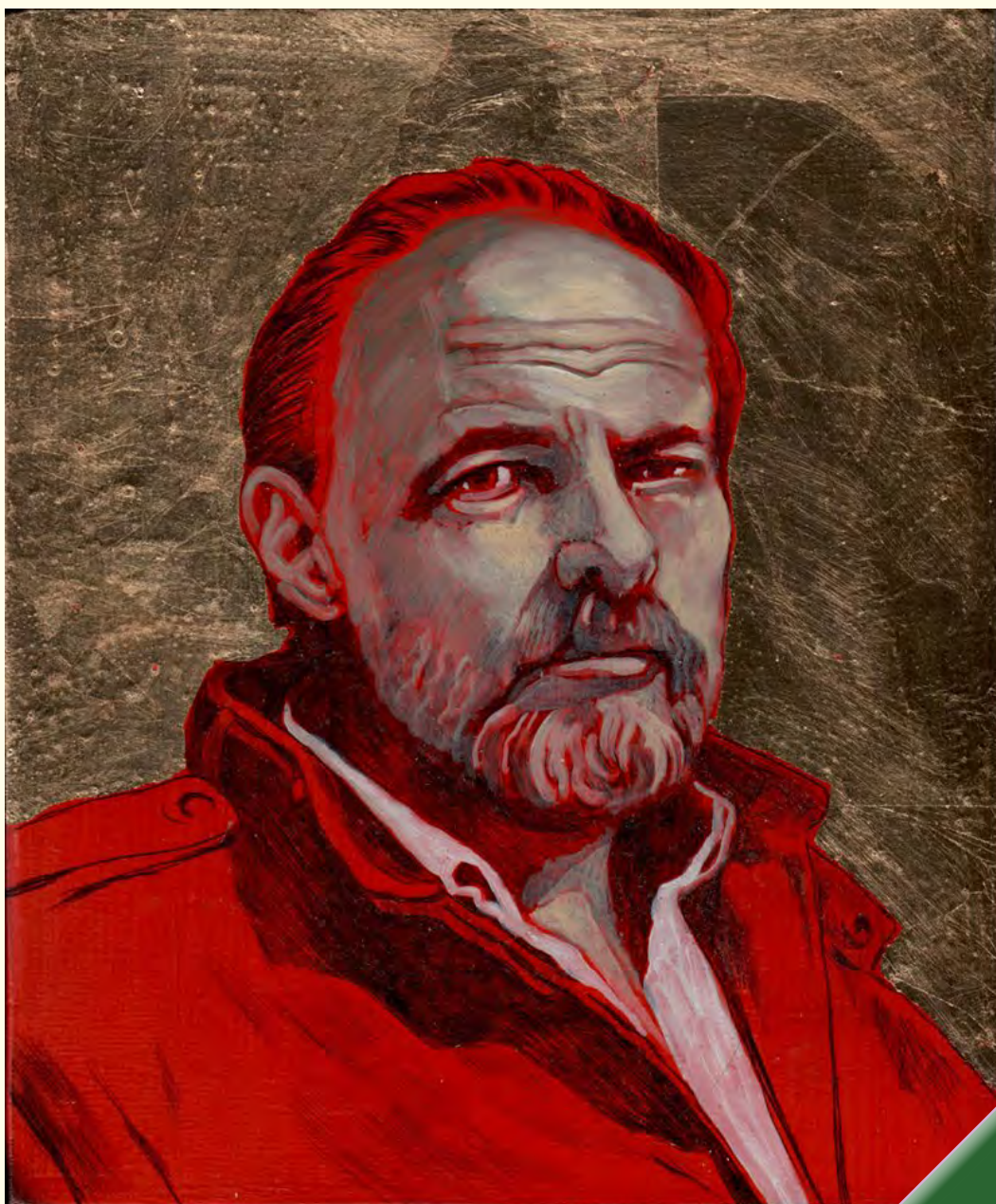


Photo of Phil © Tessa Dick, by kind permission

September 2015



Philip K. Dick by Tommaso Pincio

Website: <http://tommasopincio.net/>

Portrait section: <http://tommasopincio.net/i-ritratti/>

Selected Letters
1938-71 Corrected!

P K D

#32

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Otaku is a zine made by fans for fans.

It exists to celebrate, explore and discuss the work of Philip K Dick.

The Otaku Team have enjoyed the writing and ideas of Philip K. Dick for decades, and continue to do so.

The subject of Philip K. Dick benefits from diverse perspectives, opinions, and insights.

In this zine we hope to explore the Novels, Short-Fiction, Non-fiction and ideas of Philip K Dick.

If you would like to contribute (a letter of comment, an article, essay or review) please make your submission in

MS Doc, Rtf or Txt form to the Otaku Team c/o Patrick Clark via email:

pkdotaku@gmail.com

All submissions are welcome and considered, but we cannot promise that all will see print.

Thank you for maintaining the dialogue!

-- The PKD OTAKU Team

PKD Otaku Layout, Logo, Graphics and Typesetting

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Editorial

by Patrick Clark

Welcome to the new issue of *PKD Otaku*. It has been a long time coming – over a year – but I hope you will find within its pages enough material to compensate for the long wait. You have to understand that zines live on material written by its readers. That is what distinguishes us from your regularly-scheduled publications on the newsstand or ad-bloated web site. And *PKD Otaku* is all about niche marketing. We are proudly Philip K. Dick oriented. We recognize other interests and values but we focus on one, extraordinary writer who at some point in our lives grabbed us by the scruff of the neck and shook us until we understood that there was more to our reality than the television commercial version would allow. Phil started us on the road and we continue down it still. This zine is just one way station on that road. Sometimes there is a delay on the trip and a year passes without moving along. Then we get back in the car and head off once again, as we are doing here, now, in this thirty-second issue. So join us for the ride. Do not buckle your seat belt but do consider kicking in some gas money by sending us your own PKD inspired material for the next issue.



Philip Kindred Dick in Fort Morgan, Colorado

Brief prepared by
Lord Running Clam

Introduction

Fort Morgan, Colorado has its origins in 1865 when it was established on the Overland Trail to protect travelers headed to Denver and the mountain mines. It is named after Colonel Christopher A. Morgan, a soldier under General John Pope, who had recently died. The fort itself closed in 1868 but the town was revived in 1884. It is now the home of some 11,000

people and is known as the childhood home of Big Band musician, Glenn Miller. A museum attached to the Library commemorates this famous son.

But to thousands – if not millions -- of people worldwide, Ft. Morgan is known as the final resting place of one of modern America's greatest writers: Philip K. Dick.

The question is always asked: how is it that Philip K. Dick is buried in Fort Morgan, Colorado? Why is this science fiction writer who lived most of his life in California here?

The answer is a tale of two families, the Dick's and the Kindreds, both of which have roots in America dating to the early 19th century and back to Revolutionary times.

JOSEPH 'EDGAR' DICK (1899-1985) - Father of Philip K. Dick

Edgar, as he was known, or Ted, was of Scots-Irish descent. His grandfather had emigrated to America from Ireland in 1811 and settled on a small farm in Indiana County, Pennsylvania. This is where Edgar Dick was born, the second child of fourteen – and where he came to love the farm

animals. The family lived in Pennsylvania until 1914 when Edgar's father, William Dick, decided to sell the farm and move to a homestead near Cedarwood, Colorado – which is down in Pueblo County just east of Colorado City and south of Pueblo. But after three years of struggling with jackrabbits, tumbleweeds, dust and prairie dogs, they moved to an irrigated farm near Ft. Morgan, Colorado in 1918.

Edgar met Dorothy Kindred (who lived in Greeley, Colorado) some time in 1916. But when the United States entered World War One in 1917, young Edgar joined the US Marines and went to Europe where he saw action at Belleau Wood and in the Argonne area with the 5th Marine Regiment. He later told young Phil of his adventures, of being gassed, of the Marines firing their guns until the barrels turned red from heat, and showed him his gas mask – an item that lodged in Phil's mind and which would reappear transformed later in his stories.

Edgar would not return to the United States until 1919 when he rejoined his family now living in Ft. Morgan. He wanted to finish his High School studies. Living in the neighborhood was Dorothy's brother, Harold, and although they had not corresponded during the war, Edgar renewed his acquaintance with Dorothy Kindred. They were married in 1920.

The newlyweds moved to Washington D.C. later that year and Edgar enrolled in Georgetown University to study for a career in the Foreign Service. But, at the same time he worked as a clerk for the U.S. Dept. of Agriculture. He was assigned

a job in the Livestock and Meat Research program of the Dept. of Agriculture and became interested in the work. When he graduated from Georgetown in 1927 he decided to stay in the Agricultural field.

In late 1928 he was offered a job at the Mercantile Exchange in Chicago where he would answer telephone calls from inquirers asking about the



current price of pork bellies and such.

This is how come the family was in Chicago in the winter of 1928 when the twins, Philip and Jane were born.

DOROTHY KINDRED (1901-1980) – Mother of Philip K. Dick

Like the Dick's, Dorothy Kindred's family were from old American stock, their history going back to the American Revolution.

Dorothy was the oldest child of Earl Grant Kindred and Edna Matilda Archer, she had two younger sisters and a younger brother. They lived in Greeley, Colorado.

When she was 15 her father "E.G." as he was known, left in search of fortune and did not return to the family until the 1940s, near the end of his life.

As the oldest daughter it was Dorothy and her mom, Edna – who came to be known as "Meemaw" because young Phil couldn't pronounce 'Grandma' but he could say "Meemaw" - who raised the other children.

Dorothy met the handsome Edgar Dick in 1916 and, as stated above, married him in 1920, and soon moved to Washington D.C. While Edgar went to Georgetown and worked for the Dept. of Agriculture, Dorothy found a job as a secretary at the Journal of Home Economics.

While pregnant in 1928 she moved with her husband to Chicago where the twins Philip and Jane were born.

It was by chance then that Philip K. Dick was born in Chicago; he could've easily been born in D.C. if his father's transfer had come a few weeks later.

PHILIP KINDRED and JANE CHARLOTTE DICK

Philip Kindred Dick and sister Jane Charlotte were born at home six weeks premature on Dec 16th 1928 in Chicago. Phil was born first. A doctor who lived down the street helped with the delivery, as did father Edgar, who wiped the mucus from the babies mouths – a process he was familiar with as he had helped birth many calves.

Phil was born at noon, twenty minutes ahead of his sister.

Phil weighed 4 ½ lbs and Jane a mere 3 ½ lbs.

The twins did not do well from the start and both were sickly and malnourishment contributed to their poor condition. In fact, they steadily lost weight in the first six weeks of their lives.

Dorothy's mom – Grandma Meemaw, came from Colorado to help. The twins were malnourished and Dorothy found out that the Metropolitan Life Insurance Company would send a visiting nurse to see the children if an insurance policy were taken out on them. This they did at a cost of \$50 per child.



Edgar Dick later told his son that it was thanks to the Metropolitan Life Insurance Company that he was still alive, because the visiting nurse immediately knew the children were in ill health.

When the visiting nurse arrived with a doctor, Grandma Meemaw hid in the bathroom with baby Phil, but soon the children were rushed to the hospital. Jane died on the way. The date of Jane's death was Jan 26, 1929. She weighed 2 ¼ lbs and Phil only 2 ½ lbs at the time.

Her remains were sent to Ft. Morgan and Edgar's family held a graveside ceremony for her at the Ft. Morgan cemetery. It would be 52 years later that Philip K. Dick would be buried next to his twin sister in Ft. Morgan.

PHILIP K. DICK

At the hospital Phil was put in an incubator and given special formula. When he reached 5 lbs his mom took him home. With the help of a wet nurse and special baby formula, Philip began to thrive.

But it wasn't easy. His mother, Dorothy, was under the sway of then current pediatric psychiatric theories that emphasised that infants were a natural animal and should be tended to physically and left alone. Cuddling, kissing and hugging were frowned upon. Add to this the notion that babies should only be fed at certain times, whether they were hungry or not, and father Edgar's germ phobia and baby Phil started his life with little physical affection.

As he grew up, Phil was told the story of the loss of his sister by his mother, who could not hide her anguish and the

guilt she felt. These feelings were transferred to the boy, Phil, who internalized it and felt it was somehow all his fault. He says: "I heard about Jane a lot and it wasn't good for me. I felt guilty – somehow I got all the milk."

The loss of his baby sister had a great affect on Phil's life and writing. She was always there in his mind, something lost that shouldn't have been. Several of his novels feature twins in one form or another, including DR. BLOOD-MONEY, THE CRACK IN SPACE and THE COSMIC PUPPETS.

In the summer of 1929 and unhappy with life in Chicago, the family took a vacation to Colorado to visit their families. When Edgar had to return to Chicago for his job, mom Dorothy and baby Phil stayed with her family in Johnstown, Colorado – just South-East of Greeley.

Philip K. Dick lived as a baby in Colorado for most of 1929. When Edgar was offered a job in the livestock market at the Dept. of Agriculture's San Francisco office, the family moved to Sausalito late in the year and then to the Bay Area before settling in Berkeley, California in 1931.

Phil would live in Berkeley until 1958.

EDGAR, DOROTHY and PHILIP

In 1933 Edgar and Dorothy were divorced, precipitated by another job move from the Dept. of Agriculture. Edgar was offered a job in Reno, Nevada with the National Recovery Administration but Dorothy didn't want to leave Berkeley and she initiated the divorce.

To Edgar this came out of the blue and for the 4-year old Philip it was another loss – this time his father who was now off in Reno.

The mother and child moved in with Grandma Meemaw and Dorothy's sister, Aunt Marion, in Berkeley. Edgar visited regularly as Reno was not all that far away.

But then a custody battle broke out, with Edgar threatening to file for custody on the grounds that he was bet-

ter able financially to raise his son. The money Dorothy was making as a secretary, he thought, was not enough, even though Grandma Meemaw stayed home with the boy Philip, and gave him the hugs and kisses that his mom seemed incapable of supplying.

In the summer of 1931, free-thinker Dorothy enrolled Phil in an experimental, modern nursery school in Berkeley. Here he was subjected to many psychological tests and in many ways the schoolkids were treated like laboratory rats, even given mazes through which they must find their way. A strict regimen of feeding times, playtimes and naps reinforced the behaviorist educational theories of the time. But Phil didn't seem to mind and did well at the nursery school – it was only later as an adult that Philip K. Dick would disparage his early education.



While in Berkeley, Edgar took the young Philip on his work rounds and on visits to his rancher friends. One of Dick's bibliographer's relates a story told by Edgar of a friend of his who owned a Bull snake which slept on his porch. On a visit one day, Phil came rushing in the door – at age about 4 – calling warning on a "jingle snake" outside. The adults smiled and assured him that it was only the Bull snake. But Phil insisted and dragged them outside and there, indeed, was a "jingle snake" – a large Rattlesnake with 13 rattles!

This country living was congenial to Phil and at age 6, like any boy living in the West, he wanted to be a cowboy. There's an extant photo of him in chaps, ten-gallon hat, and holstered six-gun! But Phil wasn't really an active boy, he didn't take to sports and his asthma made physical exercise difficult.

Recalling the photograph in 1973, Phil wrote:

"First look at the little boy in the cowboy suit... I can see what that little boy wanted to be. That cowboy suit was no pose, no hoked-up phony pose costume; I loved that cowboy suit... That little boy in that cowboy suit took it for granted that there always would be cowboys and that he

was becoming one already, had already, at four years old, made a great decision: what his career would be... that is what Phil Dick wanted to be; when I see that picture I see myself in the best of all possible worlds, or on an alternate earth; look at the seriousness on my face; being a cowpoke is a serious and responsible occupation, worthy of a real man's devotion. That little boy is gone now..." (PKD in Rickman, p39)

DOROTHY and PHIL

To escape the custody threats from Edgar, Dorothy and Phil moved back to Washington D.C. in 1935 when Phil was 6 years old. She took a job at the Federal Children's Bureau.

But the separation from his loving Grandma Meemaw caused Phil much anxiety. His father, across the country in Reno, backed off on his custody threats and his visits also stopped as he faded into the distance of his son's life. Edgar did remarry in 1937.

Once in Washington D.C., Dorothy and Phil lived an unsettled life of poverty and Dorothy thought it best to place Phil in a boarding school in Silver Spring, Maryland for 1st grade.

But at the boarding school Phil was homesick and unhappy and having problems eating.

So, starting the next school year, Phil was put in the D.C. Public school system for grades 2, 3 and 4. He didn't like this school either, often failing to attend – with the tacit support of Dorothy who worried about his health continuously.

After settling in to the public school he got into the usual childish games and hobbies of the time – playing marbles, collecting stamps; his weekly allowance of 10 cents was spent on candy and Tip Top Comic books.

Soon, however, the family would move again. Although it appears there was not much planning in it. Dorothy for her job as a pamphlet writer for the Children's Bureau, was sent to Kansas City for a meeting, and she took Phil along.

Even though California is a long way from Kansas City, they squeezed in a vacation in California. And once back in California, Dorothy couldn't return to the cold and poverty of

Washington D.C. She couldn't leave California.

Somehow she wangled a transfer from the Children's Bureau to the U.S. Forestry Dept. office in Berkeley. It helped mother and child greatly that Grandma Meemaw and Aunt Marion were again close by.

Perhaps a clincher for the move was the fact that Edgar was now working in Pasadena, and Dorothy felt safe from any resurrection of the custody issue as Pasadena, just north of Los Angeles, was even further away than Reno.

Still, Edgar was close enough that father and son could occasionally see each other after a separation of 4 years while Dorothy and Phil were in D.C.



Edgar took Phil to the 1938 World's Fair in San Francisco and went fishing in area lakes and rivers. Phil enjoyed it all.

Yet the divide between his parents continued: Dorothy afraid of losing custody and Edgar thinking his son was 'trapped' under Dorothy's control.

One might think today that the Berkeley of the late 1930s and the 1940s had a similar reputation to the Berkeley of the 1960s and 70s – a hotbed of liberal student activism and left-wing politics as associated with the Berkeley campus of the University of California. But it is important to note that before the Second World War Berkeley was smaller, and the distinction between Town and Gown more marked. Dorothy and Phil

lived in the poorer part of town and it was amongst the working people of Berkeley and not the denizens of the University that he grew up. As an adult, PKD did assume the leftist political vibe of Berkeley, although in today's political environment he'd likely be labeled a Libertarian.

During 1938 to 1940 Phil attended public schools in Berkeley, but again, he wasn't happy. His asthma became more severe and he had many absences.

Then World War 2 intervened and once again Phil's father was on the move: first to the Federal Reserve in Cleveland and then to Richmond, Virginia. Phil would not see his dad again until the late 1940s after graduating from High School.

To lose contact with his father upset Phil and he again felt abandoned.

But school in Berkeley had its positives: Phil became interested in Art and Drawing, and he acted in school plays. It was about this time that his lifelong appreciation of classical music blossomed. He liked Richard Wagner, Beethoven and Gilbert + Sullivan. He also continued to write poetry.

He often sent his poems and short stories to the Berkeley Gazette newspaper where they were published in the Young Author's Column.

When he was 12 he discovered the Oz books of Frank Baum and he sought out all he could find despite the disapproving looks of the Librarians who frowned on 'fantastic' literature.



It wasn't long before he found his first Science Fiction magazine: Stirring Science Stories. And with that he was hooked. By the age of 13 he had a collection of science fiction pulp magazines gathered from the second-hand bookstores of Berkeley. By the time

he entered Garfield Junior High school he had large stacks of Amazing Stories, Astounding Stories and Unknown. He kept his pulp collection for many years.

But noticing Phil's lack of interest in his schoolwork and all his adolescent worries, aggravated by the war, Dorothy decided to send him to a psychiatrist. He would see several over the years of his life. She also enrolled him in a boarding school in Ojai, California in 1942. Although he did well here, his homesickness urged him to go home while his growing sense of manhood forced him to stay at the school.

But after a year in Ojai, Dorothy brought him back home to Berkeley and he returned to Garfield Middle School in the Fall of 1943. In February 1944 he went to Berkeley High School. But during his senior year he dropped out of Berkeley High, not for lack of academic credit, but from attacks of agoraphobia, claustrophobia and vertigo. These would remain with him for all his life and he later became reclusive and didn't want to go anywhere. He finished his senior year at home with the help of a tutor and he got his

High School diploma in 1947.

So, Phil grew up mostly in Berkeley, California during world war 2. He avidly kept up with the war in the newspapers and on the newsreels shown at the movie theatre. He was fascinated by all the different weapons he saw and drew his own larger, more advanced designs.



When he was 14, Phil wrote his first novel, now lost, which he titled RETURN TO LILLIPUT, a title which suggests its source in the work of Jonathan Swift, a lifelong favorite writer of Phil's. He also continued to contribute short stories and poems to the Young Author's Column of the Berkeley Gazette into 1944.

That same year, 1944, when he was 15, Phil got a job as a clerk at University Radio and, later, Art Music, which were two electronics shops owned by one Herb Hollis. Here he sold and helped repair radios, TVs and records. It was the only real job Phil ever had.

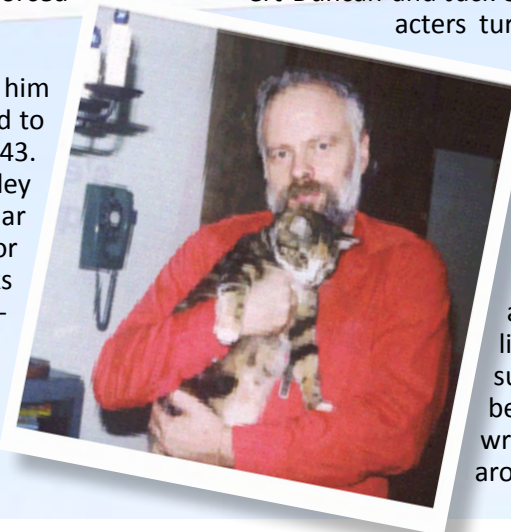
Herb Hollis became a father-figure to Phil and would be epitomized in several strong male authority figures in his novels.

At the war's end, then, in 1945, Philip K. Dick was 17 years old and already embarked on his writing career. He was a science fiction writer and one of only a few people who made a living writing sf – albeit a rather poor one until the last few years of his life.

In 1947 he left home at age 19 and moved into a rooming house in Berkeley. Here he was surrounded by a changing cast of bohemians and beatniks including the poets Robert Duncan and Jack Spicer. Interaction with these characters turned Phil's interest towards main-

stream and classical literature and away from science fiction.

He read all the modern classics by writers such as Proust, Balzac, Kafka, Dos Passos, Pound and F. Scott Fitzgerald. In essence, this lively period with the vanguard of the San Francisco Renaissance was a post-graduate course in modern literature for Philip K. Dick. He assumed the disdainful pose of the beatniks towards publishing and wrote little artsy pieces he showed around and then discarded.



But science fiction was always in his heart. One of his greatest achievements as a writer has been to grapple with the literary conventions and genre divisions of modern American literature, and force them to change to a new definition subsumed under the universal genre we call Science Fiction.

This task, like everything in Phil's life, it seems, was not easy. To realise it he had to approach the Doors of Madness, open them, step inside and look around...

Whether he came out again is still a subject of discussion.

In a way he is every one of us who has been tossed hither and yon by fate and circumstance into an alien world and who tries to make sense of it in one way or another. To

read his stories is to discover a kindred spirit: oneself.

His last resting place is here in Ft. Morgan, he lies next to his twin sister Jane. I hope when you visit the cemetery and touch the cold stone that you remember this man with respect. A great writer lies here.

“Science fiction was always in his heart.”

Lord Running Clam, March 2015 /www.wide-books.com
Biographical sources:

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- Rickman, TO THE HIGH CASTLE: PHILIP K. DICK, A LIFE 1928-1962 (1989)
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Report from the Field: Fort Morgan, Colorado by Lord Running Clam

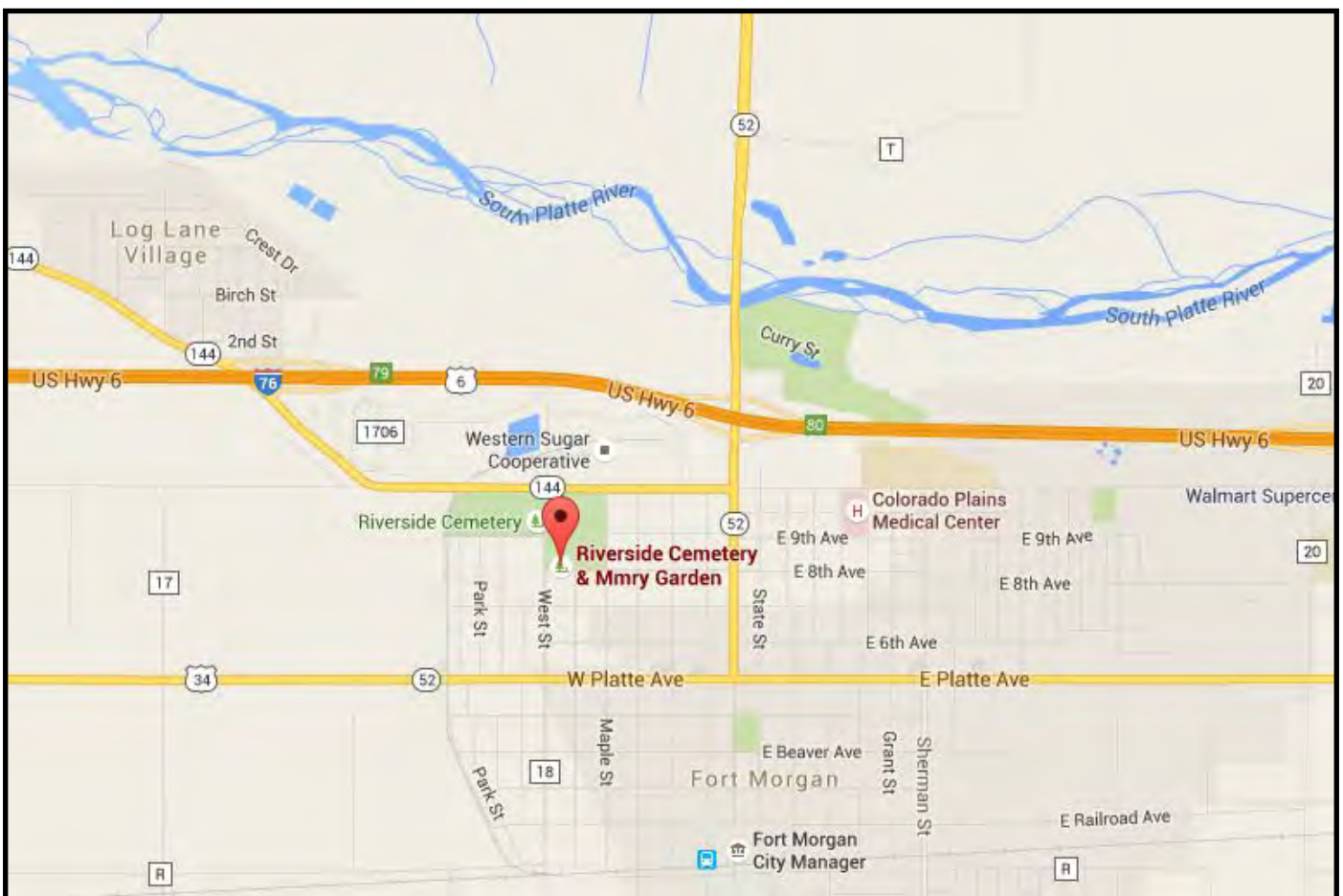
When you visit Philip K. Dick's gravesite in Fort Morgan, Colorado – a trek best made in the Spring or Fall as otherwise its either too hot or too cold – you might find there propped against Phil and Jane's headstone a tiny tatty sheep or a bleached-out business card, left there by some fan who went out of his or her way to check PKD's grave. The last time I had visited there was last summer (which is how come I know about the dusty summer heat) and I had endeavored to do some rubbings of the headstone. I'd brought along a large roll of two-foot-wide paper I'd had for years and which I knew would eventually come in handy for something – like this present task – and also some large colorful crayons. As I bent to the task sweating under the July sun, I realized the crayons were wrong for the job. The headstone rubbings were poor. I couldn't use them as gifts for distant fans, as I'd intended. They were useful for nothing. Instant kipple. So what I left there was

a pile of orange and purple wax running along the bottom of the headstone.

Sacrilege? Maybe so but we live in a PKDland of tiny bumps at the intersection of history and reality and one of these is the gravesite of the Dick twins who are finally together and now playing in the ground and in the stars. The gravesite, then, is a playground and perfectly okay to be crawled over by Ganymedeian slime molds.

Is it a magical place, then, this gravesite on the Colorado prairie? How does it feel to be there, looking down on the marker, to sit on the stone and wonder about the children playing beneath your feet? What does one see looking out over the marble orchard?

There's that one tree nearby, a marker for the grave. Tall and thin, like a Cyprus, or a yew, distant crows flap lazily by. The scene assumes a languor of dust and slow movement – an island of solitude in the heart of the town. The sun blazes down. A plastic flower on a nearby grave wilts. Traffic hums softly on the hiway. You realise you can't stay



here long. Mere humans might better tolerate the heat but for slime molds its like frying an egg. I blinked, capturing an instant in my mind. So many stones in the orchard and not enough trees.

However, that was last year when Patti and I went to Fort Morgan to pay our respects to the late, great Master of something though we're not quite sure what. This year would be different, we had a plan. To scout out the town for the purposes of a PKD Fan Picnic in the Fall. I'd been in contact with the Library (always best to ask the Librarians) and we had a meeting with them scheduled.

We got there early and drove around town. I was looking for a pool hall and Patti for a cold drink. We found the latter in a Mexican/American restaurant on the main street. Nice place with a nautical motif somehow cheerfully out of place. Just down the road was the Library and Museum.

Just before the appointed time we wandered inside and slipped into the museum and goggled over the old Frontier and Native American artifacts. A wing was devoted to the life of Glenn Miller, the famous musician and band leader, who had grown up in Ft. Morgan. We learned also of the reconstruction of the Rainbow Bridge, a 1000 ft arch-construction bridge spanning the South Platte river just north of town. Unfortunately we didn't get to visit this landmark but will surely do so in the future.

At our meeting with the three Librarians: Chandra, Brian and Laney, I sketched out our plans for a Fall picnic. They were very positive and we roughed together a possible scenario for maybe thirty people (I thought that was a pessimistically optimistic number) and talked about what we could do. They asked if I'd like to talk about Philip K. Dick at an upcoming visiting author program held at the Library and I agreed.

After our meeting Brian took us to the lower floor of the

Library where he had an art show on Castles & Clans dedicated to the extraordinary history of Scotland. The room was large and well-lit with what seemed like hundreds of paintings in fine frames on the walls. Mostly of Scottish castles in various states of repair. A remarkable exhibit by internationally known artist Karol K. Mack. We were lucky to find the artist in attendance and offered our appreciation of her artistic skills. There's something about castles that is just fascinating; one imagines ghosts and cold halls and autocratic kings. As a Lord myself, I of course reminisced about my raising in a castle-like structure on Gany-mede. I recalled how I used to crawl over the battlements and spires at night-time when all good slime molds were

supposed to be abed! For sure there are a lot of castles in Scotland and Mrs. Mack did them justice with her revealing landscapes.

Once home again I procrastinated for a while and then started researching the question: Why is Philip K. Dick buried in Fort Morgan, Colorado? To hand I had Rickman's and Sutin's biographies and other books if I needed them. The results of my

research is appended below and the immediate answer is: he is buried there because his twin sister, Jane, is buried there.

In correspondence with Chandra at the Library we decided I'd return there on the 19th March for a talk with the locals in the evening. So, at the last minute (and having had to run to the store for more paper and kicking the printer a few times) I printed out twenty copies of my paper to give as handouts. I'd use this as the basis of my talk. This print job reminded me of the old days as a zinester operating out of various factories and using the company copiers – fine, fancy machines which collated and stapled and did it all at once with much kerchunking and lights flashing and you wish they'd shut up because its the middle of the night and you're not supposed to be there! Ah yes my fine fellow fans, later editions of For Dickheads Only were brought to you courtesy of nameless Midwestern toileries. All at no cost to me!



But! I digress. On the afternoon of the 19th we drove east on I-76 to Ft. Morgan. Being March it wasn't yet too hot. We noted the proliferation of the beige fracking operations everywhere in Weld County and wondered if they had anything to do with the potholes in the road, recalling what we'd seen on TV about secret parts of Oklahoma that had fallen into the ground. I scanned the hiway suspiciously and told Patti to slow down just in case a giant hole appeared before us all of a sudden. Fortunately none did and we made it to Ft. Morgan without mishap.

At the library we made our connections with Chandra and Brian and they led us to a conference room where we set up our huge Wide Books poster and a pile of books. Slowly people came in and filled up the tables. I was pleasantly surprised at the number of people there, thinking Chandra had done a good job getting the word out to the community. She had also set out refreshments in the back of the room. Patti gave out my handouts and at 7 o'clock I began to talk.

Initially I wanted to cover the Dick and Kindred family histories (as in the hand-out) as I felt it my duty to the family who still live in the area (indeed, Phil's cousin, Jim Dick, and his wife, Marilyn, were sitting before me). This took about twenty minutes. Later Patti told me I should've just said that Edgar and Dorothy – Phil's parents – were poor and moved around a lot. But I still think this early life of Philip K. Dick is important; not only because it shows lifelong influences on his writing but also because his life was and is the life of many Americans caught up in sweeping global events, moved from pillar to post by the requirements of their jobs, struggling with misguided notions of medicine and science, and trying to raise their children the best they can. From D.C. to Chicago, to Colorado then to California: this is the path of many people urged on by some vague tropism towards the warmth and the defunct frontier of the West. Its a path I, myself, have taken although I only got as far as Colorado. Here the frontier is on a gradient to the heights of the Rocky mountains. Want to escape from society? Go live at 10,000 ft.

I then moved on to more familiar ground for me: Philip K. Dick's stories. I regaled the crowd with what I thought was

a lively recap of "Beyond Lies The Wub" and "Roog." This elicited a few smiles and I proceeded to ramble on about PKD's life and his stories, mentioning EYE IN THE SKY, THE MAN IN THE HIGH CASTLE, MARTIAN TIME SLIP, VALIS, THE THREE STIGMATA OF PALMER ELDRITCH, A SCANNER DARKLY and UBIK as well as a few short stories, including my favorite "Explorers We."

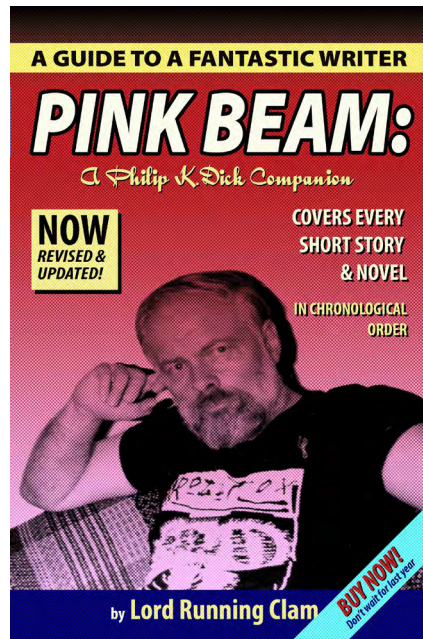
At 8 o'clock I glanced at the clock and trailed off... I looked inquiringly at the people but they smiled and encouraged me to continue. So I talked about THE TRANSMIGRATION OF TIMOTHY ARCHER and Phil's 'Pink Beam' experiences and some more about VALIS. I answered questions on Phil's drug use – yes on the speed, no on the acid (or not much), and on UBIK (although I didn't spoil the plot, a good thing as the guy asking the question was in the middle of reading it), but my voice was failing so I finished up by telling them about fannish activities like the PKD Film Festival in New York, the 2010 and 2012 Festivals in Colorado and California, academic conferences in foreign lands, and the PKD Art Show coming soon in California. I told them of our intention to have a PKD Fan Picnic in Fort Morgan in late August. This was all well received and the reporter for the Fort Morgan Times was there noting it all down. She later buttonholed me and asked more questions. I don't know if she ever wrote anything up or not though.

I was pleased to talk with Jim and Marilyn Dick and Jim told me that Phil was actually buried next to Jane in the cemetery and it was not just his ashes there. I had been unsure on this point. He told me of others of his family who are buried nearby.

Finally I signed and sold several copies of PRECIOUS ARTIFACTS and PRECIOUS ARTIFACTS 2 and PINK BEAM. By 9pm we were back on the road to home. All-in-all a fun evening in Fort Morgan. Thank you to the library staff for all their help.

– Lord Running Clam, April 2015

Note: Unfortunately, the PKD Picnic will not now happen as planned



The Penultimate Edits to the 1938-1971 Selected Letters of Philip K. Dick

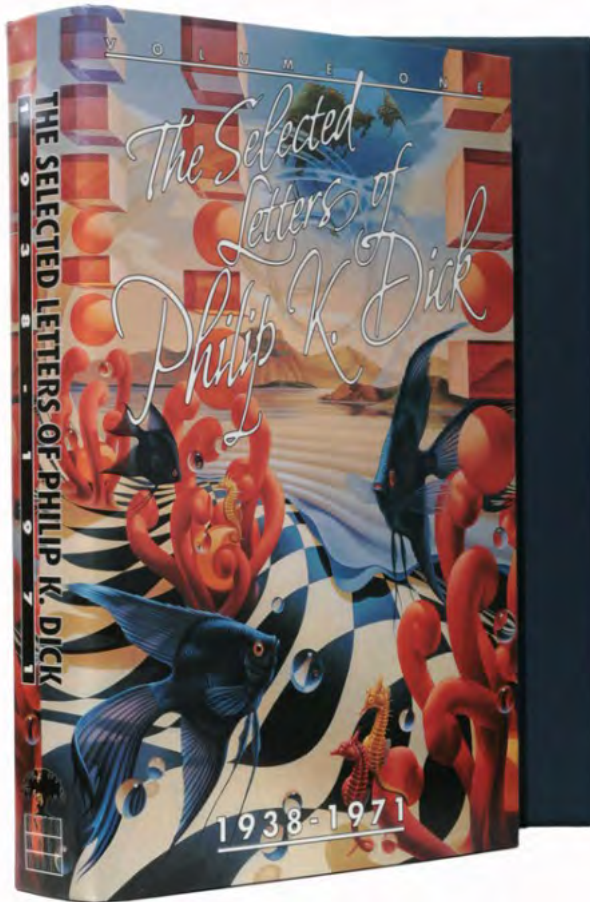
by John Fairchild

I had proofread the 1938-1971 Selected Letters in the sense that they had been transcribed from copies of the originals and I read that transcription. I had copies of some of the early letters only did not have copies of all of them. With most of these there was no way of knowing if a transcriber had misspelled a word or if Phil had done so. I was constantly asking my editor to “check this”. When I received my copy of the completed book there were a few, what’s the word—glitches?—in the book. Let me give you three examples of what caught my eye. Pg.6 to Dorothy, 3rd line, the printed word “homewick” is actually “homesick” properly spelled. Pg.21, Feb.22 to the editors of F&SF, a line got dropped. And pg.236 to Andy, the beginning of the second paragraph has that word with the inverted question mark that is actually “You”. None of these errors were in the final proof that I turned in. My theory is that there was a software glitch.

I had originally planned on just finding examples like this and pointing them out, only as I read I found myself picking at the threads, as it were. I just couldn’t keep from commenting on various aspects of the Letters. There weren’t really that many of the odd-ball mistakes that originally got me going on this. I did write Tim Underwood at the time asking how these mistakes could have happened and did not get a response. Two things: one, this was around the time that he was splitting off from Chuck Miller and I’m sure Tim had much more pressing things to worry about than this. Two, I can’t be sure my message ever got to him.

Some things are just unknowable without access to the

original letters, and in those instances I’ve used [unkn.]. This may not be standard academic practice, yet it will serve our current purpose. Some of the early “letters” are postcards. That will explain the short length of them. A note about quote marks—when using a typewriter you can only make straight up-and-down quote marks, just as they appear on a keyboard. It’s the computer itself that makes the left quotes and right quotes. So obviously it was the word processing program used in the making of the book that created the left quote marks and the right quote marks, if that even needs to be said.



If you don’t have a copy of the Selected Letters, I can imagine your eyes would glaze over fairly quickly reading this. You have my permission to skim this. So let’s just jump in and see what happens.

Pg.4, Sept.21, 1942 to Dorothy—“our rooms are like this:” refers to a drawing.

Pg.6, Oct., 1942 to Dorothy—3rd line. “homewick” is “homesick” properly spelled.

Pg.14, unknown date to Dorothy, 9th line up. Phil spelled the word “imbarressed”.

Pg.17, Dec.16, 1949 to Herb Hollis. Five lines up, the word “alot” is “a

lot”. This is my fault, I apologize. He had used the word “alot” prior to this and he uses “alot” six paragraphs later.

Pg.21, Feb11, 1952 to F&SF. In the last paragraph, an entire line got dropped. Third line up from bottom should read: “(Or even the other way around, I sometimes think.) In any case, do what you will; they’re in your hands. Drop a) or b) or both or none.”

Pg.25, Oct.29, 1952 to J. Francis McComas. Mid-page, “attitude” is one word. This is where my natural editing kicks in. [unkn.]

Pg.47, Dec.27, 1958 to Anne. Eight lines up from bottom.

Should be “representing an idea.” [unkn.]

Pp.55, Feb.1, 1960 to Eleanor Dimoff. End of first paragraph— “If you think all this types, me...”, comma should be on the other side of “me”. Then you have the word “Novermber” at the beginning of the second paragraph.

[unkn.] Then middle of pg.56, DEATH IN THE FAMILY, there would be a space between “the” and “finest”. [unkn.]

Pg.62, middle of page, close up “honorable”. [unkn.]

Pg.75, May26, 1964 to Anthony Boucher. This letter written in German was translated in Radio Free PKD #2, May 1993. I did not check any of the German words in this volume, and there are many of them.

Pg.86, June7, 1964 to James Blish. The sign-off, “m. L.” I don’t have a transcription of this page. Could stand for “much love”, or not. Who knows?

Pg.98, Sept.27, 1964 to Terry and Carol Carr. Eight lines up; the “know” somehow didn’t get corrected after I proofed this.

Pg.104, Sept.30, 1964 to Terry and Carol Carr. The salutation “Dear Terry and Wendy (I guess)” --- the “Wendy” is a joke, and forgive me if I’m explaining something that doesn’t need to be explained.

Pg.109, Oct.4, 1964 to Terry and Carol Carr. Nine lines down, there is no end quote. Pg.110, 2nd line, there is no end parenthesis. This is so common that I won’t reference these. I’ll leave this to some future academic historian. I don’t know what to say about pg.110, fourth line up from bottom, “I read, I read”.

Pg.117, Oct.22, 1964, to Terry and Carol Carr. About 2/5 down the page; you’d have to assume that the missing letter in “intuited” is a typo.

Pg.118, Oct.23, 1964 to Terry Carr. Some of you know this—his code “30” is publishing (newspaper, normally) lingo for “end”.

Pg.146, Dec.2, 1964 to Terry and Carol. Ten lines up, “here” is “hear”. [unkn.]

Pp.152-158, to Kirsten Nelson, dated Dec.9, 1964 and undated, 1964. These were not in my proofs. They were a late addition. No comments, here.

Pg.160, Dec.15, 1964 to Nancy. Notice the similarity to pg.118 to Terry Carr.

Pg.172, Jan.10, 1965 to Carol Carr. “Barcelona” misspelled [unkn.] Later in same paragraph—Phil knew how to spell Don Wollheim’s name. You’d have to assume this is a transcription typo.

Pg.183, March 1965 to Anne. 11 lines up, the correct word is “impounded”. [unkn.]

Pg.184, undated to Nancy. First line third paragraph, you’d think it would be “I wonder where she is.” [unkn.]

Seven lines up—well, he may have made up the word “sy-sygy” but he didn’t make up the word “syzygy”. We need to see the original for this one.

Pg.189, April-May, 1965 to Nancy. Top line—“...make you may wife...” [unkn.]

Pg.211, June24, 1967 to Rich Brown. Half-way down—“gravity is meager.” You’d think that would be “gravity as meager.” [unkn.]

Pg.222, Oct.20, 1967 to Cynthia ____. Re: the Lawrence poem—the sentence structure says it’s Cynthia’s. “And so is your poem The Snake.” Perhaps “your” in the sense she mailed it. It is a D.H. Lawrence poem and I’m thinking Phil just tripped over his own words.

Pg.224, Oct.26, 1967 to Roger Zelazney. Six lines up, “explains” is almost certainly “explains.” [unkn.]

Pg.228, Dec.9, 1967 to Mr. Sapiro. Third line down, “a atopsy” is probably “an atopsy”, I’m guessing. Phil created his own word-form here, which is his privilege. “Atop” is an adverb or preposition and Phil is using atopsy as a noun. Either that or the term is “an autopsy”, but that would be a weaker definition.

Pg.236, May21, 1968 to Andy. Here’s the inverted question mark used in the Spanish language plus the tilde (~). That inverted question mark is ASCII character number 126 and you can make it by using alt 0191. ¿ . So we have a mystery. I just can’t see how this could have been done short of a full-blown glitch. Getting back to page 6, (homewick), a “w” is above an “s” on a keyboard, so you can see how someone re-typing this could have done that. But the tilde is so far away from anything else on a keyboard—I just don’t know...

Pg.239, Sept.7, 1968 to Larry Ashmead. Top of page, referencing Norman Spinrad: Dangerous Visions is a Harlan Ellison book and Phil knows this. I think he was just thinking/typing too fast. Spinrad’s “Carcinoma Angels” is in this book and was nominated for some awards and to my knowledge did not win any.

Pg.252, May8, 1969 to Jack Newkom. There are too many errors in this letter to comment on. In (four) you have “fanale” and “indicitate”. In (eleven) you have “what” for “why”, and in (thirty second) you have “Person” for “Persian”, and in (thirty-third) you have “intervied”, etc., etc. All [unkn.]

I do want to comment on pg.255 and Mickey and “The Air Mail Pilot.” The actual title is Mickey Mouse the Mail Pilot. It is a 1933 Big Little Book.

Pg.263, June8, 1969. Second paragraph, “...an active evil the evil—force.” There’s probably a dash after the first “evil”. [unkn.]

Pg.266, Nov.8, 1969 to Zelazney. Second paragraph. The Triple Tunne is capitalized. This is from a poem by Herrick and it refers to a tavern in London. It was also called the Tun, and "triple" could have a small "t", depending on which source you use. The Sun and the Dog were also taverns.

Pg.272, Aug.17, 1970 to Zelazney. I have no idea what the "(sic)", 3rd line from bottom, refers to.

Pg.273, 1st paragraph, "buffalo". Since he spelled it correctly two lines later, I'd think it would be safe to assume this is a typo.

Pg.274, Aug.19, 1970 to Valerie McMillan. Note that the salutation says "Valery" and not "Valerie".

See page 304, Oct.2, 1970, where it is spelled "Valerie". And he acknowledges this—"Am I still spelling your name wrong?"

Pg.280, Aug.27, 1970 to Jack. Third paragraph, correct spelling is "Tokugawa". [unkn.]

Pg.283, Sept.8, 1970 to Valerie McMillan. Fourth paragraph, there is a possessive apostrophe in "The Beggar's Opera." Fourth line up from bottom, this apostrophe got reversed in the final copy, and seems to be an example of the software error.

Pg.284, the footnote for Glyndebourne—I'm pretty sure this refers to either Gay's "The Beggar's Opera" or "Midsummer's Night's Dream", since Glyndebourne did both of them. This is very confusing and I'm going to let someone else sort this out in the future. Glyndebourne (Opera Company) did Midsummer's Night's Dream only not until 1981 and Benjamin Britten did the music to this with a first performance in 1958. So I just don't know what's going on. Notice that "reference to this footnote is missing", so that's most of the problem.

Pg.291, Sept. 13, 1970 to Roger Zelazney. Second full paragraph. Another reversed quote mark. Plus "...convince..." would be "convinced". I do not understand what "z.b." could stand for, unless it's a typo for "c.f.".

Pg.293, Sept.14, 1970 to Zelazney. The bottom of the third paragraph—I had asked for the "r" in "which lovers Nancy" to be deleted and it wasn't. Should be "which loves Nancy". Five lines up from bottom, Wyatt is Wyatt [unkn.].

As for page 294, the enclosed poem is not by Wyatt. It is by James Stephens, who Phil liked so much. (And whose name appears at the bottom of the poem.) And BTW, the line in The Lark, "Her wonted lay" caused me to take a look at this poem to see if that was the real line. Turns out, there are at least two versions of this poem and in the other one the line is "Her merry lay". I've been unable

to find out if Stephen's wrote this in Irish (Gaelic) and it was translated, although that would be a good guess.

Pg.294, Sept.17, 1970 to Jim. This is not to Jim Pike—Pike died in 1969. This may be a good place to point out that many of the dashes, the long lines, in the table of contents and elsewhere refer to last names that are known, it's just that the people involved didn't want their last names used. Some people flat-out asked that their letters not be included. Other letters were in my draft and got pulled by the final book, which must have made paginating the table of contents more difficult.

Pg.305, Oct.2, 1970 to Valerie. Third full paragraph, "replaced mine" may or may not be Phil's error.

Pg.307, late 1970 to Francys. This was not in my draft and I never saw a proof of this. Notice line 5 "attratctiveness" could be a transcriber's typo.

Pg.314 to Nov.23, 1970 to J'Ann Forgue. Third line up, bottom of first paragraph—"beginning properly to response...". Could be a transcription error. Correct word would be "respond".

Pg.333, Dec.15, 1970, to Mr. and Mrs.--. Three-fifths of the way down, "...the clock working against us,". This comma is almost certainly a period. Pg.334, in the proof it was "...this situation with these needs...". And that makes more sense.

Pg.341, Dec.16, 1970 to Dorothy and Joe Hudner. Fourth line down, "whe" would be "she". [unkn.] Pg.342, bottom paragraph, six lines up, "pancho" would be "poncho". Pg.343, four lines down, "tweady" would be "tweedy". Pg.344, mid-page, "defience" would be "defiance". Pg.245, about 2/5 up the page, "open" would be "openly", and two lines down, "abandon" would most probably be "abandoned". All of the above [unkn.]

Pg.346, Dec.16, 1970 to Marsha. An editorial here. Phil writes that his "happiness pills" came and he was "cranked up on crank, so to speak." Crank does not come in pill form and I do not believe Phil ever took actual crank. I think this is hyperbole.

Pg.348, the undated handwritten fragment to Kathy. I have no idea why this was included, except to give heart to the future people who transcribed the Exegesis. (Only partially a joke.) For those of you who don't have a copy of the book, this transcribed letter is littered with the denotation "[illegible]". Although Phil's handwriting is legendary for being illegible, this inability to read his writing is pushing the boundaries. Two comments on what is typed—mid-paragraph pg.348, the female name is correctly spelled "Stephanie", not "Stephenie", and pg.349, eight lines up, "though" would have to be "thought".

Pg.350, Oct.29, 1971 to Franz Rottensteiner. Bottom paragraph, the sentence beginning “What I can do...”—at the very least this is an incomplete sentence. It’s lacking an “is” or “is to” before the “join and fuse”. And probably a “can” before the “contribute”. Then **pg.351**, first line of first full paragraph, “hearned” would be “heard”. [unkn.]

As a mash-up, here are some more unknowns that didn’t get put in the main body of this essay. **Pg.25** at-titude, **pg.62** honor-able, **pg.73** enough, **pg.98** kwow, **pg.176** letting and gentle, **pg.191** tine, **pg.196** maks, **pg.251** lack of capitalized “she’s”, **pg.264** re, **pg.294** “AN” ALPHANE MOON and **328**, lack of capitalized “that”. All of these will have to

wait for future bibliophiles.

I was asked to write the front notes for the dust jacket and, sure enough, a line got dropped. Perhaps the space was needed and I was the casualty. Some words got cut after “moving humanity” so that we now have an incomplete sentence. You’d have thought that I’d have kept a copy of what I wrote, except it’s either gone or irretrievably buried in the archives.



A note about the gap between 1943 and 1949. As you may know, most of Phil’s letters are based on carbon copies (from a typewriter) that he retained. The copies of letters for these years are most probably just gone, lost during various moves, etc.

Phil’s Typewriter and Mug

P K D

**Sometimes, being a
Dick-head makes sense.**

Nick Buchanan design available as a T shirt from <http://www.redbubble.com/people/paligap>

Interview with Evan Lampe by jami Morgan

Philip K. Dick and the World We Live In

We could say that about every issue of *PKD Otaku*, and practically every article, but it is actually the title of a new book. Many fans of Philip K. Dick have gone on to write books or teach classes about him. The latest to do so is Evan Lampe who grew up in central Wisconsin, but is currently teaching history and literature at National Chi Nan University in Taiwan.

Paperback: 396 pages, Trade Paperback, 6 x 0.9 x 9 inches

Publisher: Wide Books / CreateSpace ; 1st edition (March 13, 2015)

Language: English **ISBN-10:** 1508741492 **ISBN-13:** 978-1508741497

Official book blurb: We live in a world that looks increasingly familiar to the worlds described by Philip K. Dick a half century ago. In this book, Lampe explores the multiple ways in which the global capitalist society—liquid and uncertain—was foreshadowed in Dick’s novels and stories. Analyzing most of Dick’s works, including the often underappreciated stories and early novels, Lampe establishes the outline of a general interpretation of Philip K. Dick for our age. This book also goes beyond Dick’s mystical, philosophical, and metaphysical questions and documents his economic, political, and social vision. With chapters on the rise of the surveillance state, technological unemployment, global governance, family, mental illness, new religious movements, consumerism, and urban geography this book presents new ways to

read the most important American science fiction writer of the twentieth century.

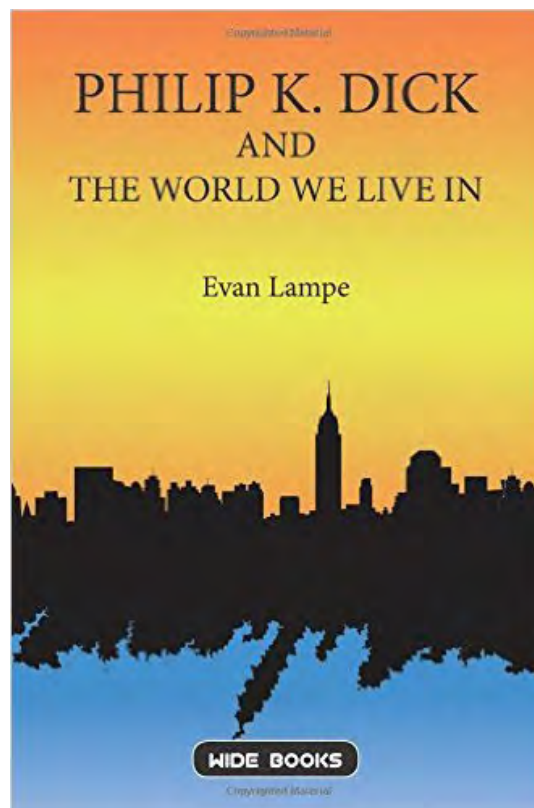
A review will follow but first, let’s find out more about Evan and why he wrote the book.

How did you get into PKD?

I started reading Philip K. Dick (Sorry! “PKD” sounds too much like corporate branding to me, so I will embrace Dick’s anti-consumerist ethos and write out his name) when I was in graduate school. I was probably 22, and it must have been 2002 or 2003.

With lots of time on my hands, no social life, and no family around to distract me, I spent many days in the public library. One day, I saw the series of Vintage reprints of Dick’s novels. I am certain the uniform nature and unimposing length of the books struck me. When the blurbs talked about philosophy I was taken in. I do not know what I read first, but I probably went through 15 novels in a couple months. Strangely, one of the first I read was *Vulcan’s Hammer*, which is never on people’s list of books to offer to people looking into Phil Dick for the first time.

Even before the NSA surveillance scandal and Edward Snowden I was telling people that novel was worth looking into. I did not finish reading all of Dick’s novels until I wrote *Philip K. Dick and the World We Live In*, but I had read most of them within a year or so of first discovering him.



Dick never became an obsession of mine. After the first couple years of my exposure to him I more or less archived him in my mind. When I began teaching history in 2006, I assigned a few of his novels to provide my students some cultural history of the 1960s and began re-reading the novels and stories. The book I wrote represents my third exposure to Dick and began when I started blogging about American literature for fun. In 2012, over about a month I wrote a short essay on 30 of the novels. At the end I summarized my findings and found my perspective on him changed

radically over this ten year period. Thematically he looked so different to me that I was moved to write down more.

But I guess this is an amazing thing about Philip K. Dick. His themes could fill a bottomless pit and there is something there for people at all stages in their life.

I guess my interest in Philip K. Dick has had its manic phases and its depressive phases. I find the intellectual monogamy of some fans hard to imagine.

What books or stories were most meaningful initially and which ones do you like most now?

I suppose it is true of most readers of Philip K. Dick that they were drawn to the big stories. For me it was probably *Ubik*, *Do Androids Dream of Electric Sheep?*, *The Three Stigmata*, *Flow My Tears*, *The Policeman Said* and *VALIS*. After that, I read around the map based on what the Albany, New York public library could offer me. I most likely agreed with most fans and scholars that the late stuff was “better” and that novels such as *The World Jones Made* were interesting but weak. I know now the error of that perspective.

Based on my current values, I am convinced that Dick’s greatest novel is *Galactic Pot-Healer*. Others I would put near the top of the list would be *Our Friends From Frolix 8*, *The Man Who Japed*, *Do Androids Dream of Electric Sheep?*, *The Crack in Space*, and *Now Wait for Last Year*. Works that may not make it as high on my list, but I think are underappreciated are *Dr. Futurity*, *Vulcan’s Hammer*, *Solar Lottery*, and stories such as “*Mr. Spaceship*,” “*The Variable Man*,” and “*A World of Talent*.” One of the most underappreciated themes in Dick’s work is the struggle of freedom against empire, the need for a frontier, and the conflict between the values of a creative youth against the institutions that define our lives. Unfortunately, the works that do that most directly are among the least appreciated. *The World Jones Made* is essentially the story of the conflict of two visions of the frontier: the imperial (represented by the Jones movement) and the creative (represented by the experimental “Venusians”).

Galactic Pot-Healer is in my mind the capstone work of Dick’s career and the only one that comes close to providing a general statement of Dick’s social values. It is almost an argument for a humanistic sort of communism,

based on the principle of “from each according to their abilities, to each according to their needs.” What every character needed in the novel was some meaning in life, and that meaning had to be creative. In this, I think Dick agreed with Marx (although I doubt he was aware of this commonality). Dick’s dislike of the “Autofac” and the dole comes across so clearly in this novel (as it does in *The Crack in Space*). I disagree with him slightly here. I think a post-scarcity economy is the key to unlocking human potential and creativity through the elimination of work. But I agree with him that we need a society that finds

value in every person’s contributions. In *Galactic Pot-Healer*, Glimmung does not recruit people because the market valued them the most. He scorns the market and its logic. He chooses them based on their creative abilities and their need for meaning (from each, too each). Glimmung also confesses that there is nobility

in facing failure and fate. Part of being productive and creative is to accept this. I do not say this to promote the sentimental narrative so popular in films: you struggle, you fail, you continue the fight, and then you win. Glimmung is making a more radical point. You will fail! You cannot find meaning in the world without a broader solidarity that transcends the values and institutions imposed on you. Your projects are futile if conceived of within the system. The future is written in the laws of physics and in the planning of the institutions. That system is not designed for you, your passions, and your creativity. It was not designed for you. Yet, we can only pursue our projects. Richard Wagner came to this same point and decided that the solution was to overturn the gods. Dick is not far from this conclusion.

I appreciate an honest look at fate, not because it takes obligation and responsibility out of our hands, but because by accepting fate you realize that the system is designed on the expectation of the failure of most. Until we reach that truth, we cannot hope to change anything. It is one of the reasons liberal economic reforms are wrong. You can give everyone a college education and a job, but the economic system we live under will still require billions of losers. I guess this is what I find so offensive about the designated hitter rule in baseball. Great pitchers striking out is part of the beauty of the game and a useful daily

reminder to us. In what other sport is daily humiliating failure worked into the game?

Galactic Pot-Healer is also home to what I find as Dick's most direct call for us to tear down the "empire of lies" and rebuild something new. Remember, raising Heldscalla is partially restorative, but it is also creative. Joe Fernwright's career change from "pot-healing" to potter (although he stinks at it in the beginning) reinforces this. Many of the people Glimmung brings into the project are there to add to Heldscalla's beauty.

His rally about half way through the novel is beautiful to me. "Any of you who wish to return to your own world are free to do so. I will provide passage—first class—back. But those of you who do go back—you will find it once again as it was. And, as it was, you could not live such a life; each of you intended to destroy yourselves, and were in the process of doing so when I found you. Remember. That is what lies behind you. Don't make it that which lies ahead of you." No fatalism about the lack of objective reality. No hand wringing about the definition of humanity. No political pessimism. A clear call for a revolutionary dreaming, solidarity, and creativity.

What prompted you to write the book about him? And, how is yours unique?

I was blogging about American writers in a mostly defunct page called "Neither Kings Nor Americans." Basically, I was going through the Library of America, work by work, text by text, but from an anarchist point of view. When I got to Dick, I decided to expand the project slightly and read through 30 novels, not just the 15 or so in the Library of America. I realized by looking at Dick through an anarchist lens, many themes are revealed: Dick's anti-Malthusian perspective, the importance of urban and frontier geographies, work, the challenges to monogamy. I also looked at well-known themes (mental illness, religion, surveillance) in new ways. When I finished that series, I committed myself to writing a book on Philip K. Dick with the goal of using his works as a window into late capitalism. I

approached Wide Books. They were interested so I went ahead and wrote it out. The biggest surprise was how much I eventually had to say. The original plan was around 60,000 words. The manuscript was around 200,000.

Other scholars have drawn the parallels between late capitalism and the themes in Dick's works. Fredric Jameson

more or less started serious Dick scholarship in *Postmodernism, or the Cultural Logic of Late Capitalism*. One thing I hoped to do in the book was to include many of Dick's writings that have been under represented in scholarship, such as the early novels and short stories. In addition to most of the novels, I analyze around 100 of the stories. There are a handful of topics that, as far as I know, are only taken seriously in this book. The most important of these is what I call "the tragedy of post-scarcity." This is the situation we are facing today.

What happens when technology means the end of work? What happens when older people dominate our institutions, businesses, and political systems? Can we as a society find a way to give people meaning when they cannot be simply economically exploited? Is it possible for people who have been told for their entire lives that what matters is a good job and income to even imagine an alternative to work? While I do not agree with Dick's answers (I think he feared technology too much), I find his statement of the problem powerful. Another thing I hope this book did was provide a general interpretation for people who are not especially moved by the more spiritual aspects of Dick's writing. Finally, I really wanted to write about our world, our anxieties, and our challenges in a non-fatalistic way. Too much scholarship is detached from our everyday problems. Most of us do not wake up and see Palmer Eldritch or Lovecraftian horrors on the television. All of us sometimes wake up feeling like Joe Fernwright or Rick Deckard.

Where in the existing body of books and analysis of PKD do you think yours belongs?

There is lots of great scholarship on Philip K. Dick, so I do not want to generalize too much, but I do see a trend that

Evan Lampe: Author of Philip K. Dick and the World We Live In

I call "reading back from VALIS." Most fans come at Dick backward. I even saw a recent post on a Facebook group asking fans what they would recommend to a first timer. One, in jest I hope, recommended the Exegesis. There is interesting stuff in the late novels, but when scholars read the early stuff or the stories for the seeds of VALIS they are missing out on a lot and failing to take trails that lead in different directions. Why have so few writers studied such obvious themes in Dick such as population, urban planning, the frontier, labor, or adultery? Is this because they are not easily worked into the narrative of VALIS? And so much great material is neglected. Even Fredric Jameson commented that the stories are weak and not very important. I have often ran into fans online or in person who have never read or even heard of "*The Variable Man*" or "*A World of Talent*," two works that reveal as much about Dick's world view as does the *VALIS* trilogy.

Overall, I did not worry too much about what other Dick scholars have been saying. I read, instead, lots of sociology and history dealing with late capitalism. Occasionally, and with great disappointment, I looked for others who analyzed or noticed the same things. Jason Vest's book on the "postmodern humanism" of Dick inspired me. I find Christopher Palmer's argument in *Exhilaration and Terror of the Postmodern* convincing and pretty close to mind in many areas. Ultimately, I was much more inspired by people like Zygmunt Bauman, Slavoj Zizek, and Mark Fisher, people asking very hard questions about the cultures and societies we are living in.

What pains me to see is when scholars look at 3-4 novels on some narrow theme, often ignoring the broader context of those themes across Dick's career. I know the pressure of scholarship and graduate school makes broader reading of a writer impossible. Advisors do not help when they encourage students to ask narrow questions. It is time for a general

interpretation of Philip K. Dick. We need some brave students of science fiction to pursue the big questions. The narrow, technocratic approach popular in academia, is not very useful in my view.

I have not read much of what people have had to say about the films. In truth, there is not a single Philip K. Dick movie I enjoy watching. I have taught *Blade Runner* from time to time, but still do not know what people see in it. If I never see it again, I do not think I will be missing out. Here is part of the problem with film makers approach to Dick. There is nothing special about ambiguity in film or literature. The world is flexible, liquid and uncertain. We do not writers reinforcing that by making that the end of the story. We need bold statements of truth. Dick is often presented (by fans, scholars, and film-makers) as a poet of ambiguity ("shifting realities" is a term often associate with him). I reject this entirely. He was only diagnosing the world he saw. His conclusions are almost never ambiguous. They are radical. Simply saying the world is fuzzy (which is where too many film makers and some fans want to leave it these days) is as banal as saying that capitalism is exploitative and ecologically unsustainable. The problem is to remake the world. Dick knew this and grounded his entire career on this unshakable truth. This is perhaps the reason I think works that focus on resistance like *Our Friends From Frolix 8*, *The Cosmic Puppets* or *The Man Who Japed* are more important to us than *The Three Stigmata of Palmer Eldritch* or other works investigating the fuzzy reality.

Do we need more biographies of Phil? (Seems like someone writes a new one every few years.) What is your feeling on existing PKD biographies?

I find it hard to believe that at this point a biographer could say something new about Philip K. Dick. One of the persistent realities of being a historian is the knowledge that biographies of famous people sell well, but account for a relatively small part of historical research. Social



history, economic history, cultural history—the history that people actually live—sell less well. Readers love the unique and find it in biography.

I read some of the biographies of Philip K. Dick that were available when I became interested in him. *I Am Alive and You Are Dead* was fun. *Divine Invasions* was informative. *I Am Philip K. Dick* (is this even a biography?) was difficult for me, and did not add much to my knowledge of the writer. In the end, I did not really cite any biographies for *Philip K. Dick and the World We Live In*, because they did not answer the questions I really needed answered, such as “Was Dick influenced directly by the anti-psychiatric movement?” or “Did Dick read Lewis Mumford?”

Too often, Dick’s biographies are interested in the novelty of his life, especially his late life spiritual experiences. As my book argues, this is not the skeleton key to understanding Dick. The skeleton key is in the mundane, everyday experiences of living in late capitalism. Had 2-3-74 broken Dick as a writer, he would be as influential to us as he is now and without the spiritual distractions and mediocre philosophy that plagued the end of his career.

Biography runs into the same problems of teleological thinking that any historical writing does. We cannot ignore the ending, but we cannot let the ending itself explain the events leading to the ending. I think the best biographies are those that extract the historical context and provide the subject with a maximum amount of historical agency. This is hard. A biographer of George Washington will a hard time closing her eyes to Washington’s eventual presidency, but to make that the story of Washington’s life is to enslave young Washington to the old. Incidentally, the enslavement of the young by old people, old institutions, and old ideas is one of the major historical and moral arguments Dick makes consistently throughout his career. It is there in “*Stability*” and it is there in *The Divine Invasion* and it is there in most works in between.

One last point about biography: I wonder why people have such an easy time exploring religious themes in Dick’s novels after learning about his 2-3-74 experiences or reading the Exegesis, but can be fully aware of his challenges with serial monogamy and not ask questions about his diagnosis of the postmodern marriage. As I am writing this, the news is full of the Duggar family scandal. As you probably know, the oldest son of the patriarch of a celebrity religious family was caught with numerous dating profiles, including on sites devoted to adultery. When writing

the book, I was thinking about Tiger Woods, but we can get to the same place. People (even those on the left) are strangely moralistic and scandalized by these revelations. I see this moral posturing as the last gasp of a defunct family system. The disempowered father (so visible in popular culture from Homer Simpson to Frank Reynolds), the overworked and underpaid and stressed out middle class family, declining birth rates, younger people choosing not to marry, radical assaults on monogamy by polyamorists, cyber relationships, long-distance relationships, and weekend marriages are just a few of the threats to the capitalist family. Not all of this is bad. Much of it certainly emerged from empowering women and liberating sexuality. My point is that whatever is that our children will not be conceiving of sex and marriage like our parents and grandparents did. The industrial capitalist marriage simply cannot survive postmodernism. Dick knew all of this. Not only did he live through some of it, but he documented it again and again in his works. Still, I find a biographical obsession with Dick’s marriage a bit lurid if it does not lead to any insights on his writing.

Beyond your book, what else would you like PKD Otaku readers to know about you or your interest in PKD?

I am not sure I am done with Philip K. Dick. I have a project looking at H. P. Lovecraft through the window of radical Atlantic histories, but I am approaching that work as more of a historian. When that is done I may come back to writing on Dick. I certainly have more to say about Dick’s philosophy of history, his view on posthumanism and mutants, and I may eventually be inspired to write a companion volume to Dick’s stories that will both make a case for the importance of the stories and provide thematic analyses of each.

Evan Lampe is a long time PKD fan and historian by training. He has taught at Endicott College and St. Thomas University. Currently he teaches history and literature at National Chi Nan University in Taiwan. He is also the author of *WORK, CLASS, AND POWER IN THE BORDERLANDS OF THE EARLY AMERICAN PACIFIC*. His current research projects include a reading of H. P. Lovecraft through the lens of Atlantic history and the politics of worker mobility in Pacific history. He lives in New Taipei City.

**Evan Lampe’s book is
reviewed in the
Book Review Section
later in this ‘zine**

Artif-orgs and Repo Men by Perry Kinman

Artif-org/artiforg = Artificial organ. How many do you have? More of the constructed type than the biologically grown type they made their first appearance in 'Cantata 140' in the form of George Walt. Jim Briskin, the presidential candidate, was so impressed how George Walt was able to function and appear lifelike and keep the secret that George, or was it Walt, had died and no one was the wiser about it, that he proposed making a deal with George Walt to save the 400 maimed bibs. The bibs sleeping peacefully in frozen bliss had had various parts removed by the famous org-trans surgeon Lurton D. Sands Jr. Bibs – "Bottled in Bond" as they say. Waiting for a time and space to live anew. Preyed upon by the sneaky doctor who was only concerned with fame and fortune. Did Jim save them? We don't know. Hopefully he did.

Well, time passed and in **NOW WAIT FOR LAST YEAR** Eric Sweetscent was Gino Molinari's personal artiforg or org-trans surgeon. Gino was mostly artiforg when the story took place, possibly even to the artiforg brain stage. Artiforg surgeons were not that common, one to 80,000 patient ratio, so only the rich or despots of small countries or politicians with hands deep in pockets were able to indulge. And, indulge did Gino do.

On another continent in **THE PENULTIMATE TRUTH** there was Stanton Brose holed up in his 'Festung' in Geneva. This guy was artiforg everything. Artiforg heart, spleen, and so on. Authentically Stanton Brose because he did not have an artiforg brain. To take that step seems to have been a questionable one most were not ready to take. To enter the universe of authentic fakes. The will to live was strong but the brain was a mysterious gray area few were ready to have replaced.

From 'Cantata 140' emerged **CRACK IN SPACE**, and the story of the new world found in the crack in the Jiffy-scuttler of the infamous Lurton D. Sands Jr. At last a place for the bibs to live out their lives. Did they make it? I forget it's been so long since I last read it, but I'll be reading it on the flight over to the U.S. when I depart tomorrow. I hope they did. It'd be a bummer to be stuck frozen away longer than anticipated. And I'm rooting for those 400 to be saved by artiforges. The world has gone more in the direction of biological transplants and donors but the good old mechanical hearts and machines still play a role in keeping alive those waiting for a transplant. Too bad there isn't an artiforg liver just yet.

Oh, by the way, lots of movies have been made of Phil's stories and novels. And recently we're getting more TV se-

ries. I don't mind the activity and effort of those who find inspiration from Phil's works, but for me the books will always be the most fertile awe-inspiring place to be. Recently, I found out a movie had been made around artiforgs. How do you like that! It had the right amount of seriousness and zaniness. Black humor to the hilt. It seemed to fizzle a bit at the end but it was a good work. The roots of the movie are a play that evolved in New York, about having body organs being



repossessed or taxed or something. It grew into a musical and a small movie was made to get it promoted, and then along came someone else and made the Hollywood version using Phil's artiforg term. I goggled and googled and couldn't find another source so I'm claiming it's a Phil original.

The movie is "Repo Men" with Jude Law and Forest Whitaker. Check it out and it will soon be playing at a DVD player right around where you live.

A PKD game sighting by jami Morgan

A new British produced "Rapture" video game is chock full of **VALIS** references! The name of the game is **Everybody's Gone to the Rapture** (#EGtR on Twitter or EGtR on Twitch.) This takes the concept of "open world" gaming to a new "fully non-linear" level, according to the game developers Chinese Room.

If Rapture wasn't in the title, I'm not sure I would have come to that conclusion. I would have thought the uncertain reality and freakish phenomena was totally inspired by PKD. It opens with scenes from a fictional VALIS Observatory located near a small town called Yaughton, in the Shropshire countryside* (Nick will have to tell us if that's a real or fictional place in a footnote here.) This is no shooter or fast action game. It's a beautifully rendered "walking simulator" that surprised even some hard core gamers (actually brought one guy to tears.) I think anyone, and probably a lot of Phil fans, would enjoy watching a walk through from Youtube. Check out the promo video first for the VALIS eye Can-D (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8z8qv6qhhAY>) and if you want more then you might like this Youtube walk through: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=T2yJL59FWxg> . (You can find various other videos of Rapture on Youtube and gamers can find more plus live play on Twitch, the gaming network.)

What I've found fascinating about the Twitch network is that I was able to watch others play and see all the VA-

LIS influence even though I have no PS4 or gaming gear. I hadn't tried Twitch before, because I've come to really hate violent games. Rapture is NOT a shooter and the only violence is the idea that people had nose bleeds and vanished. It's not only ethereal and beautiful to watch, but has fabulous original music.

When I commented on how stunning I found it, and mentioned my fascination with the VALIS reference, a gaming/SF fan posted:

"The game is full of references to classic science fiction. I



got the VALIS one immediately, but the biggest influences seem to be the works of John Wyndham - Day of the Triffids, Midwich Cuckoos and - especially - Chocky. It's very much in the style of some of the great works of British science fiction that are probably deep cuts for many modern gamers (Wyndham hasn't been fashionable for decades). I asked the developers on Twitter if the Russian novel Roadside

Picnic was an influence, because I love that book and I could definitely feel its vibe in the game. The Chinese Room replied that Roadside Picnic is an inspiration in everything they do, and I should check the Bittern Books laying around Yaughton, as one of them has a direct reference to the novel."

The game just released mid August as we were going to production with this issue of Otaku. The Verge, an online media convergence site, provides the following interview with the game developers, which contains audio clips and more visuals: [here](#) . For anyone who wants another take on "the rapture", HBO's series The Leftovers resumes October 4.

Other PKD Games?

The list of PKD-inspired video games is pretty short. Early on there was a Commodore 64 version of a Bladerunner game (1985, ZX Spectrum.) A much improved version for PC was released in 1997 by Westwood games. That one remains a cult classic, along with the movie. There was also a PC / NES Total Recall in the 1990s that was seriously panned. A Playstation (and PC) adaptation of **Ubik** was released in 1998, but may have been a bit convoluted for gamers (seems like an oxymoron, eh?) A group of Phil fans (from Ion Storm / Eidos) provided perhaps the best video game tribute to PKD with the series **Deus Ex**, a first person RPG exploration of cybernetics, nano-technology and the singularity. The first title was released in 2000. There are at least three others and a fifth game has been announced for 2015 release. The Deus Ex games have sold over 4.5 million copies.



Some not-exactly-new new Philip K. Dick fiction

by JPC

Surely there isn't a fan anywhere that hasn't wished for even more writings by Philip K. Dick in addition to the rich treasure we already have in print. In the case of your favorite author there can never be enough. One always longs for some new additions to the oeuvre. It's not as if undiscovered material is out of the question. People are always uncovering unknown works of authors long thought complete. Consider Harper Lee who, after decades, is suddenly found to have a sequel to *To Kill a Mockingbird*. In the case of PKD it has long been the consensus that we have about all there is to be had. Minus, perhaps, a few letters or an obscure interview it looks like there would never be any new PKD. The well was dry. So you can imagine the delight in learning that, indeed, there is new material and it is finally available, though in this case "new" is not the best term. In fact what we have is something quite, quite old.

Frank Hollander, PKD bibliographer extraordinaire, has brought to light what must be the very earliest fiction that Philip K. Dick ever produced. Beginning in 1942, when he was fourteen, and up through the end of 1944, Phil composed sixteen brief stories and poems that found their place in the "Young Author's Club" feature of his local newspaper the *Berkeley Daily Gazette*. The existence of some of these stories was not entirely unknown. They were noted, for instance, in the *Galactic Central* bibliography **Philip K. Dick Metaphysical Conjurer** and Gregg Rickman speaks of them in his biography **To the High Castle**. But beyond the vague knowledge that some things were out there, very few people had the opportunity to actu-

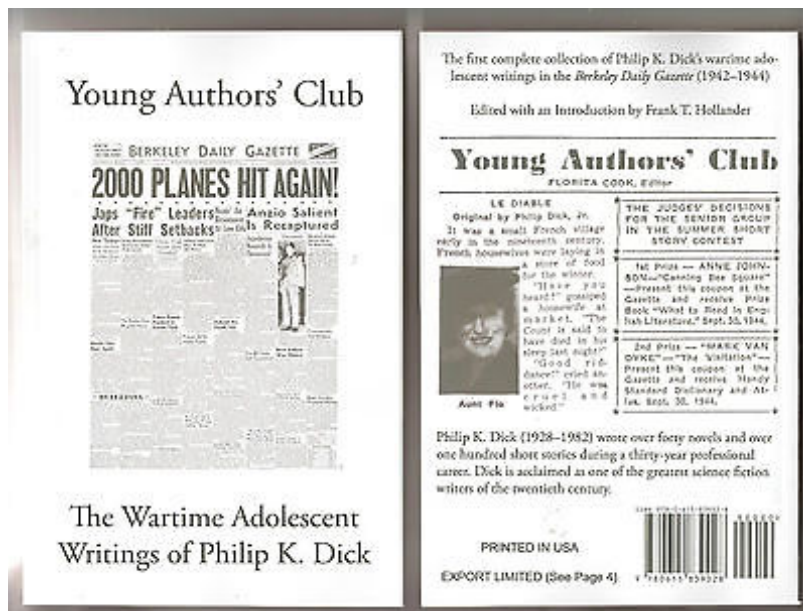
ally see them. Enter Frank Hollander who tracked down the various issue of the paper on microfilm or digitalized versions thereof and brought them out into the public square with his new book *Young Author's Club, The Wartime Adolescent Writings of Philip K. Dick*.

There is a short but highly informative introduction that explains how the Young Author's Club operated and details of Phil's various contributions. Frank has carefully and judiciously transcribed the poems and tales as well as contemporary feedback to the stories by readers of the

Daily Gazette. Full bibliographic records for each piece of writing as well as notes on the texts provide a scholarly addition. Reading microfilmed newspapers is no fun and I am grateful to Frank for getting down in the trenches and doing the work in so professional fashion for the rest of us.

Now, what of the writings themselves? There are four poems and twelve stories. Given the space limitations imposed by the

newspaper these are all fairly brief especially the poems which are a page or two. These are, well, not very successful to my mind though there is one ("Marcus and His End" that is rather clever. I imagine, in any case, what we all want to read most are the stories and these are curious indeed. There are one or two quite prosaic pieces; Phil (or the author anyway) watches birds play in a rain puddle, for instance, in "The Handy Puddle." It's not really a story as it is an impression. The war intrudes in several stories as one might expect from someone writing between the years 1942 and 1944. There is a Swiftian parable called "Jungle People" and a parody of Nostradamus called "A Satire On the Translating of Sixteen Century Prophetic Verse" as well as a grim fantasy entitled "Santa's Return" in which jolly Saint Nick is driven out of Europe after a disastrous armistice.



Curiously, given Phil's future, there is only one science fiction tale, "The Slave Race," detailing the fall of mankind to its rebellious robots. Most of the stories are fantasy, a subject Phil always enjoyed and one that here shows an early infatuation. There is a ghost story with a modern musician and a spectral Beethoven ("The Visitation"); an encounter with the Devil ("Le Diable"); several tales involving magic ("The Black Arts" and "The Magician's Box") as well as a sort of Twilight Zone episode in which Phil inexplicitly has already heard a piece of music on the radio that had not yet been broadcast ("The First Presentation").

Truly there is nothing extraordinary about any of these adolescent writings. There was no room in the newspaper for any lengthy exposition or character development so what we get are simply short bursts of narrative. Even so, the writing is good and such narrative as we have is smooth and coherent. Phil was making the most of the limitations imposed on him. A good number of the tales are dark, in the case of "Santa's Return" quite dark indeed. Dark times, of course, and what teenager has not been moody? Still, it is striking how serious these tales often are. We see here, too, Phil's great love of music. He composes program notes for an imaginary 19th Century composer. In "The Highbrow" Phil range over music as diverse as "Pistol Packing Mama" to Grieg's Piano Concerto. And in "The First Presentation" we meet Phil himself who, when he insists he has heard a song already, proudly asks his friend "Have you ever known me to confuse two pieces of music before?"

So while the wartime adolescent writing of PKD doesn't add very much to the existing oeuvre it does give us an introduction into a teenage Philip K. Dick and allows us to see in a very, very early manifestation the writer in training. This book is a delight and we all owe Frank Hollander a debt of gratitude.

A Brief Review of PHILIP K. DICK AND THE WORLD WE LIVE IN by Evan Lampe by Algernon Imhouse

Many readers of Philip K. Dick feel how his stories are somehow central to the meaning of their lives. It may be the gnostic and religious overtones of *VALIS* and *THE DIVINE INVASION* that intrigues them, or the continuous sub rosa social and political criticism in most of his novels that is increasingly relevant in today's world. Evan Lampe's book, *PHILIP K. DICK AND THE WORLD WE LIVE IN*, enlightens this critique which has, until now, only been

articulated in impenetrable scholarly articles.

A Historian by trade himself, Dr. Lampe explains in clear prose and in a way that bridges academia and daily life just how PKD's novels and short stories give meaning to our ordinary lives. In twelve penetrating chapters he covers such areas as Work (explaining how it is why jobs are so meaningless these days), consumerism (do we really want all this stuff?), marriage (who is this zombie in my bed?) and religion (Ooh! I like this new one that just came along) and shows using examples from PKD's stories how the problems of our current global economy rule and control our lives.

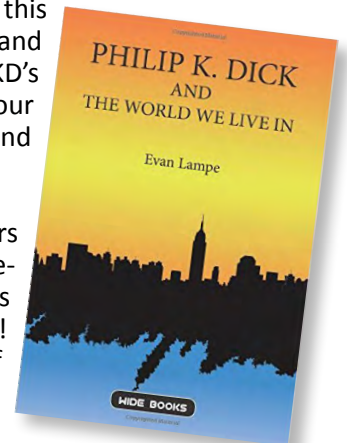
Pick any of the twelve chapters and read on in dawning comprehension as some point strikes home: Good gosh! That's right! it's not my fault that I'm out of work! Or, Huh! I thought I was crazy but its everyone else after all! The answer is right there in

MARTIAN TIME-SLIP. From neo-Malthusianism to post-consumerism and the loss of the Frontier Lampe pokes holes in reality. Or rather, Philip K. Dick pokes holes in reality and Lampe shows how he does it.

But in the end what is revealed? What is the final answer that PKD gives us? There is no final answer, only many answers. The penultimate truth is known and revealed in Lampe's book. It's a scary world we live in, controlled by institutions and interests so large they can hardly be grasped by those under control. There is no conspiracy, just dominance. The Empire never ended and life goes on in the Black Iron Prison. Yet there is hope. Lampe finds it in PKD's small-scale response to Late Capitalism: the hand-made objects that captivate a family in "*Souvenir*"; the mutant creativity of a man growing a rocket ship in his back yard in "*Misadjustment*"; or the survivors of a decaying system forced to make things for themselves in "*Pay For The Printer*".

In his closing Lampe quotes the Glimmung from *GALACTIC POT-HEALER* to the effect that once we know how something is we can continue doing it the same way but we don't have to: "Remember. That is what lies behind you. Don't make it that which lies ahead of you."

And for this reviewer *PHILIP K. DICK AND THE WORLD WE LIVE IN* is an essential book to guide one's exploration of the novels and short stories of Philip K. Dick.



Mutants and Mystics

by Jeffrey J. Kripal

Reviewed by Nick Buchanan

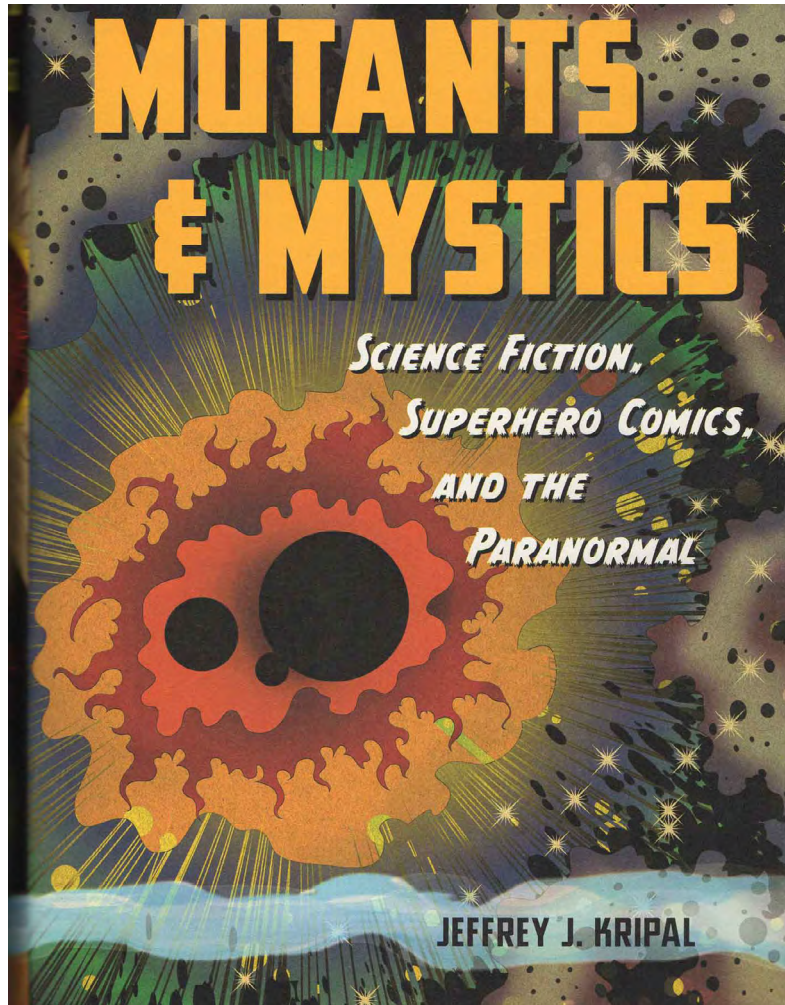
Mutants and Mystics is a book about the paranormal experiences of artists who create popular culture. It seems that many creative writers and artists, whilst creating breakthrough art - which establish new ways of using the form - also manage to have breakthrough experiences themselves. Their life imitates their art. It is well known that Philip K. Dick often used to assert that his novels and stories were *coming true*, and that in some way they mapped his own unfolding experience - that his fiction was somehow *real*.

In some respects Kripal's book maps our desire to connect with something higher than the human - something super-human perhaps? In comic books it relates to the mythic power of the super-human and the super-hero. For Philip K. Dick of course it relates to **VALIS** and his experiences of February and March 1974. In both cases a higher potential is illustrated together with the suggestion that we could be more than the sum of what we are now.

Many of the artists and writers here were giants in their field - comic artists like Jack Kirby and Steve Ditko, comic book writers like Alan Moore, and of course, Philip K. Dick. In most cases, the book cites people with singular conviction and ferocious originality, people not afraid to carve their art; people who don't wait for consensus or approval.

The first half of Chapter six is devoted to Barry Windsor-Smith and the second half to Philip K. Dick. Both had experiences which led them to ask similar questions: *'Am I mad?' 'Is this real?'* Barry Windsor-Smith (a British fantasy artist who drew Conan the Barbarian for Marvel Comics #1-24) working at his drawing board in 1970 saw the white paper dissolve and was shown a different scene with people he didn't recognize.

For a moment he heard them speaking - then he was back in the here and now. Three years later he met the people in his 'reverie' and they said the same words, and even stood in the same positions. Throughout 1973-74, Windsor-Smith continued to have transcendent experiences, in which he revisited his younger self and, like Dick, he saw visions and light-shows. At one point, he realized that he was no longer a body, *'I had no heart, no lungs, no electrochemical systems, pulsing in a red meat factory of materiality. My consciousness was my sole, prevailing existence.'* This non-locality experience appears more common than most folks assume, and could well be the *homoplasmate* form



Dick often spoke about.

When Windsor-Smith recounted his experiences, he was dismissed by many as the victim of something he 'must have smoked.' Except that he never did. The same goes for Philip K. Dick - fans today do him (and his startling achievement) a great disservice when they call him an 'Acid-head' writer, a 'stoner' and 'LSD writer.' Phil wrote **The Three Stigmata of Palmer Eldritch before he ever tried LSD** - and he only ever took LSD twice (as far as we know). The problem I have is *not* with drugs - on the contrary, I think they

should *all* be legalised. My problem is with people imagining that the only route to the transcendent is chemical, that Dick's flights of fancy could only have come from a hallucinogenic. In Dick's case it was his stunning imagination which gave us his great stories, not some bottle of pills. Chemical arguments for human experiences gave us Ritalin and the drugged children we legally turn into zombies. I regard such arguments as very dangerous.

Kripal handles Dick's experiences sensitively and faithfully - as faithfully as anyone could handle Dick's own duplicitous accounts. Through, Kripal equates such experiences as expressions of our evolution. That is to say that through such 'mythemes' (his term) we are able to mutate towards an awareness of a greater reality. That which was hinted at in comic books (with their super heroes with super powers - people developing at accelerated rates due to radio active spider bites, cosmic rays and nuclear blasts) is finally being realised by real people who have seen behind the veil. And having seen behind the veil are never the same again.

In this sense, perhaps we might all be moving towards *divinity* and *transcendence*. Certainly, Dick was addressing such ontological leaps in his so called 'VALIS trilogy.' It is testimony to his great courage that he did so at a time when such explorations were considered career suicide.

This book intelligently explores the idea that Dick's transcendence involved him seeing (quite literally) the illusory nature of the material as well as the infinitely substantial nature of a higher divinity / VALIS / Great Spirit (add your own). The 'mutant' is evolving towards a higher purpose (sometimes even against their will) whereas the 'mystic' is welcoming and reaching for that experience.

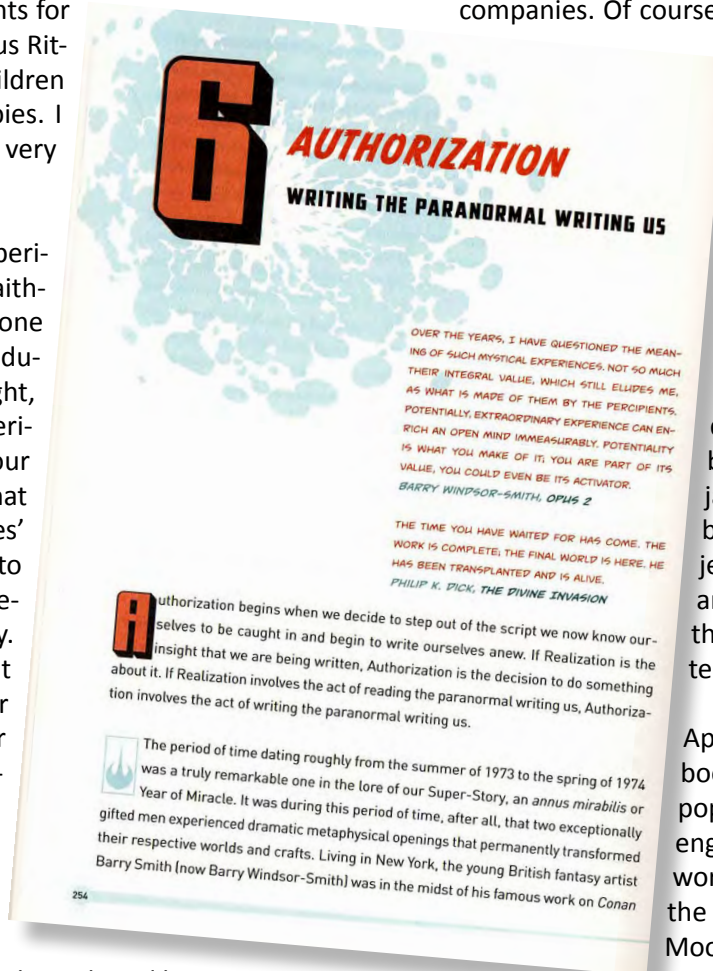
It is fitting perhaps that Kripal has found a way to bridge the gap between pop culture and spirituality. Philip K. Dick was fond of saying that '*God is in the trash*' and he wrote stories where the heroes were not God-like figures, they were simple repairmen doing mundane jobs for crummy companies. Of course, there is no 'trash' - there are only pointers to the infinite and treasures disguised as trash. Equally, there are no ordinary people - everyone is extraordinary, unique, special, sovereign.

As well as being full of stimulating content, a special mention should be made about the book's layout and design. The designer Michael Brehm is to be congratulated - his book and jacket design serves the text beautifully. This is an art object - an artifact made with love and care, and amply illustrated throughout with visual and written examples.

Apart from anything else the book provides a compendium of popular western culture worth engaging with. I can attest to the worthwhile nature of most of the works cited in this text - Alan Moore's **Promethea**, and **Watchmen**, Grant Morisson's **The Invisibles**, Jack Kirby's (original) **Fourth World**, Barry Windsor-Smith's **Conan**, EC Comics' **Weird Science**, Steve Ditko's **Dr. Strange**, etc. I just wish Neil Gaiman's exceptional **Sandman** series had made the short-list - but that's a very minor gripe.

This is an interesting book which places Dick's writings and his experience in the wider context of others who have had their own 'similar' paranormal experiences.

Mutants & Mystics by Jeffery J. Kripal
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Notes & Comments

The online comic shown here can be found at <http://anthonyalvarado.net/2015/03/26/real-weirdo-starring-philip-k-dick/>

Hmm...

*

You have to look at how human nature pans out, and how society alters and changes, in response to continuous technology advances. Write a Star Wars, and generations may pass before the times catch up with your fiction. Write A Scanner Darkly, and the present is likely to catch up with you before the ink dries on your first print. — “How Philip K. Dick Invented Cyberpunk”

*

From a review of a new book by Michel Houellebecq in the January 26th issue of The New Yorker by Mark Lilla:

...Houellebecq is, simply, a satirist. He likes to take what's happening now and imagine what would happen if it kept on happening. That's what satirists do. Jonathan Swift saw that the English were treating the Irish as animals; what if they took the next natural step and ate their babies? Orwell, with less humor, imagined what would happen if life in Britain remained, for forty years, at the depressed level of the BBC cafeteria as it was in 1948, and added some Stalinist accessories. Huxley, in “Brave New World,” took

the logic of a hedonistic and scientific society to its farthest outcome, a place where pleasure would be all and passion unknown.

This kind of satire impresses us most when the imaginative extrapolation intersects an unexpected example—when it suddenly comes close enough to fit. (As when Arnold Schwarzenegger appeared as living proof of Philip K. Dick's prescience about the merger of American politics and the wilder shores of its entertainments, achieved by people with funny names.)

[Okay, you would have to be pretty deeply involved in Phil's writings to get this reference to Yancy. My hat goes off to Mark Lilla.]

*

But in Philip Dick's world technology is twitchy, with endless glitches, often open to abuse and exploitation by unsavory elements both in and out of government. Reality itself cannot be depended on -- it can

collapse under your feet like a rotten stairwell. Nothing is what it seems -- even a beloved pet can turn out to be a product with an expiration date. Government officials can simply be simulations, if they exist at all. Threats can appear out of nowhere, often irrationally or even whimsically. To escape all this, the public retreats into drugs or obsessions with apparent trivia -- games, “setups” for



dolls, hallucinatory virtual worlds. A functional aristocracy has returned, creating a kind of techno-feudalism -- (think of Tyrell, abiding alone within the peak of his vast pyramid in Blade Runner). Dick's world can kill you in a nanosecond without anybody wondering why or even paying much attention.

The consensus SF world is long gone. The gleaming spacecraft, the extraterrestrial colonies, the world-transforming breakthroughs -- it just didn't happen that way. Furthermore, we know enough today to realize that it couldn't have happened that way.

But Dick's world -- that's something else again.

Consider the reality we're living in today. Schoolchildren kept in line by use of drugs such as Ritalin and Adderall. Technology that is as exasperating as it is necessary. Criminal syndicates operating at the speed of light from the other side of the world. A president with a record so convoluted and opaque that it's impossible to tell what is false and what isn't. (See Dick's short story, "The Mold of Yancy," in which a presidential candidate is totally unavailable and never seen outside of his video ads, because, it turns out, he doesn't actually exist.) Masses of people living in virtual alternate universes -- game clubs, social media -- in preference to dealing with the world as it exists. An encroaching surveillance state intent on tracking every living individual at all times under every possible circumstance. A would-be aristocracy slowly separating itself from the masses. Effectively invisible weapons that can kill from high altitude without the victim even knowing he was targeted.

What is this but a Philip K. Dick universe? -- J.R. Dunn

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"Rapper whose music is deemed 'a significant public safety risk' gets hologram banned from performing in Chicago. Performance'll take place anyway, at an undisclosed location. Philip K. Dick couldn't make this stuff up." -- from a reddit cyberpunk post

[It appears that Phil is the benchmark for the outer regions of weirdness in the 21st C. What we might call the "WTF Zone." If it is something that even he couldn't fore-

see it is clearly beyond imagining --and yet true. I wonder what Phil would think about that.]

*

In the next decades, from the 1950s through the 1970s, the ideological novel flourished in America too, as a kind of art-house protest literature. Its maestros were "paranoid" writers like William S. Burroughs, Joseph Heller, Norman Mailer, William Gaddis, Thomas Pynchon, and Philip K. Dick. Their subjects included technology, information, "the mass media of communication" -- as it was then called -- and the manipulations they made possible and then inescapable. -- The New Republic

*

"We live in a Philip K Dick world now. The technology-led, military-led big names like Asimov, Robert Heinlein and Arthur got it dead wrong. They were all strong on the military as subject matter,

on space wars, rational futures -- essentially, fascist futures -- and none of these things really matters today. It's Dick and people like Frederik Pohl and Alfred Bester who were incredibly successful in predicting the future, because they were interested in social change, ecology, advertising. Look at Facebook, Twitter, Apple, Google . . . These are Philip K Dick phenomena." -- Michael Moorcock, *New Statesman* July 24, 2015.

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Letters to the Editor

Dear Mr. Editor and friend Patrick Clark, and PKD Otaku Readers (many of whom are also friends);

It has been a privilege, honor and lots of fun writing articles for **PKD Otaku**, which I've done for almost every issue since I met Patrick Clark in person at the First Phil Fest (aka the Philip K Dick Festival in Nederland, Colorado, 2010.) Patrick was an extremely cogent speaker there, I might add, to use Bertrand-speak* ;) Even then (in 2010) I had spent nearly fifteen years pondering PKD. I was grateful to publish my Phil-inspired novel (*A Kindred Spirit*) so I could let go of the Phildickian flotsam floating in my mind, consuming mass quantities of my limited brain cells.

Then I realized I couldn't let go of Phil just yet. There were book signings to attend, Phil facts to post and promote on social media, PKD podcasts to participate in, and periodic **PKD Otaku** articles to whip up. The tweeting, posting, podcasting, pinning and promoting of Phil has NEVER stopped, nor has the popularity of the PKD phenomena. But it has slowed down... considerably. It's been a year since the last issue of **PKD Otaku** was published! Why such waxing and waning of interest in our favorite writer... I've seen this ebb and flow before. Or, this time is the medium the message?

Many of you reading on your iPads, tablets and phones are probably too young to recall Marshall McLuhan's message about the medium. He pointed out how changing the "delivery system" (TV for instance) affected the message. I don't have to tell you guys (and gals) about the evolution from printing press to digital—for books and zines—and the profound social change involved.

So, here's my point; given the immediate gratification of social media, do fanzines ("sercon"* or frivolous) still have a place, or are they passe'? I ask 1) to be intentionally provocative, and 2) because there are over 800 members in the Facebook PKD fan group, yet how many contribute to (or even read) one of the last remaining PKD zines?

Other than **PKD Otaku**, I don't read fanzines about other writers or celebrities. I google a new show or writer, maybe tweet my reactions or interact on Facebook. The old online forum systems seem to be faltering, and even long blog posts are becoming tedious to read and write.

I'm not saying it's a good thing, but mobile social media is the new medium. Also, who waits a year, three months, or even three minutes these days when there's something to react to or read? We've become a "two screen" culture—one for watching and another for instant response, right? (If I'm wrong are you going to wait several months for your LOC to appear here? Hardly! You'll be tweeting and snap chatting my head off ;))

One of the last rousing discussions in the long-running PKD Discussion List (served up by "our pal Cal" via email) was about the demise of the Listserv (remember that?) Last October, Cal Godot (you know that can't be his real name) called it quits. In doing so Cal declared,

"The PKD list is down, and likely dead for all time." He went on to say, "As much as I'd like to play the committed idealist and keep the list humming until people can send email by just thinking about it, I'm also overpowered by a sense of 'meaninglessness' when it comes to maintaining a discussion list where there is no discussion."

Lack of discussion OR outdated medium? Posting is frequent and frothy on Fbook. For example, in the primary PKD group Helene Collon posted:

"We live in a Philip K Dick world now. The technology-led, military-led big names like Asimov, Robert Heinlein and Arthur got it dead wrong. They were all strong on the military as subject matter, on space wars, rational futures – essentially, fascist futures – and none of these things really matters today. It's Dick and people like Frederik Pohl and Alfred Bester who were incredibly successful in predicting the future, because they were interested in social change, ecology, advertising. Look at Facebook, Twitter, Apple, Google . . . These are Philip K Dick phenomena."

PKD phenomena! The words Helene was quoting are from another Phil-era SF writer, Michael Moorcock (in *NewStatesman*: [Read article here](#))

To that, PKD group member Jeremy Eckhart replied, "When people tell me it's an Orwellian world, my initial response is - **You don't know Dick...**" Many "likes" to that. Then a few posts later, William Sarill observes:

"Interesting that in the New Statesman article Moorcock is quoted as saying, "It's Dick and people like Frederik Pohl and Alfred Bester who were incredibly successful in predicting the future, because they were interested in social change, ecology, advertising." In the earlier Guardian review, he writes "Dick's work only rarely achieved the stylistic and imaginative coherence of those other writers. His corporate future came from a common pool created by troubled left-wingers Pohl and Kornbluth (*The Space Merchants*, 1953) or Alfred Bester (*The Demolished Man*, 1953)." I suppose that one can accept both statements as true without contradiction, but to me there's more than a whiff of condescension about Moorcock's earlier appraisal than about his more recent one."

Just an example of the routine response, reaction and revelry that keeps many of us coming back to Facebook, regardless of how intrusive and possibly "evil" it might be. We get and give instantaneous feedback. I had not considered Fbook or Twitter PKD phenomena, but then Phil was certainly ahead of the curve seeing social change, evolution and our fav "homeopapes." Yes, I think he would be interacting on a homeopape tablet if he was still here and had one. (Homeopape being, of course, an interactive news "medium" as precogged by PKD in his novel *Ubik*, back in 1966. (I also think Phil would love conversing with the new AI "Echo" from Amazon, but that's another story for another day.)

Thanks to my homeopape, I recently discovered some of the older PKD documentaries are now streaming. For instance, the 1994 BBC Arena *Day in the Afterlife* is posted in six parts on PKDfans.com (from [Youtube](#).) The 2000 *Gospel According to Philip K. Dick* is available "free" with Amazon's Prime streaming video service, as is the new "Man in the High Castle" Amazon original series. You can search whatever service you use to see what else might be available now. (The "Gospel" was on Netflix, but just now did not turn up in my search.)

Speaking of the "Gospel", one of the interviewees D. Scott Apel, has resurfaced. Actually he contacted me after discovering that a long-lost interview I did with him about his book *Philip K. Dick: The Dream Connection* had been published in PKD Otaku #22. Scott said he was also pleased to discover that I had finished and published my PKD-inspired novel, which was a very rough draft at the time I had interviewed him. He has since read and reviewed AKS

on Amazon.

I was delighted to learn that Scott re-published his "Dream Connection" as an eBook on Amazon along with his *Science Fiction: An Oral History*. The latter is a real gem (they both are), but the SF history was never published back in the 70s or 80s. Then Briggs (his project partner) died. So, for this important, and nearly lost, collection of dialogues with SF writers to see publication is really significant. In addition to the lengthy PKD interview, the SF history includes interviews with Theodore Sturgeon, Fritz Leiber, Roger Zelazny, C.L. Moore, Leigh Brackett, Norman Spinrad and Robert Anton Wilson. For a mere 99 cents you get all that plus a bonus interview with Gene Roddenberry (creator of *Star Trek*.) "We set out to conduct in-depth interviews with key figures from each era of modern science fiction," Apel explains. "And we asked them all some of the same basic questions about their working habits, their literary influences, the SF field in general, and thoughts on their own major works."

Both books include the interview that Scott (and his late friend Kevin Briggs) taped with Philip K. Dick in the summer of 1977. "**Dream Connection**" is available both in print and eBook (for Kindle or Apple) and devotes the first 100 pages to the PKD interview (which Scott says lasted over eight hours, and that's just the recorded part!) Not surprising to those who knew Phil, and there aren't very many left in that category. The other amazing treat in PKD:TDC was the inclusion of a never-before in print story from Phil. "Paul Williams (then literary executor for Phil) and Russell Galen (Phil's agent) gave us first American rights to the short story 'Eye of the Sibyl' which fit in amazingly well with the theme of my 'Dream Connection' book," Scott said.

I highly recommend searching for D. Scott Apel on Amazon, because he's published several other books including his hilarious 'Alec Smart' detective series. The first one, entitled *The Uncertainty Principle?* spoofs Heinlein with a character called Harshlaw. Of course our man Phil is also in there thinly disguised as Richard K. Philips. The primary plot involves the detective's quest to discover why everything that Harshlaw (aka Heinlein) wrote came true.

I would love to see Mr. Apel contribute to *PKD Otaku* IF the zine continues. I doubt you'll ever find him on social media though, which he says he loathes. He might be persuaded to submit a cogent LOC. We'll see.

Finally, I can't talk about the fate of zines ("e" or otherwise) without a shout out to fellow PKD fan **Bruce Gillespie**. Bruce, long considered one of the "*Grand Old Men of Australian SF Fandom*" has been writing and publishing fanzines since 1968! By the mid 70s he had already received three HUGO nominations and he's still writing! Read all about him (and his thoughts on zines) here: <http://www.rowena-cory-daniells.com/2012/07/11/meet-bruce-gillespie-sf-fan-commentator-of-over-forty-years/> and/or check out Frank's Q and A with him: [here](#).

We are fortunate to have Bruce in our Super Secret FDO Fbook group, originally created to discuss PKD zines and how to preserve them. It's aptly named FDO (*For Dick-heads Only*) in honor of Dave Hyde's fabulous former zine. Bruce also participates in the main PKD fan group on Facebook, moderated by Frank Hollander and Guy Salvidge. Just ask and they usually let you in. (We're more fussy over at FDO, right Frank? ;)

I'm glad I submitted this semi-cogent letter. It helped me sort out my conflicted feelings about fiction writing, spiritual practice and where do we go from here regarding "cogent commentary." While writing, I realized this is how Phil spent his last eight years. He wanted to spend all his time reflecting and journaling in his Exegesis, but that wouldn't pay the bills. Phil's solution was to work out his conflicts in his last several novels—the ones we now refer to as his "third phase" of writing.

There's always been tremendous debate about whether Phil's final novels were intentionally semi-autobiographical or if he had finally flipped out. I can see clearly** now (ha!) how he really had no choice. Given that he was consumed with trying to make sense of the many mysterious experiences that began in 1974, working those into his fiction was his only option.

So, at 20 years and counting (one third of my life), will my

relationship with Philip K. Dick ever end? Will yours? Given that the word Otaku means obsessive, I'm sure some (if not most of you) are shaking your heads and wondering "Why would it?"

So, for the love of Phil, send our editor some feedback. If not an LOC, then post your thoughts and comments online! Your input may decide the fate of this and other zines, right Bruce? Whatever the medium, let's keep the message going!

Finally, this fantastic pink beam zapped in compliments of my friend Wayne Chambliss, a somewhat closeted Dick-head. He was hiking down from the summit of Mount Kosciuszko in Australia. As he wrote to me, "I was attempting to photograph a lone eagle circling the rocks, but got VALIS instead."

Love it and had to share! So long and thanks for all the fish, or in our case kipple.

-- "jami" Morgan, Albuquerque, New Mexico
(in close proximity to the ever-searching VLA ;)

Footnotes: *Frank Bertrand, a recently retired teacher, is an original contributor to *PKD Otaku*. He has read and studied PKD for nearly 35 years (the link above is to his "Frank Views") and urges us to submit "cogent commentary" to maintain a SerConZine (serious content fanzine.) We often rebel, as I have here. Frank is working on a super secret PKD project soon to be announced, and has been moderating our Uber Secret FDO group. Shhhhh! Thanks for all you do, Frank!

** Author ej "jami" Morgan has been a semi-serious Otaku contributor. Her last book is titled *Seeing Clearly* (thus the footnote) even though she claims to constantly grapple with spiritual (and PKD-related) matters. (She said those things, not the Editor.) Jami is currently writing a new fiction about androids and... (have to wait for it.) You can contact her through www.ZiaLink.org



Photo courtesy of Wayne Chambliss

Dear Patrick,

I don't know about you, esteemed editor, nor the myriad of perceptive readers of **PKD OTAKU** worldwide, but the news about the forthcoming television "adaptations" of one of Philip K. Dick's short stories, "Minority Report" (first published 1956) and one of his novels ***The Man in the High Castle*** (1962) does not give me a warm and fuzzy feeling in my cerebral frontal cortex.

In watching the "pilot episode" of *The Man in the High Castle* on Amazon (dot) com I noted in the opening credits sequence that there were one Supervising Producer, one Producer, 2 Co-Executive Producers, 8 Executive Producers and 5 Production Companies involved in making this. That is an awful lot of fingers and toes in the creative pool. Can't help but wonder who is making the final decisions about what is shown on the "glass teat," to borrow Harlan Ellison's descriptive appellation for your television set (or video monitor). This could be one factor why what started out as a four-hour miniseries deal with the BBC, then the SyFy Channel, ended up at Amazon (dot) com with a 13-episode first season from Amazon Studios, premiering Friday, November 20, 2015.

As for "Minority Report," bad vibes started when the early PR advertising proclaimed that the TV show is based on "the Steven Spielberg movie." Period. No mention of Philip

K. Dick, though I did come across one instance that mentioned him and his novel *Minority Report*. Lots of sloppy research and fact checking going on these days, eh?

So, I want to focus for a bit in this LOC on *The Man in the High Castle*. It's been adapted and written (pilot episode) by Frank Spotnitz (former X-Files writer/producer). He has said, in a published interview in the 3/9/15 issue of *Starpulse* (dot) com, that:

"I thought this was actually really tough to do as a TV series. I was really reluctant at first to change anything. But I realized I had to.... I just sort of felt my way forward about what changes to make to make it into a TV narrative. But trying to be sure to stay true to Dick's spirit, to his intentions, to the ideas that I perceived as being really important to him."

Attentive PKDophiles who've watched the pilot episode observed, I'm sure, one glaring change. In Phil's novel *The Man in the High Castle* we learn (see ch. 6) about an underground book, *The Grasshopper Lies Heavy*, wherein there's a world in which the Axis powers actually lose WWII. But in the TV adaptation there is a set of 16mm news reel films depicting a world in which the Allies won the war. Spotnitz explains, "That was actually the first thing that popped into my mind when adapting it for television, which was that instead of a book, it should be





a film – because it’s a visual medium.” He adds that the identity of the “Man in the High Castle,” who made the 16mm news reel films, is “one of the great mysteries of the show.”

This is not, however, as problematic as how the TV adaptation is going to “visualize” Phil’s prominent philosophical ideas about the nature of reality and what an authentic human being is. Also, how will they show his use of what he calls, in a 7/31/78 letter, “...the multiple viewpoint, plural foci, structure; there was no other way by which I could present all the aspects of reality, since, for me, as a person and a writer, reality changed when the viewpoint (narrator) changed.” (emphasis in original)

As Philip K. Dick states it, in an interview with John Boonstra, recorded June, 1981:

“Ridley Scott is a director who has a visual sense rather than a narrative sense. This is not a matter of insulting Ridley Scott. He thinks visually, and of course this is why he’s in movies. It is perhaps the way it should be. But I am an author, and I think in narrative terms, in terms of a story line.”

[*The Patchin Review*, No. 6, Oct/Dec 1982, p. 4]

Granted, Phil said this with respect to the movie *Blade Runner*, but Ridley Scott is an Executive Producer for, and his production company Scott Free involved with production of, the TV series *The Man in the High Castle*. And Spotnitz says of Ridley’s participation, he “...is one of the great visual film-makers of all time. And to have his guidance and insight as to how to approach this world has been invaluable.”

This helps explain what I think is going to be, and is in the pilot episode, the dominant feature of *The Man in*

the High Castle TV series, its visual “eye candy.” It has a rich, multi-layered visual quality to it, the kind you have to pay attention to or see more than once to pick up on. In particular is how this quality conveys historical/cultural/societal authenticity as background for what the characters are doing. And it starts right from the opening title and credits sequence which appear over and expanding map that has various scrolling images superimposed on it, all helping to set up the premise and tone of the pilot episode.

More specifically, Frank Spotnitz, during the Television Critics Association press tour asked, “What would Times Square look like if we didn’t live in a corporate capitalist society?” The answer occurs just over three minutes into the show when we get a visual wide-shot reveal of Nazi Times Square that lasts for seven seconds, with a print-over indicating “Greater Nazi Reich New York City – 1962.” It’s a visual setting with lots going on in it, reminiscent of similar wide-shots Ridley Scott did in *Blade Runner*, that leave no doubt the viewer is in Nazi controlled territory of the former United States.

The pilot episode, then, of *The Man in the High Castle* TV adaptation I found, Patrick, a visually rich experience, no doubt due to Ridley Scott’s influence. But the quality of the adaptation over a 13 episode first season, story wise remains to be seen. One can hope that too many cooks will not spoil the broth and they will indeed be able to stay true to Dick’s spirit, to his intentions.

Yours in kipple,

Frank C. Bertrand

PHILIP K. DICK AND THE WORLD WE LIVE IN

by Evan Lampe

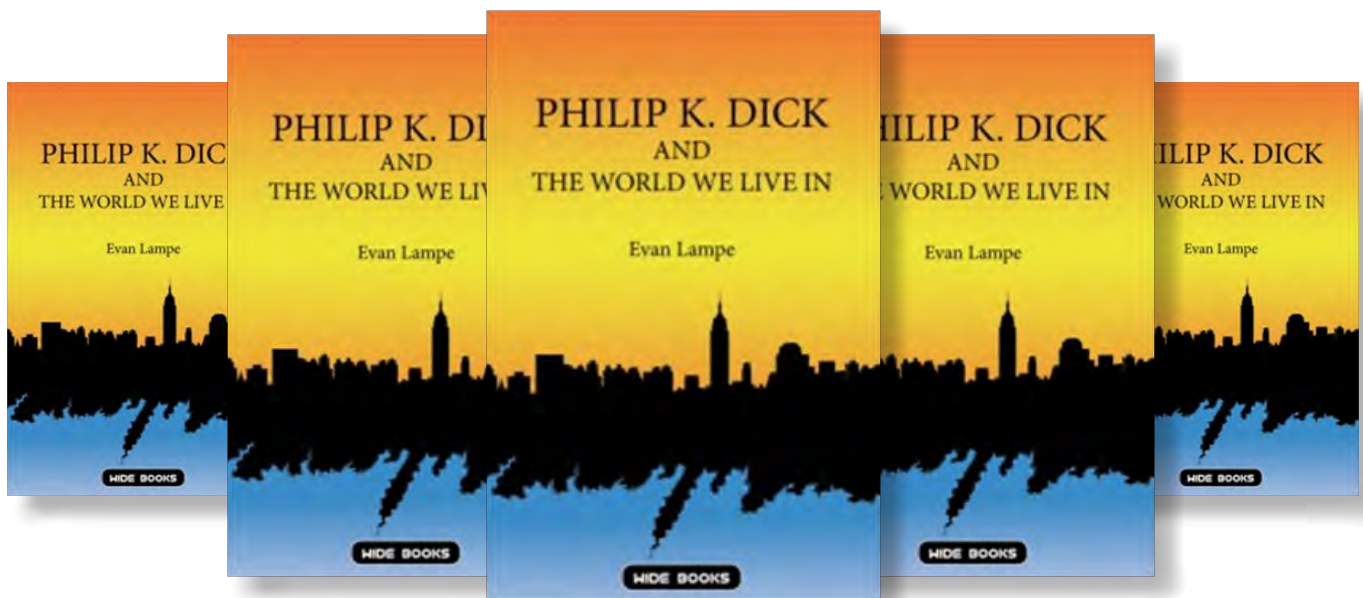
Wide Books is pleased to announce the publication of
PHILIP K DICK AND THE WORLD WE LIVE IN
a new book by Evan Lampe.

In this book Evan Lampe looks at our society through the lens of the novels and stories of Philip K. Dick.

"This is the most comprehensive study of Dick's whole worldview yet published, and it's difficult to see how anybody can do anything better in the areas he covered at present, and will be of interest to those long interested in Dick, and will want to pursue it further."

Customer Review on Amazon.com

Available on the [CreateSpace Digital Store](#) and on [Amazon.com](#)



We live in a world that looks increasingly familiar to the worlds described by Philip K. Dick a half century ago. In this book, Lampe explores the multiple ways in which the global capitalist society—liquid and uncertain—was foreshadowed in Dick's novels and stories. Analyzing most of Dick's works, including the often underappreciated stories and early novels, Lampe establishes the outline of a general interpretation of Philip K. Dick for our age. This book also goes beyond Dick's mystical, philosophical, and metaphysical questions and documents his economic, political, and social vision. With chapters on the rise of the surveillance state, technological unemployment, global governance, family, mental illness, new religious movements, consumerism, and urban geography this book presents new ways to read the most important American science fiction writer of the twentieth century.

<http://pkdickbooks.com/blog/2015/03/13/philip-k-dick-and-the-world-we-live-in/>

Quotes About Philip K. Dick Pt. 2

Compiled by Frank C. Bertrand

[Note: In reading these I am very much reminded of Mark Twain, who used "Tall Tales" to take ideas then whip them up with very humorous writing, and convince people of things that never happened to him, nor to a historical personage, or one of his characters. Philip K. Dick has done the same thing, more than once. He's not above playing with our minds, of getting us to think twice about our cherished ideas and beliefs. It's a writing technique that should be given much more attention than it has been to date.]

Gregg Rickman –

"I found that he would color things, and to a degree was myth-maker and fabulist. But his fables, his spoken as well as his written ones, express better how he really saw things than a rote recitation of "fact" ever could. No one put this better than Phil's second wife Kleo Mini: "Philip constructed what he considered to be the best way to present a point. Sometimes that applied to everyday circumstances too." [To *The High Castle Philip K. Dick: A Life 1928-1962*, Fragments West/The Valentine Press, 1989, p. vii – dated March 1988]

Lawrence Sutin –

"First off, Phil – who will, of course, be quoted more often and lengthily than anyone else as the events of his life – was very fond of elaboration, extrapolation, reinterpretation, and outright putting people on. This is agreed upon by all who knew him. Now Phil placed a fierce value upon truth in both his writings and his personal relations. But he never was one to resist the fascination of a new, brilliant, complex theory of 2-3-74, or of anything else, and his capacity for generating such theories was limitless. In addition, being gracious and gregari-

ous (when he was not in the throes of extreme depression and despair), Phil loved to tell stories and write letters that pleased – or matched the preconceptions of – the person addressed." [*Divine Invasions A Life Of Philip K. Dick*, NY: Harmony Books, 1989, pp. 7-8]

Roger Zelazny –

"I can't speak with firsthand knowledge of everything he might have believed, partly because it seemed to keep changing and partly because it was often difficult to know when he was kidding and when he was serious. My main impression from a number of conversations, though, was that he played at theology the way other people might play at chess problems, that he liked asking the classic science fiction writer's question -- "What if?" -- of anything he came across in the way of religious and philosophical notions." [*"Introduction."* *The Collected Stories of Philip K. Dick Vol. 1*, New York: Carol Publishing Group, 1990, pp. xx-xxi]

Tim Powers –

"Phil used to describe a mode of speech he called "shuckin' and jivin'" –

meaning telling the other person whatever it might be most effective for that person to hear. You see a lot of that in these letters. And of course he's not able now to explain or footnote or put these things into whatever contexts there may have been." [*The Selected Letters of Philip K. Dick 1975-1976*, volume four, Underwood-Miller, 1992, p. vii]

Thomas M. Disch –

"Dick is a professional entertainer of beliefs – and what else is a con-man. He wants to turn anything he imagines into a system. And there's his delight in making people believe – he *loved* to make you believe. That made for great novels, but when he overdid it could become delusions of reference. The urge to translate every imagined thing into a belief or suspended disbelief, is a bit



of a jump. Yet it was probably Dick's ability to sew those things together that was his main strength as a novelist."

[*The Dreams Our Stuff Is Made Of: How Science Fiction Conquered The World*, NY: The Free Press, 1998, pp. 153-154]

Anne Mini –

"So we developed a habit of speaking frequently on the phone, often indulging in a little game: could we make up stories about his life so outrageous that the reporters who came to interview him would not believe them? It never occurred to me at first that any of these stories would be believed. Yet as your readers already familiar with some of the wild tale[s] that have turned up in biographies and articles are probably aware, most of those stories were not only accepted by reporters, but have continued to turn up, increasingly embellished, in the years since Philip's death." [Interview by Etienne Barillier, February 2008, accessed at: http://www.dickien.fr/dossiers/anne-mini/interview_anne_mini_dick.html]

Anne R. Dick –

"Phil was a psychic shape shifter. He was also a great actor. He would have been a great spy. He changed his personality with every woman he related to. He changed it every time he changed his life situation. He changed it every time he was interviewed. He was a powerful influence, with his great verbal ability, his modest-sounding words, and his ability to read people. He played with all our lives as well as his own, turned us into fictional beings, and melded us into universes of his own creation."

[*Search For Philip K. Dick 1928-1982 revised with new material*, Point Reyes Cypress Press, 2009, p. 243]

"Phil was a psychic shape shifter. He was also a great actor. He would have been a great spy."

Maureen Foster –

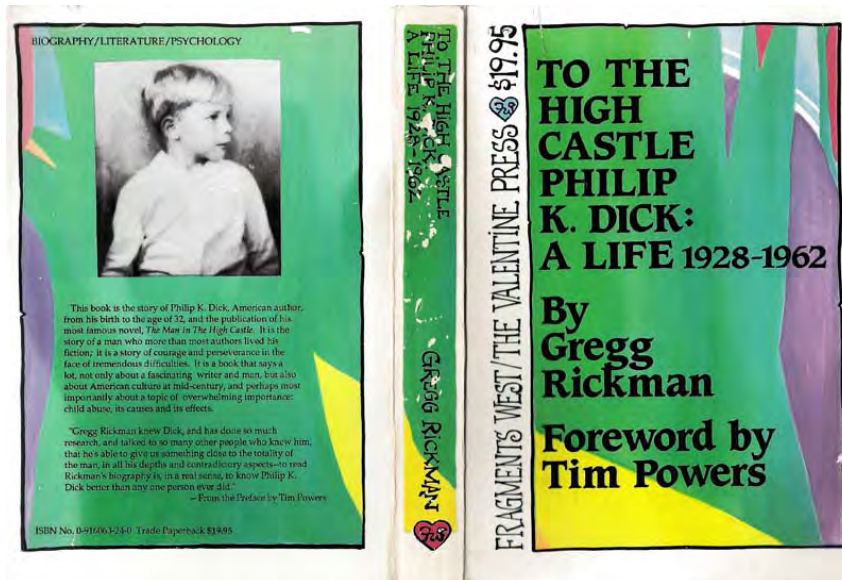
"Various sources offer differing interpretations of Phil's departure from the UC and the circumstances that led to it, probably because, as Tessa recalled, he varied the stories himself. He also teased his readers into a game of separating his fiction from his autobiography, which yet again

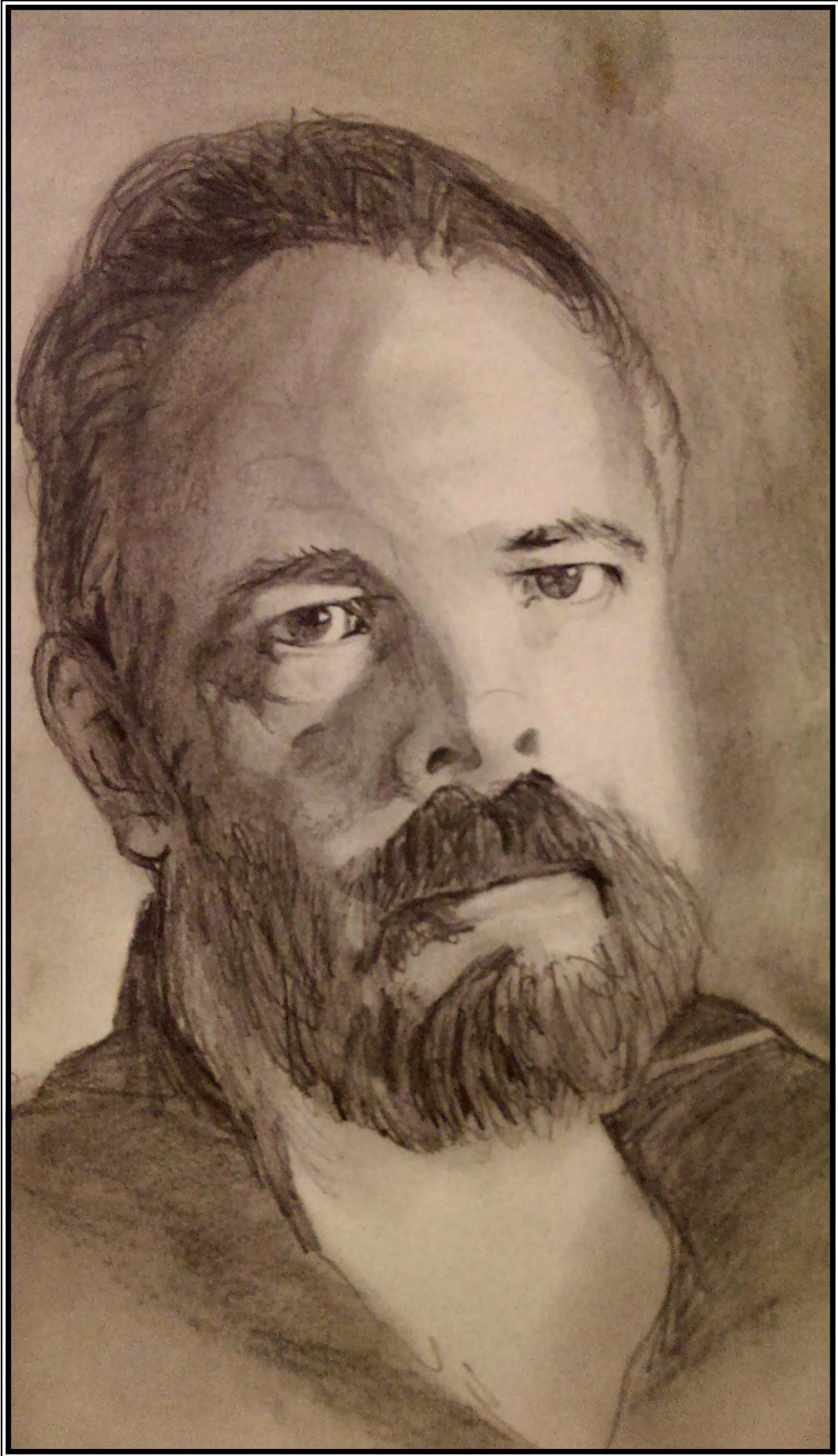
varied from "some of the lies he presents as his life, and he's very careful to obscure the difference," commented science fiction author Thomas M. Disch." [Berkeley Historical Society, Vol. 27, No. 1, Winter 2009, p.1]

Tim Powers –

"The thing is, Dick was a fiction writer, a science fiction writer who wrote about crazy stuff, and he was convincing. He would take any idea and try it out. I remember one evening in which he speculated that the Holy Spirit experienced time (a heretical thought right there), but backward, retrograde, like Merlin in *The Once And Future King* -- so that He remembered everything in the universe's future but had no first hand acquaintance with its past. If you'd been

there that evening, you'd have gone away convinced that he believed it (and maybe convinced by the theory yourself), but if you talked to him the next day you'd find that he had since derisively dismissed the whole notion." [Blog posting, June 8, 2015]





Philip K. Dick
by Tom Parkinson

tumblr. [ihopeishallarrivesoon](#)