

Welcome To “PKD OTAKU 17”

Before becoming famous as the author of books that became screenplays and, before that, as a Gnostic philosopher, Philip K. Dick’s reputation was primarily that of “acidhead SF writer.” This was based both on his hallucinogenic novels and short stories, with their graphic reality meltdowns, and on his lifestyle.

But why is a strange, drugged-out and paranoid bygone of such interest to modern-day filmmakers? Partly because today’s revolution in the biosciences, in particular in neuroscience, makes the questions he was asking particularly relevant. What is real if we can take drugs that alter our moods, or if we can tinker with our own memories? These issues were the flesh and bones of Dick’s books, all those years ago. -- *The Economist* Apr 17, 2004, p. 83

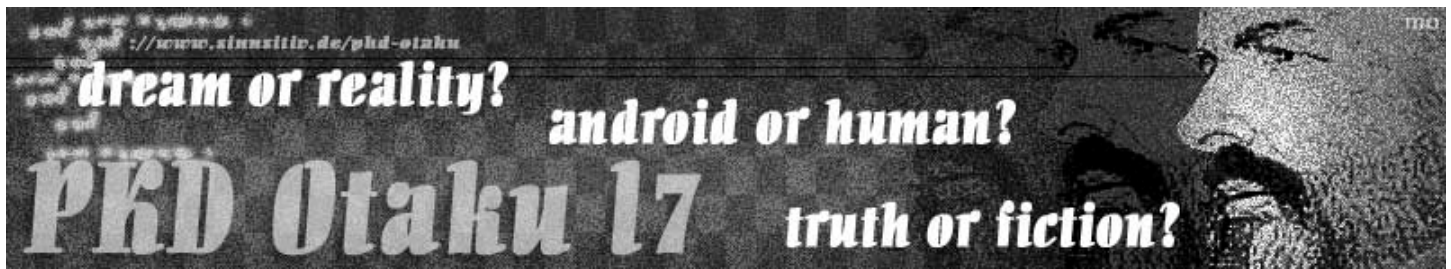
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The Credits

Main Editing & Research By Patrick Clark
Co-Editing, Layouting, Graphics & Website By Marc Oberst
Articles By Lord RC, Dave Hyde, Joshua Glenn, Andre Welling, Annie Knight & Phil Himself

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PKDland: A Trip To Pt. Reyes Station, California By Lord RC

In the late 1950s and into the early 1960s Philip K. Dick lived in Point Reyes Station, California, north of San Francisco. He initially moved there with wife Kleo but their marriage fell apart shortly after the move when PKD met a young widow, Anne Rubinstein. The two fell in love and PKD moved in with Anne and her children. In April 1959 they were married.

One might suppose this was an idyllic time for Phil: living in a beautiful place with a new wife and step-children, and, indeed, for several years it was. On February 25th 1960 Anne gave birth to a daughter, Laura.

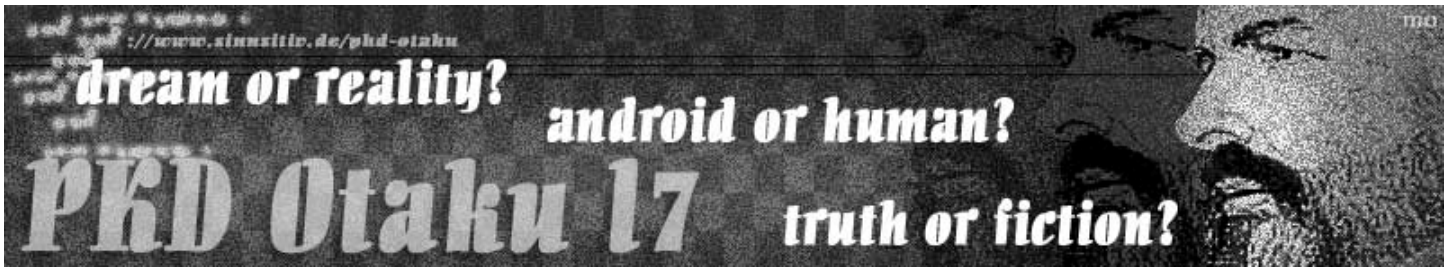
While he lived with Anne in Point Reyes Station he wrote several of his most famous novels including: CONFESSIONS OF A CRAP ARTIST (with main character Faye based on Anne), THE MAN IN THE HIGH CASTLE, THE SIMULACRA and THE THREE STIGMATA OF PALMER ELDRITCH. It was one of the most creative periods of PKD's life. But by mid 1964 the marriage to Anne was disintegrating and Phil moved back to Berkeley and the two were divorced in 1965.

Many PKD fans have read the above novels and more that were written during this time, some of which were set in the Marin County neighborhood where he lived (THE MAN WHOSE TEETH WERE ALL EXACTLY ALIKE, Dr. BLOODMONEY) and some of us have had the urge to visit this wonderful place in California.

Your present writer and girlfriend, Patti, decided to visit the area in June 2006. Patti has two daughters in California: one in Playa del Rey and one in Ventura. After spending a pleasant few days in each location and visiting the beaches of Southern California we decided to head north on the Pacific Coast Highway towards the Point Reyes National Seashore, which area contains many of the towns PKD wrote about (Inverness, Petaluma, Point Reyes Station).

The drive up the PCH is a pleasant one as the road parallels the ocean for much of its distance and one passes through such interesting places as Pismo Beach (where we hung out with Bugs Bunny) and Monterey with its famous Cannery Row and Fisherman's Wharf. After touring through these towns and others we drove through San Francisco as evening fell. Patti drove across the Golden Gate Bridge while Dave, awestruck, watched the bridge pylons disappear into the low fog above the bay. Somehow we got lost and ended up in Oakland before finding a motel for that night. The next day, again with fog coming off the ocean, we left San Francisco and drove to the Pt. Reyes National Seashore in Marin County.

The Pt. Reyes National Seashore is a world apart from the sunny beaches of Southern California and the tourist towns up the coast. It's cooler here and foggier, the unspoiled and undeveloped land bounded by the Pacific Ocean on one side and San Francisco Bay on the other while to the north and further inland is the heart of the California wine country – little wineries everywhere beckoning us to come in for a taste. But, not being wine drinkers, we forwent this inducement and drove slowly into the heart of the National Seashore, stopping every now and then to explore some local place of interest (like the Pt. Reyes lighthouse) and do some bird-watching. In this part of California the bird-watching is great (as it is Southern California). Over the three days we stayed in the area we saw numerous birds, some of which we had never seen before like the Chestnut-backed chickadee, Heerman's Gull and a pair of Willets.



But this is not a tale about bird-watching interesting as that could be, but one about the area where PKD lived for five years. On the map one sees the names of the towns: Inverness, Petaluma, Point Reyes Station; they're little dots and until one actually visits these places one has no idea what they're like. Are they big towns? Small? Tourist traps? Well, they're all pretty small. Inverness, for example, you might pass through without realizing you've been through a town. It has a few motels along the shore and a Post Office and a couple of stores and that's about it. Point Reyes Station itself is more of a tourist town but one that doesn't seem to take itself too seriously in this respect. There are a couple of book stores, several galleries, four cafes and a bar.

At one of the book stores I bought another copy of PKD's DR. BLOODMONEY and Patti bought a broach made under the direction of Anne Dick whose jewelry designs are nationally famous. While there I mentioned PKD to the proprietor of the bookstore and he informed us that Anne still lived in the area and he gave us rough directions to her house. Well, after getting lost again we drove down this country road until we spotted a large wooden sign announcing the location of Anne Dick's house.

With trepidation we parked our car in the driveway and went and banged on the door. Shortly it was answered by Anne herself who, although busy, invited us in for a short visit. The house was about the same as when Phil and Anne lived there in the 60s: a low, spread-out ranch-style house with shrubs, trees and the colorful flowers which California has an abundance of at this time of year.

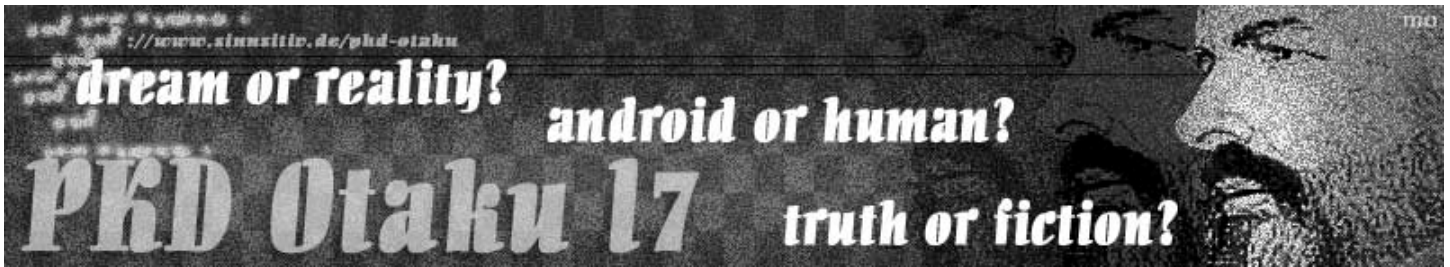
After we talked enthusiastically about PKD and the ice was broken Anne told us that she was revising her biography of Philip K. Dick and looking for a new publisher. She was also working on a novel inspired by PKD's THE MAN IN THE HIGH CASTLE. In her bookshelves she had a complete set of the Vintage editions of PKD's novels – a gift from her daughter, she said, and also a pile of old PKD editions including some early Ace Doubles and paperback originals. As she is not a collector of PKD editions, Dave sorted the pile into those which are valuable and those which are secondary editions.

Anne told us that, over the years, she had many people from all over the world had visited her – fans of PKD all. We talked of this and that and wondered why someone in Pt. Reyes had not capitalized on the fame of Philip K. Dick, perhaps by building a library or at least putting up a sign on the outskirts of town. But, as Anne said, the people in the town were oblivious of the famous writer who had spent many prolific years in the neighborhood.

We didn't wish to overstay our welcome so, after a half-hour or so we took our leave. Anne was kind enough to let us take photos of her house and even took a picture of Patti and me outside the front door.

She still makes jewelry (which you can order from her website: www.annedickjewelry.com) and has transformed part of her house into a bed-and-breakfast. I wish we'd have known about that before our visit because we would've stayed a night there. The rates were comparable for the area and the locale in the wonderful countryside cannot be beat. For any readers thinking of visiting this area you can stay a night or a week at Anne's house by going to her other website www.sevengreyfoxes.com. And, who knows, you might, like us, be able to have a nice chat with Anne about her life with PKD!

I was entranced by the whole area; we live high in the mountains of Colorado with its sere beauty but I was taken completely by the relaxed atmosphere of the Pt. Reyes Seashore and its



abundant wildlife. I wonder why PKD would leave such a great place – it must've been even better in the 60s – and move to Los Angeles!

Well, that's life, I guess, and although PKD is no longer with us the great place he lived in with Anne is still there, hardly changed at all, I imagine – an advantage of living in a National Park. I hope any readers of PKD OTAKU who are thinking of visiting America or vacationing in California will make the trip to Point Reyes. It's simply beautiful there. (August 2006)

A Scanner Darkly: The Movie – A Review By Dave Hyde

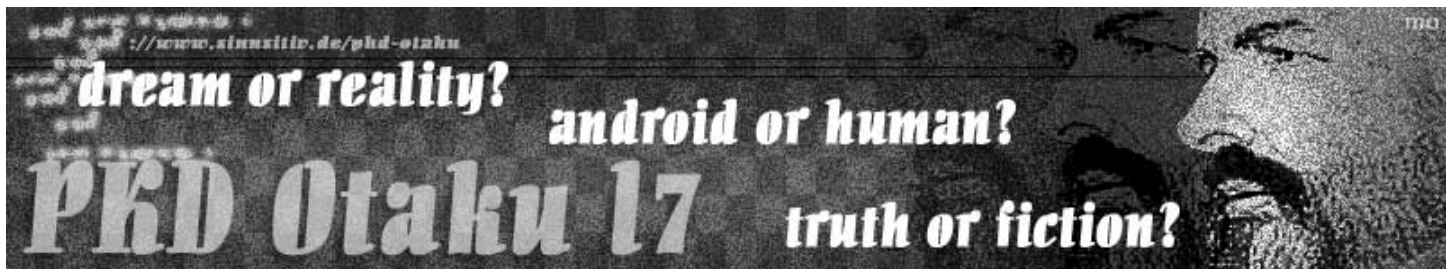
Let's see... it all started off with *BLADE RUNNER* back in 1982; a good movie by most accounts and a bold move on the part of Ridley Scott, the director, and the various writers of the screenplay. As the first cinematic interpretation of one of Philip K. Dick's novels it had the advantage of not having to follow any other film based on Dick's work – and especially it didn't have to follow itself. *BLADE RUNNER* was, then, a critical and eventual commercial success. But for the fan of Philip K. Dick's written work it had its problems. In some ways it succeeded in grasping the spirit of PKD's novel *DO ANDROIDS DREAM OF ELECTRIC SHEEP?* but in other ways the movie seemed to ignore crucial aspects of the novel completely. To this writer, after having seen three versions, *BLADE RUNNER* was a movie I scowled at for years: it just wasn't what the fans wanted; not only were whole subplots scythed out and too much emphasis put on the violence but it was all just too conventional, too much just another movie.

My irritation subsided over the years in light of what followed... First up was *TOTAL RECALL* starring the now Governor of California, Arnold Schwarzenegger. The movie was based on PKD's short story *We Can Remember It For You Wholesale*. I thought it was a fun movie that had its moments, I particularly liked it when Sharon Stone stomped Arnold in the balls and said, "That's for making me come to Mars! You know how I hate this fucking planet!" After something like that you can't really *dislike* this movie. It was a big hit in the cinemas across the nation and I was enthusiastic and glad that Phil's kids would make some money. Critically? Well, it did keep the central tenet of the story going in a twisted way and the special effects were cool for the day.

Then, um, what? *IMPOSTOR*? *PAYCHECK*? *SCREAMERS*? I think it was *SCREAMERS*. This movie was based on PKD's story *Second Variety*. This is a great short story and it would make a great movie *if* someone had spent a lot of money producing it. Unfortunately, that wasn't the case. The actors were fine, everything was fine, but it lacked confidence as if it knew it was destined to be ignored by Blockbuster and cut up on late night TV.

As for *IMPOSTOR*, this is another excellent short story of the same name but... one that shouldn't have been made into a movie. The plot is so straightforward that there's little suspense involved. Philip K. Dick was a deft writer, in this short story he made his idea interesting but in this movie version it's just boring.

By the time of *PAYCHECK* I would've been happy just to have seen PKD's name in the credits and didn't expect much from the movie and I wasn't disappointed. I don't fault Ben Affleck, you can't blame an actor or two for a bad screenplay and a lack of vision on the part of the director (whose name I have completely forgot).



With the next PKD movie I realized we'd come a long way from BLADE RUNNER. This one was MINORITY REPORT (I may have left a movie out here) starring Tom Cruise and directed by Stephen Spielberg. I detest this movie. Philip K. Dick's short story *The Minority Report* was butchered by those involved in the production. Spielberg is the director and must be responsible for this utter piece of crap. And I say that because of the smugness of the direction -- the Spielberg-patented sentimentality that drapes others of his movies. It's as if that goddamn cutsie-pie, politically correct alien abomination in E.T. has somehow invaded everything he does. It shows in MINORITY REPORT by his literally dragging one of the 'mutants' from their protective pond where she -- of course it's a she -- is further dragged around by Tom Cruise to the sniffles and sighs of audiences everywhere.

Ah, gimme a break! MINORITY REPORT is strictly high-gloss hackwork. What the hell could we expect from the next PKD production, the forever-in-the-making A SCANNER DARKLY?

I didn't expect much and was happy that they didn't change the title. I'd seen some of the stills online and was perplexed; it looked like they'd filmed all these famous actors and then for some unknown reason turned them into cartoons! I mean, if you're gonna hire Keanu Reeves, Winona Ryder, Woody Harrelson and Robert Downey Jr. and then turn them into cartoons why not get Bugs Bunny in the first place, he'd be cheaper than this lot!

So I approached the movie A SCANNER DARKLY based on Philip K. Dick's masterpiece of the same title with a mixture of skepticism and excitement. I hadn't seen director Richard Linklater's previous movie WAKING LIFE at the theater or on DVD and knew only that it was supposed to prefigure the direction that A SCANNER DARKLY would take style-wise.

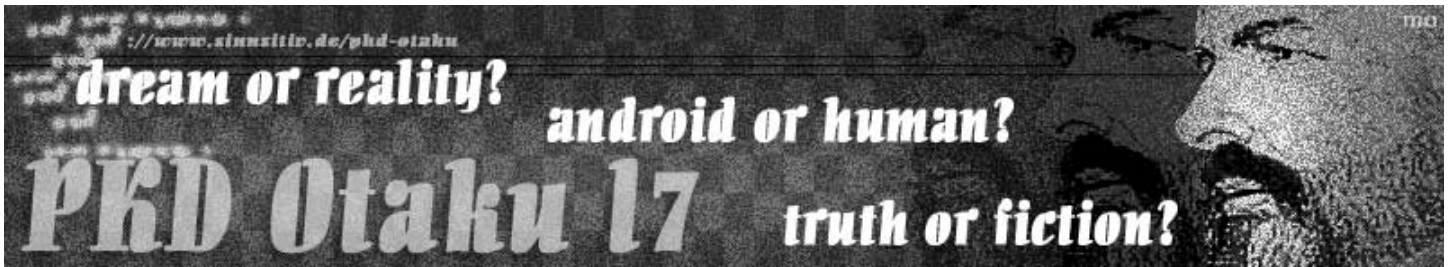
As Patti and I waited through the interminable loud previews in the multiplex in Boulder I kept a rough count of the number of people who came in to see the show. This was the 4.30pm matinee and it was 100 deg F outside. I was heartened to see all the people filling up the seats and by the time A SCANNER DARKLY began the place was almost full. There must've been 100 people in there.

On the screen a cartoon of an actor was playing the part of Charles Freck which character was scratching at visible invisible 'aphids', just like in the opening pages of PKD's novel. As the credits rolled Freck scratched his way around and infected his dog who, along with Freck, had to take an immediate bath. When the credit for Philip K. Dick appeared on the screen I smiled. There was Freck crawling on the floor collecting aphids in a jar.

I settled back as best I could in the really lousy seats these crackerbox cinemas always have, probably uncomfortable on purpose to keep the homeless from moving in... and got into the show.

The cartoon technique was interesting. I was wondering how the artists would handle the scramble suit -- the device that allowed undercover police to hide their identities. Well, I don't know how they did it but it was done. This, I thought, must be one of the advantages of doing it cartoon style. And as the faces of Bob Arctor changed continuously on the screen I noticed for a brief second there the face of Philip K. Dick himself appear in the m lange!

The technique of using cartoonized actors together with the free range of modern computer animation techniques is an interesting development with endless possibilities. It might also be completely pointless. One can imagine, as well, it being easily abused. Linklater knew this when he made A SCANNER DARKLY as can be seen by the scene when Freck is off daydreaming and his head gets blown off. And that's it. The director doesn't dwell on it or introduce scenes of gratuitous violence into the movie. Indeed, he could've done a lot more with his techniques. I imagine a lot of viewers, accustomed to cartoon violence from an early age, expected a more lurid depiction of events in PKD's story. I know I did. The director could've conjured up fantastic scenes of Bob Arctor's brain



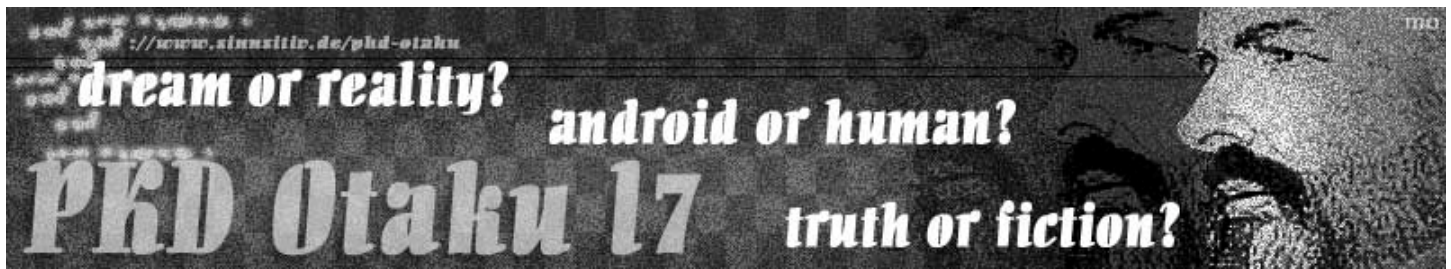
splitting into two pieces, for instance. But he didn't, instead he did something all those who believe in the originality of Philip K. Dick's work have long awaited: a cinematic adaptation of one of his stories that itself believed in the writer first and foremost, one that didn't need to be interpreted with its main eye on the expectations of the punters at the cinema. Linklater, then, had faith in Dick's novel and told it straight.

I've read some of the reviews of *A Scanner Darkly* online and in the papers and a theme of any first criticism seems to be that the movie was somehow flat. It didn't live up to expectations. Well, expectations are for blockbuster directors like Spielberg to deliver. I'd rather watch a movie that challenges the way things are done, that is innovative not only stylistically but also in the realization that the story itself is what is the *real* masterpiece. I think that if Linklater could've got away with it he'd've simply scrolled the text of *A Scanner Darkly* down the screen. That would be something! Read a book in giant letters while you munch on your popcorn. Why not? Linklater comes close with this movie. One thing is for sure; I've picked it up in the reviews, *A Scanner Darkly*, the movie, will generate endless discussion, criticism and comment and although stylistically it might not spawn a lot of imitators it will almost certainly inspire a lot of producers to have more faith in the original written stories they choose to adapt to the screen. In its way, then Linklater's *A Scanner Darkly* will, like Philip K. Dick's novel, become a masterpiece.

**Watching The Detectives. Richard Linklater Adapts Philip K. Dick's *A Scanner Darkly*
By Joshua Glenn. Slate: June 27, 2006**

...In order to get a firmer grasp on this chuckle-inducing notion, it's necessary to revisit the intellectual climate of the mid-1970s, when a middle-aged Dick was playing host to gun-toting drug dealers and their teenage clients, downing gruesome quantities of speed, and working fitfully on *Scanner*. In those years, socialism as a doctrine and a movement no longer seemed capable of arresting the progress of the insurgent political, economic, and cultural doctrine that during the market-worshipping 1980s would come to be called neoliberalism. Disappointed *soixante-huitards* everywhere sank into their couches and succumbed to irony and lifestyle radicalism. In France, however (where Dick's fiction was treated with the kind of respect formerly accorded only to Poe), thinkers like Michel Foucault, Gilles Deleuze, and Félix Guattari offered up theories of how social control was now exercised not through class domination but increasingly subtle mechanisms....

By then, Dick had been writing for more than a decade about semi-employed, drug-using, near-schizophrenic schlemiels who through sheer stubbornness and perversity succeeded in their struggle against neototalitarianism and unreality where heroic types had failed. Forget, if you can, that previous Hollywood adaptations of Dick novels have starred the likes of Harrison Ford, Arnold Schwarzenegger, and Tom Cruise: "I know only one thing about my novels," Dick wrote in a 1970 letter addressing himself to critics who didn't like his unglamorous, anti-heroic protagonists. "In them again and again, this minor man asserts himself in all his hasty, sweaty strength." And in a 1972 speech, Dick stole a march on Foucault, et al., by praising the "laziness, short attention span, perversity, [and] criminal tendencies" of the lazy, shiftless, half-crazed American slacker. ("We can tell and tell him what to do, but when the time comes for him to perform, all the subliminal instruction, all the ideological briefing, all the tranquilizing drugs, all the psychotherapy are a waste," insisted Dick. "He just plain will not jump when the whip is cracked.")



A Letter To Roger Zelazny

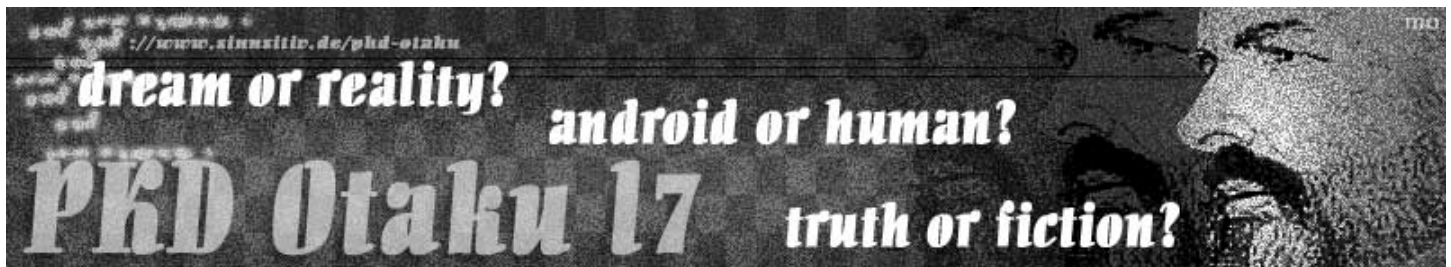
Dear Roger,

November 13, 1968

I've been thinking about the Convention and you, wondering how you are and how your busy schedule of work is going. (Please forgive the bad typing; I just finished an outline and some sample chapters for Ace, and my fingers are tired.) Anyhow, I wanted to tell you my reaction to LORD OF LIGHT, with its beautiful cover – plus what you wrote in my copy. Let me start by saying that I believe – really and strongly and completely believe – that LORD OF LIGHT is one of the two or three finest s-f novels in existence. I can think, actually, of one or two equal to it (PLAYER PIANO) and none better than it. I think I can explain why (although, of course, you must already know it. But I'd like to discuss it, as if I'm the only person who ever read it...a bit of vanity on my part: I read Roger Zelazny's book and I liked it and here's why). (Wait a minute. I think I simply type my notes, taken as I read it, onto this sheet of paper. Here goes.)

- (one) Ending carried beyond point most writers would have stopped at, giving it a full mythic quality.
- (two) Appearance at end of Christian elements a strange but very good idea.
- (three) Language at very end superb. "Flowers."
- (four) Much more powerful than Tolkien --- bit like Mort D'Arthur or Idylls of the King (and DRAGON MASTERS).
- (five) Best s-f novel I've read by anyone.
- (six) One of the very few novels either s-f or not which has an ending stronger than the body of the book – that alone is a major achievement. A novel is no better than its ending.
- (seven) The hooker is great, too.
- (eight) How did you do on paperback resale? I got \$9,000 for EELCTRIC SHEEP. I hope you got more – the novel deserves it.
- (nine) When I got through (reading it), everything around me looked ugly by comparison.
- (ten) Hesse's SIDDHARTHA.
- (eleven) The retarded girl. Inspired. A touch which, did it not exist, could never – by anyone other than Roger Zelazny – be imagined.
- (twelve) I had a terrible time adjusting back to "reality." Haven't felt that way since Stendhal's RED & THE BLACK, which I consider the best novel I have ever read. (I almost typed "written.")
- (thirteen) After reading your novel I watched a famous foreign movie on TV, and it was like living in hell. I thought I'd never get out.
- (fourteen) If you never write anything again you have made a unique and wonderful contribution to American literature – LORD OF LIGHT, like THE MARTIAN CHRONICLES should be read in every college English class. And should be known to every literate person.
- (fifteen) Your idea is original, your plotting is excellent, your resolution is beyond compare. Even VANITY FAIR did not climax as well as LORD OF LIGHT.

I think you can tell from this transcription of my holographic notes how much I liked it.



Also, I'd like to mention specific passages in the novel which appealed to me (for various reasons). Unfortunately I did not begin to mark the book until page 141, but from there on, here goes.

p. 141. "I can't take off cold. It has to warm up." (You realize, of course, that the impact of these passages depends to a great extent on their position in the text.)

p. 160. "Gods collect the strangest things, and certain among them save lists."

p. 173. "Then good-bye," and so saying, Sam rose into the air like a balloon.

p. 177. "...I was flying about the ways of Heaven looking for Lord Rudra, hoping to befoul him with my droppings..."

p. 178. As he rose, he was pierced through by an arrow from a nearby window by one who hated jackbirds."

p. 186. "We need another creator in a hurry," said Vishnu. "The floor is open for nominations."

All of page 188. Which you showed me at the Convention. An utter, absolute delight, and a high-point in the novel.

p. 193. "He (Krishna) wears out bodies at a fantastic rate."

p. 210. The top paragraph. Lovely. Did that really come out of your own mind, or are you paraphrasing someone? It's so good I can't believe a mere mortal (you are a mortal, aren't you?) could think this up, this part which starts, "It is said that each day..." etc. I've read it over and over again.

p. 216. The last fifteen lines. So damn powerful, and done in so few words.

p. 222. Lines four to eight. Very strong.

p. 222. "And elsewhere in the world..." etc., to end of paragraph.

p. 229. "In the old days, I would have taken the thunder chariot –" "In the old days there was no thunder chariot. Lord Yama –" "Silence! WE have a thunder chariot now." Etc.

p. 231. "he has dwelled in hiding over the years. Leaking (sic) scientific knowledge into the world." The verb "leaking" is excellent.

p. 231. "...He later allied himself with Narada, who now runs a bootleg body shop in the hills."

p. 234. Fish, like old coins, lay at the...etc.

p. 236. "And you, Tak?" "A banana, perhaps."

p. 237. The rain fell about him, coming like cold nails through the wind.

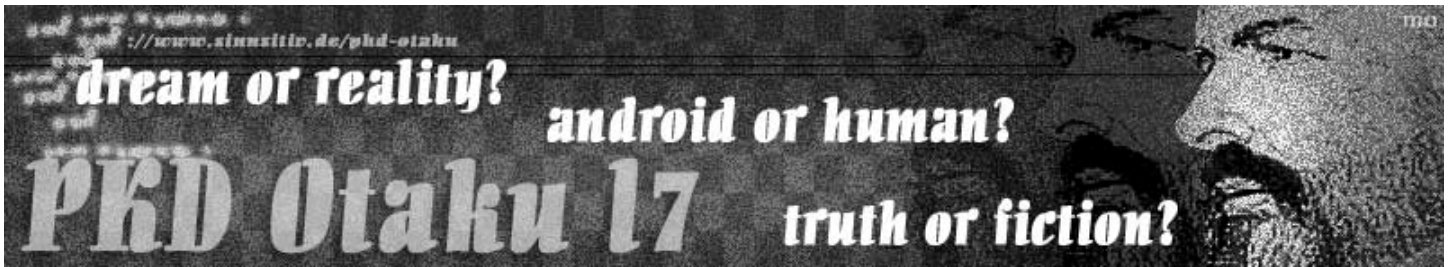
p. 241. "...You know I ma a Christian sympathizer." See my holographic note two.

p. 247. Lines six to fifteen. Beautiful and strong.

p. 247. And Yama was suddenly drenched with galloons of water; and his horse reared, falling over backwards. (And almost absurd event, at a most serious time; the effect is pataphysical.)

p. 254. top sixteen lines of 255. Now, here is something so wonderful, so sad, so perfect, so touching and strange –what can I say about it. (See my holographic note eleven.) At least I have the ability to read it, even if I don't have – and never will have – the ability to write such a thing.

I'm sorry I didn't mark the text prior to page 141, but if I had, we'd have a letter, here, a mile long. Anyhow, from this you can see what delights me: the funny ones, the sad ones, the dramatic and powerful ones. And I should add, the final paragraph...which for some reason reminds me of Grey's "Elegy." (last stanza.) I savor the book; I love it and I will reread it and get Nancy to read it (Nancy, my wife). Well, I could go on forever about LORD OF LIGHT; I'd be interested in knowing how long you worked on it, how many, if any, revisions there were and what Larry Ashmead had to



say about it. Did he realize that he had here? Did he seem to see that this was not just another successful, marketable novel?

Speaking of Doubleday -- I got news from my agent today that Doubleday has bought my most recent novel, a sort of "future mystery," as it's going to be called (working title: A MAZE WITH DEATH). And Terry Carr at Ace tells me that a big collection of my magazine-length stories is coming out as a special...so between the two sales we are back in the black and out of the red, as the folks say. And then I have high hopes for the sample chapters and outline which I just sent off to Don Wollheim. So you can see I've been busy.

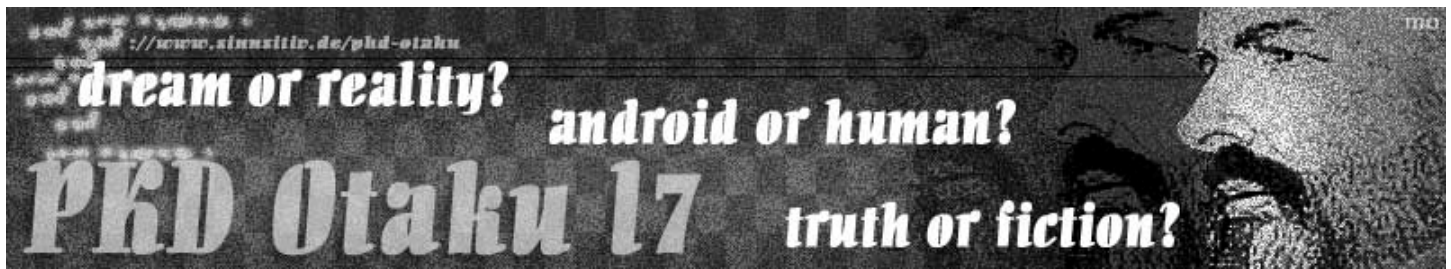
After reading LORD OF LIGHT I can see that you will have no trouble with our collaboration, DEUS IRAE. By the way -- an idea came to me about that (don't read the rest of this until March, if you're busy right now). Maybe the viewpoint -- and locale--could shift, at about page 55, to the God of Wrath himself. That's something that didn't occur to me until today...and it's been four and a half years! Shifting viewpoint is a method I always use...but for some reason this never occurred to me. Any good? Yes? No? In-between?

Let's see...one other item. Terry sent me the galleys of John Brunner's new novel, THE JAGGED ORBIT. Terrible title, but a fine book. Terry wanted me to write something nice about it (presumably after reading it) to be used in a cover blurb. Well, it was easy for me to do so because the book was so good (we'll have to dodge and weave fast to keep up with John). Now, Terry wants to know if there's anyone I'd like the galleys of my short story collection sent to. Would you have the time, say next month, I guess to read into the collection? If not that's okay; I damn near didn't have time to read John's. I can't ask Terry to send my Galleys to John because that would force him into a quid pro quo, and I don't want that. Let me know...and if I don't hear from you (I know how busy you are) I simply won't suggest your name to Terry.

In looking back over this letter I see that I have not said one bad thing about anything in your novel...and it occurs to me that possibly this might make my comments sound contrived. Therefore I shall complain about two things: two similes. "The rain came down like bullets." "His chest was like a barrel." It also occurs to me that you might be annoyed -- and quite rightly, too -- at this, my long discourse about your novel...after all it is yours, not mine; maybe I should confine my analysis to my own works. But forgive me, Roger, if I've gone too far; I did like it so damn much, and I just wanted to tell you that, and lay out the Why in front of you. And remember: THIS LETTER DOES NOT REQUIRE AN ANSWER, because I KNOW HOW BUSY YOU ARE. Okay? (One thing I would like to know, though, if you do write; which of my novels that you've read did you like the most? Assuming, of course, that you liked any. THE THREE STIGMATA? MAN IN THE HIGH CASTLE? MARTIN TIME-SLIP? Those are the ones I think are best.)

With love,

Philip K. Dick



A Brief Look At Some Of The Short Stories By Andre Welling

Having just read that pulp sf story GOLDEN MAN with its cliché radiation fear and pulp genetics (radiation caused 'mutants' like x-men villains and the 'euth' tries to hinder the emergence of new 'races' threatening to good ol' homo sapiens - that's not so much away from the world of 'Lord of the Swastika') and the punch line of an all-seeing (he knows 'the' future, oh my *yawn*) but stupid (i.e. 'animalistic') 'mutant' that is attractive for earth women because it is all golden and so (we know women are like magpies) makes them all-too- willing fuck-and-reproduce prey. Is this the end of the world? What a potboiler.. And now soon a MAJOR MOTION PICTURE with Tom Cruise all naked and golden...

Immediately dived into 'Breakfast at Twilight' which *is* (could be) by all means a decent 50s war paranoia Twilight Zone episode. There is a wonderful passage in it about what it means to be alive and the family chooses (risk of) death over that 'not being alive' of being brain-washed and unfree people. (It would also be the speech of a father rather killing his own children than letting the 'commies' have them...)

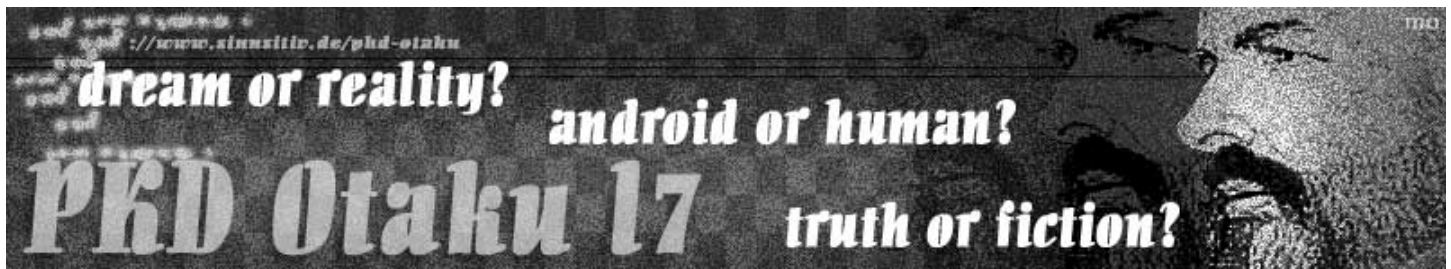
EXHIBIT PIECE with its faulty logic and 'surprise' ending (even if Dr. Grunberg is right, so why didn't he himself hear of the imminent world destruction as written in the morning paper?) is not so hot but the TURNING WHEEL is really cool and really one of his best. And one of the rare stories without Anglo protagonists and a real fun 'society'. Those Bards and Poets operating faulty machinery they wouldn't think of getting fixed because that's so, well, 'meddling'. And the delightful Elron bashing. And the white apes: I felt exactly like that sweaty and hairy Cauc hunk when I traveled in Sumatra and all those slender, short, spotlessly-groomed, handsome, and copper-colored Indonesians watched 'it' as if expecting me to turn into protoplasm any second.

Book Reviews

The Three Stigmata of Palmer Eldrich
J. G Ballard: The Guardian 31 March 1966, p. 6

The social satire, in the past one of the strongest forms of science fiction, has withered away in recent years, perhaps reflecting the present mood of complacency about our manners and morals – or, just conceivably, a sense that the future holds a great deal worse in store. Certainly the future described in Philip K. Dick's The Three Stigmata of Palmer Eldrich makes our own times seem Arcadian. The twenty-first century hero, Barney Mayerson, carries a computer psychiatrist around with him in a suitcase to provide instant harpy. However, the psychiatrist, Dr. Smile, who measures his patients' stressing Freuds, has the demoralizing habit of pronouncing their names wrongly.

Elsewhere notions of reality are equally confused. Even the cement in the vast housing blocks that stretch from coast to coast is synthetic. Intermittent failures of the cooling systems reduce entire record collections to fused lumps, and the population have given themselves over to chewing an hallucinogenic drug, Can-D. No one could blame them, nor expect them to put up much of a fight against the even more sinister drug, Chew-Z, that appears on the interstellar horizon. "No one made



us chew Chew-Z,” Barney repines at the end, but the point is never followed up. As with so many of these consumerised nightmares, “The Space Merchants” pre-eminent among them, the author and his characters implicitly accept the social and moral values ostensibly under attack.

...One guesses that the writers of these so-called satires, like the advertising agencies they envision in the future, already see us a passive robots barely able to distinguish one branded product from another.

The Man in the High Castle

James Cawthorn: New Worlds July 1967, pp. 63-64

If the prose style of the above writers [Samuel R. Delany and Roger Zelazny] verges upon the florescent, *The Man in the High Castle* (Penguin SF 5s) by Philip K. Dick offers by contrast a clear, cold daylight. For many who lived through the years from 1939 to 1945, the prospect of a Nazi victory is still and undead nightmare, and Dick depicts it in chilling detail. Tracing the interlocking fortunes of a handful of people in the Japanese-occupied sector of North America, the narrative builds up an alternate future/pas as convincing as the world we know. Europe and Africa are testing grounds for the perverted science of the Third Reich; the outer planets are destined to be Aryan colonies; in the USA, Japanese rule has been recognized as the lesser of two evils. Among the items of the conqueror’s culture which filter down to the conquered is the I Ching. The millennia-old text which the Japanese themselves adopted from China, and which will, when correctly consulted (and interpreted) predict the future. How the I Ching affects the destinies of Dick’s characters, and how it is connected with the subversive best seller, *The Grasshopper Lies Heavy*, which describes a world where the Allies were victorious, makes a story of fascinating complexity. For anyone seeking further examples of the Work of Philip K. Dick, John Brunner’s highly informative article in *NEW WORLDS* 166 will be an invaluable guide.

The Ganymede Takeover

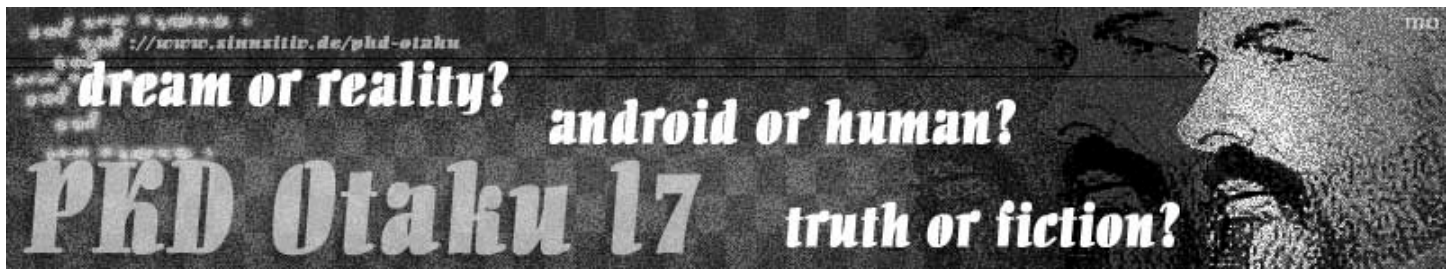
James Cawthorn: New Worlds October 1967

Very nearly anything can be looked for, and found, in *The Ganymede Takeover* (Ace Books, 50c) by Philip K. Dick and Ray Nelson, beginning with the notion of Tennessee as the last bastion of human freedom in the war against the wormlike conquerors from Ganymede. Add to this one Percy X, Negro telepath and leader of a band of coloured rebels who are the hard core of the resistance forces, and whose skin is a coveted prize among the Ganymedians; an illusion projector capable of “materializing” hordes of vampires, elephants, aardvarks and other fancies; action running from stark brutality to outright farce and several sharp prods in all direction at race prejudice. The end result is like James Thurber’s well-known hat; indescribable. Judge it for yourself.

Gather Yourselves Together

Paul Di Filippo: *Asimov’s Science Fiction* June 1995, pp. 164-165

I live with a person who does not know Philip K. Dick as an SF writer at all. Having read only his posthumously published mainstream novels, she thinks of him, perhaps, as a little-known but talented contemporary and colleague of, say, the young John Barth. Her PKD is a quirky anatomizer



of fifties angst, a metaphysician of the soul of California suburbia, a drainer of the algae-scummed swimming pools and psyches of that frozen-in-time Lotusland.

Talk about your alternate realities!

Now, thanks to Andy Watson, publisher of WCS Books, my mate Deborah (and you lucky folks too) can read what is believed to be Dick's first novel, heretofore unpublished: *Gather yourselves Together* (hardcover, \$40.00, 291 pages; order through eyeball Books, PO Box 18549, Ashville, NC 28814). This beginner's novel, although relatively simple and unpolished compared to later works, will only cement Dick's reputation as a compassionate genius whose native mainstream narrative impulses were frustrated by an inhospitable marketplace.

Gather features a limited cast: Verne Tildon, Barbara Mahler, and Carl Fitter are three employees of "the Company," a mining firm with interest in China. Left behind in the wake of the 1949 Communist takeover, custodians of an enormous overseas plant, the trio is absolved of duties and finally free to workout the psychodramas incipient among them, in a locale that at first covertly, then explicitly, calls up Dick's familiar post-apocalyptic shattered Edens. Verne and Barbara, having had an unsatisfactory affair years ago back in the States, struggle with the emotional residue. Young and innocent Carl, meanwhile, strives to understand his attraction toward Barbara and his fear of leaving behind the things of his youth.

This potent triangle generates plenty of interest, although emotions never quite reach the apex of aching queasiness found in Dick's other mainstream works. Combined with flashbacks to the State-side pasts of the three protagonists, the narrative never loses its momentum or a certain mild suspense.

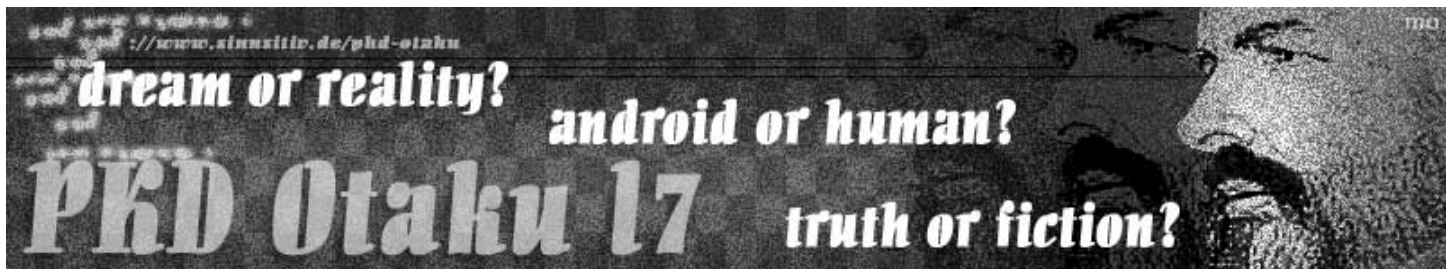
What has, I believe, been too little mentioned about Dick's sometimes rushed prose style is its compulsive readability. Not quite stream-of-consciousness, full of effective sentence fragments, Dick's occasionally meandering, seemingly haphazard thread of words, woven of emotions and perceptions, hunches and flashes of insight, functions like a guiding twine through the labyrinth of reality.

Present in this book is nearly every Dickian preoccupation that was to exfoliate later in such startling patterns. Dark-haired girls, simulacra, the cardboard nature of reality, the absence or disappearance of God, the fluctuations between past and present, bodies as machines, the seductive allure of philosophy, metaphysical anxieties – from his very earliest work, Dick was fully Dick.

In an intriguing afterword, Dwight Brown explicates the autobiographical components of the book, making a good case that Carl Fitter stands in for Dick himself. (Carl's massive treatise on ethics can even be seen as the prototype for Dick's enormous *Valis* exegesis.)

While basically agreeing, I'd like to point out that Barbara herself represents a certain element of Dick's persona. The same age as Dick was when he wrote the book, she is simultaneously hardened and vulnerable, a stance that a young PK, coming off a broken marriage, must have found himself often adopting. M Given Dick's notorious identification with his dead sister, and also an episode where Carl strains to "give birth" to a drawing that seems to represent his anima, the cross-gender identification is plain.

This handsomely produced book (credit goes to designer James "Kibo" Parry) rescues from oblivion and important – and entertaining – document from one of the field's seminal writers.



**Recall Mechanisms - An Interview With Tessa, Chris And Ranea Dick
By Annie Knight 3am Magazine 2002**

[...] 3AM: What was his writing behavior like?

TD: [He would spend] three days straight writing a couple hundred pages. I didn't get any sleep either because every ten minutes [he would ask] "How do you spell X?", "I need some coffee", "Is there any food?"... He'd lay down for about ten minutes, get up again, and write some more.

3AM: Did he have a separate room for writing?

TD: Well, we lived in a two bedroom apartment, so that doesn't leave a lot of room; but we had to move because the people below us had to get up early and we made all this noise at night. So we moved to a place over a garage. Then we had a little baby [Chris] that screamed constantly. He was known as "Fussy" for six months... Actually, Chris became a character in one of the novels.

3AM: Which one?

TD: Actually, Phil's daughter, Laura, and Chris were in *The Transmigration of Timothy Archer*. Chris was [the character] Manny - You know, Emanuel. Emanuel means something like "the lord has come" and Christopher's name means "bearer of Christ." Laura was [the character] Angel, and in the novel, Manny and Angel get together and save the world.

3AM: Anything else you remember about his writing process?

TD: Right after *The Man In The High Castle* [later in the conversation Tessa explains that this novel was written on his Hermes portable typewriter], he wrote six novels in six weeks because he knew he was going to get the Hugo award [for *The Man In The High Castle*], and he wanted to cash in on it real quick because he was so broke. When he was with me, he wrote *A Scanner Darkly* in under two weeks. But we spent three years rewriting it. I got sick of it. The last time the publisher sent out galleys for us to proof, I refused to do it. Anytime I wanted to change anything besides spelling, we had to have a big argument over it, so I just figured I was better off just leaving it alone.

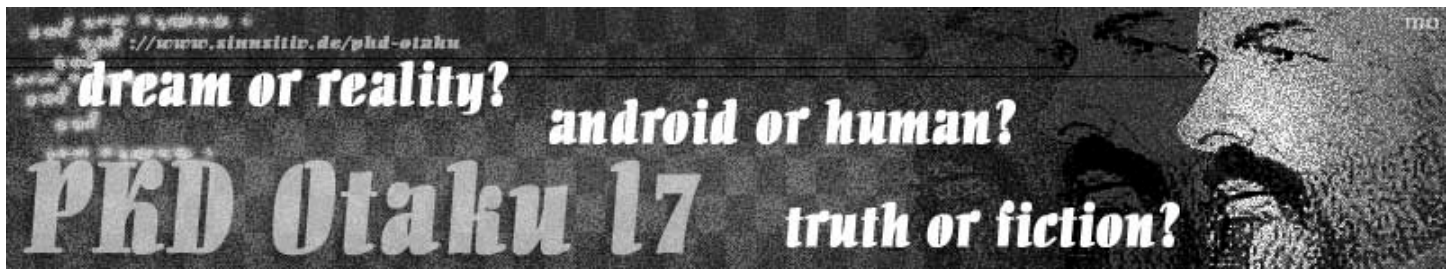
3AM: So you were pretty involved in his writing process?

TD: Well, for *A Scanner Darkly*.

3AM: When you were with him, were there books he particularly cared about more than others?

TD: He figured *The Man In the High Castle* to be his masterpiece, but he was hoping to write another one.

3AM: Did his writing behaviors change any towards the end of his life?



TD: His writing was the one constant in his life. He wanted to be a musician when he was young, but he had more desire than talent, so he became a writer. That's where he did have talent.

3AM: What did he play?

TD: He played a triangle with Harry Parch. He got to hit the triangle (laughing). [Parch] was an avant-garde musician up in Northern California. He made his own instruments... Anyway, Phil worked at [Tower Records](#) in San Francisco for a long time, and they wanted to promote him to be a manager, but his agoraphobia was getting worse. He didn't like being around people, and here he was, a salesman in a record store. That was how he met his ex-wife, Cleo. They were both students at [UC Berkeley](#) and she would come in and buy records.

3AM: What did he study at Berkeley?

TD: Phil studied philosophy for one semester, and then he dropped out because, at the time, they had mandatory [ROTC](#) since Korea was going on.

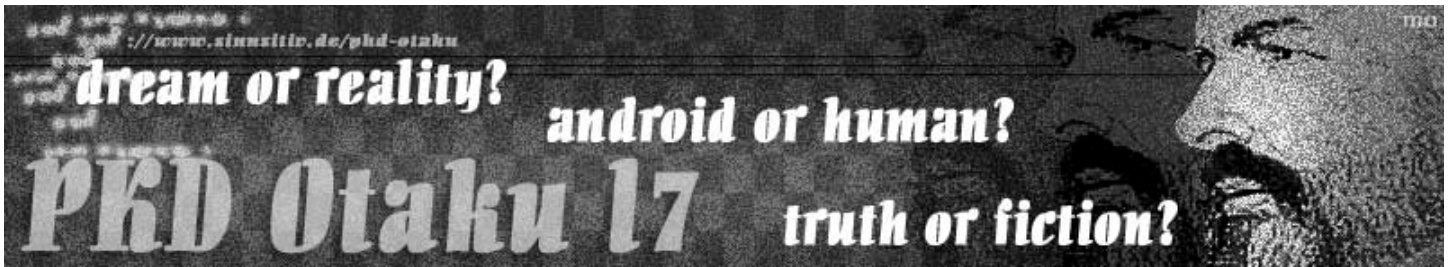
CD: Tell her about the broom.

3AM: For ROTC, they had to march with their M-1. But he would march with a broom because he didn't want to carry a gun and they told him he couldn't do that. Well, the following week, they were learning how to take the M-1 apart and put it back together, but somehow, accidentally, Phil dropped the firing pin into the wrong place and the gun was useless and could never be fired again. So he marched with the broken gun, but he got an F in ROTC, or they kicked him out. See, he never told the same story the same way twice, but some of the details remained the same. Anyway, he dropped out of college because he just couldn't handle the ROTC. After that, he went to sign up rather than get drafted because he no longer had his exemption for being in college. That's when he found out about his high blood pressure. They wouldn't take him [because of it]. He would go join the army and fight in the war because that was better than being drafted, but he wouldn't do ROTC and be a chicken lieutenant, hiding in the tent. He really was against the war, but if he was gonna do it, he was gonna be cannon fodder, not an officer.

TD: (to Chris) Do you remember flipping quarters at [K.W.] Jeter's house?"

CD: We were flipping quarters, and I won about eight or nine quarters, and for some reason my dad and me went outside. We were sitting on the stairs, and a homeless guy came up, asking us if we could spare a quarter for a cup of coffee. I reached in my pocket and gave the guy all the quarters I had won. My dad was really proud of me because he was like that-he really cared about people, and even felt sorry for some of them. I think he was really surprised that a seven-year-old kid would give up all those quarters...

My favorite thing was to have him take me to buy my [Star Wars toys](#). It was really hard to get him to go do it... we bought the "Millennium Falcon." That was a big deal for me because he never went anywhere, and never left his house. I didn't realize what a big deal it was then, but the



older I get, the less I want to go anywhere. We live in the mountains, on a dirt road, in the middle of nowhere.

RD: Yeah, I have to beg him to take me to places like Disneyland.

TD: Phil took me to Disneyland once and we managed to stay for about two hours until he went out to the parking lot and sat on the hood of the car. He couldn't get in and drive home because our friends drove us there, so he just waited there until we all went home. He could not stand crowds.

CD: He didn't like driving either. I remember he had a car for about three or four years before he passed away and it only had about 600 miles on it.

TD: For several years, he didn't have a car. He just lived in places where he could walk to everything...

CD: I'm really excited about *Minority Report* with [Steven Spielberg](#) and Tom Cruise. Spielberg hasn't released any bad movies at all. As for *Total Recall* and *Blade Runner*, both were real good. *Screamers* was low budget. I enjoyed the story. I thought it was really good actually, but I didn't like it being low budget because that means the movie is not as good, and I think that hurt his image. But I think *Minority Report* will really help to launch things and make him more popular. What I really like is that the movies reach a lot of people and get them to enjoy his books because people don't read that much anymore, as it is...

TD: Since the movie got an R-rating, [Mattel](#) discontinued all the *Blade Runner* toys, because how do you sell toys to kids from an R-rated movie? Of course today that wouldn't be a big thing, but then it was. But one day, I saw them at Mervyn's, discounted at half price, and I bought as many as I could afford.

3AM: When was this?

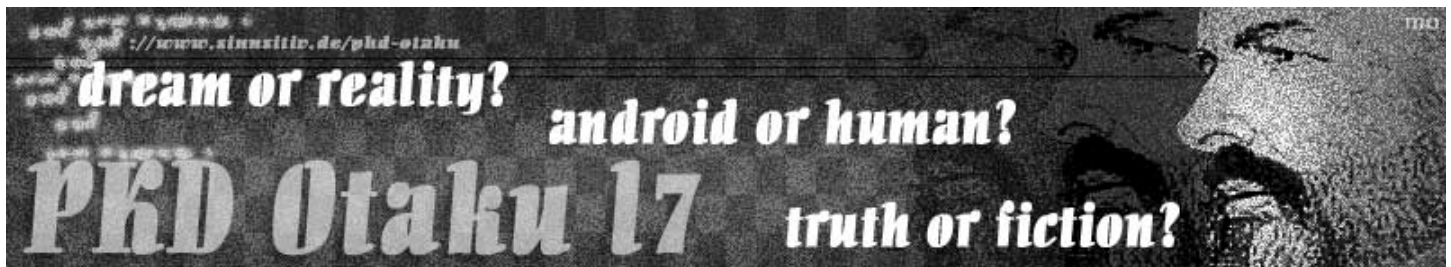
TD: Right after the movie came out, and Phil had just died.

3AM: So he was around for the making of the movie?

TD: He got to see the rough cut, which was no good, and then saw a rough cut of the remake, which was much better.

3AM: How did he feel about the movie overall?

TD: Well, he was much happier with it after David Peoples, a script doctor, fixed it. The main thing was that Peoples *did* put in the little origami animals, because Phil's novel was mostly about the animals and that we were going to lose them because we don't take care of them. The original script was just a bunch of robots and people shooting it out. But that's what people want to see!



CD: Of course, the artist is more interested in what the story is really about... I thought that was interesting how they were making robot animals because they still had a desire to have pets, even when they couldn't have the real thing. What was interesting too was that all the races were intermixed, people were speaking mixed languages, the cities were overcrowded, and crime was real bad. His science fiction is so good, I think, because it's not wild, unimaginable, fanciful thinking about things that never happen. These things really are happening or will happen. Back in the 50's, when this was written, it did seem like a fantasy when now it's a reality.

3AM: Later, through email correspondence, Tessa relayed to me in greater detail how Plato's Cave Theory and aspects of certain Native American cultures influenced Dick's writing. She explains:

TD: "In Plato's Cave, you are seated and tied up so that you can't move. You can't even turn your head. Behind you, people are carrying objects past the opening of the cave, so that the sunlight casts the shadows of the objects onto the wall of the cave. All you ever see is the shadows, so you believe that they are real objects. If someone came into the cave, untied you and dragged you outside, at first you would be blinded by the sunlight because you grew up in the relative darkness of the cave. As your eyes got used to the sunlight, and you began to see the real world, you would believe that it was a hallucination. For you, the shadows are "real", but the real objects are "not real." In Phil's novels, often what seems to be real turns out to be an hallucination, while apparent hallucinations turn out to be real."

3AM: In regard to a Native American influence upon the author and his writing, Tessa adds:

TD: "Phil heard many stories from his grandfather, who fought against the Native Americans in the late 1800s. Phil had great respect for Native Americans and their traditions, even though he was not even part Native American. Phil believed that he had a spirit guide, and that his spirit guide was a very old and ancient Native American shaman. I am part Cherokee and something of a throwback. People who know faces can tell that I'm Native American just by looking at my face, even though most people don't even think of it."