

flesh and identity. “What is being moved towards is not a replacement of the human by its simulacrum but a convergence, an interdependence between the human and the machine, the digital and the analogue, the real and the simulated” (182-83). In support of this argument, North cites Scott Bukatman, who in his massively consequential and still resonant *Terminal Identity* (1993) argues that the human condition is approaching “an unmistakably doubled articulation in which we find both the end of the subject and a new subjectivity constructed at the computer station or television screen” (Bukatman 9). Overall North furthers this argument, localizing it to the medium that will not only dictate the future of science fiction aesthetics but the dynamics of the body, the socius, perception and desire.

The Metonymy of Stat Trek. Lincoln Geraghty, Ed. *The Influence of Star Trek on Television, Film and Culture*. Jefferson, North Carolina: McFarland, 2008. 244 pp. \$35.00 pbk.

Reviewed by Lorrie Palmer

■ Following Lincoln Geraghty’s 2007 book, *Living with Star Trek: American Culture and the Star Trek Universe*, this fourth edited collection in the “Critical Explorations in Science Fiction and Fantasy” series provides multiple critical voices on the place of *Star Trek* as a media franchise, a cultural text, and as a site for fan appropriation. Appropriate to the genre involved, it also offers some dystopian viewpoints that counterbalance the overarching theme of utopia found in the earlier book. Geraghty establishes the four key areas this study will explore: the franchise, themes, film and television, and the fans. Since previous studies have tended to focus on The Original Series (*TOS*), he wants to expand his sample to include “all five series and ten feature films” which form “a gestalt entity greater than the sum of its parts” (3). Geraghty reminds the reader of his previous work on *Trek*’s alignment with the American Jeremiad as a “moral guide” (4) and his continued appreciation for those ordinary fans that are largely overlooked in the field of fan/cultural studies because they don’t show up at conventions in full Klingon battle dress. His contributors to *The Influence of Star Trek* come from specialties in cultural, film, and media studies, fandom, science fiction, Asian American studies, literature, education, and history. They provide, therefore, a diverse set of viewing positions that echo those found in Geraghty’s *Living with Star Trek* and fans’ individualized, multiple uses of the *Trek* canon.

The Franchise: Geraghty reprises his *Trek* philosophy that the show's notions of utopia and community are its primary appeal for fans. That the franchise can stand in for words, ideas, and human experience is at the heart of this book. Geraghty applies textual analysis to the opening title sequence of *Star Trek's* original series and re-states his assessment (from *Living with Star Trek*) of the opening of *enterprise (ENT)*, the final series in the franchise. This bookend approach helps make his point that, throughout its run and via multiple authorial/production voices, *Trek* consists of "a few core themes" (12) along with specific elements of story, storyteller, and audience. The opening narrations in *TOS* and *ENT*, he notes, establish that these stories of the future are being told—using linguistic strategies and visual cues—as histories. Then, in re-iterating the "overtly American version of history" (18) on the *ENT* opener (with its images of American aviation milestones), he sets up some of the later essays in this collection which explore the ways in which the very essence of the utopian, communal *Trek* universe often mark it as out of step with an altered science fiction media landscape and its shifting fandom.

Dave Hipple describes Gene Roddenberry's "accidental apotheosis" (22) from history to legend. He explores *Trek's* inception and production as well as the dichotomy of its idealistic text versus its status as a marketed commodity—alongside a less legendary portrait of Roddenberry than we are used to seeing. The author includes excerpts from the *Trek* memoirs of both William Shatner and Leonard Nimoy, *The Next Generation (TNG)* personnel, sources from Lincoln enterprises (Roddenberry's *Trek* memorabilia mail order business), and some awkward *TOS* dialogue that pointedly refers to an onscreen prop/*Trek* souvenir. While his evidence supports the claim that the market was "manipulated" (37) with block-booking practices to make the first season of *The Next Generation (TNG)* a success, he neglects the logical follow-up: that the show's subsequent six seasons succeeded due to high quality and positive fan response. This chapter works well as an introduction to the book's nuanced examination of the *Trek* product by foregrounding the darker shades of analysis that are possible.

Ina Rae Hark uses *TNG* as a starting point for her thorough examination of the possible "franchise fatigue" (41) that ultimately doomed *Enterprise* nearly 20 years later. Those seeds are scattered through Hark's examination of the recent "history of science fiction on television" (42), Paramount's strategy of first-run syndication for *TNG*, the media landscape in 1987 (when *TNG* premiered), and an outline of the narrative paradigm ("future-spaceships-aliens" [44]) employed by the series to great effect. From there, she works through 1990s and 2000s sf-TV (*X-Files*, *Buffy*, *Babylon 5*, *Stargate SG-1*, *Battlestar Galactica*) and its "ur-cult of the digital age" that left both *Voyager* and even the darker *Deep Space 9 (DP9)* stranded with a "utopian vision" that could

not “track with this zeitgeist” (50) but concludes with an optimistic note on the show’s ultimate timelessness.

Themes: Three authors address the franchise’s themes of mixed racial heritage, American environmentalism, and sports mythology/psychology. These are certainly innovative frameworks and offer an alternative to other *Trek* studies. In the first of these chapters, Wei Ming Dariotis asks “What is human?” and proposes to answer this “central question of all science fictions” (63) by examining mixed heritage characters in *Trek* (Spock, Seven of Nine, and Odo) in the context of the show’s imperialist and colonialist dialogue. She describes the “racial identity boundary transgression” (63–64) that has marked the series from the beginning. She notes the socially-proscribed limitations of these transgressions through the Kirk-Uhura interracial kiss, the “Orientalist stereotype” of Vulcans (66) and its reflection in Spock’s shameful/threatening sexuality during the *pon farr*. The author’s concept of “transracial adoption and empire” (79) is a helpful lens through which to explore *Trek*’s (and society’s) fear of, or enactment of, border crossing as identity. In this way, she can look at the Borg, vampire fiction, racism, assimilation, consumerism, eugenics, and xenophobia. These are valuable points and mostly effective here, with a few claims about the Borg, Harry Kim and the Captain Janeway/Seven relationship in *Voyager* that I would disagree with (at this point, I out myself as a serious *Voyager* fan, prone to minutiae).

As for the environmental aspect of *Star Trek*, Elizabeth D. Blum starts from the thesis that, although the show had “forward-looking racial equality” that was ahead of the curve in American society, its environmental outlook lagged behind “by more than a decade” (83). This is nicely supported by her research on our cultural/historical difficulty in defining “wilderness” (83). From the British colonists to Emerson and Thoreau to the Wilderness Act of 1964, Blum skillfully ties specific planetary landscapes first in *Trek* TV episodes and then in the feature films—with deserts or icy worlds portrayed in the negative—to their depiction of predators, indigenous lifeforms, and natural resources with parallels to contemporary attitudes. *Trek*’s response toward hostile (to humans) terrain as only suitable for conquest or as a “testing ground for faith” and its exaltation of green, pastoral spaces as “regenerative” (91) justifies Blum’s analysis. She acknowledges that some of this (during the Cold War era of *TOS*) was based on American fears of a real-life atomic wasteland. Rachel Carson’s *Silent Spring*, Love Canal, and Reagan’s “roll back” of “environmental gains” (94) alongside a thematic analysis of feature films (IV through IX) show that *Trek* has clung to an outdated environmental stance. Perhaps, she notes, people simply see it differently depending on their own very human perspectives of race, gender, and class and not even science fiction can overcome that.

Barbara A. Silliman sets out to examine *DS9*'s use of "sports and games. . . as metaphors for management style, opportunities for character exposition, and avenues for bonding and self-expression" (100). She notes the series' "respect and acceptance" of religion and how *DS9* (through Benjamin Sisko's love of baseball and his status as the Emissary of the Prophets to the Bajoran people) reflects something unique in the *Trek* canon: the secular/scientific co-existing with the mythological/religious. Nicely done is Silliman's alignment of the Joseph Campbell monomyth ("separation-initiation-return" [102]) with the game of baseball itself and with Sisko's arc. In this straightforward essay, the author makes her case that the "one link utilized by the writers to join the secular and religious worlds of the station commander of *DS9* is baseball" (103) through Ben's attraction to the clean, precise choices in the sport as well as its literal level playing field. This latter point, surprisingly, is not tied to race by the author, notable in light of Sisko's status as the first African-American *Trek* captain as well as the role of race in the evolution of baseball. On the other hand, maybe this is a nice commentary on what some see as Roddenberry's vision of a post-racial future.

Film and Television: Joseph Campbell's monomyth returns in an essay by Donald E. Palumbo. Like Barbara Silliman in the previous section, he uses Campbell's separation-initiation-return model to negotiate key narrative elements. Where he departs is in the depth of his immersion into Campbell and the *Trek* product and in his mode of address to the reader. He delves into the following: rites of passage, nativity, rebirth, exile, the search for fathers, the call to adventure, the blunder, the herald, the talisman, guides, wizards, threshold crossings, destructive watchmen, underground journeys, descent into literal, symbolic, or figurative hell, tests and trials, shadows, goddesses, temptresses, good/bad mothers, atonement, circumcision, patricide, Oedipus, mystical marriage, tyrant fathers, apotheosis, transformation, transcendence, unification of opposites, loss of ego, the boon, refusal to return, dilation of time, insulation, precautions. . . and *exhaustion*. This is the least compelling chapter in the collection. It enumerates vivid themes and displays an impressive knowledge of the films under discussion but it reads like Power Point. By the time I got to the end, I understood why the author abbreviated the film titles down to one word.

Next, Michael S. Duffy looks at "production redesign and special effects reuse" in the *Trek* film's "cinematic aesthetics" and proposes a "stylistic continuity through industrial fabrication" that visually distinguishes it from other SF texts (137). The author includes fascinating production history and states his intention to employ "fan community response" (138) to the onscreen results using a film studies and SF framework, thus showing that the starship *Enterprise*

carries a specific “iconographic meaning” (139). Genre discussion from Barry Keith Grant, Steve Neale, Vivian Sobchack, Scott Bukatman, and Annette Kuhn provides the author with a strong foundation upon which he can overlay his argument for the “visual-thematic/aesthetic intertextuality” (145) that, along with early budgetary constraints and advances in CGI, illustrates the parallel between the films’ unified look and Hollywood’s developing technologies. Duffy’s intent to examine online fan discourse does not materialize beyond his first mention of it, quoting only two posters, but the reader interested in industry/technology/aesthetics of SF cinema has much to enjoy here.

Paul Rixon clearly establishes his method and resources as he focuses on two particular groups—broadcasters and critics—in the “shaping and development of the early public discourse around *Star Trek* in Britain” (153). With publicity materials from the BBC, he shows their intent to “construct and maintain an image beneficial for the program and their channel” (154). Several print sources such as the *Radio Times* and the *Evening Standard* help the author illustrate the changing critical response to *Trek* in the response to this “imported space comic” (165). Technology, romance, ideology, satire, and more cerebral aspects of the show play out in the discourse. Rixon describes a spectrum in which the broadcaster is at one end, the critic at the other and, in between, the fan and cult magazines not controlled by either. Despite early reviewers taking cues directly from the BBC PR machine, Rixon shows how *Trek* eventually took on a “complex set of meanings” (166) and integrated into British television culture.

The Fan: Editor Lincoln Geraghty’s goal is not to “exceptionalize” *Star Trek* fans but to focus on ordinary people who engage with the text “on a more personal and emotional level” (7). To that end, Sue Short examines the “textual poaching” enacted by fans that don’t fit the “Trek nerd” stereotype or the “gullible consumer” targeted by Paramount (174). The struggle to see who *owns* *Star Trek*—the fans, the mainstream, the studio, academia—is illustrative of the author’s point that media producers have no real control over the “creation and circulation of meaning” (176). But, she notes, the franchise is still a consumer product and Paramount knowingly co-opts fan activity into its industrial/corporate structure (selling ready-made scrapbooks, policing unofficial *Trek* sites, etc.). The online production, *New Voyages*, blurs the ownership divide and, the author claims, allows fans to uphold the *Trek* legacy that the studio has allowed to flounder. I especially like her conflation of the Reg Barclay character (*TNG*, *VOY*) with the fan community—an outsider hero—to show that the franchise’s future is not exclusively in the hands of the mighty.

These ideas carry over into Justin Everett’s chapter on the “recentering of *Star Trek*” (186) as he looks at the fans’ “dissatisfaction with the official

franchise” (187). It is not the quality of the shows’ sf that fans seek, he says, but the “forward-looking idealism represented by the cultural microcosm encapsulated within the hull of the. . . *Enterprise*” (189) and the “continuing community” (190) of that fictional world. Here, Geraghty’s previous claims are echoed, as Everett describes how the American monomyth, the progress of science, and the “utopian ethic” (191) are part of the fan community’s shared worldview. The future of the franchise, an overriding concern in this book, is taken up by Everett who, like others, notes that *Trek* must adapt to a changing sf audience in a post-9/11 world. His focus on the fan-produced series, *New Voyages (NV)*, supports Short’s characterization of the symbiotic relationship between fans and Paramount in that the studio tolerates *NV* because it is distributed online for no profit even as official *Trek* talent (writers, actors, technical crew) contributes to the show. This expanding “megatext” (195) recenters the franchise’s ownership between fans and studio and shows, he says, that *Trek* may change but it is not going away.

The final two chapters employ the authors’ autobiographical negotiations of *Trek* within geographic, interactive spaces and, in addition, as a site for fandom and popular media discourse that expresses dissatisfaction with its last incarnation, the *Enterprise* series. First, Angelina I. Karpovich walks us through two “symbolic pilgrimages” in search of the “unmediated experience” in which she/we can create a “relationship between the object of fandom and the self that goes beyond mere consumption and fantasy” (199). To do this, she describes her journeys to two sites that, for the visitor, become metonymic spaces: *Star Trek The Experience* in Las Vegas (a permanent site) and the *Star Trek Adventure* in London’s Hyde Park (a tented exhibit). Science fiction fans, she notes, must often use each other as sites of community because “texts set in the future” (202) do not offer them anywhere real to go. So, Karpovich goes to Vegas—a place that is metonymic by its very nature, a point well made here. And, like Vegas, *The Experience* tries to blur time and boundaries, offering a “museum-as-simulacrum” (206) and a way to be a consumer without losing your *Trek* idealism. She further notes the proprietary atmosphere (much like the one described by other writers in this collection regarding Paramount) in which only official commodities are allowed. But the site still functions, she says, to serve the need for fans to interact with the *Trek* world by collectively sharing it with each other. The London installation, on the other hand, though less refined (cheap carpet, poorly woven costumes on display) offers the visitor a place to see how *Trek* was created. Touch-screen trivia, models, props, full-scale bridge mock-ups, a turbolift, and whooshing doors allow a less mediated interaction for the visitor than the *Experience* (although she concludes that the Las Vegas site is more thematically integrated with its surroundings). Like the

other writers here, she situates the fans who experience *Trek* on multiple levels as the primary representatives of its cultural significance.

The collection ends on rather a pessimistic note from Karen Anijar who takes her own autobiographical journey through family and friends' responses to *Trek* (via *Enterprise*), popular media discourse, and a dose of that dystopia I mentioned earlier. This chapter is a bit disjointed due to, I'm sure, the autobiographical nature of the musings but the jumps from Shatner's Priceline commercials to NORAD to Spike TV to Foucault to military recruiting practices to You Tube to Adorno to the incredibly bummed-out teenagers she quotes were a bit of a bumpy ride on the good ship *Enterprise*. It does show, though, that the tentacles of *Trek* are wrapped around our cultural landscape in myriad ways. Anijar's point is that "the *Star Trek* franchise in its current incarnation does not make much sense" (227) and her support for this claim is that her son, his friends, and the young men (no young women?) whose blogs she examines feel they live in an apocalyptic world that will never let them journey to the stars. She concludes with a question: "What is left for the 'Enterprise' franchise? Well, what is left for any of us?" A surprising final sentence to this collection, although Anijar's comparison of the X-Men mutants to current youth successfully emphasizes that the franchise must evolve in order to survive, as both narrative and fan site.

The Influence of Star Trek on Television, Film and Culture is a valuable addition to the discourse on sf-themed cultural/ media/fan studies. It offers the reader multiple viewing positions (much like the *Trek* fan has) from which to look more deeply at this complex fictional world and its metonymic reflection: our own. Or is it the other way around?

The Paranoia of Philip K. Dick's Colonialism. Christian Strowa. *Things Don't Like Me: Paranoia, McCarthyism and Colonialism in the Novels of Philip K. Dick*. WVT Wissenschaftlicher Verlag Trier, 2008. €15.00 pbk.

Reviewed by Gabriel Cutrufello

■ *Things Don't Like Me: Paranoia, McCarthyism and Colonialism in the Novels of Philip K. Dick* is the first book publication for Christian Strowa. It comes from his MA thesis written for a German university. As such, the short book offers some fresh approaches to the works of Philip K. Dick (PKD), but it also demonstrates some of the shortcomings of a MA thesis work. Strowa

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