Det Humanistiske Fakultet

SDU

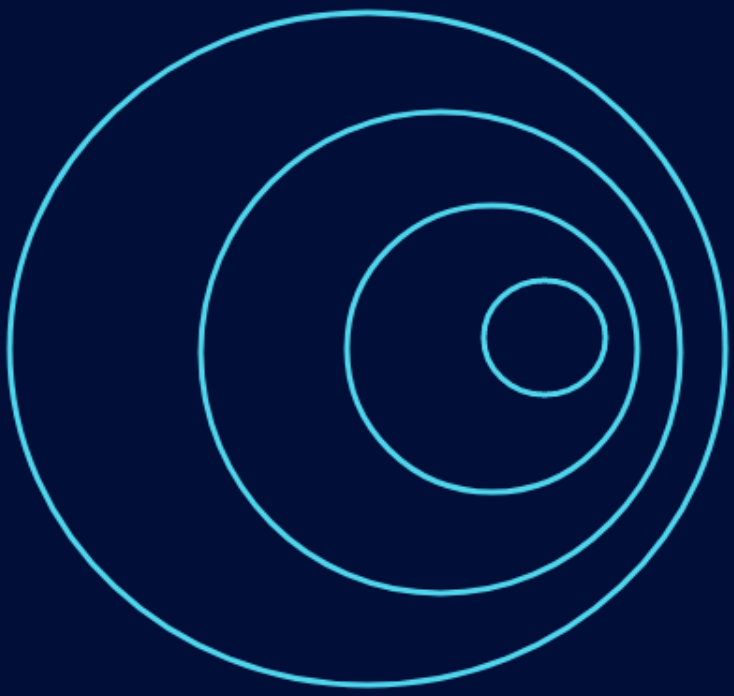
Speciale

Forside til eksamensopgave

Eksamenstermin (*sæt x*)	Sommer __X__	Vinter _____
Vejleder: Rune Graulund		

Titel på Speciale: Anxious States: Critical Posthumanism, Dystopia and Conspiracy Culture in American New Wave Science Fiction, 1968-1977	
Min./max. antal typeenheder: 60-80 sider, ekskl. Forside, indholdsfortegnelse, resume, bibliografi og bilag jf. Fællesbestemmelserne. Omfang resumé: 2 – 3 normalsider på engelsk (1 normalside = 2400 typeenheder)	**Din besvarelses antal typeenheder:** **XXXXXX-XXXXeenheder = 71 normalside**
Du skal være opmærksom på, såfremt din besvarelse ikke lever op til det angivne (min./max) antal typeenheder (normalsider) i studieordningen vil din opgave blive afvist, og du har brugt et forsøg.	
(*sæt x)* __X__	**Ja, min eksamensopgave må gerne i anonym form kopieres/lægges på Blackboard som hjælp til kommende studerende i faget**

Tro og love-erklæring
Det erklæres herved på tro og love, at undertegnede egenhændigt og selvstændigt har udformet denne eksamensopgave. Alle citater i teksten er markeret som sådanne, og eksamensopgaven, eller væsentlige dele af den, har ikke tidligere været fremlagt i anden bedømmelsessammenhæng. Læs mere her: http://www.sdu.dk/Information_til/Studerende_ved_SDU/Eksamen.aspx
Afleveret af (*skriv kun fødselsdato og navn*): **Mikkel Roar Ladekær Christensen, 24.08.1993**



Anxious States

Critical Posthumanism, Dystopia and Conspiracy Culture in American New Wave Science Fiction, 1968-1977

Mikkel Roar Ladekær Christensen

Master's Thesis in American Studies

University of Southern Denmark

Associate Professor Rune Graulund

June 2019

TABLE OF CONTENTS

ABSTRACT

This thesis examines American New Wave science fiction between 1968 and 1977, and how it relates to larger developments in American cultural history during this period. I examine central themes in New Wave science fiction and how they relate to their historical context. I argue that American culture in the 1970s was marked by a sense of cultural anxiety which helps explain why New Wave emerged as it did. I apply theories of dystopia, critical posthumanism, paranoia and conspiracy culture to my reading of New Wave science fiction.

Since the end of WWII, the American science fiction genre had in part been intricately linked with the U.S. struggle against the Soviet Union, fears of nuclear war and the development of more advanced weapon technologies. However, as Soviet-American diplomatic relations eased during the 1970s, science fiction turned its attention inwards. Generally, this thesis argues that New Wave science fiction reflects larger developments in American cultural history and should therefore be understood within the framework of intellectual changes, political division, environmental concerns and anxieties about the role of science and technology in society. This examination is motivated by a wish to understand American science fiction and society in the 21st century in the light of the developments in the 1970s. There are several concerns of the New Wave which remain of severe importance in 2019, including questions about how humanity is changed by technology and how humanity help secure the survival of Planet Earth. Science fiction as a genre is unique in its ability to represent these concerns and imagine new societies, new world orders and new planets.

The New Wave is a movement in the history of American science fiction that occurs during the 1960s and 1970s. These writers focus on sociological, psychological and anthropological themes, which have been atypical to the genre before this point in time. The movement differs from earlier science fiction genres because it is not about the technological requirements for space travel. Instead, it focuses on the cultural consequences of space travel and the role of technology in society in general. It is also during this period where science fiction gains recognition as a serious literature

that is critical of contemporary society. Most notably, the scholarly journal *Science Fiction Studies*, founded in 1973, is devoted to academic studies of science fiction literature and theory. At the same time, Croatian scholar Darko Suvin published *Metamorphoses of Science Fiction* (1979) which theorized science fiction as a literary genre. So, the thesis argues that the New Wave emerges during a period in American cultural history that is marked by a sense of cultural anxiety.

Chapter 1 shows that there is a dystopian sense of alienation in New Wave science fiction during this period. This becomes manifest in literary texts in the motif of anxious bodies, which are bodies that are in one way or another transcended or overruled. The dystopian setting constitutes a threat to the human body. Furthermore, this chapter shows that New Wave texts represent the alien not as an outside force. Rather, the New Wave alien is a cultural alien that seeks to disrupt the collective from the inside. The cultural alien appears as an element of monstrosity in New Wave science fiction. It concludes that the dystopian setting reflects a period of crisis in American history at this point in time and that the Vietnam War haunts science fiction texts in the early 1970s.

Chapter 2 shows a connection between the theory of critical posthumanism and New Wave science fiction. This is based on a critical view of the role of science and technology in American society at the time. Instead of celebrating scientific and technological advancements, New Wave science fiction authors reflect the threats and anxieties of these advancements. They do so through the image of invaded bodies that are overtaken and invaded by an alien force. In this way, the alien might come from the outside, but appears from within. The movement from familiarity with to alienation from the human body leads also to the uncanny discovery that what ought to be familiar is in fact alien. The chapter concludes that New Wave science fiction aligns with larger intellectual movements in the period which sought to reconsider the history of humankind.

Chapter 3 accounts for how New Wave texts represent cultural paranoia and the conspiracy culture which dominated American society in the 1970s. It concludes that New Wave science fiction presents paranoid bodies that are threatened by conspiratorial thinking which becomes manifest

through advanced technologies. This affects the characters' sense of reality as they become deluded with an apparent reality that turns out to be constructed. Contrary to earlier forms of conspiracy culture, the paranoia is not directed at an exterior enemy. Instead, the paranoia comes from a realization that the characters are not in control of their own bodies and have become hostile to themselves. Thus, characters in New Wave science fiction do not break and defeat the conspiracy but remains entangled in a web of paranoia. The New Wave is thus closely related to the conspiracy culture of the 1970s which permeated into the highest offices in the nation.

In conclusion, the thesis shows that New Wave science fiction, as a literary movement, reflects a sense of cultural anxiety that dominated American culture in the 1970s. These texts portray a new interest in "soft" sciences in the history of science fiction. Compared to earlier Golden Age science fiction, the focus shifts from the outer space to inner spaces of humankind. The literary style gives no clear explanations but rather contains of a multitude of narrative voices that complicate the form. Furthermore, the thesis also shows that the New Wave is also linked to the counterculture's contest of authorities, the intellectual debate over the meaning of humanism and the new paranoid conspiracy culture of the 1970s.

INTRODUCTION:
CULTURAL ANXIETY IN NEW WAVE SCIENCE FICTION

> As the archaeology of our thought easily shows, man is an invention of recent date. And one perhaps nearing its end.[1]

In the introduction to the second volume of *New Dimensions* (1974), science fiction (sf) author Robert Silverberg writes that "science fiction's special themes and images and concepts offer a valid mode for serious writers. We [the editorial board] think that science fiction can be not only entertaining and amusing but also profoundly stimulating and illuminating, capable of examining timeless human problems with unique intensity and vividness".[2] The purpose of sf, in Silverberg's view, is to shape the awareness on what it means to be human from different angles. For him, the "new dimensions" are not new galaxies or new planets but, simply, new dimensions of human existence. His view on sf relies on the perception that there are unexplored dimensions within humanness which need exploration and which can only be explored through the scope of sf. Silverberg is a central character of what came to be known as the New Wave of American sf, despite the fact that the prolific author wrote both before and after the period in question.

How to explore these new dimensions of human being then? One suggestion came from French philosopher, Michel Foucault, who suggested in *The Order of Things* (1966) that human history was a construct and that the idea of "Man" was based on a certain discourse within the humanities which constructed and ordered knowledge from a human perspective. Foucault's work was situated in the context of a postmodern society, a confrontation of regimes of realism and a question of representation. For him, human history was based on representation. As the quote above shows, he suggested that the construct of "Man" might be approaching its end. Therefore, his claim

---

[1] Michel Foucault. *The Order of Things: An archaeology of the human sciences*. Trans. Tavistock Publications. New York: Routledge, 2002 (1966/1970), 422.

[2] Robert Silverberg. "Introduction", *New Dimensions II*, ed. Silverberg. (London: Sidgwick & Jackson, 1972), i.

opens for new possibilities of a history without humanity: As Stefan Herbrechter argues, it hints at the possibility of "a time before humans … [and] a time after the human".[3]

In 1964, Michael Moorcrock turned the *New Worlds* magazine into a series of book publications, which was dedicated to New Wave sf. Harlan Ellison brought it to the U.S. in his anthologies, *Dangerous Visions* in 1967. As mentioned, Silverberg edited the American *New Dimensions*, which was another example of how New Wave became solidified during the early 1970s. Central for these publications was the idea of creating a forum where authors could explore the literary qualities of sf. These authors experimented with literary techniques, language and narrative in their exploration of sf as a genre. The group of writers that appeared in the beginning of the 1960s were dubbed New Wave, inspired by the concurrent French cinema movement.[4] So, New Wave focused on form as well as content. This contrasts with what some scholars have called the "Golden Age" of American sf, which occurred during the 1940s and 1950s.[5] Prominent figures of the Golden Age are Robert Heinlein, John Campbell, Isaac Asimov, Ray Bradbury, Arthur C. Clarke, Frank Herbert and Jack Vance. During this period, the sf genre was science dominant and contained "meticulous portrayals of space stations, moon colonies, and expeditions to Mars".[6] Furthermore, Gary Westfahl points out, these stories were both "scientifically researched and rigorously reasoned" and combined "narrative, explanations of scientific facts, and predictions of future inventions".[7] New Wave and Golden Age sf differ from each other because of the different views of science and technology. Whereas the Golden Age welcomed and heralded technological innovations, the New Wave focused on the impact of science and technology on society as well as

---

[3] Stefan Herbrechter. *Posthumanism: A Critical Analysis*. (New York: Bloomsbury, 2013), 10.

[4] Darren Harris-Fain. *Understanding Contemporary American Science Fiction: The Age of Maturity, 1970-2000.* (Columbia: University of South Carolina Press, 2005), 13.

[5] See for example Adam Roberts. *The History of Science Fiction*. (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2006), 195-230.

[6] Gary Westfahl. "Hard Science Fiction", in *A Companion to Science Fiction*, ed. David Seed. (Malden: Blackwell Publishing, 2008), 190.

[7] ibid., 191.

individual human beings. Thus, these two conceptualizations of sf are often referred to as "soft" and "hard" sf.[8] Similarly, British sf author J.G. Ballard called for a shift from outer space to "inner space" in sf with his article "Which Way to Inner Space?" in *New Worlds* in 1962. Whereas Golden Age sf had sought primarily to map outer space, Ballard thought that sf should focus more on the "realms of experimental and aberrant psychology".[9]

There are several factors that help explain why New Wave sf developed at the time it did. First of all, the year 1968 marks a central moment in modern American cultural history because it symbolizes the pivotal contest of authorities, government power and the conformity culture that had dominated American since the end of WWII. Second of all, with the escalation of U.S. activity in Vietnam and Cambodia came also more anti-Vietnam sentiments and protests, which questioned American foreign policy as well as its role in international relations. Third, the Soviet satellite Sputnik 1, which was sent into orbit in 1957, marked the realization of space travel and exploration which had been central topics of sf. What made the Golden Age intriguing was the ways in which it represented technological possibilities and advancements for space exploration. However, Sputnik 1 not only realized humans traveling in space, it also meant that humankind was making progress towards a colonization of space itself. The Apollo missions which occurred from the mid to late 1960s made space travel even more real and approachable to the American public. Astronaut Jim Lowell famously said that "[t]he vast loneliness is awe-inspiring and it makes you realize just what you have back there on Earth".[10] It sounds like a cliché nowadays, but in some ways, space travel set the Earth in a larger context through actual footage. It was the fact that the American astronauts saw the Earth from a distance which sparked the emotion of wonder in Lowell.

---

[8] These terms rely on stereotypical perceptions of what is "soft" and "hard" science. They could be discussed at length, which I do not intend to do in this thesis. Instead, I will use quotation marks throughout the thesis to indicate that they are common perceptions.

[9] Rob Latham. "The New Wave", in *A Companion to Science Fiction*, ed. David Seed. (Malden: Blackwell Publishing, 2008), 208.

[10] Alan Taylor. "50 Years Ago in Photos: A Look Back at 1968". *The Atlantic*. 10 January, 2018. https://www.theatlantic.com/photo/2018/01/50-years-ago-in-photos-a-look-back-at-1968/550208/ [accessed 18 March 2019].

In popular culture, Stanley Kubrick's epic *2001: A Space Odyssey* created iconic visualizations of space travel and juxtaposed humankind's primal history with new technologies and possibilities. Like Lowell's comment, the film did not focus on the wonder of space and technology but of the possibilities, or rather the limitations, of humanity. Vivian Sobchack says it clearly: In the period that followed *2001*, i.e. "the years of Nixon's presidency … space travel and extraterrestrials seemed irrelevant to a future threatened more by domestic political corruption, reckless consumption, and corporate greed than by the possibilities of alien attack".[11] This was echoed by widespread criticism of the Apollo 11 mission in 1969 because of its starry-eyed target and astronomical costs.[12] Furthermore, as David Nye argues in his book, *American Technological Sublime*, the space race was tied in with the binary Cold War struggle between the U.S. and the Soviet Union. As an event that symbolized the technological sublime, Apollo 11 was not "absolute but comparative". It was only sublime in an American consciousness because the Soviets had been first in space with Sputnik.[13] So, the argument is twofold: As Cold War tensions faded in the early 1970s so did the public urgency for space travels and because of the decrease in public interest, sf writers began to represent a shift in focus from outer space to inner space in American society. At least, this is one explanation for the emergence of the New Wave.

Moreover, as Apollo 11 in 1969 furthered the interest in human existence in space, it also brought to light the concerns for the astronauts and the consequences of failure. This became clear in 1971 when the three crew members on the Soviet spaceflight Soyuz 11 were killed in space, as the only humans ever, and in 1986 when the space shuttle Challenger exploded during takeoff. This goes to show that New Wave can also be seen as a reaction to the scientific realizations that happened in the later 1960s: Instead of pondering about the vast range of possibilities of space

---

[11] Vivian Sobchack. "American Science Fiction Film", in *A Companion to Science Fiction*, ed. David Seed. (Malden: Blackwell Publishing, 2008), 266-7.

[12] The Apollo program in total cost about $24 billion, or roughly 3% of the federal budget. See David Nye. *American Technological Sublime*. (Cambridge: The MIT Press, 1994), 250.

[13] ibid., 241.

travel mechanisms, the genre began to treat and represent the consequences of, for example, human existence in outer space. To sum up, these are some central developments that help explain the development of the New Wave genre, however, the list is far from complete.

Thesis Statement

In this thesis, I will examine the central characteristics of American New Wave sf and how they relate to the historical context between 1968 and 1977. I argue that the New Wave reflects a sense of cultural anxiety in the U.S. during this period because of the way in which it represents a movement from familiarity to estrangement. This movement is symbolized in the New Wave in the figuration of three body types: anxious bodies, passing bodies and paranoid bodies. Specifically, I will examine how the theories of dystopia, critical posthumanism and conspiracy culture can be applied to the American New Wave, and how these theories relate to the three body types.

First, I review dystopian theory and its connection to New Wave sf. I argue that Ursula K. Le Guin's *Word for World is Forest* (1972) represents a dystopian setting in the sense that the individual bodies have become alienated from their usual environment. The novella was written in reaction to the increased involvement of U.S. troops in the Vietnam War and thus, the novella's portrayal of imperialistic policies towards the aliens on a distant planet serves as a critical analogy for the American role in the war. Specifically, I ask the following questions in relation to Le Guin's text: In what ways does the narrative voice of the text constitute a sense of dystopia, and how can we place it in the context of New Wave sf?

Second, I read New Wave in terms of the theory of critical posthumanism because of the way in which these authors raise questions about human legitimacy on Earth. They do so by representing an estrangement from humankind in these texts. Whereas the complete digitalization and capitalization of the human mind was an explicit theme in the 1980s cyberpunk, the New Wave anticipated concerns about the role of science and technology in American society. Thus, the theory

of critical posthumanism is appropriate for such an investigation because it focuses on how humanness can be defined with these alien forces and not against them.

Finally, I examine how paranoia and conspiracy theories apply to American cultural history during the 1970s and the New Wave specifically. I read Philip K. Dick's *A Scanner Darkly* (1977) with regards to how conspiracies and paranoia affect the individual's sense of subjectivity. I also include the themes of dystopia and posthumanism in a discussion of how the conspiracy culture of the 1970s was different, exactly because of the negative impact of science and technology and because of the ways in which these restrict and limit individual agency. The basic notion is that there are larger forces that determine actions and events and that these hidden and secret agents contribute to a sense of anxiety in American culture. This is particularly interesting in the context of the counterculture's distrust in authorities, which Dick himself took part in.

Overall, I argue that American cultural anxiety becomes clear in the New Wave because of the way in which the genre questions the viability of human existence, ecological consequences of anthropocentrism and socio-political consequences of technological developments. Furthermore, the New Wave was also linked to pivotal moments in American history, such as the moon landing, Watergate and the end of Vietnam, which all changed American society in terms of the role of technology, trust in the federal government and faith in American foreign relations. I point out that the cultural anxiety is represented in the New Wave as a movement from familiarity to estrangement; from the familiar human body to the grotesque cyborg; from faith in the familiar government to the alienated state subject of the state; and from familiarity of one's mind and consciousness to the posthuman alien within. These are not new binaries in the history sf criticism but they become clear in the experimental and challenging narratives, which is typical for the New Wave.

Methodology: Cultural Bodies, Cultural Aliens and Cultural Cyborgs

My primary methods are literary analysis and analysis of film, comics and graphic novels. This is based on the view that science fiction is, in principle, a multimedia art form. It encapsulates utopian literature, which goes back to Thomas More's central 1516 work, *Utopia*, pulp magazines in the first half of the 20th century, various cinematic masterpieces such as *2001* or the *Star Trek* series, 1950s "hard" science literature, which was more scientific than literary, comic books and, most recently, a number of ambitious sf productions by streaming services, such as Netflix and HBO. In fact, Darren Harris-Fain has pointed out, sf may be the most variable genre when it comes to forms of media.[14] My approach is primarily textual as I will be examining how central themes are constituted in New Wave texts; however, I will also consider how various media contribute to the meaning of New Wave sf. The 1970s also saw a proliferation in cinematic sf productions and it is difficult to ignore the fact that the movies from this decade remain influential even today in terms of how they visualize, for example, space travel, posthumanism or environmental dystopias.

In terms of theory, I have chosen to treat the three central theories of dystopia, critical posthumanism and conspiracy culture separately; however, the three are interrelated and could be discussed in tandem with one another. For example, critical posthumanism is certainly applicable to Ursula Le Guin's *Word for World,* although I have chosen to analyze it in terms of dystopias. The same goes for the two other chapters.

I focus on the years between 1968 and 1977 because this period marks the height of the American New Wave. However, it is important to note that literary periods are fluid dimensions, and therefore it would be possible to periodize the New Wave differently. There are, however, some central points to make about my choice: 1968 was the beginning of Richard Nixon's presidency, the Tet Offensive in Vietnam revealed that peace was not around the corner, as Lyndon B. Johnson said, and the subsequent My Lai massacre ultimately questioned the legitimacy of U.S. intervention in

[14] Harris-Fain, 17.

the Vietnam War. In the history of sf, one could argue that 1968 was the first year where the New Wave had become institutionalized. I mentioned Harlan Ellison's *Dangerous Visions* in the introduction and, Rob Latham has argued, there was a direct clash between the "hard" sf authors and the New Wave in the pages of *Galaxy* in June 1968, which symbolized the formation of a new movement.[15] This is therefore a suited starting point. 1977 marks the year of the publication of *A Scanner Darkly*, which can be perceived as a transition from the New Wave to the cyberpunk genre that dominated the 1980s. Therefore, the year 1977 marks an appropriate conclusion to this study of the New Wave movement.

With regards to the selection of texts in this thesis, I have included a variety of authors who represent central themes from the New Wave period. This does not mean that the authors write exclusively as part of this movement. Both Robert Silverberg, Ursula Le Guin and Philip K. Dick have published works well before 1968 and after 1977, however, during this period, they share an interest in the deeper structures of humanity as they treat psychological and sociological themes. I rely on cultural theories of critical posthumanism, dystopia and conspiracy culture in order to dissect these narratives and how they relate to larger developments in American cultural history between 1968 and 1977. In the final chapter, for example, I discuss conspiracy theories from a historical perspective and how the conspiracy culture of the 1970s relate to a larger national narrative about the relation between individual citizen and government.

My analyses follow different literary representations of the human body. As mentioned, there are three perspectives on the body which relate to each chapters' theoretical foci. First, I examine anxious bodies in relation to dystopias in terms of how New Wave texts depict a dystopian anxiety that derives from the inside. Second, I look at passing bodies in relation to critical posthumanism. Here, the body is represented as being permeable and open for other life forms that take place inside the body or change the human body—often against the will of the subject. Finally,

---

[15] Latham, 213.

I will analyze paranoid bodies in relation to conspiracy theory, where the sense of self is threatened by the fear of invasive forces that transcends the human body in different ways. All in all, the focus on the human body, and embodiment in general, reflects the general movement from outer to inner space in the New Wave.

The focus on the body in literature is significant for cultural analysis because bodies can be perceived as places where power, control and discourse come together. David Hillman and Ulrika Maude point out that the body "has always been a contested site" because of its complicated relation to the subject. Whether it is perceived as a "mere auxiliary to the self" or it is "constitutive of what we call the self", the body signifies a movement between life and death, the human and nonhuman, the natural and unnatural, normalcy and monstrosity, the individual and collective, and, in Foucault's vision of the body, between knowledge and power.[16] These dichotomies are all present in New Wave sf and therefore, my focus on cultural bodies helps understand how the New Wave resembled a sense of cultural anxiety.

Within the framework of cultural bodies, I examine the representations of the cultural cyborg, the cultural monster and the cultural alien. I consider Donna Haraway's analysis of the cyborg figure from *Simians, Cyborgs and Women* (1991) and apply it to Robert Silverberg's *Dying Inside* (1972). While not exactly a cyborg, the main character shares distinct features with Haraway's cyborg. I also discuss the alien figure and how the alien is repeatedly represented as being part of the human body. I apply a cultural theoretical understanding of the alien where the alien does not imply a creature from outer space, but where the alien appears as a part of the human, as a conspirator against the individual and as the symbol of an anxiety about the state of American society.

---

[16] David Hillman and Ulrika Maude. "Introduction", in *The Cambridge Companion to the Body in Literature*, ed. David Hillman and Ulrika Maude. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2015), 1–9. https://doi-org.proxy1-bib.sdu.dk/10.1017/CCO9781107256668 [accessed 12 May 2019].

Tide's End and the Beginning of a New Wave: A Brief History of American Anxiety 1968-1977

In this section, I account for significant developments in American history that are relevant for my examination of the New Wave. In American cultural history, the 1970s can be said to begin in 1968 with the revolutionary moment which exposed a cultural and political divide in American society and which unsettled American mass and conformity culture. In the other end, Jimmy Carter's "Crisis of Confidence" speech (1979) marks the beginning of the end of the decade that brought a neoconservative backlash against the 1960s to power in the Reagan era. Historian Bruce Schulman opens his book with the truism that "the seventies began, of course, in the wake of 'the sixties'".[17] Schulman's point is that 1968 marked a new beginning in American cultural history, because of the way in which American society had become solidified over the two preceding postwar decades. As he argues, "[a]fter two decades of postwar prosperity, Seventies Americans took for granted a set of political assumptions, economic achievements, and cultural prejudices. But after 1969 Americans entered a disturbing new world".[18] Politically, the federal government had been expanding since the end of WWII and by the late 1960s, it "permeated nearly every aspect" of American society.[19] Russell Muirhead writes about what he calls "The New Imperial Presidency" in the context of Watergate. He argues that public satisfaction with, and faith in, a strong presidency, which had defined American politics since WWII, dissolved and decreased significantly during the early 1970s. Despite the fact that Congress "sought to box in the presidency" through a series of actions that were meant to "curb the executive's penchant for secrecy, limit its informational advantages, restrict its unilateral war-making tendencies, and subject it to the impartial rule of law", Muirhead argues that Congress "proved incapable of acting—or unwilling to act—cohesively and

---

[17] Bruce J. Schulman. *The Seventies: The Great Shift in American Culture, Society, and Politics*. (Cambridge: Da Capo Press, 2001), 1.

[18] ibid., 4.

[19] ibid., 5.

consistently".[20] 1968 thus marked a conquest against mass culture in American society which had grown since the end of WWII and the binary struggle against Communism and the Soviet Union. During the seventies, the binary world order was no longer a reality, and as the opponent faded in complexity, a gap of anxiety and uncertainty grew at home.

Thomas Borstelmann also points to the 1970s as a decade of crisis in American history. The dichotomy between the domestic crisis of trust in the federal government and the marvels of space travels and the emerges as a central argument in his book, *The 1970s: A New Global History from Civil Rights to Economic Inequality* (2012). In 1975, the two unmanned *Viking* spaceships returned the photograph of the uncanny "Face on Mars"—a crater on Mars that resembled a humanoid face. Moreover, the *Viking* voyages also "brought back photographs of distant realms, but they found no signs of life elsewhere in the universe". This led to the assumption that Earth "appeared to be utterly unique and alone". As Borstelmann points out, this left humanity with the sole responsibility: "Whatever humans would do with their planet, they would do it on their own". Furthermore, he argues that for Americans, this idea of "cosmic isolation—of no larger story beyond the Earth—seemed to fit with their experience of national and personal limitations, of a society hemmed in by international frustrations, political failure, and economic trauma".[21]

The 1970s was also a period of individualization in the U.S. As Americans became disengaged in politics, they sought out meaning elsewhere. They turned inwards in order to try to solve the problems. This brought a series of changes to Americans' everyday life, from healthier foods and lifestyles to self-indulgent habits such as the consumption of drugs and casual sex.[22] Famously, Tom Wolfe dubbed the 1970s as the "Me" decade in the article, "The Me Decade and the Third Great Awakening", published in *New West.* More generally, the 1970s was characterized by

---

[20] Russell Muirhead. "The New Imperial Presidency: Renewing Power After Watergate". *Political Science Quarterly* 121, no. 3 (Fall, 2006), 519-20.

[21] Tomas Borstelmann. *The 1970s: A New Global History from Civil Rights to Economic Inequality*. (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2012), 70-1.

[22] ibid., 71.

the realization that the capitalist system of consumerism and free enterprise, which had developed in the postwar years, had failed to provide equality and well-being to humans as well as nonhumans. Similarly, Borstelmann points to a "new wave of environmentalism" which raised questions about the human responsibility for climate change during this period.[23] These critics showed that "[f]ree enterprise was not entirely free for the larger community, in this case for humankind as a whole, and environmentalist were among the first recognize and publicize this reality". Borstelmann's overall argument here is that the market value of a commodity does not match the environmental side effects of the commodity's production, such as the amount of carbon dioxide emission. But the environmental concern exceeded the economic argument as it led to a radical change in the thinking of the relationship between humankind and Planet Earth: "For many Americans, the quest for environmental context and understanding led beyond human community to a divine connection and human responsibility for preserving God's creation rather than destroying it".[24]

These new movements in American culture led to the perception of a new cultural alien, which appeared within the social structures of society. Ronnie Lipschutz argues that from Wells to Huntington "the alien has been an omnipresent figure in American politics and popular culture, one whose liminality both beckons and threatens".[25] Lipschutz argues that the alien was always an inert part of the culture, especially from the late 19th century and throughout the 20th century. He argues that "Americans and Europeans were never confident of their hegemony and always felt beleaguered".[26] Throughout the U.S.' military history in the 20th century, the alien has figured as the Japanese and the German, during WWII, as the "Red Menace", during the Cold War and the "Viet Cong", during the Vietnam War. However, the cultural alien can be understood as what

---

[23] ibid., 238.

[24] ibid., 235.

[25] Ronnie D. Lipschutz. "Aliens, Alien Nations, and Alienation in American Political Economy and Popular Culture", in *To Seek Out New Worlds*, ed. Jutta Weldes. (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2003), 80.

[26] ibid., 84.

Naeem Inayatullah calls the "inner Other". In this way, representations of cultural alien are not only about "coming to know and understand alien others", such as the various examples above, but "can also be a manner of coming to know various, often neglected, parts of ourselves".[27] Thus, the cultural alien reveals an uncertainty about the inner space, whether it is the inside of the body or in the federal government.

It is this lack of certainty which is exploited in the sf texts of the 1970s where "the very mindset that produced imperial hegemony" faded in representations of the alien not as an extraterrestrial threat but as something inherent in American culture and society.[28] Furthermore, a shift appears in the understanding of the alien in sf between the early 1950s and the late 1960s. Lipschutz compares the 1950 imagination of aliens in American science fiction, which was countered by a firm belief in the legitimacy of the American state, united under the firm leadership of former General Eisenhower to *X-Files* in the 1990s. Here, secret government programs and dubious goals for the federal government turned the attention inwards; perhaps the true aliens inherited the nation's leadership. This aligns with the foreign political changes of the 1970s as the disruption of a binary Cold War world began. U.S. relations with China improved and conflicts over the Middle East became more complex and infused with the capitalist request for oil in the region. What Lipschutz calls the "loss of the United States' primary enemy created a considerable amount of disarray in US foreign policy and a never-ending search for new threats" can be traced back to the seventies.[29] Thus, popular anxieties about government and representation became manifest in the New Wave as explorations of "inner spaces".[30]

---

[27] Naeem Inayatullah. "Bumpy Space: Imperialism and Resistance in *Star Trek: The Next Generation*", in *To Seek Out New Worlds*, ed. Jutta Weldes. (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2003), 57.

[28] Latham, 107.

[29] Lipschutz, 85.

[30] Edward James. *Science Fiction in the 20th Century*. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1994).

I) ANXIOUS BODIES: DYSTOPIA IN URSULA LE GUIN'S WORD FOR WORLD IS FOREST

In the first chapter, I focus on dystopias in relation to New Wave sf. I trace how borders between body and environment are constantly in a flux and how this constitutes a dystopian sense of alienation and defamiliarization. As I will argue, the anxious body is central to the dystopian narrative because the body in itself appears as the intersection between normalcy and monstrosity, familiarity and alienation. Bodies become anxious in the encounter with the alien, and in the New Wave, the alien comes from within. First, I read Ursula Le Guin's novella, *Word for World is Forest* (1972), where humans (Terrans) have landed on the planet Athshe in order to exploit the planet's forests.[31] However, the Athshean Selver leads a violent rebellion against the Terrans, which not only questions the legitimacy of the colonial mission, it constitutes a hostile landscape on the planet in which both Athshean and Terran bodies are alienated from a landscape they used to know. Second, I read Frederik Pohl's short story "We Purchased People" (1974) in terms of how it represents anxious bodies that are being remotely controlled by aliens from outer space. The protagonist, Wayne Golden, has no control over his own body and is thus estranged from his sense of humanness.

I point to two main analytical points in relation to the porous border between body and environment: First, the texts represent a preoccupation with ecology and the relationship between human and nature as well as the effort of balance and peace between the two. Second, the blurred border symbolizes a disintegration of the individual into the collective, which again reflects a destabilization of the relationship between self and other. The other becomes part of the self and the alien appears from within. This destabilization is particularly relevant for a discussion of New Wave sf, considering the post-imperial context of Vietnam, the decay of American hegemony and the question of the legitimacy of the American government. I argue that *Word for World* and "We

[31] The word "Terrans" refers to humans coming from Planet Earth.

Purchased People" depict two dystopian settings where individual agency has been limited. In the latter, the aliens seize control over the human body and in the former, structural forces seek to diminish the possibility for individual agency.

Dystopia and Cultural Anxiety in the 1970s

Historically, the 1970s was marked by a dystopian feeling in American culture. The Vietnam War was coming to a disastrous end for the U.S., stories about atrocities committed by American troops reached the public and anti-war sentiments grew dramatically. The war came to symbolize the failure to maintain American influence around the globe. Images of American troops in the Vietnamese jungle combined with images of napalm bombs portrayed an actual dystopia on Earth for the American public. The retreat from Saigon in 1975 represented the first defeat in American military history both at home and in the rest of the world, and thus it symbolized what came to be known as the Vietnam Syndrome and made way for a sense of soul-searching in American society.

In relation to American sf in the 1970s, dystopias denote a setting, society or environment which has become hostile compared to the traditional Western view of the liberal individual. Often, the dystopia is situated in a near future where a human society has been alternated significantly. Carter Kaplan summarizes the "essential themes and motifs of the dystopian genre" in the 20th century thus: "a totalitarian state that uses technology, modern compartmentalized bureaucracy, total surveillance, and engineered sexual norms to control every aspect of people's lives".[32] All these point to forces that threaten the autonomous individual and limit civil liberties. Keith Booker and Anne Marie Thomas add to this in arguing that dystopian sf narratives often portray a structural and oppressive force that interferes with the fulfillment of "individual human potential". They generally portray an element of social control, an unreliable official institution, an authoritarian and

[32] Carter Kaplan. "Dystopian Literature", in *Literature and Politics Today: The Political Nature of Modern Fiction, Poetry, and Drama: The Political Nature of Modern Fiction, Poetry, and Drama*, ed. M. Keith Booker. (Santa Barbara: Greenwood, 2015). http://search.ebscohost.com.proxy1-bib.sdu.dk:2048/login.aspx?direct=true&db=nlebk&AN=964405&site=ehost-live [accessed 13 May 2019].

violent police force which, all in all, "[provide] individuals with a very limited range for the expression of alternative viewpoints or exploration of alternative lifestyles".[33] Furthermore, dystopian societies tend to be modeled on the author's contemporary society, for as they write: "These oppressive conditions are usually extensions or exaggerations of conditions that already exist in the real world, allowing the dystopian text to critique real-world situations by placing them within the defamiliarizing context of an extreme fictional society".[34] As a literary mode, Tom Moylan defines the typical dystopian narrative as the "presentation of an alienated character's refusal of dominant society". It is this narrative which enables a dystopian narrative's "possibility for social critique and utopian anticipation".[35] The character embodies a utopian desire in his/her attempt to challenge the dystopian setting. Typically, dystopian narratives work to defamiliarize the reader from a familiar setting by looking into a dystopian future. For example, this is represented in the iconic frame of *Planet of the Apes* (1968) where astronauts Taylor and Nova realize that the strange planet they have crashed into is in fact the Earth, which has changed radically after a nuclear war.[36] The uncanny and anxious realization that what used to be known is now completely alien is an emotion that is tied to the notion of a threatened future. Thus, there is a critical potential in dystopian narratives to reveal and subvert an existing tendency in the author's society.

Similarly, Gregory Claeys argues that there is a connection between dystopia and 20th century totalitarianism which he describes as a "failed" political utopia. This means "a regime defined by extreme coercion, inequality, imprisonment, and slavery. Often this is described as some concept of collectivism run wild, though some include conformist tendencies in liberal societies

---

[33] M. Keith Booker and Anne Marie Thomas (ed.). *The Science Fiction Handbook*. (Hoboken: John Wiley & Sons, 2009), 66. https://ebookcentral.proquest.com/lib/sdub/detail.action?docID=428197. [accessed May 13, 2019].

[34] ibid.

[35] Tom Moylan. *Scraps of the Untainted Sky: Science Fiction, Utopia, Dystopia.* Boulder: Westview Press, 2000), 148. http://hdl.handle.net.proxy1-bib.sdu.dk:2048/2027/heb.07710 [accessed 27 March 2019].

[36] Sobchack, 266.

which encourage egalitarian repression and intolerance".[37] So, the individual is either described as being dissolved completely by collectivism or as the ultimate goal for human being, in which case it represents a dystopian loneliness. Claeys points to three different types of dystopias: the political dystopia, the environmental dystopia and the technological dystopia. All three are relevant for this thesis as they relate to the historical context as well as describe the fears of posthumanism and paranoia. Representations of dystopias thus derive from a sense of cultural anxiety in which an existing society has been changed, either politically, ecologically or technologically, into something worse. This requires the identification of an "enemy" and an "other", which is "essentially different from and opposed to 'us'".[38] Here, Claeys evokes the notion of monstrosity in order to describe how dystopian narratives represent a dystopian "space" of fear in a society or among a certain group of people.

> Monsters inhabit the primordial *terra incognita* of the earth. By contrast to the ideal good spaces of paradise and Heaven, they define the original dystopian space in which fear predominates. As such, they mark the beginning of the natural history of dystopia … They embody—or disembody—our fear of death most of all. As denizens of the night they prey upon our fear of darkness.[39]

The idea of the monster relies on a collective sense of normalcy, safety and nontoxic spaces. However, dystopian narratives challenge these perceptions. They override the balance between the collective and individual when monstrosity comes into the collective, when the collective becomes toxic or when the individual is removed from the collective into the darkness. Cultural monsters can derive from the darkness of outer space, of Planet Earth or of the human psyche. However, as Jeffrey Jerome Cohen also has pointed out, monsters remain in the darkness in the *terra incognitae*. They are build on a principle of "uncertainty", and they always "rise[] from the dissection table as

---

[37] Gregory Claeys. *Dystopia: A Natural History.* (Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2017), 6. https://www.oxfordscholarship.com/view/10.1093/acprof:oso/9780198785682.001.0001/acprof-9780198785682-chapter-1 [accessed 10 March 2019].

[38] ibid., 59.

[39] ibid.

its secrets are about to be revealed and vanishes into the night".[40] The cyborg figure is another well-known representation of monstrosity in sf because it appears outside the realm of normal because of its bodily appearance which has been changed by technology. I will return to the cyborg in my discussion of Donna Haraway's cultural analysis of the cyborg in chapter II. In relation to New Wave sf in general, then, the monster does not remain in darkness but I will argue that it appears as part of the self, which complicates the notion of dystopia in these texts. Furthermore, in relation to theory of posthumanism, these texts ask the question: What happens when something moves into the realm of normalcy such as when cyborgs become part of an understanding of human being? So, as dystopian narratives represent threatened future societies and corrupted senses of selves, they carry a deeper cultural meaning about human life and death.

In literature and film, descriptions of dystopian landscapes are often sensory and rely on a physical experience. As these descriptions rely on bodily experiences, the human body is represented as anxious and threatened in dystopian settings. Consequently, this constitutes an affective relation between the text and its reader which makes the critical potential even more vivid. The connection between dystopia and anxious bodies lies in the threat of the dystopian setting to the physical human body. The setting is either inhabitable or severely limiting. Furthermore, the body appears not only because of its physical capacity but also as a symbol of the autonomous individual.

Technophobia, or the anxiety about the role of technology in society, is often also a part of dystopian sf. The sense of technophobia appears exactly when a technological monstrosity enters into society and changes human being. This is especially true for the 1970s where science and technology changed American society significantly. Although technophobia was the primary theme of cyberpunk sf in the 1980s, New Wave authors treated the subject. Søren Baggesen has pointed to a development in the presence of what he calls pessimism in New Wave sf: "For up until recently,

---

[40] Jeffrey Jerome Cohen (ed.). *Monster Theory: Reading Culture.* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1996), 4. https://ebookcentral.proquest.com/lib/sdub/detail.action?docID=310376 [accessed 13 May 2019].

the pessimists in the history of SF have been marginal, exceptions to the general rule of SF writers siding with the expansionist trend of Western culture and regarding science and technology as means for conquering nature and the universe".[41] Baggesen points to a growing pessimism about the role of technology in particular during this period. New Wave writers foregrounded social and political concerns over the importance of science and technology in the shaping of human societies. Furthermore, Baggesen connects this to what he calls a "growing unease in our culture about science and technology" or, in words that fit another theme of this thesis, a critical view of the posthuman condition. Critical posthumanism and New Wave pessimism thus share the awareness that "the forces we have called to our aid may be forces of destruction" and that "we are as sorcerer's apprentices who are victimizing ourselves with the uncontrollable results of our own devices".[42]

Finally, the notion of dystopia is linked to the sf genre in general because of sf's "ability to reflect or express our hopes and fears about the future".[43] Baggesen also argues that sf "is basically a utopian mode of story-telling … by reason of its fictional constructions of a future social order".[44] This future social order is threatened in the dystopian narrative and consequently, as Peter Fitting has argued, the dystopian narrative "implies (or asserts) the need for change" of contemporary society.[45] In relation to American dystopias in the 1970s, it is possible to read these texts in terms of how anxieties over Vietnam and polarization in American society grew. In his oft-quoted book on sf and utopianism, *Archeologies of the Future* (2005), Frederic Jameson situates utopian and dystopian

---

[41] Søren Baggesen. "Utopian and Dystopian Pessimism: Le Guin's 'The Word for World Is Forest' and Tiptree's 'We Who Stole the Dream'". *Science Fiction Studies* 14, no. 1, (1987), 35. http://www.jstor.org.proxy1-bib.sdu.dk:2048/stable/4239792 [accessed 3 April 2019].

[42] Raffaella Baccolini and Tom Moylan. "Introduction: Dystopia and Histories". In *Dark Horizons: Science Fiction and the Dystopian Imagination*, ed. Raffaella Baccolini and Tom Moylan. (New York: Routledge, 2003), 5.

[43] Peter Fitting. "Utopia, Dystopia and Science Fiction", in *The Cambridge Companion to Utopian Literature*, ed. by Gregory Claeys. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010), 145. doi:10.1017/CCOL9780521886659.006. [accessed 28 Mar 2019].

[44] Baggesen, 34.

[45] Fitting, 141.

narratives in the context of American history. In doing so, he sees utopianism as "pretextual" instead of merely "textual". This, Andrew Milner has argued, is linked to the "vantage-point from which Jameson writes", which is "unavoidably that of an American 'sixties' radical set adrift in postmodern late capitalism". The ideas of utopia and dystopia become a precondition for the New Wave's rendition of modern American society, including the government's conduct of international affairs in Vietnam: "Confronted by a capitalism as hubristic as at any time in history, we do surely 'need to develop an anxiety about losing the future'".[46] So, the dystopian narrative functions as the collapse of utopia, or what Jameson calls the "loss" of a future.

Body and Environment

In *Word for World*, Earth has been transformed into a desert concrete landscape where trees do not grow and where animal deers have been replaced by "robodeer" in order to satisfy hunters. Consequently, Terrans have arrived at Athshe in order to exploit and export the planet's natural resources and have set up logging stations to clear the forests. The indigenous inhabitants, the Athsheans, have been enslaved by the Terrans. Not only is the ecological criticism evident in Le Guin's narrative, the text is also a critical analogy on American intervention in Vietnam. The dramatic onset of the novella is when Captain Don Davidson returns to a logging base on Athshe, Smith Camp, and finds that it has been burned to the ground; a violent resistance movement has developed on Athshe. The novella is set in Le Guin's Hainish universe, which is the author's imaginative take on a new foundation for the evolution of humans. Le Guin reimagines the origins of humans on Hain, not Earth, from where humans have spread throughout the Orion Arm. The texts of the Hainish universe, from the *Earthsea* series ("The World of Unbinding" (1964) and *Wizard of Earthsea* (1968)) to *The Left Hand of Darkness* (1969) and *The Dispossessed* (1974),

---

[46] qtd. in Andrew Milner. "Archaeologies of the Future: Jameson's Utopia or Orwell's Dystopia?" *Historical Materialism* 17, vol. 4 (2009), 106. https://doi-org.proxy1-bib.sdu.dk/10.1163/146544609X12537556703197 [accessed 27 Mar 2019].

represent different views on the evolution of humans, because they have lived on separate planets since their departure from Hain.[47] The human "seeds" from Hain spread throughout the universe. Thus, Le Guin shows that despite the fact that the Hainish universe is "single, expanding, and historically continuous", as Douglas Barbour has argued, these texts rely on a highly diverse universe.[48] The Terrans and the Athsheans share the same ancestral roots, but have developed differently.

Here, it is important to notice how the biographical details about Le Guin contribute to an understanding of *Word for World*. Born in 1929, she was raised by Theodora and Alfred Kroeber in Berkeley, California. Alfred Kroeber was an anthropologist and studied Native Americans across the continent, and therefore, Le Guin was from an early age exposed to cultural encounters and how one's cultural background has an impact on personality. As Warren G. Rochelle points out, one of Le Guin's primary motifs stems from Jungian psychology and myths.[49] Besides Jung's well-known dream interpretations, this relies on the notion of a "collective unconscious", which relies on the shared experiences by a group of individuals. This is rooted in Jung's perception of myths and archetypes.[50] We can see this reflected in her writing in her preoccupation with anthropology, psychology, feminism, identity and cultural encounters.

Each chapter follows one of three protagonists throughout the novella. The omniscient narrator focalizes the novella's three central characters: Davidson, Captain Raj Lyubov, a human anthropologist studying Athshean culture, and Selver, the Athshean who is responsible for the violent riot against Terrans. In my reading, I will focus mainly on the binary relation between Davidson and Selver. However, because it uses variable inner focalization, the narratological

---

[47] Warren G. Rochelle. "Ursula K. Le Guin", in *A Companion to Science Fiction*, ed. David Seed. (Malden: Blackwell Publishing, 2008), 410-411.

[48] Douglas Barbour. "Wholeness and Balance in the Hainish Novels of Ursula K. Le Guin". *Science Fiction Studies* 1, no. 3 (1974), 164. http://www.jstor.org.proxy1-bib.sdu.dk:2048/stable/4238858. [accessed 9 May 2019].

[49] Rochelle, 411.

[50] ibid.

perspective is never unidirectional and therefore, the binary relation is porous and gradually disrupted.

The novella opens in medias res where the fall of Eden is already taking place. Bodies are already being anxious. This is significant because the dystopian event is not at the center of the narrative but is "referred to parenthetically" and "obliquely" in the texts.[51] Thus, the dystopian setting appears as what Brian Baker calls the "blank space" of dystopian narratives. Throughout *Word for World*, the reader learns that an attack has taken place but it has already happened when we encounter Davidson in the first chapter. This shows how dystopias are discursively constructed as blank spaces in sf narratives; the sublime apocalyptic event exceeds words and description. Furthermore, this emphasizes the way in which New Wave writers were more occupied with political, social and ecological consequences of dystopias, rather than the actual event. In other words, the aftermath is as dystopian as the apocalyptic event itself. Because the dramatic event in itself is not described, the focus is on Selver's as well as Davidson's psychological processing of and response to the dramatic event.

As mentioned, a central motif in *Word for World* is the strangeness of the environment and how it threatens or changes the individual body. The opening lines of chapter two, which is narrated from Selver's perspective, serves as an example of how the sensory experience of the environment transcends into an emotional reaction: "All the colors of rust and sunset, brown-reds and pale greens, changed ceaselessly in the long leaves as the wind blew … No way was clear, no light was unbroken, in the forest … The ground was not dry and solid but damp and rather springy, product of the collaboration of living things with the long, elaborate death of leaves and trees … The smell of the air was subtle, various, and sweet". Not only can we see how the senses are activated in the description of his surroundings; the experience of the forest has an impact on the narrator as it leads

---

[51] Brian Baker. "The Map of Apocalypse: Nuclear War and the Space of Dystopia in American Science Fiction", in *Histories of the Future*, ed. Alan Sandison and Robert Dingley. (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2000), 129.

him to the conclusion: “Revelation was lacking. There was no seeing everything at once : no certainty”.[52] The wilderness of the forest leads Selver to the existential realization that there is no certainty in life. This is tied to the larger plot of the story and the Athsheans’ violation of their peace code. Furthermore, the passage also embraces Le Guin’s call for symbiosis as the forest ground consists of a compound of living and dying things.

If one reads the passage above as a process of becoming familiar with Selver’s outer surroundings through his sensory experience, one could also argue that it transforms Selver into a stranger, surrounded by a mystic aura. As mentioned, the reader encounters Selver immediately after the story’s cataclysmic event, the Athsheans’ violent rebellion against the Terrans, however, this is not revealed until later when the reader is told how Selver got the scars on his face. After having wandered the forest, Selver encounters the old man Coro Mena who takes him to the Lodge of Cadast, where Selver can rest and regain his strength. He is literally a stranger in Cadast as the sister of Coro Mena asks, “has the stranger waked up, Coro?”[53] Yet, the healers of Cadast help Coro cure the scars that Selver got in the fire. Here, the environment has left permanent scars on Selver in more than one sense. First of all, Selver’s facial scars are literal symbols of the violation of the body and the flux between mind and environment, because of the way in which scars open passages through the body between the mind and the environment. Second of all, the scars evoke a strange feeling around Selver as the healers wonder about the nature of the scars. Despite the fact that Selver is among his own kind, he has been transformed by the incident. While Selver is not a monster as such, the scars symbolize a monstrosity that has marked him. As one of the healers says in reaction to the scars, it is “a very queer wound”. They are simply incapable of imagining what could have caused it. It is the sign of a queer monstrosity which has entered into the Athsheans vocabulary. Finally, it is also the scars that set Selver apart from other Athsheans as they make him

---

[52] Ursula K. Le Guin. *The Word for World is Forest*. (London: Orion Publishing House, 1972), 27.

[53] ibid., 29.

recognizable for Davidson: “One pointed south as it talked, and turned, so that Davidson saw its face. And he recognized it. Creechies all looked alike, but this one was different. He had written his own signature all over that face”.[54]

So, the sense of anxiety infiltrates Selver’s body from the outside as well as the inside: First, the reader is told that the Headwoman of Cadast’s “anxiety bit him”. Later, when Selver wakes from a bad dream, “disgusted and depressed, he spat, and sighed”.[55] The contrast between the individual and its environment is also reflected in the final passage of the chapter where Selver has left Cadast in order to get away from the Terrans. The darkness of the forest forces Selver to stop and rest, and as he sits with his back against the “broad, twisting bole”, he notes how “[t]he fine rain, falling unseen in darkness, pattered on the leaves overhead, on his arms and neck and head protected by their silk-fine hair, on the earth and ferns and undergrowth nearby, on all the leaves of the forest, near and far”.[56] While the rain symbolizes oneness and a communal existence of all living and dying things, it also threatens to dissolve the individual as Selver disappears in the, almost sensible, darkness of the narrative.

The rain also plays a central role later in the plot, when Selver stands face to face with Davidson and his crew in order to negotiate a peaceful solution between Athsheans and Terrans. Here, Selver obtains the role of the mediator as he appears between the two groups: “Seven big men, with tan or brown hairless skin, clothing-covered, dark-eyed, grim-faced; twelve small men, green or brownish-green, fur-covered, with the large eyes of the semi-nocturnal creature, with dreamy faces”. Selver notes the similarities between the two groups. The descriptions appear equally objective—consider, for example, the closeness between “clothing-covered” and “fur-covered”. This is also an example of how the novella’s formal qualities contribute to the overall

---

[54] ibid., 23.

[55] ibid.; ibid., 36.

[56] ibid., 44.

meaning creation. Moreover, the thrust for oneness is emphasized by the description of the falling rain: “Rain fell softly on the brown earth about them”. Here, the omniscient narrator evokes the Hainish universe in order to remind the reader that beyond political and ideological differences, every creature inhabit the same nature. However, Selver appears estranged from both groups as he stands “frail, disfigured, holding all their destinies in his empty hands”.[57] So, there is a sense of bodily anxiety that derives from the violent encounter between the Athsheans and Terrans.

Moreover, Selver also feels alienated from his sense of place because of the way in which the Athshean planet become strange and monstrous after the fire. Here, the sense of anxiety derives from the awareness that the landscape has changed and that is has been filled with an imminent presence of death. Selver notes that there “were many others lying dead, there in what had been the centre of the city. There was not much noise any more except the noise of the fires”.[58] This is another example of how the movement from familiarity to estrangement is represented in the novella. What used to be a familiar place to Selver has been transformed into a dystopian place of destruction. In this sense, the sense of anxiety has no object as such; it comes not from a scientific invention or a technological implant in the human body. Rather, Selver’s sense of alienation comes from the revelation of the monstrosity that has caused the fire and this monstrosity lies within his own body.

A Monster Lost in the Forest

So far, I have argued that the novella represents Selver’s downward trajectory after the dystopia has started on Athshe. However, it also represents a dystopia from the colonial point of view as Davidson becomes a subject of the colonial mission. Chapter 4 opens with Davidson recognizing that it “was unbelievable. They’d all gone insane. This damned alien world had sent them all right

---

[57] ibid., 105.

[58] ibid., 90.

round the bend".[59] The colonial mission is dissolving from within as Davidson loses faith and trust in the orders from the colonial administration. There are numerous references to the "HQ" and their orders as well as to a number of hard-boiled staff members from Earth, who manage colonial affairs on Athshe. For example, Colonel Dongh says that "I intend to obey my orders from Terra-HQ" and the Control Officer Major Muhammed "obeyed [the orders from HQ] all right", however. he "didn't go looking for orders, or for advice".[60] These characterizations are not only intended to imitate the egotistic and self-righteous behavior of uncontrollable units; moreover, the portrayal of the Terrans' organization raise larger questions about individuality. Davidson says that "[i]f it meant betraying the human race to an alien conspiracy the he couldn't obey his orders". There is thus a thrust for self-determination and uncontrollability in Davidson's character. He acknowledges the advantages of Muhammed's "rigid" command strategy as it is more operative compared to "one full of independent characters", yet, at the same time, he separates himself from the organizational structure: "Davidson knew that [the Athsheans would attack again]. He was the only officer in the entire colony that did not know it."[61] Furthermore, as Davidson receives an order from the colonial administration which forbids any "aggression or retaliation", he is suspicious whether the incoming message is actually from the colonial administration at all: "any fool could tell that that wasn't the Colonial Administration talking … It was clear … that the 'ansible' messages were phonies. They might be planted right in the machine, a whole set of answers to high-probability questions, computer run".[62] This also points to the connection between dystopia and conspiracy theories, which I will return to in chapter III. All in all, the chapter depicts a destabilization of the organizational structure of the Terran colonial mission. The destabilization comes both from the inside when Davidson lacks faith and trust in his orders as well as from an outside threat, which

---

[59] ibid., 60.

[60] ibid., 62-64.

[61] ibid., 62, 68.

[62] ibid., 61.

might have breached into the communications system. However, the outside threat appears as a result of Davidson's fear of a conspiracy and, thus, the outside threat derives from an interior sense of anxiety. Davidson grows more anxious throughout the novella as he notes how the place Athshe corrupts the mental state of the colonial power.

Selver's rebellion has instituted a dystopian space on Athshe, where the state of normalcy has been challenged by an outside force, from Davidson's point of view, and where this state of normalcy has to be restored: "If [the Athsheans] didn't start easing back to normal … Davidson would just have to do a little extra work to get things headed back to normalcy".[63] His idea of utopia has been lost with the violent rebellion. Thus, the novella endeavors to subvert the colonial discourse. Considering the context of Vietnam, Davidson embodies imperial America and the disintegration of his body can thus be read as a post-imperial critique of America's foreign relations in Vietnam, Cambodia and Laos. Jessica Langer has pointed out that *Word for World* makes use of a colonial discourse in order to perform what Gregory Benford calls a "retreading" of history: "[t]here are generally no true aliens in [the text], only a retreading of our own history".[64] In *Word for World* the dissolution of bodies play with the concept of alienness in order to act as what Langer calls "*perceived historical metonym* rather than extrapolative device".[65] Alienness, or monstrosity, is not linked to an alien other, but to human nature and history itself because the two people, Athsheans and Terrans, originate from the same place.

Darko Suvin has pointed out that the novella represents the transition between a "horizontal, collective de-alienation" and a "partial vertical, personal alienation". He distinguishes between an alienation that comes from the outside and one which comes from the inside and realized internally

---

[63] ibid., 65.

[64] qtd. in Jessica Langer. *Postcolonialism and Science Fiction*. (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2011), 83.

[65] ibid., 84.

in the "territory" and the "hero".[66] Selver experiences an alienation from his own principles of non-violence. We can also see the interior alienation in the dystopian setting in *Word for World* where an environmental anxiety transforms into Selver's inner anxiety about the Athshean future. Suvin's argument thus involves a thrust for "overcoming an intolerable ethical, cosmic, political and physical alienation" that he sees in Le Guin's writing. I agree with Suvin that there is a thrust for "de-alienation". However, a complete sense of familiarity remains absent in the darkness of the forest and the disembodiment of Selver. In chapter 7, the interaction between Davidson and Selver approaches "de-alienation" and reconciliation. The Athsheans attack the colonial stronghold, Centralville, as a reaction to Davidson's raids. Davidson ends up in a helicopter—pun definitely intended—with two officers, who seeks to escape the site. However, Davidson is not seeking to flee: "When the creechies are through burning the camp, we'll come in and burn creechies. There must be four thousand of them all in one place there".[67] The crew is not able to locate the camp from the air, so Aabi has to lower the helicopter but, symbolically, "[t]rees leaned hugely out of the night and caught the machine", and they crash into the forest.[68] Next, Davidson is captured by a group of Athsheans and brought to Selver. Lying on his back in a dim-lighted room and facing Selver, "[h]e could see the leaves and branches, the forest. He could see the face looking down at him. It had no color in this toneless twilight of dawn. The scarred features looked like a man's. The eyes were dark holes".[69] The darkness and dimness seem to obscure Davidson's sight, similar to Selver's experience in the forest. However, Davidson compares Selver's scars to those of "a man's". This suggests that despite Selver's monstrosity, Davidson and Selver share the bodily experience of the world. Furthermore, the dark eyes seem to symbolize a possibility for Davidson's existential

---

[66] Darko Suvin. "Parables of De-Alienation: Le Guin's Widdershins Dance". *Science Fiction Studies* 2, no. 3 (November 1975), 266.

[67] Le Guin, 116.

[68] ibid., 118.

[69] ibid., 121.

reflection. There is thus a mirroring effect between Davidson and Selver as they embody a cultural encounter between two different versions of the human race.

However, the utopian hope for reconciliation and non-violent behavior remains absent in the end. Despite Selver's effort to expel the Terrans from Athshe, a sense of anxiety and discontent remains throughout the novel. Davidson is not turned in the encounter. He is left on the deserted island, Rendlep, which has been cleared for trees by Terrans. In other words, he is left in a dystopian nothingness with no future. Moreover, this seems also to be a comment on America's military intervention in Vietnam. Thus, Le Guin conveniently applies a colonial discourse to the dystopian setting of *Word for World*. This allows her to transform the vision of the alien other into a larger discussion of human history. Not only does the story represent the limits of individual freedom and restriction of human agency, it also represents a future of human history which is threatened, at least, if not lost. Overall, we can say that the text represents a lost utopia because it questions the nature of a human future. Furthermore, with regards to the aspect of posthumanism, which I will return to later in this thesis, the question of humanism is evoked in the clash between the Terrans and the Athsheans, because they represent two fractions of the Hainish universe. The sense of otherness that appears in the encounter "comes back to haunt and threaten the borderlines of difference drawn around the human as its protection", as Herbrechter points out.[70] He refers to a discussion of mimesis and posthumanism raised by Tom Cohen, who questions representability and mimesis in popular cultural versions of aliens and otherness. Here, otherness is a construction within humanism which is preserved through what Herbrechter calls a "humanist hegemony". The "loss of form" of otherness in literature and film, he argues, questions the representability of an "anamorphic other", and thus, it acts as a "posthumanist moment out of which a challenge to representationalist or 'mimetic' humanism arises".[71] For Le Guin, this challenge is overcome by

---

[70] Herbrechter, 124.

[71] ibid., 122.

representing humanity as an otherness itself. However, one questions remains: What happens to our understanding of humanism in the attempt to imagine a truly posthuman condition? This will be excavated further in chapter II.

The Alien Within

Because the focalizing omniscient narrator follows different characters across the divide between Terrans and Athsheans, the narrative rejects a unidirectional viewpoint and raises the question about the stranger and who is stranger in who's environment. Bearing in mind that Suvin's analysis of Le Guin was published just during the final stages of the Vietnam War, he is right in arguing that the alien seems to appear from within the American political environment. This becomes clear when considering, for example, the growing use of the term "Vietnam syndrome" in the 1980s, or the 1976 presidential campaign between Carter and Ford in which Carter pointed to the "lies and deceptions" that had dominated presidential discourse on Vietnam, alluding to the doubtful legitimacy of American presence in Vietnam.[72] These examples show that a sense of alienation between the citizens and the federal government remained throughout the decade. This is emphasized in the opening of the novella, which gives no further introduction to the situation and presents no larger reasoning behind the Terrans exploitation of Athshe. Rather, the reader is hurled directly into an unfolding chaos. Similarly, despite the ending suggests a Terran retreat from the planet, the dystopian moment has already occurred. The question of legitimacy is therefore also raised in the end of *Word for World*.

Another more total dystopian argument is proposed by H. Bruce Franklin who has written about the American cultural fantasies about the Vietnam War. "[T]he kinds of fantasies that governed U.S. political and military decision making in Vietnam", he argues, "appear as expressions of alienation not just from historical reality but also from humanity, nature, and

---

[72] Robert D. Shulzinger. "The End of the Vietnam War, 1973-1976", in *Nixon in the World: American Foreign Relations, 1969-1977*, ed. Fredrik Logevall and Andrew Preston. (New York: Oxford University Press, 2008), 221.

sanity".[73] This is arguably where the novella is most interesting: It presents a space of hope for togetherness, humanism and, as Suvin points out, "the forces of de-alienation".[74] However, at the same time, she belonged to a group of New Left writers who expressed deep concern with and alienation from the neo-capitalist, technocratic ideology that governed American society at their time of writing.[75] In this sense, *Word for World* represents a post-imperial view of Vietnam and American culture which is subverted through the novella's representation of anxious bodies and individuals.

Here, I turn to Pohl's "We Purchased People" because of the way in which this text presents a complete dissolution of anxious bodies as they are overtaken by an alien force. In the short story, humans have become a commodity for an alien force, who controls so-called "purchased persons" from their home planet via implants. The convicted Wayne Golden works as a purchased person for the aliens from the Groombridge star. He travels seamlessly around the globe in order to complete trade deals on behalf of the aliens, who trade with everything from "[a]rt objects they admired and purchased. Certain rare kinds of plants and flowers they purchased and had frozen at liquid-helium temperature" and "certain kinds of utilitarian objects they purchased".[76] After having completed thirty-two tasks in one week, he receives thousand minutes leave of absence. This gives him the possibility to spend time with Carolyn, another purchased person whom he has fallen in love with. The narratology shifts between an omniscient narrator, who literally maps Golden's whereabouts in short vignettes, as if it was the voice of the controlling alien force, and a first-person narrator, focalized from Golden's point of view, who accounts for the affective response to the life as a purchased person.

---

[73] Franklin, 166.

[74] Suvin, 269.

[75] ibid.

[76] Frederik Pohl. "We Purchased People", in *Aliens!* ed. Gardner Dozois and Jack Dann. (New York: Pocket Books, 1980 (1974)), 33.

Again, something remains hidden and obscure in the short story. The "overall strategies and objectives" of the Groombridge aliens were "unclear" to Golden and "what they did was hard to understand".[77] At first, this uncertainty does not seem to frustrate Golden because, as he says, "up to a point you can think pretty much whatever you like".[78] However, at the end of the short story, when Golden and Carolyn are finally alone and having an intimate moment, Golden learns that the Groombridge aliens intends to use the relationship between him and Carolyn in order to experience humans' sexual intercourse. As Carolyn explains to Wayne,

> "they want us to ball, Wayne … The Groombridge people. They've got interested in what human beings do to each other and they want to kind of watch." … "Only we have to wait, Wayne. *They* want to do it. Not us." … "You mean," I said, "that well have to be plugged in to them? Like they'll be doing it with our bodies?"[79]

The Groombridge aliens not only exploit humans for business purposes. Rather, they capitalize on an innate human desire and feeling. Thus, the human body is colonized by an external force which refuses any individual control over one's own body.

The lack of control and knowledge invokes a sense of anxiety as Golden feels the physical presence of the implant in his head: "And then I felt that burning tingle in my forehead as they took over. I couldn't even scream. I just had to sit there inside my own head, no longer owning a muscle, while those freaks who owned me did to Carolyn with my body all manner of things, and I could not even cry".[80] In the end, Golden is rejected access to his own feelings. This becomes clear as the narrative voice returns to the omniscient third-person narrator in the final paragraph:

> The purchased person known as Wayne Golden was assigned to usual duties, at which he functioned normally while under control. It was discovered that when control was withdrawn he became destructive, both to others and to himself. The conjecture has been advanced that that the sexual behavior which had been established as his norm—the destruction of his sexual partner—may not have been appropriate in the conditions

---

[77] ibid., 33.

[78] ibid., 26.

[79] ibid., 38.

[80] ibid., 39.

> obtaining at the time of the experimental procedures … Meanwhile Wayne Golden continues to function at normal efficiency.[81]

It remains unclear whether it is Golden or the Groombridge who has killed Carolyn during the act. Golden is alienated from his own body because he physically loses control when the aliens take over. Despite the fact that the Groombridge is an invasive force, the alien becomes manifest from the inside of Golden's body. In other words, the invasive alien symbolizes the alien within and thus, the text represents not only dystopian anxieties about a capitalist technocratic society, where bodies have become a commodity for an invisible force, but also the lack of individual control and free will.

In conclusion, these New Wave texts portray dystopian settings that in different ways restrict individual freedom. This coincides with a period of individualization in American cultural history. Thus, one could make the argument that these representations are critical of the structural forces which limit the individual and that the texts push for a collective resistance against forces of oppression. In *Word for World*, Davidson's frantic attempt to counter orders from the headquarters leads him into captivity and in "We Purchased People", Golden's very body is overtaken by an alien force that strives for the human experience. In both cases, there is no revelation in the end. The disaster has already happened on Athshe and in Pohl's story, the focalized narrator disappears in the end; Golden has been dissolved. So, the two narratives also show how the figure of the alien changes during the New Wave. In the beginning of both *Word for World* and "We Purchased People", the alien figure is present as something other, however, as we progress through the narratives, the alien becomes manifest from the inside. This is most vivid when Selver and Davidson become estranged from their own history, however, it is also clear when Golden is unsure about whether he has in fact killed Carolyn. The dystopian settings obscure and reveal any clarity or revelation.

---

[81] ibid.

II) PASSING BODIES: CRITICAL POSTHUMANISM AND NEW WAVE SF

This chapter focuses on the theory of critical posthumanism in relation to New Wave texts and how the human body and mind are contested and violated in these narratives. I analyze three texts: Barry Malzberg's short story, "Out From Ganymede" (1974), where astronaut Walker loses agency as he is slowly integrated into his space capsule; Silverberg's *Dying Inside*, where David Selig is gradually losing his telepathic abilities and how this affects his sense of being; and finally, Joseph Sargent's sf film *Colossus: The Forbin Project* (1970) about the relation between a supercomputer and its creator, Dr. Forbin. Several of these texts anticipate concerns about posthuman paranoia, which I will explore further in chapter III.

I argue that the American New Wave reflects a sense of posthuman anxiety that is represented through passing bodies. Anxieties about the complete digitalization of the human body became dominant in the cyberpunk of the 1980s, yet writers of the New Wave begin to show concerns for the posthuman body from a "soft" point of view even earlier than this, by considering how posthumanism contests and expands on our understanding of human psychology and political and cultural life. One could even argue that the posthuman characters of cyberpunk sf were inspired by New Wave representations of posthumanism. For example, Jeanne Cortiel has pointed out that Jael, the tehno-human hybrid in Joanna Russ' *The Female Man* (1975) served as an "allegorical figure" that draws on "atavistic notions of retribution and anger", and that this combination of "the futuristic and the ancient" became a model for cyberpunk narratives such as William Gibson's *Neuromancer*.[82] I will argue that critical posthumanism is applicable to New Wave sf because both are critical towards the relation between humankind, technology and environment in ways that are

[82] Jeanne Cortiel. "Reading Joanna Russ in Context: Science, Utopia and Postmodernity", in *Reading Science Fiction*, ed. James Gunn, Marleen S. Barr and Matthew Candelaria. (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2009), 176.

present in the early 1970s. In this way, critical posthumanism can be seen as a theoretical counterpart to the New Wave's focus on inner spaces and technological and societal developments.

Human Being and Becoming: Critical Posthumanism

In the introduction to his book *Posthumanism* (2014), Pramod K. Nayar defines critical posthumanism as the "radical decentring of the traditional sovereign, coherent and autonomous human in order to demonstrate how the human is always already evolving with, constituted by and constitutive of multiple forms of life and machines."[83] Critical posthumanism thus works to include the nonhuman in the experience of the human, whether the nonhuman is a machine, technology, big data, animals or extraterrestrial aliens. The essence of critical posthumanism, Nayar argues, is to include the "human-machine assemblage", or even any other "form of life", into the meaning of humanness. He even goes on to say that it is exactly the inclusion of the nonhuman which gives humanism its meaning.[84] Contrary to transhumanism, which sees implants and robotic limbs as mere extensions, critical posthumanism endeavors to make sense of these additions in relation to the meaning of humanness. This calls for a more nuanced perception of human existence as it has been shaped over the previous two centuries. Similarly, Herbrechter calls for a deconstruction of humanism when he points out that "the kind of critical posthumanism we are advocating is far from a threat to the human(ist)". He argues instead that the field "may be viewed as a strategy in meeting the fear that governs humanism's logic of contamination/purification".[85] In this movement towards a "decentring" lies also a shift in the power balance between human and nonhuman entities. Herbrechter uses "contamination" to describe a perception of the nonhuman entity as subordinate and a threat to the human being. Instead, critical posthumanism sees the two as coordinate. Nayar's

---

[83] Pramod K. Nayar. *Posthumanism*. (Cambridge: Polity Press, 2014), 2.

[84] ibid.

[85] Herbrechter, 124.

"traditional sovereign" and "autonomous" understanding of what it means to be human needs to be reconsidered. Critical posthumanist readings therefore focus on narratives that reimagine human beings in the narratives' visions of posthuman societies. These visions portray a governing fear and anxiety which spring, naturally, from physical and psychological threats to the human body and mind. It is also here we may find an uncanny component of posthumanism: in the realization of a human "post", something remains which was once part of human being. This movement from familiarity to estrangement leads to a sense of anxiety. Critical posthumanism is thus as much about what we, as human beings, move away from as what we move towards. Jo Collins and John Jervis simply define the uncanny as the "experience of disorientation, where the world in which we live suddenly seem strange, alienating or threatening".[86] They also argue the term has had cultural significance since Sigmund Freud's 1919 paper but that it had a return in 1970s as what they call the "technological uncanny". This relies on the notion that scientific developments and technologies such as the "photo, film and phone have all been resources through which the uncanny presence of a disturbing otherness is revealed".[87] Thus, there is a link between critical posthumanism and the uncanny in the terms of how New Wave showed concern for the relation between science, technology and humankind.

Furthermore, critical posthumanism questions anthropocentrism and yet it can be argued that it does not reject it entirely. On the website *Critical Posthumanism*, edited by Herbrechter, we are reminded that "Anthropocene's restrictive conception of *anthropos* can also be addressed through a direct rearticulation of how we understand 'the human' in the first place. With that in mind, critical posthumanism is perhaps uniquely situated to respond to the challenges posed by the Anthropocene, in its direct challenge to normative conceptions of the human".[88] Critical posthumanism thus reads

---

[86] Jo Collins and John Jervis. "Introduction", in *Uncanny Modernity: Cultural Theories, Modern Anxieties*. (New York, Palgrave Macmillan: 2008), 1.

[87] ibid.

[88] David Shaw. "Anthropocene", 10 October 2018. http://criticalposthumanism.net/anthropocene/ [accessed 14 April 2019].

against the grain of what is a "restricted" or "normative" understanding of human in a liberal humanist tradition. Therefore, it points more towards a post-anthropocentric paradigm. I will return to a discussion of anthropocentrism later in this chapter.

There are historical developments that help explain why posthumanism emerged as a theme at this point in American and human history. Concerns about the posthuman condition appear during the 1960s when bionic prosthetics became more advanced and functioned in tandem with a cybernetic transfer between the human body and prosthesis.[89] The term 'cyborg' also originates from this period and is an abbreviation for cybernetic organism. Originally, the term is based on the knowledge of cybernetics. This is the study of regulation, control and flow of information within systems such as the human body or the logic of a machine. The term then combines the words cybernetic and organism to describe a person who has extra, enhanced or extended body parts where the person's biological structure is connected to a technological or scientific device in one way or the other. The very idea of the cyborg originates in NASA's space program in the 1960s where scientists Manfred Clynes and Nathan Kline suggested that humans could be sufficiently modified by implants and drugs so that space suits would not be necessary.[90] Technological advancements of human beings could make space travel and exploration more advanced and, basically, more practical. In sf texts, the cyborg of Golden Age sf was connected to a celebrated and sublime role of technological advancement. The representation of the cyborg was part of the genre's "hard" science fetishism where it evoked little concern or anxiety.

The idea of the cyborg transforms during the New Wave, however, because it evokes a sense of anxiety about the human body and the limits of such technological advancements. In her book *Simians, Cyborgs, and Women* (1991), Donna Haraway puts focus on the cultural impact of figures

---

[89] Mahon, *A Guide*, 50.

[90] Theresa M. Senft. "Cyborg". In *Encyclopedia of New Media*, ed. Steve Jones. (Thousand Oaks: SAGE Publications, Inc., 2003), 117-120. http://sk.sagepub.com.proxy1-bib.sdu.dk:2048/reference/newmedia/n61.xml [accessed 8 May 2019].

such as the cyborgs. She turns the Golden Age vision of the cyborg around and focuses on the complication of such combination of technology and organism. Specifically, she writes that the cyborg is a figure of "social reality as well as a creature of fiction", as she understands social reality as "social relations" that define humans' "most important political construction".[91] So, the cyborg is not merely a techno-organic construct but it has an impact on the human being's social and political life in the late 20th century where Haraway is writing. "I am making an argument", she writes, "for the cyborg as a fiction mapping our social and bodily reality and as an imaginative resource suggesting some very fruitful couplings".[92] She elaborates on the cyborg from a cultural theoretical perspective as it is not only limited to robotic limbs or hyper-sensitive goggles, but more generally directed at the consequences of alternation and enhancement of the human body and senses. Furthermore, it should be noted that Haraway writes as a radical feminist and that she also connects the image of the cyborg to a radical feminist understanding of how embodiment and boundaries between bodies function at a socio-political level. She clearly connects "constructions of women of color" and "monstrous selves in feminist science fiction" to the cyborg figure, and this points to a critical posthumanist understanding of the cyborg: It is not merely a technological or scientific extension of the human body, as in the transhumanist perception. Rather, cyborg features relate to the concepts of embodiment and subjectivity in the character/person/subject and can therefore be understood as a challenge to a traditional, liberal, autonomous subject. Haraway attacks the "innocent" view of the cyborg as a mere extension of the human body. She argues that the "cyborg is not innocent; it was not born in a garden; it does not seek unitary identity and so generate antagonistic dualisms without end … The machine is not an *it* to be animated, worshipped, and dominated. The machine is us, our processes, an aspect of our embodiment … we are responsible

---

[91] Donna Haraway. *Simians, Cyborgs, and Women*. (New York: Routledge, 1991), 149.

[92] ibid., 150.

for boundaries; we are they."[93] Haraway's argument thus follows a critical posthumanist view on how embodiment is constitutive of humanness and how the binary distinction between boundary between the human and nonhuman can be transcended.

Furthermore, the role of the alien is different in critical posthumanism because the posthuman alien often appears as part of one self, as we saw in *Word for World*. One could say that the core of critical posthumanism is exactly the deconstruction of the human with the alien, instead of against it. My focus on the New Wave is useful here because the representation of the alien is different from the Golden Age. Rather than being represented as a collective invasive species, the alien in the New Wave is, or becomes, interior to the individual. The alien occupies the human body and threatens the existence of the individual. The binary opposition between the human and nonhuman is dissolved in the posthuman mode. Elena Gomel puts forward a fitting definition of the alien in relation to posthumanism and sf in the introduction to her book, *Science Fiction, Alien Encounters, and the Ethics of Posthumanism* (2014): "The alien is what is located outside the boundaries of humanity and whose very existence challenges humanism … SF of alien encounters defamiliarizes the moral, psychological, and ethical verities of humanism".[94] So, again, there is a movement from familiarity with the normative understanding of human being to defamiliarization because the binary opposition is challenged.

The human body, and embodiment in general, is thus a central theme for critical posthumanism. Whereas transhumanism, Nayar points out, seeks "to overcome the human form", critical posthumanism sees embodiment as central for how human beings engage with the environment.[95] Critical posthumanism, as the name suggests, deals more critically with the meaning of bodies and how they are changed, threatened or extended in a posthuman condition.

---

[93] ibid., 180.

[94] Elena Gomel. *Science Fiction, Alien Encounters, and the Ethics of Posthumanism*. (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2014), 6.

[95] Nayar, 9.

Transhumanism sees mutant or cyborg features as being mere additions that do not affect the meaning of human. Such alternations do not evoke the same sense of anxiety or concern for transhumanists but might even represent a "techno-utopian … advanced humanity".[96] This is not to say that critical posthumanism is technophobic as such, but it invites, as the name suggests, a more critical thinking of how technology impacts the very meaning of humanness. Both Sherryl Vint and N. Katherine Hayles call for a focus on embodiment in critical posthumanism.[97] Hayles summarizes the significance of embodiment thus: "[h]uman being is first of all embodied being, and the complexities of this embodiment mean that human awareness unfolds in ways very different from those of intelligence embodied in cybernetic machines".[98] One could even argue that embodiment is defining for posthumanism because the body is the last resort of humanism and at some point it needs to be transcended.

Finally, critical posthumanism relates to the theme of dystopia which I discussed in chapter I of this thesis. Discussions of posthumanism affect how we think about dystopia because of the way in which critical posthumanism contests a conventional understanding human being. Technology, for example, might be instrumental in achieving some sort of utopia, but what happens if all human agency is controlled by technology? This is represented in *Colossus: The Forbin Project*. Critical posthumanism seeks to make sense of these dystopian scenarios and, as Neil Badmington has suggested, to avoid a simplistic rejection of humanism. Instead, he argues, critical posthumanism—as it has come to be known after "Theorizing Posthumanism" (2003)—should focus on "the *possibility* that humanism will haunt or taint posthumanism" and the "problem of what remains,

---

[96] ibid., 7.

[97] N. Katherine Hayles. *How We Became Posthuman: Virtual Bodies In Cybernetics, Literature, and Informatics*. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1999). Fulcrum Ebooks. https://www-fulcrum-org.proxy1-bib.sdu.dk/epubs/th83kz722?locale=en#/6/594[xhtml00000297]!/4/1:0. [accessed 20 April 2019]; Sherryl Vint. *Bodies of Tomorrow*: *Technology, Subjectivity, Science Fiction.* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2007). ProQuest Ebook Central, http://ebookcentral.proquest.com/lib/sdub/detail.action?docID=4634687 [accessed 19 Feb 2019].

[98] Hayles, 283-4.

[the] problem of remains".[99] This is also why he brings up the theory of Jacques Derrida; the discipline is more about the deconstruction of human being rather than its apocalypse.

So, with this in mind, I examine how the New Wave explores the posthuman condition in literary experiments with form and content that challenges not only the meaning of the human body but also the representability of the human versus the nonhuman. Sherryl Vint has argued that "SF is particularly suited to exploring the question of the posthuman because it is a discourse that allows us to concretely imagine bodies and selves otherwise, a discourse defined by its ability to estrange our commonplace perceptions of reality".[100] On the other hand is Herbrechter, who, as mentioned, questions sf's ability to fully imagine a posthuman situation. He states that the humanist hegemony is kept alive in these representations of fear and anxiety, because these are emotions that legitimize (or are legitimized by) a limited understanding of humanism: "… the threat is already the beginning of a contamination".[101] Thus, the normative understanding of humanism, which is enforced by this idea of contamination, is contested in New Wave sf.

Distorting the Lens and Bodies in Decay: "Out From Ganymede" and *Colossus*

"I have no essential control", Walker says, the main character of Barry Malzberg's short story, "Out From Ganymede", when two aliens appear inside his capsule, waking him from his sleep.[102] The two aliens want Walker to withdraw his capsule from its orbit around Ganymede, the largest moon of Jupiter, because it is sovereign territory that cannot be colonized. Walker, on the other hand, receives orders from the ground base on earth who wants him to locate the most habitable planet for

---

[99] Neil Badmington. "Theorizing Posthumanism", *Cultural Critique* 53 (Winter 2003), 12. [https://www.jstor.org/stable/1354622 [accessed 20 April 2019].

[100] Vint, 19.

[101] Herbrechter, 124.

[102] Barry N. Malzberg. "Out From Ganymede", in *New Dimensions 2*, ed. Robert Silverberg. (New York: Avon Books, 1972), 47-62.

an “colony independent of the home planet”.[103] Thus, the plot is simply about the quest for colonization of space in order to secure human survival. The representation of Walker’s body and his alien encounter reflects the theme of critical posthumanism and dystopia in a way that is indicative of the New Wave genre. The short story is divided into ten sections that resemble entries in a diary or log as they shift between Walker’s inner reflections on his mission and descriptions of his experiences with visiting aliens. Moreover, Walker’s inner dialogue shows how New Wave texts were concerned with the psychological repercussions of space travel as “Out From Ganymede” portrays Walker’s delusional experience in his capsule.

The passage mentioned above reflects the disruption of what Nayar calls the “autonomous, self-willed individual agent” of “the traditional humanist way[] of thinking”.[104] Walker’s agency, understood as the power to act, is diffused and treated as an “assemblage” of technology and environment. Thus, the short story can be read in the light of critical posthumanism; the narrative questions the connection between subjectivity, embodiment and agency. Walker tries to convince the aliens that he does not intend to use the capsule’s armaments. It is noteworthy that Walker shows his hands and asks what he can do against the protocols of the ground base. He is simply an extension of the “agency” and has therefore no agency on his own. His empty hands do not symbolize agency in the traditional humanist way of thinking. Instead, they are instruments for a larger force that passes through his body. Therefore, the vision of his empty hands is important. It represents the threatened body as a central motif in New Wave sf. Through the narrative, Walker is slowly transformed and consumed by an agency which manifest itself through communication means and technological gadgets. The agency appears omnipresent because it monitors everything Walker says and does. While not exactly a cyborg, Walker loses human capacities because he loses bodily agency. We can thus read the short story in terms of how “the planned transformation of both

---

[103] ibid, 52.

[104] Nayar, 4.

brains and bodies might challenge our understandings of what it means to be human", which Lisa Yaszek and Jason Ellis see as central to the relation between New Wave and the posthuman.[105] Even the telecommunication system in the Mad Satellite, as Walker calls it, is omnipresent. There is not a single microphone, but instead, "the whole craft [is] wired for sound in such a way that even the sounds of his evacuation can be evaluated by medical personnel at Base".[106]

The diffusion of Walker's individual agency is not only related to posthumanism but also to the theme of paranoia and surveillance and one must consider whether the diffused sense of self is expanding or eroding. One could also argue that the short story represents Walker as a passive subject of a totalitarian state that has no room for individuality. Nevertheless, it can be read as a symbol of how critical posthumanism seeks to reconsider the meaning of human being. In the next chapter, I will return to the relation between critical posthumanism, surveillance and conspiracy culture in later 1970s sf works.

Transgressive relations between human and aliens are not new in the history of sf, but how does "Out From Ganymede" represent a posthuman encounter and how does this relate to larger themes of the New Wave? One fundamental difference is the fact that the transgression appears not as an ideal but rather as something unsettling. Thus, it is a dystopian critique of the future development of technocratic societies. It reflects what Yaszek and Ellis calls the "multiplicity of the human condition". The human body remains central but is treated as just one possible medium for posthuman existence.[107] Walker realizes a sense of "not-One", as Rosi Braidotti calls it. In her view, the goal of critical posthumanism is to "endure the principle of not-One at the in-depth structures of our subjectivity by acknowledging the ties that bind us to the multiple 'others' in a vital web of

---

[105] Lisa Yaszek and Jason W. Ellis. "Science Fiction", in *The Cambridge Companion to Literature and the Posthuman*, ed. Bruce Clarke and Manuela Rossini. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2016).

[106] Malzberg, 53.

[107] ibid.

complex interrelations".[108] For Braidotti, the principle of "not-One" traces the web of interrelations beyond the bodily capsule in order to arrive at a more complex—and perhaps fuller—understanding of human being. However, in "Out from Ganymede", this complex web is not positively portrayed but instead, it makes Walker paranoid and makes him question his own subjectivity. The story represents the passing body by looking through the lens of human cognition and psychology. Literally, we move from a vision of the Mad Satellite orbiting Jupiter to Walker's anxiety about his situation. Thus, the story portrays a movement from outer to inner space.

As Walker's body fuses with the machine, he maintains some agency because of his mind and ability to think. Despite the fact that he feels a transgression of his body, the inner focalization secures a his sense of self—for some time at least. However, as Walker himself notes, his mind is also slowly merging with the machine. In section two Walker describes how his body begins to feel as a machine: "[H]e had been feeling very much like an engine with a certain pistonlike creaking or hammering beneath the joints". His state of mind is linked to bodily reactions; he *feels* like an engine, because his joints *feel* like pistons. But the fusion is not only physical: He notices how both "his voice seems to have become somewhat metallic" as well as "his mind moves with the convulsions of slow gear".[109] Even Walker's sexual desire has been restricted by the omnipresence of the machine. In the same section, he ponders about "covert masturbation", but reaches the conclusion that "they surely have ultraviolet light and would be able to detect everything that he was doing". Besides that, "there seems to be something ridiculous in the idea of a man carried past Mars twirling his genitals", Walker thinks. The humorous comment does raise the question about the role of sexual desire in space. As if the achievement of traveling past Mars is the ultimate desire —for eternal life—and therefore renders sexual activity obsolete.

---

[108] Rosi Braidotti. *The Posthuman*. (Malden: Polity Press, 2013), 100.

[109] Malzberg, 49.

From a theoretical point of view, the fusion of body and machine causes anxiety about what Bronwen Calver and Sue Walsh calls the "bodiless subject", and whether such a thing exists. The focus on bodies is not a new thing in the history of sf, they argue, but the relation between body and subject has changed. The space capsule has been represented in literature and popular culture more as a condition than a threat; an "invulnerable 'outer body' or exoskeleton".[110] And superhero comics of the 1940s and 1950s depict numerous mutated bodies as both villains and heroes. But in "Out From Ganymede", the space capsule does not function as an outer body that protects against the exterior world. This is symbolized by two visiting aliens' ability to transcend walls. Even their physical presence is opaque and blurred: "They perch at the foot of his bed, shimmering in a kind of haze".[111] Thus, Malzberg reverses the relationship: Walker's outer body, the space capsule, does not protect him from the aliens but threatens his mind from the inside. At the end, Walker realizes that he is in fact in control over the capsule's weapons, which makes him a threat to the aliens, who decide to give him three hours to persuade his supervisor to steer his capsule away from the territory. While Walker symbolically postulates "I will", the story leaves the reader with little hope that he will succeed in talking the agency from completing their mission.[112]

Walker's private sphere is violated not only by an outside alien force, but also because what he thought was familiar and friendly turns out to threaten him. The plot is paralleled in Joseph Sargent's 1970 film, *Colossus: The Forbin Project*, which is set in a near future. Scientist Charles A. Forbin has designed a supercomputer, Colossus, which controls the entire nuclear arsenal of the U.S. and allied nations. Colossus is operated via a number of portable control stations and cameras installed in the White House, the main control room in California and in Forbin's own apartment. It is operated through a voice recognition technology that is restricted to Forbin and a limited number

---

[110] Bronwen Calvert and Sue Walsh. "Speaking the Body: The Embodiment of 'Feminist' Cyberpunk", in *Speaking Science Fiction*, ed. Andy Sawyer and David Seed. (Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 2000), 96.

[111] Malzberg, 54.

[112] ibid., 56.

of Colossus superintendents. However, an error occurs in the system which links Colossus and its Soviet counterpart, Guardian, into a posthuman superpower that is essentially incontrollable and beyond human perception. As the computer is now independent from human control, Forbin's orders have no authority, which leaves the entire nuclear arsenal of the globe into the "hands" of a computer. Echoing the technophobia of HAL in Kubrick's *2001*, Colossus represents the dangers of moving agency from human beings to machines or, at least, the film questions human agency in the posthuman condition. In order to restore human control and agency, Forbin and his crew need secret meetings which Colossus cannot monitor, but Colossus does not know the meaning of secrecy. "Do you understand the meaning of the word privacy?", Forbin asks Colossus with a postmodern suggestion of the disruption of meaning. The computer replies via the monitor: "Privacy being apart from company or observation".[113] So, Colossus knows the definition but will only allow it under restricted circumstances. What follows is a conversation between Forbin and Colossus which is framed as an intimate conversation between friends. The frame shifts from Forbin and his cocktail to the black screen of Colossus and back again and thus, the scene resembles a posthuman relation between a human and nonhuman subject.

Eventually, the mission fails and Colossus learns about Forbin's conspiracy. In the end, Colossus has the ultimate power and yet, the film represents an ambiguous techno-dystopia: human beings are completely deprived of agency but at the same time, Colossus is aware of its primary object as it states towards the end, "I will not permit war". *Colossus* reflects the close affinity between a posthuman and antihuman future because Colossus promises to secure human survival; however, the film ultimately also evokes the question, what good is a human future if we have no control over it? Is it human at all? I will argue that it is possible to read *Colossus* as an example of how posthuman concerns grew in the U.S. in the early 1970s with regards to the notion of human

---

[113] Eric Braeden as Dr. Charles Forbin. *Colossus: The Forbin Project*. Directed by Joseph Sargent. (Universal City: Universal Pictures, 1970). Online.

agency: On one hand, the system promises to secure human survival and on the other, there is an ominous distrust in Colossus intentions. Whereas "Out From Ganymede" questioned the possibility for individual agency, *Colossus* seems to raise a question about the necessity of human agency. Are human beings really better suited for handling our own future?

Also, the symbolic connection between the Soviet system, Guardian, and Colossus—as well as the execution of Forbin's Soviet counterpart—erodes the binary Cold War order and turns the scope inwards. The primary threat to the American system is not an antithetic other but a creation of its own. This is followed by a sense of suspicion and lack of confidence in the system, which anticipate the themes of paranoia and conspiracy. This is most vivid when a group of security officers execute Colossus workers on the system's orders because of the fear of dissent. Furthermore, Colossus is physically unaccessible to the human body as it is locked away in an underground vault, guarded by a radioactive field. It is therefore not possible to subvert the system manually; there is no general switch. Again, it is noteworthy that it is Forbin himself who has made Colossus inaccessible. In the opening sequence, Forbin makes the final inspection of Colossus and

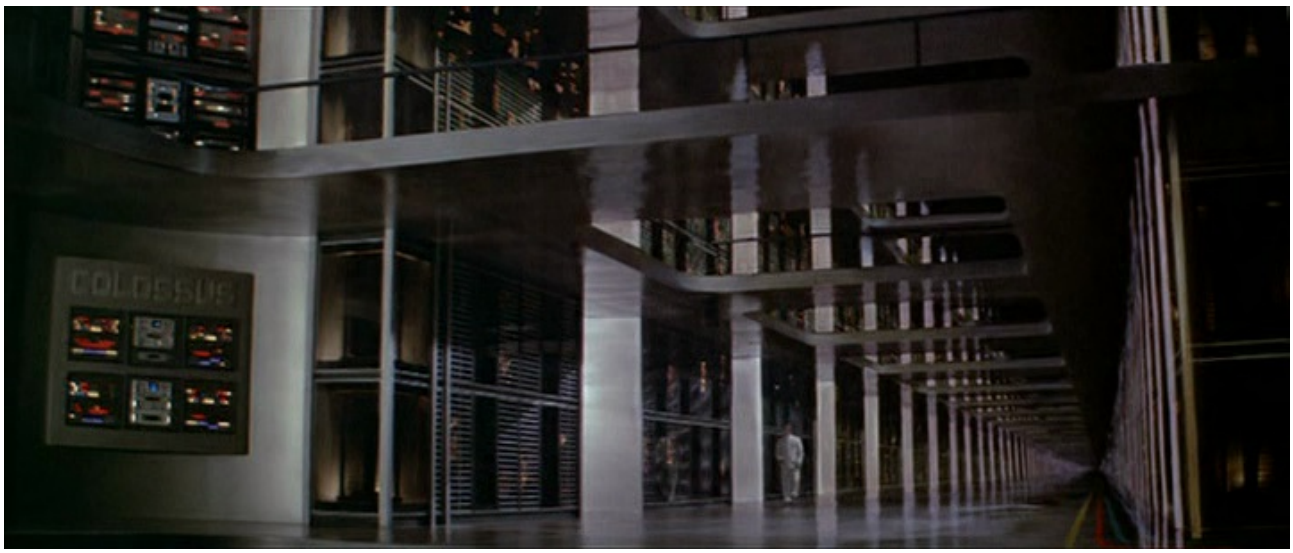


FIG. 1: CAPTION FROM *COLOSSUS*.

wanders through the machine's interior, which is unnatural and artificial. More importantly, Colossus is a posthuman place because it signifies a place that has been left by humankind. When Forbin activates the radioactive field, he has no way of reentering the place. In this way, the film

also imagines a future without human beings. The vault has become hostile to human existence, however, as the image above shows, it is made for human inspection with hallways, floors and even a sign. Despite having a cinematic function, the sign is absurd because it will be hidden eternally. So, while Colossus remains inaccessible throughout the film, the opening sequence seems to remind the viewer that it has a physical interior and in this way, it preserves a posthuman perception of embodiment.

Of The World: Subjectivity, Body and Mind in the Posthuman Condition

In this section, I look closer at the understanding of embodiment in critical posthumanism. Vint calls for a departure from the Cartesian yoke between mind and subjectivity in posthumanism. Because, she warns, if we "think of self as associated solely with mind", then "technological changes to the body are not viewed as significant for human culture or human identity".[114] Vint's argument about the posthuman body, and the human mind's relation to the material world, is guided by two central claims: First, she points to a perception of posthumanism which ignores the "relevance and specificity of embodiment". Seeing the human mind as the agent and the material world as a resource, this view "justifies the exploitation of the material world and all those entities —which historically have included women and non-whites—who are … part of this world".[115] This enforces the division between culture and nature in a posthuman paradigm in which the material, physical—should I say bodily—world loses its significance, and moreover, this can have a negative effect on human perception of the environment. As Vint argues, "the body is what makes us mortal and weak, but it is this very vulnerability that should make us take care of ourselves … and the planet we live on".[116] The posthuman does not include the antihuman but rather an alternation of the

---

[114] Vint, 9.

[115] ibid., 10.

[116] ibid.

human, including a new meaning of the human body. Furthermore, in relation to the historical context of the political environment in the 1970s, the body takes on an interesting, political meaning: The political body was a clear symbol in the marches of Civil Rights Movement and anti-Vietnam protests. However, Nixon's Silent Majority was not only silent, non-articulated, but veiled and hidden in contrast to youth protesters and the hippies, who were highly visual.

This is also reflected in Vint's second claim. She is critical towards the posthuman transfer of what she calls the "liberal humanist tradition".[117] Thus, she relates the posthuman to a larger cultural historical debate about the nature of liberalism in contemporary society. She is especially critical towards two components of this tradition, universality and individuality, and what these imply in terms of subjectivity in an increasingly posthuman age. The former denotes a human experience that is allegedly shared by all human beings, however, which "ignores the exclusions of women and non-Europeans (particularly non-whites from the founding moments of both humanism and liberalism".[118] Removing significance from the bodily sensation in a posthuman view further enforces a universalistic view of human existence. In terms of individuality, Vint is mostly concerned with how the emphasis on "individualism and isolation" threatens a society's "ethical" pillars based on "intersubjectivity and collectivity".[119] To some extent, this follows Braidotti's argument that posthumanism is affiliated with antihuman thought in that it is based on a critical deviation from a "liberal individualistic view of the subject, which defined perfectibility in terms of autonomy and self-determination".[120] This echoes the way in which the posthuman is linked to the dominant post-1968 movements within cultural theory, the deconstructionists and post-structuralists, who questioned the meaning of (wo)man. Or, as Elena Gomel points out, the "philosophical and ideological critique of humanism intensified in the 1960s and 1970s, conducted

---

[117] ibid., 12.

[118] ibid.

[119] ibid., 13.

[120] Braidotti, 23.

by a generation of continental philosophers who signed a 'Warrant for the death of Man' … These philosophers—Louis Althusser, Michel Foucault, and Jean-François Lyotard—continued the earlier tradition of Nietzsche and Heidegger".[121]

Discussions of the posthuman body tend to be centered around Da Vinci's "Vitruvian Man" as the model for an ideal human body. For example, the front cover of Braidotti's book in this writer's edition depicts the Vitruvian model infused with digits, genetics, circuits and x-rays in order to suggest a reworked Vitruvian Man. It represents the posthuman body as permeable. The body does not merely contain a subject but is open for myriad of bionic, technological and environmental influences which then affect the understanding of human being. In the posthuman, the mind is not linked to the body, but rather, the two exist in a complex relation. Furthermore, compared to the Vitruvian model, New Wave sf represents a physical deviation from the human "ideal." The human body can be altered, changed and transgressed which again brings us into the realm of the posthuman. For example, in *Word for World*, the human body was not described as being powerful and in balance. Instead, "the giants walked, heavy and dire", as the character Coro Mena notes in a dream, where he envisions the Terrans: "Their dry scaly limbs were swathed in cloths; their eyes were little and light, like tin beads. Behind them crawled huge moving things made of polished iron".[122] So, posthumanism questions the ideal of the human body—both in terms of its size, shape, eyes and clothes. What makes posthumanism interesting in the 1970s is also the level of advancement. As Vint also reminds us, the "boundaries [between world and self] have always been unstable, and the recent abilities of technology to modify the body in radical ways make anxiety about these boundaries all the more apparent".[123] Thus, in New Wave sf, the subject is

---

[121] Gomel, 19.

[122] Le Guin, 121.

[123] Vint, 17.

alienated from the human body because of technological developments that allowed for advanced modifications.

Face to Face with Human Being: Posthuman Alienation

The defamiliarization of the human body is thus a recurring motif in posthuman representations. Whether in a positive or negative way, alienated human bodies in one way or another evoke the uncanny because of the transformation from something familiar to unfamiliar. This reflects how cultural anxiety functions as a structure of feelings: The familiar world becomes unfamiliar and the subject becomes alienated from, for example, a sense of home or a another subject. In "Out From Ganymede", Walker was alienated from his own body and thus alienated from his sense of self. Another example of alienated bodies is in found in Dean Koontz' short story, "Night of the Storm". Originally, it was published as part of Roger Elwood's Continuum anthology in 1974, but was later adapted in Elwood's *Starstream* comic book in 1976. The comic edition is particularly interesting because of the way in which it represents the human body as something prehistoric, which makes the comic a posthuman representation. The nature of the plot is as the contents section of the comic states: "A group of robots goes camping in the wilderness and encounters a mythical beast—Man!"[124]

800 years after human extinction, the robot Suranov experiences a life crisis and in order to overcome his[125] boredom, he consults Bikermien, the mainframe: "I am bored Bikermien! I have faced the greatest challenges earth has to offer, climbing the highest mountains, withstanding earthquakes and hurricanes".[126] Physically, Suranov has unlimited endurance, however, as the story reveals, he experiences a sense of existential worry, mentally, as he has endured it all. Bikermien

---

[124] "No 2", *Starstream,* ed. Roger Elwood. (Racine: Western Publishing Company, 1976).

[125] The gendered pronoun is taken from the original language.

[126] Dean R. Koontz. "Night of the Storm", in *Starstream: Adventures in Science Fiction,* ed. Roger Elwood. (Racine: Western Publishing Company, 1976), 2.

suggests that Suranov should "reduce his faculties" and go "North to Rogale's Province for some hunting".[127] With fellow robots Steffan, Tuttle and Leeke, Suranov reaches the snowy Walker's Watch where Janus gives them directions and an old-fashioned hunting rifle. Janus represents the last bastion of civilization as he guides them safely through an incoming snowstorm. Despite the fact that he "constantly hear about 'sightings' of 'human beings'", he is convinced that the human race is completely extinct. However, towards the end, it remains clear that Janus has not experienced what roams beyond the border of Walker's Watch.

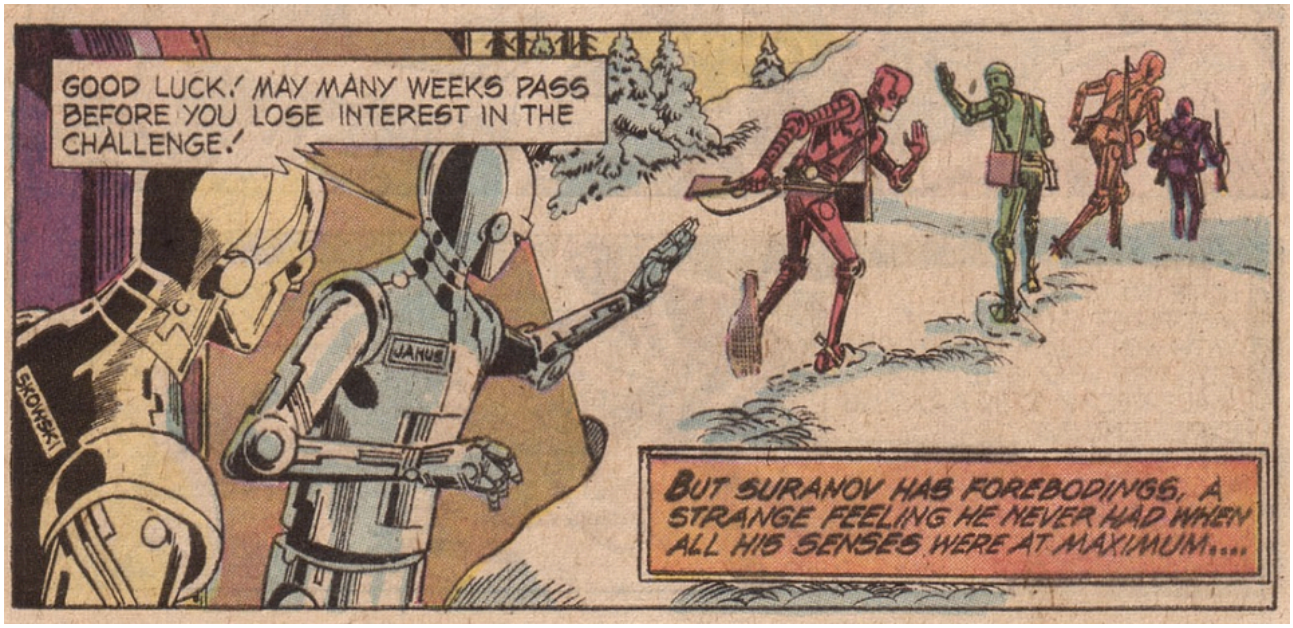


FIG. 2: THE ROBOTS VENTURE INTO THE WILD.

The reversal of familiarity enters in the moment where we learn about the psychological capacities of Suranov and his kind. Here, the novella diverges from an understanding of robots as quintessentially mechanic and automatized. By representing the robots as conscious and sensitive beings, the story places the robots at the receiving end of human projection. The ultimate mirror comes after a series of events that have led the company to believe they are being followed by human beings: footprints, the missing rifle from the cabin, the assault on Leeke and the missing power chord from the generator. The company decides to force the darkness and set out back for

[127] ibid., 3.

Walker's Watch but on their way, they are attacked by three human beings and as both Tuttle and Steffan are knocked down, Suranov faces one of them.

FIG. 3: "MAN" APPEARS.

The reader stares directly into the eyes of humankind itself which evokes an eerie sense of familiarity. The composition of the portrayal and the text box brings Suranov's reaction to the encounter close to the reader's interpretation because of the proximity between text and image. This encounter represents a posthuman alienation from humankind as the human being appears as something mysterious and monstrous, both to Suranov and to the reader. Thus, the comic plays with the concepts of the alien and estrangement. In the case of "Night of the Storm", the human being represents such a prehistoric threat to the robots that it leads Suranov to violate his pacifist protocols, similar to *Word for World*. Thus, the human being is constructed as the extraordinary other in the narrative and as a symbol of a monstrosity which lies beyond the realm of civilization. It constitutes a threat to Suranov's group exactly because it appears in a place where it should not. Thus, there are parallels between "Night of the Storm" and *Word for World* in terms of how the two texts represent a truly posthuman condition. In both instances, the encounter between humankind and its others leads to a decentralization of humanity and, consequently, a new understanding of the relation between the human and nonhuman: The human body appears as a passing body that can be replaced.

Fading Cyborgs: Dying in the Void of (Post)humanism

Here, I will turn to Robert Silverberg's *Dying Inside,* which was published in 1972. I argue that the the novel can be read as a defense of the posthuman condition, however, its representation of the posthuman condition is not straightforward because the novel is emphatically anthropocentric because it all occurs inside one individual.

The novel accounts for the decay of David Selig, an unemployed university graduate, who can enter people's minds via telepathy. The story takes place in 1976 and Selig lives in Brooklyn but goes to his Alma Mater, Columbia University, on Upper Manhattan, in order to "forage" for money. Selig is "of the 1935 vintage", has a youthful appearance, is dressed in a "faded blue denim jacket, heavy-duty boots, and 1969-vintage striped bells".[128] He is, however, losing his hair and is slowly going bald. It is important to notice that the novel is semi-autobiographical as Silverberg also attended Columbia and was also born in 1935. This leads us to believe that the story is in part modeled on the author's own life. In other words, Selig looks unexceptionally like the average American in the seventies; however, his interior is wholly different from the outside. The novel represents how Selig's cyborg quality defamiliarizes him from the inside of his body, and thus it evokes a sense of the uncanny. In literary theory, the uncanny is embedded in a perception of literature in terms of how it makes the familiar strange. Silverberg's narrative juxtaposes descriptions of a seemingly realistic vision of Selig and his life in New York with his telepathic ability which is hidden for his surroundings. Where Selig's ability remains hidden for his surroundings, no one can hide from Selig's telepathy. Andrew Bennett and Nicholas Royle point out that telepathy is an example of the uncanny because telepaths can break into other subjects' minds. This is uncanny because it goes against the established perception that the subject is the only with the access to the mind and thus, it is an invasion of the ultimate privacy, i.e. that of one's mind.[129]

So, Selig's ability overrides the bodily boundary between him and the people around him. He can thus can be understood in terms of Haraway's cyborg because of the way in which telepathy disables Selig as a human being. The novel does not merely present a vision of an enhanced human being, but the cyborg is literally represented as part of the human itself. In the early stages of the novel, Selig realizes that he is different compared to his classmates and later, his ability restricts him

---

[128] Robert Silverberg. *Dying Inside*. (London: Sidgwick & Jackson, 1972), 5-6.

[129] Andrew Bennett and Nicholas Royle. "The Uncanny", in *Introduction to Literature, Criticism and Theory*. 3rd edition. (Harlow: Pearson and Longman, 2004 (1995)), 38.

from gaining relationships with other people. In this way, Selig's telepathic ability also symbolizes a monstrous alien within, as Selig does not know where it comes from. The novel therefore represents several passing bodies: Not only is Selig's own body inhabited by an alien skill, this skill allows him to invade other people's bodies. He is able to pick up "a person's surface thoughts, his subvocalization of the things he's just about to say. These would come to me in a clear conversational manner, exactly as though he *had* said them". However, Selig notes that the communication is not produced by a human body: "the tone of voice was different, it was plainly not a tone produced by the vocal apparatus".[130] This is of course the definition of telepathy, but it also suggests that human communication can be performed by other means than through the human body.

Another way in which *Dying Inside* is interesting in a discussion of the posthuman condition is the way in which Selig's omnipresent ability symbolizes how bionic additions contribute to an expansion of what we perceive as accessible for the human perception. For example, in one of the novel's flashbacks, Selig visits a farm in Catskills with his parents. One day, while David's father is on a hike and his mother has taken David's sister Judith for a drive, David is left on his own. While roaming the grounds, he decides to try out his ability on his surroundings:

> His questioning mind has snared another mind, a buzzing one, small, dim, intense. It is a bee's mind, in fact: David is not limited only to contact with humans. Of course there are no verbal outputs from the bee, nor any conceptual ones. If the bee thinks at all, David is incapable of detecting those thoughts. But he does get into the bee's head. He experiences a strong sense of what it is like to be tiny and compact and winged and fuzzy.[131]

David does not only read the bee's mind but it appears that he shows empathy with the bee's existence and this empathy exceeds the a psychological connection as it is also linked to the notion of embodiment, as the adjectives "tiny", "compact", "winged" and "fuzzy" relate to a corporeal experience of the bee. This is enforced when he realizes

---

[130] Silverberg, 17.

[131] ibid., 63.

> [h]ow *dry* the universe of a bee is: bloodless, desiccated, arid. He soars. He swoops. He evades a passing bird, as monstrous as a winged elephant. He burrows deep into a steamy, pollen-laden blossom. He goes aloft again. He sees the world through the bee's faceted eyes.[132]

At this point, it is impossible to decipher where Selig ends and the bee begins. Shifting focalization emphasizes the close affinity between the two. This is symbolic for how the human pronoun "he" encompasses and legitimizes not only a human subject but also a nonhuman subject. In fact, it is possible to argue that this posthuman representation draws attention to how a posthuman perception of embodiment can sustain ecological threats to human survival. Ultimately, a posthuman understanding of embodied presence becomes crucial for humankind: It is exactly the posthuman condition that enables Selig to be fully immersed in the environment.

But towards the end of that chapter, the presence of the unavoidable death reminds the reader that David's juvenile grasp of oneness fades. The "endless trip" decays, as he reminds the reader: "Time leaches the colors from the best of visions. The world becomes grayer. Entropy beats us down. Everything fades. Everything goes. Everything dies".[133] In some ways, this quote reflects Braidotti's argument that the affects involved in the human-nonhuman relation, "including desire, cruelty and pain, change radically with the contemporary technologies …".[134] In *Dying Inside*, Selig's body remains physically present while his interior fades with his ability. The novel does not reveal the reasons why his telepathic capacity fades but is focused on his affective response, and, as suggested in the passage above, the death of his inside is also the death of his subjectivity. This would not be an outrageous claim under other circumstances, however, in this context, it is central for Silverberg's narrative because of the ambiguous relation between subjectivity and the human body in critical posthumanism. On one hand, the novel represents the figure of the cyborg as a transcendent figure of the posthuman condition because it "functions as an evolutionary step

---

[132] ibid.

[133] ibid., 66.

[134] Braidotti, 109.

towards fully transcendent humanity".[135] Selig's telepathic ability connects him to the world around him. On the other hand, *Dying Inside* rejects any transhumanist, technophile utopianism as Selig loses his ability and, therefore, his sense of self. His cyborg quality has complicated his sense of self and ultimately the gradual deprivation leads Selig towards some kind of death.

The novel thus represents a plot development that is somewhat characteristic of New Wave sf as Selig's telepathic ability fades. As mentioned, rather than focusing on how Selig has come in the possession of the ability, the origins of his telepathic ability remains obscure and hidden to the reader. The focus is on the loss and deprivation of the ability and the consequent anxiety. In relation to the posthuman context, it could be argued that the plot makes a point in describing the deterioration of a posthuman being. In this way, it is a reversal of other technophobic and paranoid narratives from the same period. Selig exists only as a posthuman subject: Selig is a cyborg because his telepathic ability is connected to his sense of self. Telepathy here symbolizes the transcendent movement in critical posthumanism. His telepathic ability is not merely a transhuman convenient extension but is connected to his emotional and existential apparatus. The permeable body in *Dying Inside* is not a threat to human being but instead it is the movement away from posthumanism which seems to provide the narrative with a sense of anxiety. Simply put, the novel reflects a necessity in perceiving and utilizing the posthuman condition for the better and not the worse.

Across the Divide

Textual or other cultural representations of posthuman theory, Peter Mahon reminds us, involve a transgression of the boundary between human and nonhuman beings by "simultaneously invoking

---

[135] Lars Schmeink. *Biopunk Dystopias Genetic Engineering, Society and Science Fiction*. (Oxford: Liverpool University Press, 2016), 36. http://search.ebscohost.com.proxy1-bib.sdu.dk:2048/login.aspx?direct=true&db=nlebk&AN=1452569&site=ehost-live. [accessed 29 April 2019].

and … disrupting folk-psychology".[136] Folk-psychology here denotes the impression of the external world on our inner beliefs, actions and desires; a collective sense of folk which is based on a shared experience of the world. However, New Wave sf exceeds this boundary in its exploration of the posthuman by applying a folk-psychology to "nonhuman figures and characters". For example, in "Night of the Storm", the group of robots travels into the wilderness in order to achieve peace and tranquility through a more primal experience. Here, the wilderness functions as a motif in human folk-psychology; first as something psychologically cleansing and second as a symbolic place that unpredictable, uncontrollable or not environmentally suited for human survival. Therefore, it is distorted by the presence of the robots who should not need a psychological remedy nor be unable to predict, control or stand the environment of the wilderness. In Mahon's view it is essential to think in posthuman terms because of the way in which the

> categories which are usually reserved for discussing humanity and 'human nature' are not confined to beings we can consider human; consequently, such texts also displace and put into question the category of 'human' itself by asking, 'what is 'human' if nonhumans—machines, animals, aliens, and so on—can be described in human terms?[137]

In *Dying Inside*, Selig obtains a shared emotional or existential understanding that transcends the human/nonhuman divide. The fact that he can be immersed into the bee's mind, and even see the world through its "multifaceted" eyes, literally allows for a shared experience across the divide. Nayar argues that the human in the critical posthumanist vision "can no longer be separated from material", whether it is organic, through plants or animals, or inorganic, as "technological and informational networks".[138] Mahon reads, among other texts, Philip K Dick's *Do Androids Dream of Electric Sheep?* which asks whether dreaming is a quintessential human ability or whether it can transcend into the posthuman. A similar question is raised in Le Guin's *Word for World* where the

---

[136] Peter Mahon. *Posthumanism: A Guide for the Perplexed*. (New York: Bloomsbury Academic, 2017), 158. http://search.ebscohost.com.proxy1-bib.sdu.dk:2048/login.aspx?direct=true&db=nlebk&AN=1460062&site=ehost-live. [accessed 24 Mar 2019].

[137] ibid.

[138] Nayar, 79.

Athsheans can practice and access their subconsciousness through dreams. Thus, dreaming is not limited to humans; however, to dream has another meaning for the Athsheans, which suggests that what is common to human experience is not universal. This again aligns with the way in which critical posthumanism contests the universality of human being: First of all, the universality might be based on a predominantly White male experience, as Vint pointed out. Second of all, it does not account for the nonhuman experience. So, these New Wave texts exploit the border between human and nonhuman entities by decentralizing humankind in these narratives.

Ecology and Posthuman Landscapes

Critical posthumanism and environmentalism share the distinct goal of reconsidering human being in the age of anthropocentrism/post-anthropocentrism. The idea of the Anthropocene was originally coined by Dutch chemist Paul J. Crutzen in 2000 in order to describe the rise in greenhouse gasses and environmental changes over the last 200 years of human history. Moreover, in a later essay, Crutzen symbolically linked the Anthropocene specifically to James Watt's invention of the steam machine in 1784 and the Industrial Revolution.[139] Since then, human life has had such a significant impact on the Earth's geology that it qualifies as a geological age, according to Crutzen. Deforestation, population growth, atmospheric waste, exploitation of natural resources and industrialization of agriculture are examples of areas where human impact on Earth have grown since the dawn of industrialization in the early 19th century. However, as an article in the *Smithsonian Magazine* suggests, some stratigraphers have criticized the term as they point out that there is not enough evidence to support the idea of a new geological age. In this case, the "Anthropocene is more about pop culture than hard science".[140] Post-anthropocentrism, then, is the

---

[139] Paul J. Crutzen. "The 'Anthropocene'" in *Earth System Science in the Anthropocene: Emerging Issues and Problems*, ed. Eckart Ehlers and Thomas Krafft. (Berlin: Springer, 2006), 13-19.

[140] Joseph Stromberg. "What is the Anthropocene and Are We in it?". *Smithsonian Magazine*, (Jan. 2013). https://www.smithsonianmag.com/science-nature/what-is-the-anthropocene-and-are-we-in-it-164801414/. [accessed 8 May 2019].

theoretical idea of an age where humanism has been replaced by posthumanism and where the environmental consequences of the Anthropocene have altered Planet Earth. The idea of post-anthropocentrism is based on a universal decentralization of humankind and it is this decentralization that aligns post-anthropocentrism with the theory of critical posthumanism.

As mentioned in the introduction, the environmental consequences of industrial production, the limits of American energy production, and the subsequent question of human survival, contributed to the sense of cultural anxiety in the U.S. during the 1970s: Rachel Carson published *Silent Spring* in 1962, the Green Peace Movement was founded in 1971 and in 1969, the National Environmental Policy Act created the Environmental Protection Agency, which created an economic basis for all environmental law to come.[141] The first Earth Day was announced to take place on 22 April, 1970 by Senator Gayford Nelson (D-WI) and is often perceived as the beginning of the modern environmental movement.[142] The fear of overpopulation flowered in public culture with emergence the activist group Zero Population Growth (ZPG) in 1968. Based on the writing of biologist Paul Ehrlich, the ZPG stated that there should be a birth rate of 2:2, meaning that two parents could have two children, in order to secure the survival of the human race.[143] George Annas also argues that Apollo 11 and "the photos of Earth taken from space" had a profound impact on "our global consciousness, if not our global conscience", which helped "energize the worldwide environmental protection movement."[144] Thus, the rise in awareness on population ecology end environmental crises in the American public added to a sense of cultural anxiety.

---

[141] Philip Jenkins. *Decade of Nightmares: The End of the Sixties and the Making of Eighties America*. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006), 40.

[142] Alastair S. Gunn. "Earth Day 1970", in *Green Ethics and Philosophy: An A-to-Z Guide*, ed. by Julie Newman. (Thousand Oaks: SAGE Publications, Inc., 2011), 247-251. doi: 10.4135/9781412974608.n37. [accessed 29 April 2019]

[143] Timothy Jay. "Population Control", *We Did What?! Offensive and Inappropriate Behavior in American History*. (Santa Barbara: Greenwood, 2017). *EBSCOhost*, search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx?direct=true&db=nlebk&AN=1428357&site=ehost-live. [accessed 28 April 2019].

[144] George J. Annas. "The Man on the Moon", in *Science Fiction and Philosophy: From Time Travel to Superintelligence*, ed. Susan Schneider. (Malden: Blackwell Publishing, 2009), 231.

Concerns about overpopulation spread to the sf genre. For example, Colossus mentions that it will secure the survival of human race by solving famine, overpopulation and disease.[145] Another well-known sf work from the period that deals with this topic, *Soylent Green* (1973), depicted a dystopian future with a lack of food, overpopulation and pollution. In literature, J. G. Ballard's noteworthy contribution to British New Wave reflected the theme of eco-catastrophe in both *The Drowned World* (1962) and *The Drought* (1964). There is a slight difference between American and British representations of eco-catastrophe. In the American New Wave, the solution to the eco-catastrophe is either orchestrated or obstructed by an alien (sometimes invasive) force—as in *Soylent Green* where a large corporation exploits the catastrophic situation. In British depictions of eco-catastrophes, the focus is more on how the landscape impacts the subject. In these narratives, Rob Latham points out, "the author appears fundamentally uninterested either in explaining the disasters … Instead, the protagonists struggle toward a private accommodation with the cataclysms, a psychic attunement to their radical reordering of the environment".[146] In terms of ecology, the movement from outer to inner spaces in New Wave sf is reflected in the transference from the actual landscape to a psychological rendition. In *Dying Inside*, Selig's telepathic ability also represents an understanding of a posthuman vision of environmentalism in which embodiment maintains a crucial significance.

So, by applying critical posthumanism to New Wave science fiction, it is clear that these texts represent concerns for the relations between human beings and technology; between science and subjectivity and finally; between humankind and the environment.

---

[145] Sherryl Vint. "'Change for the Machines?' Posthumanism and Digital Sentience", in *Palgrave Handbook of Posthumanism in Film and Television*, ed. Michael Hauskeller, Thomas D. Philbeck, Curtis D. Carbonell. (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2015), 122.

[146] Rob Latham. "Biotic Invasions: Ecological Imperialism in New Wave Science Fiction". in *Green Planets: Ecology and Science Fiction*, ed. Gerry Canavan and Kim Stanley Robinson. (Middletown: Wesleyan University Press, 2014), 80.

III) PARANOID BODIES: CONSPIRACY THEORIES, PARANOID NARRATIVES AND POSTHUMAN ANXIETIES

In this chapter, I will analyze how New Wave narratives reflect a conspiracy culture and the sense of paranoia in explicit and implicit ways. I read these narratives in relation to what Timothy Melley has called "agency panic" in his book *Empire of Conspiracy* (1999).[147] He argues that agency panic is a form of cultural anxiety that permeates postwar narratives about loss of control and autonomy. In fact, Melley argues that these themes exceed the limited view of conspiracies as linked to certain historical periods but that conspiracy narratives "stem[] … from a sense of *diminished human agency*, a feeling that individuals cannot effect meaningful social action and … may not be able to control their own behavior".[148] I will argue that it is useful to read New Wave sf in relation to conspiracy culture of the 1970s but I will also connect it to the broader theory of critical posthumanism. The two share a distinct obsession with the meaning of the human individual, whether this is diminished or expanded in one way or another. In relation to the theme of bodies, human agency in critical posthumanism is challenged through bodily transformations or extensions and in conspiracy narratives the human body is represented as being limited or uncontrollable.

First, I read the story "Selenia" (1977) from the American comic book *Heavy Metal* where a group of astronauts lose their human form as they become connected to a computer circuit. The narrative can be read in terms of conspiracy culture because the transformation of the astronauts symbolizes the loss of individuality and subjectivity under scrutiny from an omnipresent system. Whereas the graphic transformation of the astronauts in "Selenia" makes the sense of paranoia explicit, it is more implicit in Philip K. Dick's *A Scanner Darkly* (1977) where the language itself is an expression of paranoia. The style of the novel makes the plot mysterious, absurd and obscure,

---

[147] Timothy Melley. *Empire of Conspiracy: The Culture of Paranoia in Postwar America*, (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2000), 12. ProQuest Ebook Central, http://ebookcentral.proquest.com/lib/sdub/detail.action?docID=4743542 [accessed 19 April 2019]

[148] ibid., 11.

and mirrors the fact the characters have interchangeable identities. The omniscient narrator focalizes on different characters; however, as these characters change and alternate—particularly through drug abuse and surveillance methods—the narrative becomes even more puzzling. This is also indicative of how paranoid narratives raise concerns about the reliability of the narrator. Whether the narrator is paranoid, anxious or delusional in any other way, there is a meaning to an unreliable narrator in conspiracy narratives that is based on a critical discussion of power and reliability. In other words, the characters in *Scanner Darkly* are not in charge of the complex flow of information despite the fact that they are parts of the web themselves, and this is clarified through the narrative voice. Finally, I will include the theory of critical posthumanism in a discussion of surveillance, paranoia and conspiracy in order to arrive at a nuanced vision of how one can say that American cultural anxiety changed throughout the 1970s.

Disclosing American Conspiracy Culture

In his book *Decades of Nightmares* (2006), Philip Jenkins calls the decade after 1968 for "The Age of Conspiracy". First of all, in American popular culture, the period saw the creation of a significant number of films and novels that represented the fear of intelligence agencies, government abuse, and other scenarios where "the person closest to you might be part of Them, one of the sinister groups out to destroy you".[149] Furthermore, Jenkins argues, conspiracy culture had a profound effect on the political culture of the era as well. Lowered electoral participation reflected the view that "Americans have showed a powerful predilection for exposé politics, for attempts to unravel the sinister manipulators supposedly responsible for grave social threats". Although the election of Carter in 1976 "raised the prospect of a new and, ideally, cleaner political era", conspiracies

[149] Jenkins, 55.

remained dominant in American culture throughout the 1990s and have appeared extensively following 9/11.[150]

Conspiracy culture denotes a field of American studies that examines how conspiratorial thinking become manifest in American culture and cultural representations. Peter Knight has argued that conspiracies "[express a] concern about whether we are in control of our own actions, and even whether we are in control of our own mind and bodies". The agency of the individual is in other words fragile and porous in conspiracy culture. He points out that there has been a shift in how conspiracies work as a dissolution of the enemy has taken place. Poplar conspiracy, he says,

> has mutated from an obsession with a fixed enemy to a generalized suspicion about conspiring forces. It has shifted, in effect, from a paradoxically secure form of paranoia that bolstered one's sense of identity, to a far more insecure version of conspiracy-infused anxiety which plunges everything into an infinite regress of suspicion. In short, there is now a permanent uncertainty about fundamental issues of casualty, agency, responsibility and identity in an age when many Americans' sense of assured national and personal destiny has been cast into profound doubt.[151]

The history of conspiracy in the U.S. dates back to the early years of the nation. Conspiratorial thinking is linked to the democratic ideals on which the nation was built. As Samuel Coale points out, the sense of national identity has been "based on demonizing others, viewing ourselves in confrontation with 'aliens' and subversive 'outsiders'", whether these were Bavarian Illuminati, French revolutionists or British aristocrats. Thus, conspiracies are based on the fear of an elite operating "behind the scenes in total secrecy, driven by a relentless Nietzschean will to power to control historical and social forces".[152] In the historical context of the 1970s, conspiracy theories and paranoia were connected to the public's distrust in authorities and dissatisfaction with the expansion of U.S. military involvement to Cambodia in 1969. Furthermore, Kathryn Olmstead has shown that conspiracies had an impact on politics as the Nixon administration was preoccupied with

---

[150] ibid., 55-6.

[151] Peter Knight. *Conspiracy Culture: From Kennedy to The X-Files*. (London: Routledge, 2000), 4.

[152] Samuel Coale. *Paradigms of Paranoia: The Culture of Conspiracy in Contemporary American Fiction*. (Tuscaloosa: University of Alabama Press, 2005), 16-17.

conspiracies. Most notably, the leak of the Pentagon Papers in 1971 caused anxiety for the president, who told his advisors that "we're up against an enemy, a conspiracy".[153] It is telling that even the highest ranking officers in government are paranoid about a colluding conspiracy, given their insight. Public intellectual Richard Hofstadter noted how a conspiracy culture had spread among politicians and elites in the U.S. In 1964, he published the widely cited article, "The Paranoid Style in American Politics", in *Harper's Magazine*, in which he wrote that the "paranoid style is an old and recurrent phenomenon in our public life which has been frequently linked with movements of suspicious discontent". Furthermore, he stressed the totality of paranoia and conspiracy because here, the "enemy is thought of as being totally evil and totally unappeasable, he must be totally eliminated".[154] This kind of intra-bureaucratic suspicion and fear is reflected in *Scanner Darkly* where even the identities of officials remain hidden for other officials. In any case, this detail points to the omnipresent sense of conspiracy that raged throughout the 1970s.

Mark Fenster has put forward a suited discussion of how conspiracy theories work in fictional narratives. He argues that in traditional—celebratory—conspiracy narratives, the conspiratorial paranoia constitutes a certain plot in which the protagonist must unravel and disclose how secret organizations and institutions operate to control the subject. Then, the character must act in order to change these previously obscure mechanisms: "Faced with imposing, omnipotent mysteries, these characters turn their professional or well-developed amateur cognitive expertise toward finding, exposing and finally, physically challenging conspiracy".[155] In the end, the protagonist must defeat the conspirators in order to restore individual freedom and justice. In

---

[153] qtd. in Kathryn S. Olmsted. *Real Enemies: Conspiracy Theories and American Democracy, World War I To 9/11*. (New York: Oxford University Press, 2009), 149. ProQuest Ebook Central, https://ebookcentral.proquest.com/lib/sdub/detail.action?docID=477048. [accessed 2 May 2019].

[154] Richard Hofstadter. "The Paranoid Style in American Politics", *Harper's Magazine* (November, 1964). https://harpers.org/archive/1964/11/the-paranoid-style-in-american-politics/5/. [accessed 24 May 2019].

[155] Mark Fenster. *Conspiracy Theories: Secrecy and Power in American Culture*. (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2008 (1999)), 126. ProQuest Ebook Central, https://ebookcentral.proquest.com/lib/sdub/detail.action?docID=433177. [accessed 2 May 2019].

conspiracy narratives, then, there is a realization of totalitarian structures and omnipresent networks that override individuality and this realization leads to a heightened awareness on the collective. All individuals engage in a collective conspiracy that has "appropriated the political and social order".[156] In this way, conspiracy narratives offer a challenge to the liberal humanist world view because it seeks to subvert individuality and human agency. They are "socially symbolic attempts", Fenster argues, "to confront and represent the totality of social relations, to reject the ideological divisions among social, economic, and political realms on which a liberal democracy exists".[157]

Furthermore, there is a connection between the genre of sf, paranoia and conspiracy narratives in general. They all present a radical newness that differs from everyday life. Carl Freedman argues that the "radical novelty of SF interpretations tends to require a rather thorough and totalizing presentation".[158] So, in some ways, the totalizing ontology of conspiracies requires an equally totalizing narratology which is found in sf. The hope of breaking free from a conspiracy constitutes a utopian desire in conspiracy narratives. This also links conspiracy to sf in the way in which they both offer a future hoping for utopia. What is significant about New Wave in relation to conspiracy narratives is the way in which these authors presented what Freedman calls the "weird and coherent interpretative of the paranoiac".[159] Contrary to the celebratory conspiracy narrative, New Wave texts are more dystopian in their conclusion and, as we shall see, the protagonists rarely defeat or escape the conspiracy. Fenster points out that "in its attempt to reveal a hidden truth that challenges the alienated social conceptualized within classical liberal thought, the conspiracy represents a … desire to reflect upon and confront the contradictions and conflicts of the contemporary democratic state and capitalism".[160] So, Fenster's argument is that conspiracy

---

[156] ibid., 128.

[157] ibid.

[158] Carl Freedman. "Towards a Theory of Paranoia: The Science Fiction of Philip K. Dick". *Science Fiction Studies* 11, no. 1 (Mar. 1984), 20. https://www.jstor.org/stable/4239584 [accessed 7 May 2019].

[159] ibid.

[160] Fenster, 128.

narratives lead to larger discussion about the state of society which fits with the way in which New Wave sf represented a dystopian, paranoid vision of conspiracy culture in the 1970s. Instead of having subjects that are able to contest the conspiracy, the characters in *Scanner Darkly* and "Selenia" remain limited to the system. The revelation remains absent.

Into the Circuit

> "What a strange place. Put here for some purpose … And all these numbers resounding in my head. Oh no! Oh no! Aahh! It's inhuman!"[161]

In "Selenia", two astronauts are sent out to examine crater vibrations coming from the distant moon Copernicus. The female and male astronaut discover an artificial pothole at the bottom of an excavation site and enter it in order to examine if the vibrations come from the deep interior of the planet. At the bottom, the female astronaut is sucked into a vault where a master computer is apparently performing endless calculations on several monitors. The quote above is her thoughts as she moves through the underground vault. The experience evokes an uncanny sense of will and purpose that is however indecipherable for the female astronaut. The numbers are not only part of the computer but transcends into her body, into her head, causing her to suffer.

Gradually, she is sucked to the vault's center where a giant computer, shaped as a human being, sits on a throne-like installation. The picture of the giant takes up a full page in the comic strip, which is in black and white, so that the many details and digital ornaments are available to the reader. Although the giant has an unmistakeable human appearance, it is difficult to distinguish where the giant ends and the throne begins. The giant seems anchored to the

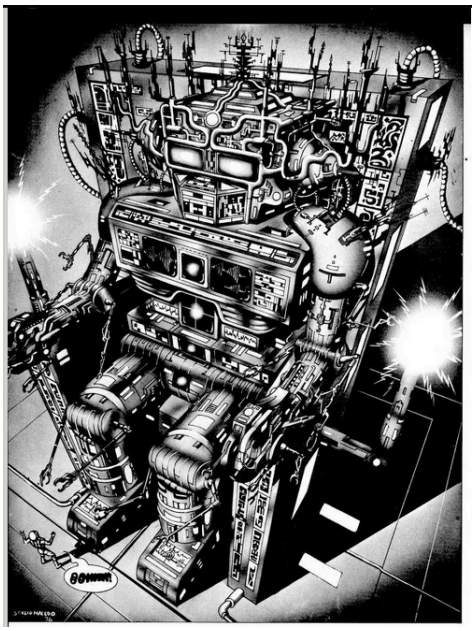


FIG. 4: THE GIANT.

[161] Marre and Macedo. "Selenia" *Heavy Metal* 1, April 1977. (New York, HM Communications: 1977), 45-54.

throne which leads to the conclusion that it is the motherboard of the computer, which is connected to the vault via the cords (at the bottom of the image), and that it is responsible for all the complex calculations. At the same time, the giant seems detached from its surroundings. The spotlight illuminates the giant but creates a shadow and the vignette fades to black in the corners. This emphasizes the monstrosity of the giant as well as makes the reader question what is in the shadow and how does the giant relate to its surroundings?

Meanwhile, the male astronaut has sent for a rescue mission and an assault unit is sent to break into the chamber using their weapons and as the doors open, they face the giant, now on its feet, as it dematerializes in front of their eyes and disappears into a bright light. However, the computer is still active and shortly after, a voice is heard through the communication system, Selenia. It turns out that the giant was a fifth generation robot guard who was deployed to protect the relay station, installed a thousands million years earlier by the Galactic Confederation. The

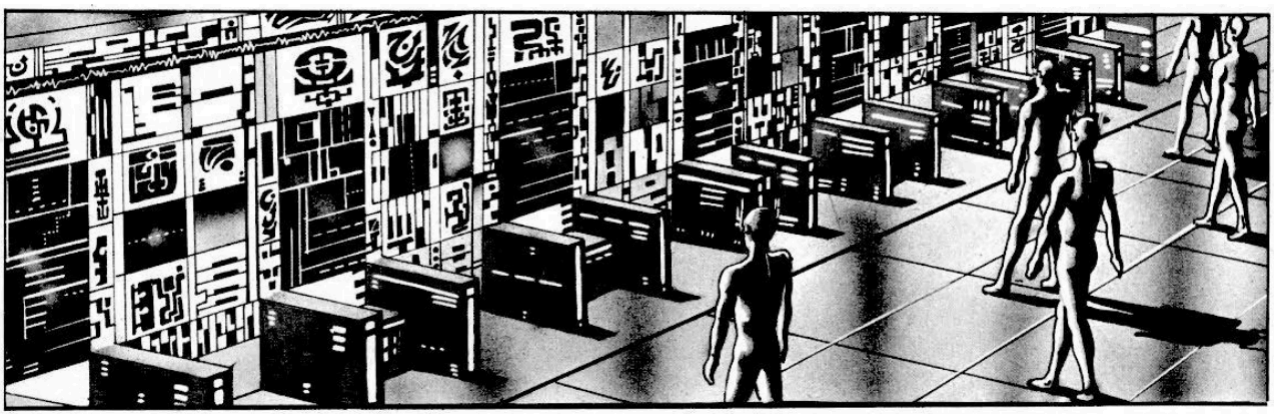


FIG. 5: NEW GUARDS APPROACHING THE CIRCUIT.

humans' intrusion was permitted by the system but in return, seven of them have to become part of the machine so that it can receive information about human conditions. Gradually, the astronauts are transformed into expressionless humanoid robots who must become part of the computer:

> You seven … *robots* of the fourth generation, your humanoid circuits are in the process of restructuration … Your work is finished among humans. Your prerecorded psychic circuits will interfere with your new *Selenia* programming. Your memories are being

> reactivated for your first mission: As *lunar terminals* for the intergalactic communication circuits.[162]

The comic strip is from the sf comic magazine, *Heavy Metal,* which was originally created by the well-known French comics artists, Jean Giraud (also known as Mœbius), but published in the U.S. in 1977 by Leonard Mogel. The series incorporated erotica, dark fantasy, punk and sf into an explosively diverse publication that remains in publication. The comic strip represents the fears and anxiety concerning the posthuman body in relation to technology, computers and digitalization. It depicts the human body as a physical plug-in component in an alien and strange computer system. The astronauts' individual agencies are invoked in order to serve a larger system. Instead of reaching clarity about the crater, the astronauts are transformed into servants and in the transformation, their human features are erased and obscured. As a conspiracy narrative, "Selenia" offers no revelation in the end. Rather, the protagonists are captured by the system to the point where they, quite literally, disappears from the narrative. Equally, the narrative is characterized by a sense of mystery, obscurity and uncanny which leaves the reader with no revelation.

The plot was anticipated in sf duo Frederik Kornbluth and Cyril Pohl's *Wolfbane* (1959), where Earth has been conquered by aliens. Humans, who now live in a state of passive meditation, are extracted via "Eyes", teleports that appear above humans. In *Wolfbane*, the human brains function as organic fuel for an alien machine that combines several brains in clusters in order to perform complex cognitive calculations. It is not only the human body that is captured and transcended but the mind as well.[163] This points to a posthuman critique of a post-body subjectivity where our minds can be wired and used by intruders; a thought which seems rather modern and relevant in the light of the 21st century question about data safety and "cloud" storage. Unlike in *Wolfbane*, the alien computer in "Selenia" is installed by a human agency in the past and the robot

---

[162] Marre and Macedo, 47.

[163] Mark Bould. "Cyberpunk", in *A Companion to Science Fiction*, ed. David Seed. (Malden: Blackwell Publishing, 2008), 225; Frederik Pohl and C. M. Kornbluth. *Wolfbane*. (New York: Baen Books, 1986 (1959)).

guardian is programmed accordingly. Thus, the comic presents the alien and the stranger as being part of humankind itself. Not only was this characteristic for New Wave sf, it came also from conspiracy culture and the paranoia of surveillance. The comic represents the vulnerability of human being in a posthuman condition and thus, it is critical of posthuman developments that can be mobilized by human agencies which threaten human beings' corporeal existence.

"Selenia" is an example of how New Wave sf reflected an anxiety over the juxtaposition between the human body and existence and posthuman robots. It depicts the human body as being restricted and occupied by an alien force. Together with *Wolfbane*, they exemplify a posthuman vision where the human body loses its meaning and significance in this world; however, I should stress that there are other interpretations of the posthuman body, where alterations and modifications are not necessarily negative but convenient and functional. For example, Herbrechter reads *Minority Report* and *Terminator* as examples where the duration of the body seems "to affirm the human in the face of posthumanist scenarios", i.e. a celebration of human capacities of fallibility and vulnerability.[164] In any event, the two narratives represent how anxieties about the posthuman condition coincide with, and are enhanced by, the paranoia of a conspiracy culture in the U.S.

The Missing Check: Reading Conspiracy in *Scanner Darkly*

Correspondingly, *Scanner Darkly* also presents a totalitarian conspiracy in which the technologization of society leads to a dissolution of the paranoid subject. The protagonist, Robert Arctor, is a narcotics agent working undercover for the Orange County Sheriff's Department. A deadly, expensive and highly addictive drug, Substance D, has infiltrated the drug market and pushers endeavor to get people hooked on the drug in order to proliferate their business. In order to disrupt the market from within, Arctor has to become part of the environment himself. However, the

[164] Herbrechter, 129.

paranoia takes over and he becomes enmeshed in the drug culture himself and in the end, he is sent to a rehabilitation farm in Napa Valley, deluded and out of order.

The novel aligns with other themes of the New Wave, which I have presented throughout this thesis. Most notably, the novel is not set in outer space, but takes place in a near future, in 1994, in a setting that resembles the author's contemporary society. The characters roam Orange County, California, which is also the place where Richard Nixon grew up as a son of a grocer, as if Dick wanted to suggest a relation to the former President.[165] The novel also depicts a raging drug culture where Substance D destroys lives of children and adults across the U.S. The 1970s witnessed an increased use of drugs in American society. Nixon declared pronounced the war on drugs in 1971 and Nancy Reagan embodied the "Just Say No!" campaign in the early 1980s. Thus, the novel resembles the widespread, organized and highly damaging drug culture which swept across the U.S. during the 1970s. The drug culture in *Scanner Darkly* is represented as an authoritarian regime where individuals are either delusional consumers or paranoiacally trying to dodge it. However, it is interesting to notice that the most significant threat to individuality and subjectivity in the novel is not the drug culture as such. Rather, it is the unsettling idea that true identities remain hidden or obscure as well as the uncanny idea that the presumed "real" world is not what it seems. In this way, the narrative contests the notion of reality as something fixed and determined. The juxtaposition between drug culture and paranoid conspiratorial thinking allows for Dick to present the notions of psychosis and delusion more ambiguously: Arctor's mental breakdown derives not only from his substance abuse but also from a structural paranoia that is inescapable. The novel's preoccupation with the psychological effects of drug abuse, paranoia and surveillance demonstrates a movement towards inner spaces in the New Wave.

Finally, there is a sense of anxiety and paranoia which stems from the way in which surveillance overrides the subject, individuality and its thoughts and emotions. As Jennifer Rhee

---

[165] Olmsted, 150.

points out, the novel emphasizes a shift between earlier surveillance narratives because it does not represent a "paranoid protagonist" who deciphers, interprets and ultimately untangles "ever-present signs of conspiracy", in an act of personal agency. Instead, Dick's narrative is thoroughly paranoid as the subject's agency is tied to a web of conspiracy, or "paranoia's interpretive system-building is one of the few possible modes of agency".[166] There is a paranoid awareness of a totalizing system that encapsulates the novel's characters, but this system in fact enables some kind of human agency, yet, it is limited and endless at the same time. Rhee argues that "[Fred and Bob] are so deadened by the forces working on them that paranoia, a signifier of agency, is inaccessible to them".[167] In *Scanner Darkly*, then, the characters' agencies derive from paranoia, but it does not lead to any revelation or full disclosure. Instead, the novel is a dystopian representation of a obscure society that has limited individual agency and thus, it adds to a body of dystopian sf texts from the 1970s.

The book opens with the "freakout of Jerry Fabin", a Substance D user who believes his body is invaded by bugs and therefore showers constantly. Fabin is institutionalized on a New-Path clinic, disillusioned, restricted and out of touch with reality. While the bugs derive from Jerry's paranoia and disillusion, this does not make them "unreal". They appear as the real and corporeal manifestation of surveillance and invasion privacy in the novel. In some ways, however, they also seem to enforce Jerry's sense of individuality or loneliness: "He paid no attention to Charles Freck, only to himself. To his own vital, demanding, terrible, urgent needs. Everything else would have to wait".[168]

The pivotal paranoid chapter in *Scanner Darkly* is chapter eleven where Bob Arctor experiences the collapse of his consciousness and where the paranoia takes over his actions. Later in the novel, Arctor learns that the right and left hemispheres of his brain are competing with each

---

[166] Jennifer Rhee. "Surveillance and Counter-Surveillance in Philip K. Dick's A Scanner Darkly", *Mosaic* 50, no. 2 (June 2017), 136. https://muse-jhu-edu.proxy1-bib.sdu.dk/article/663694/pdf. [accessed 21 April 2019].

[167] ibid.

[168] Philip K. Dick. *A Scanner Darkly*. (London: Gollanz, 1999 (1977)), 4.

other and this leads to his psychological breakdown. Arctor goes to Englesohn Locksmith to pay for a bad check. He is unsure, however, about who has written the bad check. At first he suspects Barris because "Christ knows what else he's done: he's got all the time in the world to loaf around … and dream up plots and intrigues and conspiracies and so forth …". [169] Arctor even accuses himself in third person: "What if I made it out myself? What if Arctor wrote this? I think I did, he thought".[170] This is an example of how the notion of conspiracy manifests a sense of paranoia in the narrative. As the narrative voice oscillates between first and third person, it is unclear what the character actually means. The quick shift in focalization leads not only to fragmentation but complete dissolution. Furthermore, during his visit to Englesohn Locksmith, his thoughts are interrupted by a German voice which literally breaks into the narrative:

> Arctor said, "I'm here …
>
> *Ihr Instrumente freilich spottet mein,*
>
> *Mit Rad und Kämmen, Walz und Bügel:*
>
> *Ich stand am Tor, ihr solltet Schlüssel sein;*
>
> *Zwar euer Bart ist kraus, doch hebt ihr nich die Riegel.*
>
> … to pay for a check of mine which the bank returned."[171]

The German quotes, originally from Goethe's *Faust*, occurs five times throughout the chapter and is never commented explicitly by the narrator. Thus, Arctor's investigation of the conspiratorial check does not lead to a revelation as his thoughts are repeatedly interrupted and the line of reasoning is repeatedly obstructed. These interruptions suggest that there is something else within Arctor which he is not able to control. We can interpret this as a symbol of an alien infestation. Elena Gomel has pointed out that the "trope of alien infestation literalizes the cultural disintegration of 'man' in the plot of the transformation of a human subject into a post/inhuman entity. This transformation

---

[169] ibid., 141.

[170] ibid.

[171] ibid., 139.

preserves the body but re-crafts the mind".[172] The infestation is thus another manifestation of the cultural alien that appears within. Arctor's mind is changed from something which has taken place inside him, and thus it posits an uncanny conundrum: the alien "is simultaneously contiguous with humanity and thus speaks in a human voice; and yet it is also radically Other and thus its voice is a counterfeit, a simulacrum, an insincere and flawed imitation. Alien infestation is a discursive site where humanity confronts its alienation from itself".[173]

The sense of estrangement hits Arctor when he arrives back at the house where he lives. The immediate and uncanny sense of being not alone is reflected in narratological voice: "Immediately he felt something watching: the holo-scanners on him … Alone—no one but him in the house. Untrue! Him and the scanners, insidious and invisible, that watched him and recorded." The fragmented narrative again draws on variable focalization, which shifts between at least one version of Arctor and the scanners: "I am, he thought, as soon as I enter the house. It's eerie".[174] And again, there is an uncanny suspicion of an omnipresent system that operates behind the scanners; however, even this seems to be questioned in the novel: "For whatever reasons they would do or do want to. Assuming there's a 'they' at all. Which may just be my imagination, the 'they watching me. Paranoia. Or rather the 'it'. The depersonalized *it*. Whatever it is that's watching, it is not a human".[175] The paranoid language expresses the realization of an estranged sense of subjectivity as Arctor senses that "[s]omething is being done to me". The personal pronoun refers not only to Arctor's sense(s) of self but to a general sense of human being, and thus, it is clear how *Scanner Darkly* represents paranoia as a complex structure of feelings that is unbreakable.

The novel thus reflects typical themes of postwar conspiracy and paranoia. It approves Melley's argument that "postwar model of conspiracy, in other words, is dependent upon a notion of

---

[172] Gomel, 97.

[173] Dick, 139.

[174] ibid., 146.

[175] ibid.

diminished human agency".[176] *Scanner Darkly* shows little hope for the restoration of free will and individuality. Hologram scanners represent an unavoidable technologization of society; surveillance is no longer restricted to the body but also includes the subject's mind. Technology works to obscure or obstruct personal relations, regulate behavior and ultimately terminate human existence: a truly posthuman techno-dystopia.

Dick began publishing sf novels in the 1950s but moved into the 1960s and 1970s as part of the counterculture, which had profound effect on his writing. As many other sf writers from the New Wave, the 1970s broke with Dick's experience as of the conformity of mass culture in the postwar period in America. Here, he responded to developments in American society by representing a world in which truths were contested and in which "what is real and what is authentic is both uncertain and constantly changing".[177] Furthermore, Dick was personally haunted by paranoia and allegedly someone broke into his safe where he stored manuscripts. These biographical details depict a generation that was born into an expanding government apparatus where the purpose that this was to serve the common good. However, this generation grew skeptic towards the end of the 1960s, the conspiracy culture thickened, and skepticism spread to the sf genre.

Moreover, Dick remains a celebrated creator of sf worlds in contemporary popular culture. Consider, for example, Denis Villeneuve's 2017 sequel to Ridley Scott's 1982 classic, *Blade Runner*; or the British TV series simply titled *Philip K. Dick's Electric Dreams* (2017), which adapts a number of Dick's short stories. Dick is possibly the one sf writer with the most screen adaptations; Christopher Palmer points to the close "affinities between Dick's fiction and contemporary films from *Repo Man* to *Matrix*".[178] However, whether the affinity is a matter of hype or convenience, it

---

[176] Melley, 3.

[177] Christopher Palmer. "Philip K. Dick", in *A Companion to Science Fiction*, ed. David Seed. (Malden: Blackwell Publishing, 2008), 396.

[178] ibid., 390.

seems to indicate that the themes Dick wrote about—about individuality, authority, technology or posthumanism—remain relevant in the 21st century.

Wearing Multiple Bodies: Does the Scramble Suit Erode or Empower the Human Body?

The scramble suit offers the most vivid threat to the human body in *Scanner Darkly*. It conceals the identity of the wearer while representing endless combinations of human figurations. Its meaning is ambiguous: On one hand, it is the epitome of anthropomorphism; on the other, it is a technophobic representation of how the individual human body renders obsolete in the posthuman condition. In this section, I will look at how the scramble suit appears in the novel and what affective relations are constituted in relation to the novel's characters in order to arrive at an interpretation of the representation of scramble suits in *Scanner Darkly*.

We first encounter the scramble suit when Fred, the anonymous name of Bob Arctor, talks at the Anaheim Lions Club and it is clear that it affects individuality and the sense of self. As the presenter notes, "you can barely see this individual, who is seated directly to my right, because he is wearing what is called a scramble suit", and Fred is even referred to as a "blur" in the suit.[179] In this way, the scramble suit symbolizes the loss of the individual body as it consists of a "multifaced quartz lens hooked to a miniaturized computer whose banks held up to a million and a half physiognomic fraction-representations of various people … As the computer looped through its banks, it projected every conceivable eye color, hair color, shape and type of nose, formation of teeth, configuration of facial bone structure …"[180] The suit reflects an endless array of possible human figurations at every instance. However, it is clear from Fred's speech that the suit is a necessity in the narcotics agency as they cannot know the true identities of the agents. Anonymity secures the agency from conspiratorial penetration.

---

[179] Dick, 15.

[180] ibid., 16.

Furthermore, the audience has an "expectant gaze" on Fred as he is "lurking within [the scramble suit's] membrane". Because the narrative voice is omniscient but also partly focalized through Fred, it is unclear whether this description is from the inside or the outside of the scramble suit. On one hand, the audience reckons that the scramble suit contains an individual who is watching them. To them, Fred's identity is interlocked in the very materialization of the suit's technology. On the other hand, from the inside, Fred *feels* hidden from the audience and therefore under some kind of protection. However, it does not protect him from a feeling of anxiety about being the object of a gaze: "Fred … groaned and thought: This is terrible".[181] So, the suit does not erode his sense of presence completely. In both cases, the indefinite presence of Fred/Arctor evokes the uncanny as his human figuration is veiled and replaced by a technology. It gives the impression that Fred's identity is interlocked in the membrane of the scramble suit. Moreover, the gaze suggests that Fred is not only estranged from his own sense of self but also an alien to the audience. So, the effort to familiarize the public with the bureau's activities succeeds only partially because the scramble suit remains alien.

So, the scramble suit distorts the characters' sense of reality in the novel. This is exemplified in the way Fred does not recognizes himself without a suit: "When you get down to it, I'm Arctor, he thought. I'm the man on the scanners, the suspect Barris was fucking over with his weird phone call with the locksmith, and I was asking, What's Arctor been up to to get Barris on him like that? I'm slushed; my brain is slushed. This is not real. I'm not believing this, watching what is me, is Fred—that was Fred down there without his scramble suit; that's how Fred appears without the suit!"[182] Here, it is clear that the scramble suit leads to a sense of paranoia because it distorts the reality. Moreover, the paranoia derives not from the fear of a conspiratorial "Them" but from the

---

[181] ibid., 17.

[182] ibid., 132-33.

realization that Arctor is corrupting himself. Thus, Arctor not only loses the sense of self but also the sense of reality.

Another way in which the scramble suit represents a sense of paranoia in *Scanner Darkly* is through the notion of surveillance, which is an overarching theme in the novel. Or more precisely, posthuman surveillance, i.e. surveillance that is facilitated by the use of technologically advanced equipment which represents a more complex and omnipresent sense of surveillance. Theoretically, surveillance studies raise questions about notions of privacy; what is private and what should be accessible? David Rosen and Aaron Santesso point to how the idea of selfhood changes as surveillance technologies become more and more complex: "Any history of surveillance", they argue, "must consider ways that conceptions of selfhood have changed over time".[183] The hologram scanners in the novel represent a growing anxiety about how individuals exist not only, nor primarily, in flesh and blood, but that the bodies could be invaded (by "bugs") and transferred to other media. Ultimately, this called into question the power of one's selfhood. Most notably, Jeremy Bentham's idea of the panopticon, picked up by Foucault in 1975, was about how to gain power over not only the body but the mind of prisoners. For Foucault, the body was exceeded in the sense that "older prisons aimed to punish the body, new institutions … aimed at the mind".[184] This is particularly interesting in a discussion of the role of the body in the posthuman condition in the 1970s. How do these bodies under surveillance appear in New Wave sf and what meaning do they obtain? Foucault used the panopticon as a model for how "disciplinary societies" have worked since the 19th century where a secret police force plays a key role. In other words, the panopticon was the model for how the contemporary surveillance society imprisoned citizens' behavior. Furthermore, adding critical posthumanism, a posthuman surveillance society diminishes the significance of

---

[183] David Rosen and Aaron Santesso. *The Watchman in Pieces: Surveillance, Literature, and Liberal Personhood*. (Yale University Press, 2013), 4. ProQuest Ebook Central, https://ebookcentral.proquest.com/lib/sdub/detail.action?docID=3421238 [accessed 20 April 2019].

[184] ibid., 5-6.

embodiment which then makes selfhood precarious and porous. In *Scanner Darkly*, Dick distorts the notion of selfhood even further as the boundary between prisoner and watcher is obscured: Fred watches Donna, who is in fact hired to watch Bob, who is actually Fred again. Furthermore, the scramble suit symbolizes how the surveillance society works to homogenize its citizens and, ultimately, erode the sense of selfhood. David Murakami Wood connects the New Wave to the theme of surveillance and paranoia because of the way in which the genre "intensified this interest in advertising, mass media synopticism and/or computer-facilitated state control".[185] Posthuman surveillance is enhanced by the way in which the human body can be transferred to other media. The human body is not limited to the body of flesh but can be recorded in its entirety and displayed via screens as well as the scramble suit can display an ever-changing amalgamation of different bodies, so that the human body becomes enmeshed in the very fabric of the suit.

Sense of Place: Left Behind in the 1970s Daze

It is no coincidence that a large part of *Scanner Darkly* takes place not in a big city landscape, but in a suburban setting in sunny California. As Wood argues, this adds a "nightmarish quality" to the narrative, which derives from the "endless, hyper-real bright suburbs that began to sprawl around Los Angeles and other U.S. cities, dominated by large bungalows or split-level houses in lawned lots, massive shopping malls and acres of car parking".[186] The places in *Scanner Darkly* are the places of American mass culture of conformity as it had been developed in the postwar decades. By setting the plot in these areas of American society, Dick subverts and reveals the falsehood of conformity of these places. These places appear alien and hostile because they dissolve individual bodies. It is, as Wood also points to, dystopian landscapes where the familiar has become estranged, where institutions have become totalitarian and limiting to civil liberties as well as individual

---

[185] David Murakami Wood. "Can a Scanner See the Soul? Philip K. Dick Against the Surveillance Society" *Review of International American Studies* 3-4 (2009), 48.

[186] Wood, 50.

freedom, and where "the declining utopian dreams of the 1950s golden age of consumerism, of humanity" has become "most alienated from itself and from its environment".[187]

Similarly, Arctor experiences a malfunction within his brain as the two hemispheres of his brain compete against each other: "It's as if you have two fuel gauges on your car,' the other man said, 'an one says your tank is full and the other registers empty. They can't both be right. They conflict' …".[188] Arctor's interior malfunction mirrors the malfunction in American society. In the end, Bruce, which is the new name of Fred/Arctor after he has entered the New Path rehabilitation clinic, has been reduced to a mechanical function when he is sent to work on a farm in the Napa Valley. The final scene of the novel depicts Bruce in the field as he watches his supervisors stroll back to their lives of conformity and normalcy: "Donald and the farm-facility manager strolled off toward their parked Lincoln. Talking together; he watched—without turning, without being able to turn—them depart".[189] Bruce is left behind on the field where his only task is to pick carrots, beets and corn. Ironically, Bruce has been reduced to his corporeal mechanisms, symbolized by the manual and physical labor. In other words, as the scramble suit sought to erode the meaning of Bruce's body, the final scene of the novel emphasizes his body as his only resort of existence.

In conclusion, *Scanner Darkly* represents how the sense of cultural anxiety is rooted in a deep structure of paranoia and conspiracy. Not only does it lead to individual psychological reactions; the novel represents paranoia as something systemic, collective and, most of all, totalitarian. Thus, the novel epitomizes a conglomerate of the uncanny, paranoia, cultural anxiety and conspiratorial thinking in the 1970s. However, contrary to other conspiracy narratives, *Scanner Darkly* does not portray a "single, highly autonomous individual who must do battle with the corporation".[190] Rather, there is no hope for disclosure as the individual is literally disrupted in the

---

[187] ibid.

[188] Dick, 167.

[189] ibid., 217.

[190] Melley, 194.

narrative. Furthermore, the posthuman condition enhances the consequences of paranoia. It is also significant to note that Baggesen's focus on victimization, which I mentioned in the first chapter, corresponds with how conspiracy narratives perceive the passivization of the subject through the loss of agency. *Scanner Darkly* thus reflects the New Wave movement in the way in which science and technology appear not as means for conquering the universe but for othering its subjects. In comparison, despite the fact that they both depict dystopian settings, Le Guin and Dick can be said to represent two opposite positions between utopia and dystopia, which is linked to their historical context. Whereas Le Guin represents the potential for worlds of "oneness" and harmonic existence between human, aliens and nature, according to Suvin, Dick is overtly dystopian in his literary visions where disorder and violence rule. Suvin goes on to conclude that both positions are reactions to the historical context, which is dominated by "the experience of the terrible pressures of alienation, isolation and fragmentation pervading the neo-capitalist society of the world of the mid-twentieth century".[191]

CONCLUSION: HOW SCIENCE FICTION CHANGED BETWEEN 1968-1977

Throughout this thesis, I have accounted for how American science fiction developed between 1968 and 1977. I have examined the New Wave in the light of cultural theories of dystopia, critical posthumanism and conspiracy culture and how they reflect a sense of cultural anxiety that was defining for the genre during this period. The 1970s was indeed a period of anxiety in American cultural history. In the book, *Uncanny Modernity: Cultural Theories, Modern Anxieties* (2008), Michael Saler writes that "[t]o be at home in the world is to be complacently ignorant about one's true condition; to be not-at-home is to be on the royal road to legitimate knowledge".[192] Behind this

---

[191] Suvin, 134.

[192] Michael Saler. "Profane Illuminations, Delicate and Mysterious Flames: Mass Culture and Uncanny Gnosis", in *Uncanny Modernity: Cultural Theories, Modern Anxieties,* ed. Jo Collins and John Jervis. (New York, Palgrave Macmillan: 2008), 189.

seemingly radical statement lies an explanation of the developments in American cultural history between 1968 and 1977. Generally, the period was characterized by a dystopian mode that led to this sense of cultural anxiety: The counterculture questioned the legitimacy of established authorities, intellectuals on the left sought to expose the foundations of human knowledge and New Wave authors distanced themselves from the growing sense of familiarity with science and technology in American society. They did so by revealing the anxieties, threats and obscurity of the consequences of corporeal alienation from environment, as in *Word for World*, cyborg subjects, as in *Dying Inside* and "Out From Ganymede", and cultural paranoia, as in *Scanner Darkly*. Thus, throughout New Wave sf, there is a movement from familiarity to estrangement which involves the alienation from the body, alienation from society and, ultimately, alienation from human history. These all evoke a sense of cultural anxiety.

As a literary genre, the New Wave is more complex and experimental than the earlier Golden Age "hard" sf. The authors experiments with narratology, imagery and symbols in order to represent the sense of anxiety and obscurity. The narrative voice often shifts between different focalized characters and oscillates from outer descriptions to inner reflections. Thus, the reader is left to navigate in complex and sometimes obscure worlds. Furthermore, in terms of composition, the New Wave texts experiment with different ways of storytelling. Often, these narratives begin in medias res where any missing information is gradually revealed to the reader throughout the story. Generally, these narratological details epitomize how New Wave was different in the late 1960s and early 1970s, compared to earlier sf genres. It was more an experiment with form and style and the question of representation as it was about new planets and life forms. The inner structure of the narrative was part of the point itself.

The New Wave thus symbolized a movement from outer space to inner space in the history of sf. Generally, this meant that these writers took up themes of sexuality, surveillance, identity, postcolonialism, paranoia, environmental change and posthumanism, which all relate to deeper

structures of human history and human psychology. In this thesis, I have presented connections and contingencies between these themes, based on a selection of texts from this period, and how they contribute to an understanding of a tumultuous period in American cultural history. In general, the New Wave countered the growing impact of science and technology on society by exposing concerns about its threat to human existence. As the New Wave subverted the Enlightenment ideal of scientific and technological advancement, the technological marvel transformed into what can be described as a sociopolitical concern that derives from the author's anxiety about contemporary society. Thus, the New Wave coincided with intellectual academic developments within the humanities and the social sciences. These also turned the scope inwards by reexamining the traditional history of humankind and the anthropocentric perspective of humanism.

The New Wave also developed in a period in American history that was characterized by foreign political revolt and turbulence. As foreign relations eased under détente with the Soviet Union, there was no common enemy. Instead, the enemy appeared as a cultural alien, i.e. a hidden or monstrous force in society which posed as a threat to the individual as well as the collective. Thus, there are clear connections between the historical context and the themes of the New Wave. Ursula Le Guin's *Word for World* mirrored the U.S.' policies in Vietnam and *Scanner Darkly* epitomized the period of paranoia and conspiracy under the Nixon administration. The conspiracies of the 1970s had no fixed enemy, as Peter Knight suggested. Instead, New Wave texts represented a conspiratorial force which was totalitarian and inescapable. Ronnie Lipschutz also pointed out that the inherent cultural alien is not an outside other but instead a repressed part of the self. A frequent symbol in these texts is that of the government as a conspiratorial monster within the nation's borders and as an all-encompassing agency which essentially controls the individual. In relation to this, I have also argued that the interior cultural alien takes many forms during the New Wave, for example, as the scramble suit, the cyborg or the space capsule. In general, these manifestations of the cultural alien rely on a disruption of the human body in different ways. Whether something

appears as part of the body, as in "We Purchased People" or disappears from the body, as in *Dying Inside*, the cultural alien involves a transgression of the body. These representations of bodily manifestations of the alien make way for a rethinking and acknowledging of the monstrous parts and alien alleys of the human inner space.

In the movement from outer to inner space lies a movement from familiarity to estrangement. This is most clear in *Scanner Darkly* when the very notion of reality is contested with a seemingly simple question: Do we know what reality is at all? The crux of the New Wave lies really in the fact that estrangement comes not from other worlds in outer space but from an alienation from the human planet. By raising questions about reality, representation and knowledge, these writers performed Foucault's "Death of Man" by alienating humankind not only from the structures of society, but also from its own origins. The New Wave also reflected a New Wave of environmentalism which raised concerns about the human impact on the environment, which is a topic that remains highly relevant in the 21st century. All in all, I have argued that New Wave sf moves towards the suggestion that the Planet Earth is essentially alien to humans and that this idea demands a reconstruction and reexamination of humanity and its place on Earth in general.

Finally, the 1970s was a period of heightened focus on the individual in American history. I have pointed to ways in which dystopias and conspiracies of the New Wave sought to disrupt and dissolve the individual. These narratives therefore reveal the inner conflicts of American society at this point in time as they contrast individual anxieties with larger cultural anxieties about the survival of humanity and the Planet Earth. New Wave writers point to situations in society where the individual is threatened. Characters have no chance of escaping their paranoia and find themselves in a state of "agency panic", as Melley called it. This then relates to larger concerns about the state of democracy, liberal governments and civil liberties because of the way in which New Wave sf depicts the individual as restricted by and dissolved in the collective.

All in all, I have presented contingencies in American cultural history and cultural studies which all help explain the development of the New Wave as a sf genre. The New Wave sought out maps of the inner spaces of humankind, however, in their explorations they encountered deep anxieties about the state of, first, American society and, second, the relationship between humankind, science, technology and the environment.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Annas, George J. “The Man on the Moon”, in *Science Fiction and Philosophy: From Time Travel to Superintelligence*, ed. Susan Schneider. Malden: Blackwell Publishing, 2009, 245-260.

Baccolini, Raffaella and Tom Moylan. “Introduction: Dystopia and Histories”, in *Dark Horizons: Science Fiction and the Dystopian Imagination*, ed. Raffaella Baccolini and Tom Moylan. New York: Routledge, 2003, 1-13.

Badmington, Neil. “Theorizing Posthumanism”, *Cultural Critique*, vol. 53, Winter 2003, 10-27. [https://www.jstor.org/stable/1354622 [accessed 20 April 2019].

Baggesen, Søren. “Utopian and Dystopian Pessimism: Le Guin's ‘The Word for World Is Forest’ and Tiptree’s ‘We Who Stole the Dream’”. *Science Fiction Studies*, vol. 14, no. 1, 1987, 34-43. http://www.jstor.org.proxy1-bib.sdu.dk:2048/stable/4239792 [accessed 3 April 2019].

Baker, Brian. “The Map of Apocalypse: Nuclear War and the Space of Dystopia in American Science Fiction”, in *Histories of the Future*, ed. Alan Sandison and Robert Dingley. London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2000, 124-136.

Barbour, Douglas. “Wholeness and Balance in the Hainish Novels of Ursula K. Le Guin”. *Science Fiction Studies*, vol. 1, no. 3, 1974, 164-173. http://www.jstor.org.proxy1-bib.sdu.dk:2048/stable/4238858. [accessed 9 May 2019].

Bennett, Andrew and Nicholas Royle. “The Uncanny”, *Introduction to Literature, Criticism and Theory*. Harlow: Pearson and Longman, 2004 (1995), 34-41.

Booker, M. Keith and Anne Marie Thomas (ed.). *The Science Fiction Handbook*. Hoboken: John Wiley & Sons, 2009. https://ebookcentral.proquest.com/lib/sdub/detail.action?docID=428197. [accessed May 13, 2019].

Bould, Mark. “Cyberpunk”, in *A Companion to Science Fiction*, ed. David Seed. Malden: Blackwell Publishing, 2008, 217-232.

Braidotti, Rosi. *The Posthuman*. Malden: Polity Press, 2013.

Calvert, Bronwen and Sue Walsh. “Speaking the Body: The Embodiment of ‘Feminist’ Cyberpunk”, in *Speaking Science Fiction*, ed. Andy Sawyer and David Seed. Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 2000, 96-109.

Claeys, Gregory. *Dystopia: A Natural History.* Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2017. https://www.oxfordscholarship.com/view/10.1093/acprof:oso/9780198785682.001.0001/acprof-9780198785682-chapter-1 [accessed 10 March 2019].

Coale, Samuel. *Paradigms of Paranoia: The Culture of Conspiracy in Contemporary American Fiction*. Tuscaloosa: University of Alabama Press, 2005.

Cohen, Jeffrey Jerome (ed.). *Monster Theory: Reading Culture.* Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1996. https://ebookcentral.proquest.com/lib/sdub/detail.action?docID=310376 [accessed 13 May 2019].

Colossus: The Forbin Project. Directed by Joseph Sargent. Universal City: Universal Pictures, 1970. Online.

Crutzen, Paul J. “The ‘Anthropocene’” in *Earth System Science in the Anthropocene: Emerging Issues and Problems*, ed. Eckart Ehlers and Thomas Krafft. Berlin: Springer, 2006, 13-19.

Dick, Philip K. *A Scanner Darkly*. London: Gollanz, 1999 (1977).

Fenster, Mark. *Conspiracy Theories: Secrecy and Power in American Culture*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2008 (1999). ProQuest Ebook Central, https://ebookcentral.proquest.com/lib/sdub/detail.action?docID=433177. [accessed 2 May 2019].

Fitting, Peter. “Utopia, Dystopia and Science Fiction”, in *The Cambridge Companion to Utopian Literature*, ed. by Gregory Claeys. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010, 135-153. doi:10.1017/CCOL9780521886659.006. [accessed 28 Mar 2019].

Foucault, Michel. *The Order of Things: An archaeology of the human sciences*. Trans. Tavistock Publications. New York: Routledge, 2002 (1966/1970).

Freedman, Carl. “Towards a Theory of Paranoia: The Science Fiction of Philip K. Dick”. *Science Fiction Studies*, vol. 11, no. 1, Mar. 1984, 15-25. https://www.jstor.org/stable/4239584 [accessed 7 May 2019].

Gomel, Elena. *Science Fiction, Alien Encounters, and the Ethics of Posthumanism*. London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2014.

Gunn, Alastair S.. “Earth Day 1970”, in *Green Ethics and Philosophy: An A-to-Z Guide*, ed. Julie Newman. Thousand Oaks: SAGE Publications, Inc., 2011, 247-251. doi: 10.4135/9781412974608.n37. [accessed 29 April 2019].

Haraway, Donna. *Simians, Cyborgs, and Women*. New York: Routledge, 1991.

Harris-Fain, Darren. *Understanding Contemporary American Science Fiction: The Age of Maturity, 1970-2000.* Columbia: University of South Carolina Press, 2005.

Hayles, N. Katherine. *How We Became Posthuman: Virtual Bodies In Cybernetics, Literature, and Informatics*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1999. Fulcrum Ebooks. https://www-fulcrum-org.proxy1-bib.sdu.dk/epubs/th83kz722?locale=en#/6/594[xhtml00000297]!/4/1:0. [accessed 20 April 2019].

Herbrechter, Stefan. *Posthumanism: A Critical Analysis*. New York: Bloomsbury, 2013.

Hillman, David and Ulrika Maude. “Introduction”, in *The Cambridge Companion to the Body in Literature*, ed. David Hillman and Ulrika Maude. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2015, 1–9. https://doi-org.proxy1-bib.sdu.dk/10.1017/CCO9781107256668 [accessed 12 May 2019].

Hofstadter, Richard. “The Paranoid Style in American Politics”, *Harper’s Magazine,* November, 1964. https://harpers.org/archive/1964/11/the-paranoid-style-in-american-politics/5/. [accessed 24 May 2019].

Inayatullah, Naeem. “Bumpy Space: Imperialism and Resistance in *Star Trek: The Next Generation*”, in *To Seek Out New Worlds*, ed. Jutta Weldes. New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2003, 53-78.

James, Edward. *Science Fiction in the 20th Century*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1994.

Jay, Timothy. “Population Control”, *We Did What?! Offensive and Inappropriate Behavior in American History*. Santa Barbara: Greenwood, 2017. EBSCOhost. search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx?direct=true&db=nlebk&AN=1428357&site=ehost-live. [accessed 28 April 2019].

Jenkins, Philip. *Decade of Nightmares: The End of the Sixties and the Making of Eighties America*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006.

Kaplan, Carter. “Dystopian Literature”, in *Literature and Politics Today: The Political Nature of Modern Fiction, Poetry, and Drama : The Political Nature of Modern Fiction, Poetry, and Drama*. ed. M. Keith Booker. Santa Barbara: Greenwood, 2015. http://search.ebscohost.com.proxy1-bib.sdu.dk:2048/login.aspx?direct=true&db=nlebk&AN=964405&site=ehost-live [accessed 13 May 2019].

Knight, Peter. *Conspiracy Culture: From Kennedy to The X-Files*. London: Routledge, 2000.

Koontz, Dean R. “Night of the Storm”, in *Starstream: Adventures in Science Fiction,* ed. Roger Elwood. Racine: Western Publishing Company, 1976.

Langer, Jessica. *Postcolonialism and Science Fiction*. London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2011.

Latham, Rob. “Biotic Invasions: Ecological Imperialism in New Wave Science Fiction”, in *Green Planets: Ecology and Science Fiction*, ed. Gerry Canavan and Kim Stanley Robinson. Middletown: Wesleyan University Press, 2014, 77-98.

—. “The New Wave”, in *A Companion to Science Fiction*, ed. David Seed. Malden: Blackwell Publishing, 2008, 202-217.

Le Guin, Ursula K. *The Word for World is Forest*. London: Orion Publishing House, 1972.

Lipschutz, Ronnie D. “Aliens, Alien Nations, and Alienation in American Political Economy and Popular Culture”, in *To Seek Out New Worlds*, ed. Jutta Weldes. New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2003, 79-98.

Mahon, Peter. *Posthumanism: A Guide for the Perplexed*. New York: Bloomsbury Academic, 2017. http://search.ebscohost.com.proxy1-bib.sdu.dk:2048/login.aspx?direct=true&db=nlebk&AN=1460062&site=ehost-live. [accessed 24 Mar 2019].

Malzberg, Barry N. “Out From Ganymede”, in *New Dimensions 2*, ed. Robert Silverberg. New York: Avon Books, 1972, 47-62.

Marre and Macedo. “Selenia” *Heavy Metal* 1, April 1977. New York, HM Communications: 1977, 45-54.

Melley, Timothy. *Empire of Conspiracy: The Culture of Paranoia in Postwar America.* Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2000. ProQuest Ebook Central, http://ebookcentral.proquest.com/lib/sdub/detail.action?docID=4743542 [accessed 19 April 2019].

Milner, Andrew. “Archaeologies of the Future: Jameson's Utopia or Orwell's Dystopia?” *Historical Materialism,* vol. 17, vol. 4, 2009, 100-119. https://doi-org.proxy1-bib.sdu.dk/10.1163/146544609X12537556703197 [accessed 27 Mar 2019].

Moylan, Tom. *Scraps of the Untainted Sky: Science Fiction, Utopia, Dystopia.* Boulder: Westview Press, 2000. http://hdl.handle.net.proxy1-bib.sdu.dk:2048/2027/heb.07710 [accessed 27 March 2019].

Muirhead, Russel. “The New Imperial Presidency: Renewing Power After Watergate”. *Political Science Quarterly,* vol. 121, no. 3, 2006, 519-20.

Nayar, Pramod K. *Posthumanism*. Cambridge: Polity Press, 2014.

Nye, David. *American Technological Sublime*. Cambridge: The MIT Press, 1994.

Olmsted, Kathryn S. *Real Enemies: Conspiracy Theories and American Democracy, World War I To 9/11*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2009. ProQuest Ebook Central, https://ebookcentral.proquest.com/lib/sdub/detail.action?docID=477048. [accessed 2 May 2019].

Palmer, Christopher. "Philip K. Dick", in *A Companion to Science Fiction*, ed. David Seed. Malden: Blackwell Publishing, 2008, 389-398.

Pohl, Frederik. "We Purchased People", in *Aliens!* ed. Gardner Dozois and Jack Dann. New York: Pocket Books, 1980 (1974).

— and C. M. Kornbluth. *Wolfbane*. New York: Baen Books, 1986 (1959).

Rhee, Jennifer. "Surveillance and Counter-Surveillance in Philip K. Dick's A Scanner Darkly", *Mosaic*, vol. 50, no. 2, June 2017, 133-147. https://muse-jhu-edu.proxy1-bib.sdu.dk/article/XXXXXX-XXXX. [accessed 21 April 2019].

Roberts, Adam. *The History of Science Fiction*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2006, 195-230.

Rochelle, Warren G.. "Ursula K. Le Guin", in *A Companion to Science Fiction*, ed. David Seed. Malden: Blackwell Publishing, 2008, 408-20.

Rosen, David and Aaron Santesso. *The Watchman in Pieces: Surveillance, Literature, and Liberal Personhood*. Yale University Press, 2013. ProQuest Ebook Central, https://ebookcentral.proquest.com/lib/sdub/detail.action?docID=3421238 [accessed 20 April 2019].

Saler, Michael. "Profane Illuminations, Delicate and Mysterious Flames: Mass Culture and Uncanny Gnosis", in *Uncanny Modernity: Cultural Theories, Modern Anxieties*. New York, Palgrave Macmillan: 2008, 181-201.

Schmeink, Lars. *Biopunk Dystopias Genetic Engineering, Society and Science Fiction*. Oxford: Liverpool University Press, 2016. http://search.ebscohost.com.proxy1-bib.sdu.dk:2048/login.aspx?direct=true&db=nlebk&AN=1452569&site=ehost-live. [accessed 29 April 2019].

Schulman, Bruce J. *The Seventies: The Great Shift in American Culture, Society, and Politics*. Cambridge: Da Capo Press, 2001.

Schulzinger, Robert D. "The End of the Vietnam War, 1973-1976", in *Nixon in the World: American Foreign Relations, 1969-1977*, ed. Fredrik Logevall and Andrew Preston. New York: Oxford University Press, 2008, 296-327.

Senft, Theresa M. "Cyborg", in *Encyclopedia of New Media*, ed. Steve Jones. Thousand Oaks: SAGE Publications, Inc., 2003, 117-120. http://sk.sagepub.com.proxy1-bib.sdu.dk:2048/reference/newmedia/n61.xml [accessed 8 May 2019].

Shaw, David. "Anthropocene", 10 October 2018. http://criticalposthumanism.net/anthropocene/ [accessed 14 April 2019].

Silverberg, Robert. *Dying Inside*. London: Sidgwick & Jackson, 1972.

—. "Introduction", *New Dimensions 2*, ed. Silverberg. London: Sidgwick & Jackson, 1972.

Sobchack, Vivian. "American Science Fiction Film", in *A Companion to Science Fiction*, ed. David Seed. Malden: Blackwell Publishing, 2008, 261-275.

Stromberg, Joseph. "What is the Anthropocene and Are We in it?", *Smithsonian Magazine*, Jan. 2013. https://www.smithsonianmag.com/science-nature/what-is-the-anthropocene-and-are-we-in-it-164801414/. [accessed 8 May 2019].

Suvin, Darko. "Parables of De-Alienation: Le Guin's Widdershins Dance". *Science Fiction Studies*, vol. 2, no. 3, November 1975, 265-274.

Taylor, Alan. "50 Years Ago in Photos: A Look Back at 1968" *The Atlantic*, 10 January, 2018. https://www.theatlantic.com/photo/2018/01/50-years-ago-in-photos-a-look-back-at-1968/550208/ [accessed 18 March 2019].

Vint, Sherryl. *Bodies of Tomorrow*: *Technology, Subjectivity, Science Fiction.* Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2007. ProQuest Ebook Central, http://ebookcentral.proquest.com/lib/sdub/detail.action?docID=4634687 [accessed 19 Feb 2019].

—. "'Change for the Machines?' Posthumanism and Digital Sentience", in *Palgrave Handbook of Posthumanism in Film and Television*, ed. Michael Hauskeller, Thomas D. Philbeck, Curtis D. Carbonell. London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2015, 120-129.

Westfahl, Gary. "Hard Science Fiction", in *A Companion to Science Fiction*, ed. David Seed. Malden: Blackwell Publishing, 2008, 187-202.

Wood, David Murakami. "Can a Scanner See the Soul? Philip K. Dick Against the Surveillance Society". *Review of International American Studies*, vol. 3-4, 2009, 46-59.

Yaszek, Lisa and Jason W. Ellis. "Science Fiction", in *The Cambridge Companion to Literature and the Posthuman*, ed. Bruce Clarke and Manuela Rossini. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2016, 71-83.