence are among the last shown in the episode, a strategic decision made by the director, David Carson, to convey the horrors of a war avoided and sacrifice of those aboard the Enterprise-C.

Historical and Philosophical Foundation for "Yesterday's Enterprise"

Star Trek and its progeny, including *The Next Generation*, have spurred a wealth of academic discourse since 1966, when the original series premiered, due to the Original Series' markedly liberal approach to race relations at the height of the United States'

Civil Rights Movement.^{†††} While *Star Trek: The Original Series* sparked the brunt of academic inquiry, especially with respect to race relations, *The Next Generation* has also proven itself a rich field for historical, philosophical, and even scientifically minded study.^{†††}

Although “Yesterday’s Enterprise” has not directly elicited academic inquiry of questions related race relations or historical and philosophical developments, it serves as a *The Next Generation* episode nonetheless affected by historical, philosophic, and scientific events of the late 1980s and early nineties. Historically, the events of Reagan’s administration, including his Star Wars defense initiative, bear strong resemblance to technology used by the Federation, Klingons, and Romulans in “Yesterday’s Enterprise.” Furthermore, the tensions that transpire in the episode’s alternate timeline reality between the Federation and Klingon Empire can be interpreted as an allegory for the historical problems between the United States and Soviet Union.

The quixotic goal of the Federation, as depicted in all of the *Star Trek* series, appears to be overcoming myopic racial tension of past centuries to pursue galactic peace and exploration. Despite this fact, it often falls far short of this ambition, as demonstrated within “Yesterday’s Enterprise.” International and domestic policies during the Reagan administration, including his controversial Star Wars defense initiative, bear strong resemblance to defensive Federation technology, including its photon-based weaponry.

^{†††} *Star Trek: The Original Series* drew much attention in 1968 when it aired the episode “Plato’s Stepchildren,” in which the characters Captain Picard, portrayed by William Shatner, and Lieutenant Uhura, played by African American actress Nichelle Nichols, share American television’s first interracial kiss.

^{†††} *Star Trek: The Original Series* has been examined within the context of race relations primarily because the series featured the first network television interracial kiss in the episode “Plato’s Stepchildren,” from 1968, between Captain James Kirk, portrayed by William Shatner, and Lieutenant Uhura, played by Nichelle Nichols.

While the arguable majority of technology aboard the Enterprise is directed toward scientific ends and aids in its primary mission of space exploration, its weapons arsenal testifies to the reality of war and potential use of deterrence as a defensive strategy.

The Strategic Defense Initiative, pejoratively dubbed “Star Wars” as a tribute to Goerge Lucas’ popular 1977 space fantasy film, was proposed by President Ronald Reagan in March of 1983 as a means of protecting the United States from potential nuclear ballistic missiles attacks.⁴² The program sought to develop land and space-based weaponry capable of stopping nuclear weapons, and it represented an offensive alternative to the theory of Mutually Assured Destruction, or MAD. MAD dictates that states in possession of nuclear weapons will not attack one another lest they face devastating nuclear counter-strikes. Reagan’s SDI was heavily criticized for its offensively-minded strategy. Its opponents argued that it would upset MAD’s delicate defensive balance and encourage states to launch preemptive nuclear strikes against ones in possession of SDI weaponry as well as causing imbalance amongst states with nuclear arsenals. The veritable game of diplomatic “chicken” employed in an SDI scenario strongly resembles the predicament of the Federation when facing the Klingon Empire in “Yesterday’s Enterprise.”

In “Yesterday’s Enterprise,” the alternate timeline Enterprise-D is faced with the choice of maneuvering away from attacking Klingon Birds of Prey or facing potential destruction to stay and ensure the Enterprise-C’s safe return through the temporal anomaly. Ultimately, the Enterprise-D stays, though it sustains extreme casualties in the alternate timeline reality. Likewise, the Enterprise-C’s sacrifice guarantees a return to the original timeline, preventing war between the Klingon Empire and Federation. While the

episode does not indicate that either the Enterprise-C or D employed SDI technology to offensively attack opponents, Federation photon torpedoes and warp-core technology bear strong resemblance to Reagan's "Star Wars" program insofar as both serve the dual purposes of offensive attack or, perhaps more realistically, creating a game of "chicken" in which an equilibrium of mutual preemption results in catastrophic consequences for both sides in battle.

Mikhail Gorbachev expressed concern to President Ronald Reagan that the United States' SDI would create an unfair balance between US and Soviet nuclear arsenals. Reagan, in turn, promised Gorbachev to provide the USSR with SDI technology; Gorbachev did not take the claim seriously.⁴³ In 1988, game theorists Steven J. Brams and D. Marc Kilgour argued that Reagan's SDI would create a disturbing world in which mutual preemption becomes the normative equilibrium for nuclear states, especially with unbalanced defensive capabilities.⁴⁴ Likewise, in the alternate reality timeline of "Yesterday's Enterprise," war between the Klingon Empire and Federation is underscored by their mutual possession of powerful weaponry. The Klingon Bird of Prey's cloaking capacity can be interpreted as a veritable form of an SDI. For example, the Enterprise-D fires frantically when a Bird of Prey cloaks during the episode's ending battle, just as Brams' and Kilgour's game theoretic model predicted with SDI development. Conversely, the use of powerful weaponry by *Trek* organizations and empires, including photon torpedoes, though intended as a method of deterrence, often spurs others to launch preemptive attacks upon it, as in the episode "Preemptive Strike"

from season seven of *The Next Generation*.^{§§§} “Yesterday’s Enterprise” reflects historical concerns stemming from Reagan-era policies. Furthermore, the reaction of those aboard the Enterprise-D in the episode echoes concerns by scientists with the SDI in the late 1980s.

In “Yesterday’s Enterprise,” Dr. Beverly Crusher expresses concern with sending the Enterprise-C crew back through the temporal rift, as it would result in their inevitable deaths and might not restore the original timeline. Her moral quandary with the prospect resounds of concerns within the scientific community about Reagan’s proposed Strategic Defense Initiative. For example, Stanford University chemist and ballistic weapons historian Rebecca Slayton indicates in her 2007 article “Discursive Choices: Boycotting Star Wars between Science and Politics” that the scientific community towed an unusual, fine line between academic study and political involvement when a number of its members went up in arms against Reagan’s SDI in 1986.⁴⁵ “Yesterday’s Enterprise” likewise reflects the potency of combining objective scientific reasoning with morally evocative concerns in its presentation of the Enterprise-D dilemma in choosing to send the Enterprise-C back through the temporal anomaly. The episode reflects *The Next Generation’s* trend toward using objective scientific study, or at least potential technological breakthroughs, as the backdrop for analyzing classic questions of morality.

The Klingon-Federation war depicted in the alternate timeline of “Yesterday’s Enterprise” can be interpreted as a Cold War allegory. *The Original Series* has been interpreted as a palpable example of Cold War era tensions between the United States and

^{§§§} In “Preemptive Strike,” the Cardassian Empire is threatened with a preemptive strike by the Maquis, a paramilitary organization responding to rumors that the Cardassians had developed biogenic weaponry.

USSR. The series aired at the Cold War's inception in the late 1960s, and the Federation has commonly been viewed as bearing strong parallels to the United States. Conversely, the Klingon Empire's war-like tendencies and markedly inferior technology resembles US perception of the Soviet Union during the time. Captain Kirk's propensity for breaking traditional rules to serve the "greater good" resembles popular cultural perception of the 1960s of the United States as an international "policeman," especially against Communist incursion, for the greater good.⁴⁶ However, Roddenberry's vision of the *Trek* universe as one in which class struggle is eliminated indicates that, perhaps, the Federation itself is Communist. Therefore, any conclusions that *The Original Series* is a *direct* allegory to the Cold War are premature. While definitively arguing that either the Klingon Empire or Federation represents Communism or democracy may be callow, Roddenberry's self-stated dissatisfaction with US foreign policy during the 1960s lends credence to the suggestion that *Trek* parallels Cold War tensions.⁴⁷

The Next Generation generally adopted a milder approach to political issues than its predecessor. However, the alternate timeline world within "Yesterday's Enterprise" represents a resurgence of allegorical Cold War issues from the original series. The year 1989 marked a definitive year for relations between the Soviet Union and United States, and it may have influenced Ganino and Stillwell's construction of the episode. Revisiting Klingon-Federation tensions within "Yesterday's Enterprise" serves as *Trek's* swan song to the decades-long conflict between the USSR and United States, which gradually dissolved beginning in 1989, precipitated by the fall of the Berlin Wall and a series of anti-Communist revolutions throughout Europe.⁴⁸ The Enterprise-C's sacrifice prevented war and saved the lives of "over forty million people."⁴⁹ Likewise, the conclusion of US-

Soviet tensions in 1989 reflects *The Next Generation's* emphasis upon peaceful international coexistence.

Conclusion

“Yesterday’s Enterprise” reflects seminal historical, philosophic, and scientific contributions of the late 1980s. The episode’s authors, Trent C. Ganino and Eric Stillwell, crafted a story that is well-remembered for its smartly acted, powerful story with a strong moral valence. Its alternate history depiction of events resounds of Cold War history and serves as a liberal, cautionary tale against engaging in offensive nuclear war. The episode, much in the vein of its alternate history science fiction predecessors, including Philip K. Dick’s *The Man in the High Castle*, demonstrates alternate timeline science fictions’ propensity for revealing as much about reality and the world in which it was crafted than the fiction it depicts. “Yesterday’s Enterprise” is no exception: it represents an altered timeline that speaks volumes about the present.

NOTES

¹ “‘Star Trek: The Next Generation’: The Top 10 Episodes | EW.com,” *EW.com*, n.d., <http://www.ew.com/ew/article/0,,20057754,00.html>.

² “Yesterday’s Enterprise” won two 1990 Technical Emmy awards for Outstanding Sound Editing and Outstanding Sound Effects. “Recalling ‘Yesterday’s Enterprise’ with Eric Stillwell - Part 2,” *StarTrek.com*, n.d., <http://www.startrek.com/article/recalling-yesterdays-enterprise-with-eric-stillwell-part-2>.

³ Eric A. Stillwell, *The Making of Yesterday’s Enterprise* (N.P.: Lulu.com, 2007), 17.

⁴ Michael Jindra, “Star Trek Fandom as a Religious Phenomenon,” *Sociology of Religion* 55 (March 20, 1994): 27.

⁵ Eric Stillwell, Facebook message to author, March 7, 2012.

⁶ Stillwell, *The Making of Yesterday’s Enterprise*, 11.

⁷ Ibid.

⁸ Eric Stillwell, Facebook message to author, March 7, 2012.

⁹ Ibid.

¹⁰ Ibid.

¹¹ Susan Sackett, *Inside Trek: My Secret Life with Star Trek Creator Gene Roddenberry* (Tulsa: Hawk Publishing Group, 2002).

¹² Stillwell, *The Making of Yesterday’s Enterprise*, 12.

¹³ Ibid.

¹⁴ Ibid., 13.

¹⁵ Eric Stillwell, Facebook message to author, March 7, 2012.

¹⁶ Stillwell, *The Making of Yesterday’s Enterprise*, 12.

¹⁷ Ibid., 19.

¹⁸ Ibid.

- ¹⁹ Ibid., 27.
- ²⁰ Ibid.
- ²¹ Ibid., 33.
- ²² Ibid., 34.
- ²³ “Recalling ‘Yesterday’s Enterprise’ with Eric Stillwell - Part 1,” *StarTrek.com*, n.d., <http://www.startrek.com/article/recalling-yesterdays-enterprise-with-eric-stillwell-part-1>.
- ²⁴ Stillwell, *The Making of Yesterday’s Enterprise*, 37.
- ²⁵ Ibid., 38.
- ²⁶ Ibid., 45.
- ²⁷ Ibid.
- ²⁸ Julie Anne Taddeo and Ken Dvorak, *The Tube Has Spoken: Reality TV & History* (Lexington: University Press of Kentucky, 2010), 2.
- ²⁹ Stillwell, *The Making of Yesterday’s Enterprise*, 53.
- ³⁰ Ibid., 87.
- ³¹ “Michael Piller, 57; Was a Force Behind Later ‘Star Trek’ Series,” *Los Angeles Times Articles*, n.d., <http://articles.latimes.com/2005/nov/03/local/me-piller3>.
- ³² “Recalling ‘Yesterday’s Enterprise’ with Eric Stillwell - Part 2,” *StarTrek.com*, n.d., <http://www.startrek.com/article/recalling-yesterdays-enterprise-with-eric-stillwell-part-2>.
- ³³ Denise Crosby, *Star Trek Community Online*, Web, November 16, 1996, <http://web.archive.org/web/20080505043153/http://www.startrek.com/startrek/view/community/chat/archive/transcript/1120.html>, (accessed December 29, 2011).
- ³⁴ “Recalling ‘Yesterday’s Enterprise’ with Eric Stillwell - Part 1,” *StarTrek.com*, n.d., <http://www.startrek.com/article/recalling-yesterdays-enterprise-with-eric-stillwell-part-1>.
- ³⁵ Cliff Bole et al., *Star Trek The Next Generation - The Complete First Season* (Paramount, 2002).
- ³⁶ Ibid.

³⁷ Ibid.

³⁸ Ibid.

³⁹ Ibid.

⁴⁰ Ibid.

⁴¹ Ibid.

⁴² Rebecca S. Bjork, *The Strategic Defense Initiative: Symbolic Containment of the Nuclear Threat* (New York: SUNY Press, 1992), 1.

⁴³ “Reagan’s Secret War; The Untold Story of His Fight to Save the World from Nuclear Disaster”, n.d., <http://www.scribd.com/doc/75616929/Reagan-s-Secret-War-The-Untold-Story-of-His-Fight-to-Save-the-World-from-Nuclear-Disaster>.

⁴⁴ Steven J. Brams and D. Marc Kilgour, “Deterrence versus Defense: A Game-Theoretic Model of Star Wars,” *International Studies Quarterly* 32 (March 1, 1988): 3.

⁴⁵ Rebecca Slayton, “Discursive Choices: Boycotting Star Wars between Science and Politics,” *Social Studies of Science* 37 (February 1, 2007): 27.

⁴⁶ J. P. Telotte, *The Essential Science Fiction Television Reader* (Lexington: University Press of Kentucky, 2008), 206.

⁴⁷ Nicholas Evan Sarantakes, “Cold War Pop Culture and the Image of U.S. Foreign Policy: The Perspective of the Original Star Trek Series,” *Journal of Cold War Studies* 7 (2005): 74.

⁴⁸ Robert Owen Keohane, Joseph S. Nye, and Harvard University. Center for International Affairs, *After the Cold War: International Institutions and State Strategies in Europe, 1989-1991* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1993).

⁴⁹ Cliff Bole et al., *Star Trek The Next Generation - The Complete First Season* (Paramount, 2002).

CONCLUSION

Science fiction has long been ignored as a subject for critical academic inquiry. However, recent literary and historical scholarship has begun to examine the role that science fiction plays in serving as a barometer of popular culture in the United States. The Atomic Age and Cold War marked a period of renewed interest in science fiction spurred in part by technological breakthroughs from the eras, including atomic weaponry. Cold War science fiction, including the work of Philip K. Dick and Gene Roddenberry's *Star Trek: The Original Series*, demonstrates a marked tendency to produce social commentary concerning the time period. Science fiction has long existed. Literary scholar, in his landmark 1973 work *Metamorphoses of Science Fiction*, defines the genre as one "whose necessary and sufficient conditions are the presence and interaction of estrangement and cognition, and whose main formal device is an imaginative framework alternative to the author's empirical environment."¹ Science fiction was not seriously studied within academia, however, until the Cold War era.

While science fiction has been studied within the context of the Cold War, little attention has been given to its offshoot, alternate history science fiction, which has not been examined for its power as a vehicle of social criticism and commentary. *The Man in the High Castle*, from 1962, by Philip K. Dick, and *Star Trek: The Next Generation* episode "Yesterday's Enterprise," from 1990, offer alternate history science fiction perspectives on the early and late periods of the Cold War, respectively. While Dick and "Yesterday's Enterprise" author Eric Stillwell perhaps did not intend to directly critique the Cold War in their respective works, their artistic contributions to science fiction offer insights into American popular culture during the era and are, in turn, valuable tools for

examining the role that fiction plays in conveying American perception of historical events.

Philip K. Dick's *The Man in the High Castle* does not represent a direct critique of the Cold War, despite much speculation on the part of Dickian scholars concerning its underlying political meanings. However, the work's interpretation of World War II is heavily influenced by Dick's troubled childhood and his extensive research of World War II history and figures, many of whom Dick chose to serve as characters in the work. *The Man in the High Castle* is powerful because it brought alternate history science fiction to light as a serious form of popular culture. Its overarching themes, including fear of surveillance, paranoia, and the malleability of reality, represent pessimistic positions found heavily in American popular cultural expressions, including science fiction, of the Cold War era. While *The Man in the High Castle* is valuable because of its direct and peripheral American cultural insights into the heart of the Cold War, Star Trek: The Next Generation episode "Yesterday's Enterprise" is also worth examining because it offers a refreshing take on late Cold War developments in the United States.

Eric Stillwell's episode "Yesterday's Enterprise," like *The Man in the High Castle*, does not directly critique United States foreign and domestic policy during the Cold War. However, Stillwell's background as a self-described "child of the Cold War" and "bleeding heart liberal," coupled with Roddenberry's own admission as a "card-carrying socialist" underlie the episode's distinctive anti-war message influenced, in part, by late Cold War developments such as President Ronald Reagan's Strategic Defense Initiative.² Cold War developments and a strong vein of anti-war sentiment sparked by the failed Vietnam War, fear of the Strategic Defense Initiative, and longstanding

mistrust of nuclear weaponry shine through both examples of postwar alternate history science fiction. Both works ultimately helped make alternate history science fiction a form of serious academic discussion because of its value as a barometer of American popular culture.

Alternate history science fiction, like its parent genre, science fiction broadly construed, came into its own as a form of critical cultural assessment with technological developments during the twentieth century, the making of the atomic bomb, and the advent of the Cold War. While science fiction experienced vitality as a subject for critical analysis thanks to powerful Cold War contributions, including the works of Robert Heinlein, Isaac Asimov, Philip K. Dick, and the *Star Trek Original Series*, alternate history science fiction is perhaps even more valuable as a vehicle for social criticism and commentary.

Alternate history science fiction offers has the capacity to be more powerful than its broad progenitor as a tool for cultural and social observation. Because the genre is contingent upon offering alternate visions of events that have already occurred, whether on a fictional or, in the case of *High Castle*, real historical timeline, its creators are in the unique position to provide less-veiled, more direct critiques of social, political, cultural, and historical events from a given time period than that of science fiction in general. The study of alternate history science fiction is, therefore, valuable because of the genre's potential counterfactual potency.

Science fiction, and alternate history science fiction, can offer powerful glimpses into American popular culture. While the study of alternate history science fiction, in particular, is lacking, a new understanding of the genre's value in light of its potential for

Cold War commentary, demonstrated through examination of Dick's *The Man in the High Castle* and *Star Trek: The Next Generation* episode "Yesterday's Enterprise," show that more historical analysis of the genre is warranted.

While fiction cannot tell us everything about historical fact, it certainly can assist in shedding light into the subconscious of artists and ordinary Americans. The study of alternate history and general science fiction represents a valuable example of cultural history's importance. If art imitates life, then science fiction represents a brave new world for historical analysis.

NOTES

¹ Darko Suvin, *Metamorphoses of Science Fiction* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1979), 8.

² Eric Stillwell, Facebook message to author, March 7, 2012.

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