

THE REPRESSIVE ROLE OF TECHNOLOGY IN AMERICAN AND BRITISH
DYSTOPIAN NOVELS OF THE COLD WAR

by

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Abstract

The Cold War was a time of extreme conformity, with an equally extreme reaction against forced conformity. Representations of such reactions were not to be omitted in the literature of the time. Throughout the novels, the characters and society itself are repressed into an alternate state of being. This investigation analyzes the role that technology plays in this process in *Fahrenheit 451*, *Sirens of Titan*, *1984*, *Lord of the Flies*, and *A Clockwork Orange*. The novels were all written during the Cold War and follow a dystopian society. Society is controlled and maintained in its respective disarray through the utilization of technology, whether it be pushed down upon them by their governments or by themselves.

Through close analysis of the novels themselves and existing discourse related to the topic, it becomes evident that technology is able to manipulate and dictate the lives of people, diminishing their individualism. A dichotomy between creative expression and technology arises in all of the studied novels, pointing to the significance of individualism and its existence through creativity. This investigation concludes that such acts of expression, including creative writing and nonconformist acts, are vital to maintaining a stable societal system. The literature points to the ultimate evil that arises from technology and the power that inevitably comes with it, warning that humanity itself may be lost without the existence of free will and individual thought.

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Introduction

Setting the Stage for Conflict

The atomic bombs dropped on Hiroshima and Nagasaki shook not only Japan, but the entire world. Beyond becoming a leading component of foreign policy and weapon expansion, the fear and concerns over atomic warfare spilled into novels of the Cold War. Although far from being invented as a form of genre during the Cold War, the dystopian novel truly took flight during the time period and “proved reluctant to engage with anything else” (Hammond 664). It comes from an era of intense tension between nations and belief groups, and fears of mutual destruction made possible by the powerful might of the atomic bomb. Such anxiety and paranoia could have only stemmed from a time of such unprecedented technological development, where questions over the nature of progress grew prevalent. In dystopian novels written during the Cold War, technology is used as the preferred method to repress individualism and the narcissism of society, ultimately rendering society an obedient and conformed body, lacking personal motivation for betterment. More imaginative and individual methods of expression, mainly the act of writing, are ways in which repressed societies are able to combat their governments.

According to Sidney Hook, “the task of the intellectual... is to criticize what needs to be criticized in America, without forgetting for a moment the total threat which Communism poses to the life of the free mind” (Cochran 2). Dystopian novels written during the Cold War were able to do just that. For a “living mythology” to be successful, it needs “to offer an image of the universe that will be in accord with the knowledge of the time” (Campbell 221). In order to be understood, literature needs to provide a valuable window into the societal feelings of a time. Though not necessarily factually accurate or even possible, they need to be believable. The

dystopian novel was able to truly gain popularity as it presented concerns with a tone of warning to society. If it continued down its current path, society would be faced with the issues that plagued those in novels such as *1984* or *Fahrenheit 451*.

The nuclear anxiety that ran rampant in the world once more nations acquired their own weapons of mass destruction is appropriately established in dystopian literature of the time. As seen in all of the studied texts, the threat of nuclear war has reshaped the landscape of politics and eventually entirely restructured societal matters. The potential for, or in some instances, the effect of a nuclear apocalypse has forced humanity to recreate their societal structures. In particular, the prevalence of nuclear anxiety in the dystopian novels then calls into question how society was reacting to technological advancements of the time. With the heightened role of science and technology in daily life, there has been an increase in “the utopian prognostications that have generally accompanied monumental scientific and, especially, technological developments” (Maus 77). As witnessed throughout each respective novel, the fear and skepticism towards technology is not limited to the killing might of nuclear weapons. Rather, the restricting and repressive role that technology plays in society is common as well.

This investigation will set out to explore how certain dystopian novels expressed societal fears and tensions that were prevalent during the time. These works include Ray Bradbury’s *Fahrenheit 451*, Kurt Vonnegut’s *Sirens of Titan*, George Orwell’s *1984*, William Golding’s *Lord of the Flies*, and Anthony Burgess’s *A Clockwork Orange*. According to some critics, the Cold War was the leading force for “major forms of cultural and philosophical expression in the period” (Hammond 662). Such a characteristic and seeming obsession of Cold War matters in daily life validates the use of literature to observe a reflection of society. The investigation will

focus on American and British literature written after the end of World War II and before the period of detente, or thawing of relations, which took place beginning in 1969. The United States of America was going head-to-head with the Soviet Union in the nuclear arms race as well as their separate aims to expand their respective economic system. Thus, the Cold War was also about the clash between two camps of thought, that of capitalism and that of communism.

British literature will be observed in relation to that of American because of the role that the United Kingdom played during the Cold War. The United Kingdom was experiencing a certain fall from grace. They were no longer the powerful empire that they had maintained prior to the world wars of the twentieth century. Instead, they saw their role as a world power being filled by the United States now. However, the government and its people were far from removed from the conflict of the Cold War. The United Kingdom found itself a step behind in regards to the nuclear arms race, but still a vital part of it. It saw its leaders get involved in drawing lines, such as Winston Churchill's declaration of the "iron curtain" dividing Europe. They drew fear not only from the possibility of the expansion of the Soviet Union and its system, but also from the ever-growing influence of American politics and ideals that could further threaten to diminish the UK's role in world politics. With the looming proximity of the Soviet Union to the UK geographically and the rapid expansion of American influences, the UK found itself stuck between two superpowers that individually, and collectively, threatened its position on the world stage.

To completely investigate the role of technology in the dystopian novels, its relation to the apparent opposite, creative expression, will be considered in each novel. Throughout each studied novel, the characters deal with and react to their repression in various matters. However,

consistently they do not utilize technology when battling their oppressors. Instead, it is their persistence towards free thought and expression that combats technology. Through the use of writing and reading, the characters find that they open the shunned gates of free thought, causing serious concerns for their governing systems.

Technology, when referred to in this analysis, does not encompass technology in its entirety. It is used in relation to new machines and mechanics that are prevalent either in the era or the novel. Technology itself is a spectrum that cannot be summarized against creative expression. Books themselves were at one time the pinnacle of technological advancement, an example of progress in print culture. With this in mind, the treatment of technology in this analysis holds a focus on new forms of media and progress. It is in reference to the most recent, the most advanced, and the most progressive elements in each novel. While in *Sirens of Titan* this refers to spaceships and implanted antennas, in *Lord of the Flies* it points to spectacles and sharpened hunting tools. By limiting the discussion to these forms of technology, it remains that progress itself is not a tainted evil. Rather, it is specifically the rampant and morally questioned progress that was prevalent in the Cold War, and represented throughout each novel, that instills fear in society.

Representations throughout American Dystopian Literature

The American novels that will be studied in the process are Ray Bradbury's *Fahrenheit 451* and Kurt Vonnegut's *Sirens of Titan*. With *Fahrenheit 451*, the major aspect of the new society is the banning of all books. Firemen no longer put out fires; rather they are the ones that start them. Once they receive the call or tip that an individual is hiding books in their home, they

use flamethrowers to burn down the house. This clash between literature and weaponry represents the clash between personal thought and governmental control. Within books, one can find a myriad of opinions and thoughts which can spark revolutions of the mind or even a whole society. They are reasonably feared by a government that is attempting to control and conform its citizens to a single entity. When they are so heavily targeted by the government, then humanity is forced back to keeping the stories and information that was previously stored in books in their mind instead. The push back towards books sets up the dichotomy between written works and technology. While books expand the mind in individual ways, technology encourages the element of the same, numbing society into conformed mass.

The further repressiveness of technology as a theme in the novel is seen by the entertainment systems that people maintain in their homes. Guy Montag's wife, Millie, is constantly wanting to expand the "parlor walls" that are the latest fad in entertainment, creating an immersive experience which resembles large television screens. Her inclination to compare her possessions with those of their neighbors points towards her general dissatisfaction and preoccupation with material possessions. People are shown to prefer these walls of entertainment over actual human conversation and interaction. Again, they thus create a mindless and unimaginative society in which conformity is supreme. To further ensure that their people remain submissive, the threat of nuclear war is constant, and glimpses of such warfare are scattered throughout Guy Montag's revelations, as if they were commonplace occurrences.

Vonnegut's *Sirens of Titan* takes place after World War II. Humanity has spread to space and a colony on Mars had formed. However, recruitment for Mars is not necessarily random, nor ethical. Individuals that are not considered entangled in community matters are targeted with the

thought that they will not be missed. Once recruited, the majority of people would have an antenna put into their skulls which would control their impulses. If they thought or said anything that was not acceptable to the Martian mission, they would be zapped and endure incredible pain, dispelling such disagreeable thoughts. These pain-driven punishments strike similar to the methodology used by the government in *A Clockwork Orange* to control Alex. The controlling antennas in *Sirens of Titan* thus effectively act as mind control mechanisms, conforming the will of the Mars Army to the point of attacking their former home, Earth.

Furthermore, Unk, or Malachi Constant at the time, begins the novel with the belief that there is a higher being looking over him and providing him with luck. However, after his memory is erased and he is recruited for the Mars Army, he returns to Earth with the belief that he is nothing more than the result of several accidents. He thus wipes out notions of luck and being favored. Such a statement is used to communicate to humanity the indifference of any higher being. However, the counterbalance to such a scientific position is individual fulfillment. The characters are all eventually satisfied in their condition of solitude, except for Rumfoord, whose “lack of imagination leaves him purposeless” (Friedman 158). Even the book he writes, a history of Mars, is praised for its factual and straightforward nature. He has not found redemption through art or love.

Representations throughout British Dystopian Literature

The British novels being explored are Orwell’s *1984*, Golding’s *Lord of the Flies*, and Burgess’s *A Clockwork Orange*. In Orwell’s *1984*, technology is the most notable component. The new society is constantly being watched and observed by “Big Brother” to ensure that they

are falling in line with expectations and regulations. The rooms in their homes and offices hold “telescreens” that act as both cameras and ways to force individuals to watch whatever broadcasts the government is showing at the time. Paranoia of ever coming into contact with the “Thought Police” keeps society following rules and avoiding independent thought.

Furthermore, censorship is a part of daily life for Oceania and Winston Smith especially. Winston works for the Ministry of Truth, doctoring and editing historical documents to ensure that they fall in line with the main political party’s agenda. This method of censorship resembles the actions taken by the government in *Fahrenheit 451*, pointing towards the true power of the written word. Such a method of keeping its society submissive plays into Oceania being “portrayed as invulnerable to progressive change” (Resch 139). Winston’s own desire and inclination to begin writing in a diary with a type of stream of consciousness style indicates that the expression on paper leads to a power of realization and understanding. This societal structure points to the assertion that “not-state power corresponds to ‘individual freedom,’” which becomes a common theme for these novels, and that “not-party dictatorship [corresponds] to ‘moral community’” (Resch 144).

Golding’s *Lord of the Flies* uses technology in a way different from the rest of the novels. A group of boys finds itself trapped on an isolated island, forced to learn how to survive on their own, without any adults, after their plane crashes. A nuclear war has been raging across the world, keeping the adults occupied and unable to assist the boys until several months pass. On the island, however, the boys must seemingly start over. They have no learned survival methods, rather, the initial ideas are all dependent on different electronics. It is not until they are able to

start a fire using Piggy's glasses that they feel slightly more adaptable. Fire thus becomes their most advanced and cherished technology.

The boys eventually split into separate camps, with one side believing that keeping the fire burning as a signal will save them and the others relying on hunting pigs with their sharpened tools to survive. In such a way, their respective technologies are what divides them. Jack, the choir boy turned savage, realizes that his camp cannot survive without fire. They need it not only for warmth, but to cook their food. He and his group of boys set out to collect Piggy's glasses, their only known method of starting a fire. They are willing to kill for the glasses, showing the truly savage mania that has swept the island. The remainder of the novel shows the savage camp wipe out the more rational and rule abiding ones, until only Ralph is left. He would have surely been killed as well if adults had not conveniently showed up during the final hunt.

Anthony Burgess's *A Clockwork Orange* couples the repressive capabilities of technology with its destructive nature towards art. Alex and his gang of "droogs" (a resemblance of the Russian word for "friends") lead a life of violence, practically terrorizing their neighborhood. An early representation of their attitudes and actions is seen with their attack of an older man leaving the library with some books. They scold him for having such obscene books with him, when in reality they are scientific and scholarly works. The violence quickly escalates over time until Alex murders a woman in her home. It is once he is convicted of murder that the novel raises questions about the possibilities that technology has brought with it.

The government decides that Alex's violent streak needs to come to an end. They set out on their process of conforming and conditioning Alex into a more acceptable member of society. The "Ludovico Technique" is still in its experimental stages, but consists of an aversion therapy

style of treatment. Alex is injected with a substance that causes sick feelings. He is then subjected to view a film showing a series of acts of violence, which have a classical soundtrack, including Alex's favorites, such as Beethoven. The feelings of nausea which he is forced to feel while watching the violent sequences are meant to condition him into feeling sick whenever he even thinks about committing a violent act. However, unintentionally, the films have also made Alex sick whenever listening to classical music. He is so tormented by what he once held so dearly, that he even attempts suicide when he hears classical music coming from behind the wall in his room. He does not succeed in killing himself, instead finds himself in a hospital and is coerced to side with the government that had ultimately led him to such an act.

Commonalities

The need of the government to have its society conform to a greater will, shedding itself of any individualism, is a common theme throughout Cold War dystopian novels. This common theme is treated in various ways, however, such as *Lord of the Flies* following a society that must create its own rules and civilization or the hyper-aware government of Big Brother in *1984*. Technology becomes the greatest instrument of repressing free will, instilling instead dependence, fear, and a communal spirit. Most commonly, the reader sees nuclear anxiety in the texts, ranging from a background reference to the leading component of societal methods. The nuclear weaponry and warfare in the novels set the dystopian novels purely in the Cold War or as a direct result of it. With the world's reaction to the destructive power and might of the atomic bombs dropped in Japan, the widespread literary reaction to nuclear weaponry is far from surprising.

The additional utilization of technological fear and suppression bring into question scientific progress in general. Vonnegut's *Sirens of Titan* may represent this notion the best. As humanity sees ease and expanding extent in space exploration, going further than ever before, they simultaneously become aware that to find meaning they must look inwards, not outwards. Such a concept questions the true progress of technology, and whether it can be considered progress at all.

Instead of progress in human behavior, there is a reversion to violence and savagery, as plainly expressed in *Lord of the Flies*, where a former choir becomes a ravenous group of hunters. Readers see firemen go from putting out fires and helping people to starting fires, whether people are in the houses or not, to keep humanity away from the influence of books in *Fahrenheit 451*. Notably, in *A Clockwork Orange*, Alex's aversion from violence is coupled with an aversion to classical music, which is often considered great art and cultural achievement. Has technology truly helped progress humanity then or has it instead repressed it into a mindless machine?

The representations and uses of technology in Cold War dystopian literature is worth studying as it has remained relevant throughout the years. The ethical nature of some technological innovations has been at the forefront of political debate and societal splits. Furthermore, nuclear anxiety is far from a thing of the past. The twenty-first century has not greatly differed from the twentieth. The world has seen new wars waged over the possession of chemical weapons, while science fiction remains a popular and often used genre of literature to question the direction in which society is headed.

Chapter 1: Technology in American Dystopian Literature of the Cold War

Technology in Fahrenheit 451

Ray Bradbury's *Fahrenheit 451* takes place in a futuristic society in which books have been banned. If any individual is suspected of having a book within their possession, the firemen are sent in to take care of the job. Firemen in this new societal order are setting fire, rather than putting it out. Not only was it their job, but it "was a special pleasure to see things eaten, to see things blackened and changed" (Bradbury 3). All the homes had become fireproof, and books had been deemed dangerous, so their roles switched. They acted as "custodians of our peace of mind, the focus of our understandable and rightful dread of being inferior: official censors, judges, and executors" (Bradbury 59). It is the society's method of keeping people from beginning revolutions and stirring in passionate manners against one another.

Once the firemen are notified that a home holds books, they set fire to the collection and the house itself. At times, these individuals refuse to leave their books, and so go up in flames with the rest of their home. It is one such occasion that finally rattles Guy Montag, one of the firemen. An older woman stays inside despite being warned and encouraged to leave. Guy picks up one of her books, taking it home with him, curious about what could justify dying. By doing so, he has put himself in danger of a similar fate.

Technology has numbed society into quiet and passive obedience in *Fahrenheit 451*. While books at one time were a leading source of entertainment and recreation, they are now banned completely. Instead, only forms of technological entertainment are permitted. Guy Montag's wife, Millie, is concerned with little else beyond her "parlor walls" which resemble flat-screen televisions that surround the viewer. She spends her days in front of these parlor walls

and bases her happiness on possessing the most modern and updated version of them. If a neighbor or friend purchases some that are newer or better than hers, then she feels she needs to do the same. In the novel, according to McGiveron, “technology allows for the existence of mass culture” and simultaneously has a “direct effect on the decline of thought”. With the parlor walls for entertainment, “the exploited,” like Millie, “willingly consume to the exclusion of independent thought” (McGiveron 1996). They are compressed into a conformed society of consumers, ignoring intellectual thought.

Such a condition similarly resembles society during the Cold War, when television began to encroach on everyday life. Television was just a simple element of the changing culture during the Cold War. Beyond being a conflict of politics and militaries, it was “also one profoundly implicated in, and shaped by, key transformations in twentieth-century culture” (Mihelj 509). In this regard, the Cold War was a conflict spurred by differing cultures, developed upon by and for the masses. The mass culture, which is mirrored in *Fahrenheit 451* through the parlor walls, was the official culture of both sides of the Iron Curtain. It is the culture and attitudes that are approved and encouraged by the respective governments, and so often plagued with propagandist qualities. These messages that comprise mass culture were shared with the public through television, newspapers, and other broadcasts, such as radio. Through such measures of communication, governments were able to maintain control over their public and to instill fears of the other side, or anything that went against the enforced mass culture.

In *Fahrenheit 451*, while creating an atmosphere centered on these parlor walls, society stops caring about the other issues that surround it. The parlor walls are able to act as propaganda in the society, for they are able to control what people listen to and watch. For instance, when

Guy Montag is running away, the cameras follow him closely and the chase is being broadcasted for all to see. However, once he gets away from the robotic dog and the other cameras, his death is faked on the broadcast so that the general population would believe that the government and enforcement succeeded in dealing with criminals. In fact, Guy had made his way beyond the city and was able to meet up with a group of men that, like him, appreciated books. Guy watches on a portable viewer that one of the men carried and sees “on screen, a man turned a corner.... The Mechanical Hound rushed forward into the viewer” and the man was trapped (Bradbury 149). Such information on Guy’s escape would have undermined the government and the firemen, though, and so the truth is kept from the population.

By showing the supposed death of Guy Montag on the parlor walls, even when it was not him that they killed, the government is able to turn people away from similar behavior. In such a way, “the state reasserts its authority and ability to keep the population calm” (Patai 42). It instills fear in those who had begun to question policy while reaffirming pride in the strict adherents. Books would not have been as effective in conveying false information. While what is being broadcasted can be closely monitored and controlled, publications are not as easily censored. It is clear then why the government felt it necessary to turn away from books and stick with technology instead. Books were written and read by all sorts of people, and thus had a myriad of topics and beliefs covered. No common thread of understanding was accomplishable with such an array of writings. A set amount of programming and news on the parlor walls, however, limit the spectrum of information being conveyed, making emotions and beliefs more controllable.

People are so easily manipulated by their parlor walls and the information that they get from them, that Millie herself turns her husband in for having books in their home. Millie presents an interesting character as on the surface it seems she is content with the life she has been leading. Children were not her desire, while her time is spent with the other “family”, the characters she watches on the parlor walls. However, such alienation from true human contact may have been wearing on Millie, as shown through her suicide attempts. Due to having her memory erased after each incident, though, thrusts Millie back into the state of denial and obsession with her television. Such a dynamic points to a subconscious rebellion against the repression that she inflicts on herself and that is being inflicted on her by the government.

Furthermore, she has been so conditioned by the societal standards and expectations that she is willing to put her husband’s entire life in danger due to his collection of books. By calling the firemen to inform them of Guy’s books, Millie shows where her allegiance truly lies. It is with her parlor walls, her shallow friends, and the rules that have been passed down to her. Her call and the arrival of the firemen at the Montag residence begin the chase of Guy Montag, and the end of Millie’s life with Guy.

Although Millie’s call was the final piece of evidence that the firemen needed to burn down the Montag home, it was far from a complete surprise for the firemen. Guy Montag had been suspected of uncharacteristic behavior beforehand. After witnessing the elderly woman refusing to leave her home and her collection of books while it was set on fire, Guy had called off from work the following day. His captain came to visit him to ensure that Guy was feeling well. During the visit, Guy remained in bed. Under his pillow he had hidden a book that he had taken from the woman’s home the previous day. Captain Beatty felt that Guy was acting

suspiciously, but left without doing anything further for the time being. He gave Guy a warning and conditions under which he could return to work the next day.

To follow up on Guy's suspicious behavior, the firemen send their dog over to investigate. This dog is far from an ordinary mutt, however. It is a robotic hound that is capable of spying on Guy, and any other suspected book-hoarder. The mechanical hound is practically an omnipresence throughout the book and the lives of the characters. Guy Montag is only ever able to suspect that the hound has been sent to his house, for it is able to leave no trail and circle the house unseen.

With such a known resource available to the police and firemen, society can reasonably expect to be watched at all times. Whether it be their friends, neighbors, or the hound, their actions are documented and any suspicious behavior will surely be reported. The constant watchfulness of their surroundings represses individuals to abandon their personal habits that may appear out of step with the rules of society. Society instead conforms into a common entity, with a limited amount of acceptable behavior and recreational practices, such as watching the parlor walls. They know that the minute they do something wrong (as defined by the government), for instance keeping a book in their home, the hound will be at their doors snooping. According to Captain Beatty, "a book is a loaded gun in the house next door" (Bradbury 58). Thus, the government has been mostly successful in taking away books, what they consider dangerous, while simultaneously drowning out recreational desires with the development of the parlor walls that individuals like Millie come to covet. A society so repressed by the surveillance capabilities of its government is similar to that of Oceania in *1984*, which is constantly being monitoring society through their "telescreens".

The mechanical hound is a further play off the former role of firemen. Just as in a past life firemen were sent to put out fires, so the hound was sent in to assist the firemen and rescue those that were injured. However, the manipulation of technology in this dystopian society shows that the hound now preys on the weak and is sent out for the kill. It guards society not against fire and harm, but rather from obtaining books. The hound has become a watchdog, a potential enemy of the people it would have protected in past societal structures. It is programmed and designed to punish any who break the rules that society is forced to follow.

The hound's capacity for tracking surpasses anything known to man before its creation. Once his senses bring him to his victim, the hound has a steel needle that can project from his snout. The needle sends enough morphine to kill its prey in a matter of seconds. The engineered eyesight is nearly perfect, even in the night, allowing the hound to operate in practically the utmost accuracy. It is an engineered killing and tracking machine that can quickly and effectively do the jobs of many.

Considering the capabilities of the robotic dog with eight legs, it is no surprise that society is not eager to break any rules. The mechanical hound is the lead in chasing and finding Guy Montag, and so human wit is truly put to the test against that of technology in the incident. Guy makes several stops along the way, leaving his scent at the homes of firemen in an attempt to throw off the hound. It is not until he reaches a river, though, that his attempts are successful. At the river, he soaks himself in whiskey to mask his own scent and exchanges his clothing for those of his comrade, Faber. At this point, the hound cannot find Guy and the police set up the fake death of Guy for the public to witness.

The novel takes place in the midst of a nuclear war, however, it only ever seems to be in the background. Such an issue, especially in a novel written during the Cold War, would be assumed to be in the forefront. With the television obsessed society, though, the “pacified citizenry is not even aware of the dangers it faces” (Patai 42). Guy Montag hears the weapons being flown overhead throughout the novel, and once he is in the woods with the group of men he comes across, he hears the bombs being dropped, and a potential nuclear war breaking out. Guy Montag and the rest of the group watch as the city that Guy had just escaped is completely wiped off the face of the planet. Everyone that had remained must have been killed, though the observers are only slightly injured.

The surviving group is able to reminisce in a sense after the bombing by discussing a phoenix and its cycle of rebirth. Mankind is similar to a phoenix in that it constantly repeats its mistakes and must rebuild from them. However, mankind is able to remember its mistakes, though it needs to be able to look at itself to completely assess its actions. When Millie’s memory is erased after her suicide attempts, she becomes incapable of reflecting on such a decision. Instead, she is thrust back into her mundane routines, complacent as ever. The men’s discussion further points to the senseless cycle of warfare that has plagued mankind since its beginnings. Though nuclear weapons allow destruction to be more effective than ever before, the act of killing and domination has remained constant.

With the city a leveled playing field now, the group heads forward to begin society anew. Surely, they will recall the trouble that banning books had caused, and so will focus on having books replenished. The note of optimism and open-endedness that the novel leaves off on attempt to bring a potential positive out of the repressive role that technology had played.

Despite the advanced nuclear warfare that had wiped out the city, humanity has survived and can once again start its journey towards betterment. Montag predicts that “someday we’ll remember so much that we’ll build the biggest goddamn steamshovel in history and dig the biggest grave of all time and shove war in and cover it up” (Bradbury 164). For the group, it is through the knowledge that they remember from books that mankind will be able to continue its existence, rather than any single individual.

Technology in Sirens of Titan

The *Sirens of Titan* takes place sometime after the Second World War and before another Great Depression. Though technological advancements do not stem too far out from what was available during the time that Vonnegut wrote the novel, the availability of commercial spaceships and other technology surpassed the imaginable. With the novel’s writing taking place during the space race era of the Cold War, the leading component of the novel is space exploration. Spaceships were not just for astronauts, instead, the wealthy were welcome to travel until Winston Rumfoord, a multimillionaire space explorer, passes through the “chrono-synclastic infundibulum”. After he and his dog, Kazak, encounter such a phenomenon in space, they temporarily materialize on Earth every few weeks. At the other times, they materialize in various places in the universe, such as Mars or Titan.

With such a discovery of the chrono-synclastic infundibulum, space travel has been mostly suspended. Winston Rumfoord’s materializations at his home become a spectacle that no one is invited to witness until Malachi Constant, another wealthy member of society, receives an invitation. Malachi had inherited his wealth from his father, who had earned his money through

investing in various stocks. His method was rather simple, though far from orthodox. He used the Bible as his guide, taking the letters of each word and investing in stocks that held the same abbreviation. Such a methodology emphasizes the importance of the written word not only in this novel, but the others as well. Through the help of the Bible, Malachi's father was able to find great riches, just as Guy Montag was able to when he read the Bible and shared it with the other men.

When Malachi meets Winston Rumfoord, he is told his fortune. The chrono-synclastic infundibulum gives Rumfoord the ability to see both the past and future. Rumfoord exploits such knowledge not for playing the stock market, as his wife would like, but rather eventually "manipulates the entire human race to establish a religion, with his pontifications serving as holy text" (Friedman 154). He forecasts that Malachi will end up going to Mars, have a son with Beatrice Rumfoord, travel to Mercury, return to Earth, and then visit Titan before returning to Earth once again. Malachi questions why he would need to go to Titan, but Rumfoord simply tells him "You [Malachi] do – I promise you" (Vonnegut 30). Though it first appears that Malachi does not take Rumfoord's fortune-telling trick seriously, he sets out to throw an extravagant party at which he gives out rights to oil leases as party favors and loses the rights to his spaceship. Such preventive measures are parallel in Beatrice Rumfoord, Winston Rumfoord's then wife, who locks herself in her home and refuses any contact with Malachi.

Rumfoord's ability to travel through space with his spaceship thus ends up controlling the lives of Malachi and Beatrice. The two are fearful of what Winston has predicted for them, and so they are forced to lead their lives in altered manners in an ultimately failed attempt to alter their fate. Knowing the future led to its actualization. Both Beatrice and Malachi end up being

recruited for the colony on Mars that had formed. Recruits were a specific type of individual in society, one that would not be missed by friends or family. Since both Beatrice and Malachi had done what they could to isolate themselves from not only each other, but any circumstances that may thrust them into each other's company, they become attractive options for the Mars project.

Although both would probably refuse to participate in the expedition to Mars, knowing that Mars had been a predicted stop in Rumfoord's prophecy, they ultimately had little choice in the matter. The recruiters for Mars singled out their individuals and approached them not with an open request, but with the desire to wipe their memories and shuffle them into a spaceship that would take them to Mars. Such a mind dump allows for the remainder of the prophecy to become reality with ease.

The truly repressive role of technology is seen through Malachi's time on Mars. After his memory has been erased, he is referred to as Unk, as he no longer is the Earthling Malachi. On Mars, he is neither wealthy nor poor, just a soldier like the rest of the men. However, he often has problems with his memory in that it keeps creeping back to his consciousness. Due to the resurfacing memories, Unk must have his memory repeatedly erased. The willingness to erase memories for the completion of the Mars colony calls to mind the erased memory of Millie in *Fahrenheit 451*. These methods point to the true potential of an individual's mind to do damage to a societal structure and why it is feared and controlled by those in positions of authority.

After one of these instances of erasure, Unk is being forced to kill Stony Stevenson. He does so because of the consequences that would arise if he refused to carry out orders. Unk, like the majority of the soldiers on Mars, has an antenna installed in his heads upon arrival. The few soldiers, often lower ranking officers to throw off suspicion, that do not have antennas observe

the others and zap them with painful waves whenever a soldier disobeys orders or behaves in unacceptable ways. This army of mind-controlled soldiers populates the majority of the colony on Mars. They effectively become a thoughtless, killing machine that can even be ordered to run an attack on their former home, Earth.

The antenna, as well as the fear of the pain that would follow, repress any desires to act out against the will of the commanding officers. If a behavior or thought is not soldierly, then a painful zap to the head will rid it from the soldier's mind. Just as in *Fahrenheit 451* with the mechanical hound, the society feels helpless in acting out against the rules that have been set out before them. They know that they are not out-numbered in manpower, but instead in technological advancements. There is no way for them to overcome the pain that floods their body with a single press of a button. The pain as a conditioning technique resembles the Ludovico Technique that is utilized on Alex to remove him from a pattern of criminal behavior in *A Clockwork Orange*. Having a government that is willing to sacrifice individuals for the sake of power and society as a whole correlated directly to the Cold War itself. Individuals were targeted, justifiably or not, as potential threats and subsequently tortured.

Unk finds ways to rebel in small manners, though. After killing Stony Stevenson, he finds a list that he had been writing so that he would be able to remember certain things. By reading the list, he learns that Stony Stevenson was his best friend, though he is not aware that the man he killed was in fact Stony. Unk further learns to become suspicious of the antenna in his head and who may actually be controlling him. The letter tells him that Stony "told you [Unk] to watch out for Boaz" (Vonnegut 129). The two men had also at some point figured out

that “a big, genial, smiling, yodeling man who always had a big dog with him” was actually in charge of everything on Mars (Vonnegut 129). This man, of course, was Winston Rumfoord.

Once the attack on Earth begins, Boaz and Unk are put into a spaceship that does not head to Earth like all of the others. Winston Rumfoord had specifically programmed their autopilot to take the two men to Mercury. On the trip over, it is revealed that Unk had replaced the innards of the box that Boaz kept in his pocket with tissues. Boaz had been one of the officers that controlled the rest of the soldiers and their antenna, and now Unk had taken his power away from him.

Unk did not defeat him physically, but rather by taking away Boaz’s technological superiority. Boaz had not been any more intelligent than Unk, nor more powerful. Any controlling power he held was in the little box he kept in his pocket. Once the box had lost its ability to control and send painful zaps for Unk, Boaz had become insignificant. Unk could finally operate without the fear of painful consequences. The technological superiority had repressed him into a submissive soldier, but on the spaceship to Mercury, Unk had regained his individuality.

In *Sirens of Titan*, humankind as a whole has been controlled and repressed by completely technological creatures, the robotic Tralfamadorians. One of their own, Salo, had been stranded on Titan when his spacecraft broke down. He had been traveling to the other end of the universe in order to deliver a message that had been kept secret even from him. However, once Salo became stuck on Titan, the Tralfamadorians began to manipulate humans and played with the entire course of human development and history. Major monuments of human feats had been nothing more than messages of assurance for Salo to see from Titan. For instance,

Stonehenge, the Great Wall of China, and the League of Nations Palace were all messages from the Tralfamadorians for Salo.

When Winston Rumfoord had gone through the chrono-synclastic infundibulum, one of the places he would materialize was Titan, where he met Salo. Winston, being able to see the future, knew that Malachi and Beatrice were vital parts of the Tralfamadorian plan for rescuing Salo. Their son, Chrono, would pick up a small metal piece, one he would dub his lucky piece, which he would bring with him once the three of them left Mars.

Thus, the Tralfamadorians had ensured that Chrono would be born on Mars so that he could find the metal piece that would fix Salo's spaceship. In order for Chrono to be born on Mars, both Beatrice and Malachi had to be recruited for the Mars colony. Beatrice and Malachi would not have been recruited if they had not isolated themselves from the rest of society and their previous roles after finding out about their future from Rumfoord. Rumfoord would not have been able to forecast Malachi's and Beatrice's lives if he had not built a spaceship and come across the chrono-synclastic infundibulum. The chain of events that allowed and ensured that Chrono ended up on Mars is endless, though they doubtlessly begin with the Tralfamadorians.

In such ways, all of mankind had its future predetermined by foreign technological innovations, the Tralfamadorians. They were not being controlled by fear and manipulation, as would happen if laws and regulations were the major repressive forces, as in *Fahrenheit 451* or *1984*. Instead, their daily lives and decisions are part of a grander scheme that had been determined previously by the Tralfamadorians in order for their message to finally make it to its desired destination. The human race was a pawn and resource for the Tralfamadorians, and the

race as a whole had been repressed into living their lives simply to be used. According to Beatrice, though, this was not a completely negative aspect of their lives. She tells Malachi that “the worst thing that could possibly happen to anybody... would be to not be used for anything by anybody” (Vonnegut 317). If being used meant being useful, then it was not all so bad.

By being used completely, to the point that wars are fought for the mere act of sending Salo a comforting message, humanity had been repressed into a powerless and unaware species. They couldn't rebel in any way since their actions had already been calculated into the Tralfamadorian scheme. Again, Beatrice searches for the positive in the human condition. Though she doesn't deny that the Tralfamadorians had played a part in Earth's occurrences, she claims that the people that had “served the interests of Tralfamadore have served them in such highly personalized ways that Tralfamadore can be said to have practically nothing to do with the case” (Vonnegut 315). Instead of working as a conforming body, Earth's population had gone their own ways in the grand scheme of the Tralfamadorians, and thus had found their own meaning.

As the beginning of the novel asserts, the search for the meaning of human existence had turned inwards. Darwin's notion of survival of the fittest comes into play, asserting that “human beings will not find meaning ‘out there’ but instead must look within themselves and that to become the fittest, individual interest must be their supreme goal” (McInnis 390). With such a method, “Everyone now knows how to find the meaning of life within himself” (Vonnegut 1). The characters thus use such a moral code to guide them through each stage of their lives, until the final stage on Titan.

Once Winston Rumfoord dematerializes for the last time from Titan, Beatrice, Malachi, and Chrono find individual meanings in their lives. Salo had received his missing piece, but had dismantled himself because he had lost Rumfoord, whom he had considered a friend. Without the needed piece any longer, the three humans remaining on Titan were able to finally act without the influence of the Tralfamadorians. Malachi Constant had begun his journey as a “woefully passive” passenger, “one of grotesque manipulation at the will of the omniscient Rumfoord” and “the residents of the distant planet Tralfamadore” (Friedman 155). Free from technological repression, Chrono chose to leave his parents and roam with the birds, Beatrice was free to write to her heart’s desire, and Unk took upon the act of putting Salo back together.

Unk ultimately succeeds in putting Salo back together. He and Salo get onto Salo’s repaired spaceship and head to Earth, where Unk will be dropped off in Indianapolis. Having lived on Titan, and learning how the human species had been used throughout its entire existence, he surely has some wisdom to share with the rest of humanity. Of course, he is near the end of his time, but if he could even share with a single individual the “knowledge which helps the hero escape the confines of his own ego, or knowledge of some message that may save his society” that Vonnegut often provides, society can be reborn, as it is in *Fahrenheit 451* (Hume 435). The message that Unk carries from Titan is more than the “Greetings” that Salo was carrying. Instead, it would fulfill his earlier wish of finding “a single message that was sufficiently dignified and important to merit his carrying it humbly between two points” (Vonnegut 17).

Chapter 2: Technology in British Dystopian Literature of the Cold War

Technology in 1984

Technology is found in just about every corner of every room in the society depicted in George Orwell's *1984*. Society is monitored by the telescreens that are kept on the walls of people's homes, work spaces, and public places. Winston believed that it "was even conceivable that they [the Thought Police] watched everybody all the time" (Orwell 3). These screens dictate the entire course of their day, beginning with age-specific exercises that Party members must participate in as part of their morning routine. It directs their two-minute hate, where they shout and yell at the Party's propaganda, usually against Goldstein, whom they consider their ultimate enemy.

The main aspect of the telescreen, however, is its ability to monitor these individuals completely. It not only sees them, but can sense their heartbeat. A flash of the eyes, a twitch of the muscle, it's all noticed and picked up on by the telescreen. Therefore, it is not only the actions of society that it is able to assess, but also its emotions and attitudes. Faking admiration and love for the Party and Big Brother is thus practically impossible.

With the telescreens as a fully integrated component of life, society must accommodate its behavior accordingly. Oceania is portrayed as being "invulnerable to progressive change" while encouraging submissiveness instead (Resch 139). There is no freedom when it comes to beliefs, and style of life is strictly restricted. Big Brother is truly always watching, observing, monitoring. Fear of encountering the Thought Police keeps society away from independent thought, turning individuals into nothing more than vessels of Party politics and propaganda. With such aspects, *1984* becomes "not a science fiction prophecy but a powerful warning of the

danger to human freedom inherent in the use of technology to achieve and maintain political power” (Bernstein 26). This very notion is key to understanding the power relations of the Cold War, when nuclear arsenals played the leading role in control.

Censorship goes beyond the presence of telescreens and the unwanted interactions with the Thought Police. Winston Smith is employed with the ironically named Ministry of Truth. The Ministry of Truth handles an elaborate system of doctored and edited documents and texts. Whenever present reality does not match with past predictions or alliances, previous newspaper articles and speeches are altered. For instance, Oceania has not had a stable ally, so people like Winston Smith must rewrite the past to make it seem that Oceania has always been fighting the same enemy. During the Cold War, the United States similarly omitted mentioning the vital ally it had in the Soviet Union during World War II. Once World War II commenced, drastic international transitions occurred in terms of alliances. Once the Soviet Union’s forces were no longer necessary against Nazi Germany, “fears became predominant” and Americans staff “had come round to a pro-British and anti-Soviet consensus” (Reynolds 215). Both the United States and the Soviet Union craved more security, and so set out on an “insatiable quest for security” that became “the root cause of the growing East-West tension” (Reynolds 215). With this new dynamic present, the former allies became opposing forces until the Soviet Union’s dissolution.

Such processes are used as well with production quotas. When chocolate rations are reduced, the past is rewritten to state that chocolate rations have always been at such levels. Winston Smith is faced with lower boot production than had been predicted, so he must rewrite past statements to make it seem as if production has actually surpassed, rather than fell below,

expectations. It is a system of ensuring that Big Brother and the Party always appear in the right and that standard of living is only getting better under their leadership.

To survive such work without beginning to doubt the Party, employees, as well as the rest of society, must partake in the process of “doublethink”. With doublethink, an individual is capable of holding two contradictory thoughts simultaneously. It is the ability to believe that two and two make five if the Party says that it does. It requires that these individuals deceive themselves, and most likely their intuition, in order to match the Party’s requirements and expectations. It is through this process that Party members are able to accept fighting a different enemy from day to day while proclaiming that they have been fighting the same enemy since the war began. By doing so, they are able to rearrange reality to fall in line with Party politics, rather than having Party politics accepting reality.

When an individual fails to successfully undertake the process of doublethink, they commit “thoughtcrime”. Thoughtcrime is anything that the Thought Police or the Party deem to be illegal thought. The society in *1984* not only is lacking the freedom of speech, but the freedom of thought as well. For the Party, anything that would promote or create individuality is illegal. It was an incredibly dangerous crime to commit since “you might dodge successfully for a while, even for years, but sooner or later they were bound to get you” (Orwell 19). The fear of thoughtcrime promotes isolation, stemming from the fear of intimacy and affection for anyone other than Big Brother. Individuals live in such a “locked loneliness” that even a momentary glance was a “memorable event” (Orwell 18). The technology and capabilities of telescreens make such crimes detectable.

Society is so soaked in isolation that in order to be married, the couple must prove to the Party that they hold no emotional attachments for each other since “the Party was trying to kill the sex instinct” (Orwell 66). Instead, their desire for marriage must purely originate in their desire to reproduce, to further the Party into the future. They must promise to raise their children in accordance with the Party’s expectations. Although on the surface it may appear similar to a stable family unit, this is not the case. Children are encouraged to listen in on their parents, checking that they are truly living up to Party regulations. If not, then they happily and eagerly turn their parents in for arrest. Winston felt sympathy for his neighbor whose children seemed to fill her with terror. He believed that “another year, two years, and they would be watching her night and day for symptoms of unorthodoxy” (Orwell 24). Children are conditioned from birth, whether it be in school or clubs, to put the Party above all else. Anyone who does not follow the Party on every point is the enemy of the Party, and, therefore, their own enemy as well.

Under such leadership, it should come as no surprise that technology is used purely for repressive means. The repressive role of technology worked so effectively that it even stopped technological development since “scientific and technical progress depended on the empirical habit of thought, which could not survive in a strictly regimented society” (Orwell 189). Society is being monitored non-stop by the telescreens and microphones that have been placed around Oceania, weeding out any notions of innovation. Beyond the surveillance, however, technology is present in society through the seemingly never ending war. The war rages on not necessarily over any disputes amongst the three superstates; rather, war continues for the sake of war itself. With it, the people are under constant feelings of fear and anxiety. Bombs are dropped consistently throughout the novel, though always seemingly in the Prole districts.

The war works miracles for the Party. By presenting society with a common enemy (a changing, irrelevant one), it ensures that society will band together against it. They do not worry about internal differences or conflicts when they consider that there is a force out there that is trying to dominate all of them nevertheless. They then willingly flock to the Party, whom they see as their powerful protector and supplier. The society of Oceania does not face the turmoil of being on the frontlines and is easily led to believe that Oceania is winning the war. Success stories keep their spirits high and their trust firmly lodged in the hands of the Party. The fact that the success stories are likely recycled, fraudulent reports written by a Ministry of Truth worker, such as Winston Smith, does not matter when doublethink is possible.

With such a willing society at the foot of their doors, the Party is then able to manipulate the economy to its liking. They are able to create the class system that benefits their motive of power. Production levels remain at standards low enough that society does not expect much in terms of pleasure. They work for the Party in order to survive, offering their obedience in exchange for security. In such a way, “war is peace” as one of the Party slogans is explained (Orwell 4). With the ever-lasting war, the superstate is able to maintain internal peace.

The face of the enemy is only ever seen in propaganda and pride-inducing instants, such as the parade of war criminals through the streets. They do not truthfully know whether their enemy is actually any different from themselves. Furthermore, it is possible that the Party itself is behind the bombings in Oceania. The bombs that Winston Smith mentions seeing never have much impact on important parts of the city. Instead, they fall on the poorer Prole districts, where nothing of Party relevance is held. The Proles have faced bombings so often that when Winston Smith is in their district, he appears to be the last to know that a bomb is about to be dropped. A

Prole helps him off the street, saving his life. This special sense of awareness that expresses a clear distinction between them and people of the other classes, such as Winston Smith, points to the targeting that they face.

Why would Oceania's enemy target the poor Proles rather than the center of Party activity? It seems that strategically they wouldn't bother with the uneducated and poor masses. Winston Smith thus begins to question who is actually behind the attacks. It is possible, and in such cases probable, that the Party decided to bomb its own people. These attacks serve as reminders of the war and its danger. For the Proles, they face the danger first-hand, while upper Party members see it from more of a distance. Either way, the purpose is served and society feels that they need Big Brother to keep them safe from that week's enemy.

With such an extensively planned out set of operations, it can be of little surprise that Winston Smith did not come out victorious against the Party. Society has succumbed to "frightening techniques of mind control: from the ubiquitous posters of Big Brother with eyes that follow you, to the electronic eye of the telescreen which invades even the privacy of the bedroom" (Bernstein 26). The control is so extensive and so complete that the Party is able to cater to each individual's worst personal nightmare. Winston is no match for the cage of rats, his worst fear, O'Brien has prepared for him, making it quite evident that for the Party, loyalty reigns supreme. To foster such loyalty, the repressive role of their technology is vital.

Technology in Lord of the Flies

William Golding's *Lord of the Flies* is unique in the collection of dystopian novels being studied here. It does not take place in a politically oppressed society that has undergone change

over a lengthy period of time. Instead, it follows a group of boys that have been stranded on an island after their plane crashes. They are left with no food, no security, and no adult supervision. Thus, rather than being directly impacted by political repression and societal norms, they are isolated from them. Of course, they are not completely without any notion of societal norms as they had been raised up until that point in an English society. They do, however, give up some of these practices when they find that they do not accommodate their survival instincts in the wild.

The situation that the group of boys finds themselves in is purely caused by the technology of war that has swept the world. They are on a plane while being evacuated from their home, England. England has become a hostile and unsafe environment for them because of a war that is waging. However, before they are able to get to their destination safely, the plane is attacked and strands them on the island. Afterwards, the boys witness an atomic bomb go off in the distance, signifying the existence of an atomic war elsewhere. Such weapons have ripped apart the fabric of society, separating children from their parents for the sake of safety. Thanks to the usage of such weapons and developments, even children are targeted. This holds true to the very nature of the atomic bombs that had been dropped in Japan. The bombs cannot discriminate, and everyone is in danger.

Included in their abandonment on the island is the lack of access to modern technology. In terms of advancement and development, the boys have to manage and make do with more primitive matters. At first, they are limited by their prior dependence on technology, such as the radio. Their solutions for escaping the island and finding help are all dependent on means that are not available to them on the island. It is not until Ralph, the elected leader, realizes that they need fire to make progress. However, they are initially uncertain of how to start the fire without

matches. Once they sense that the pile of wood is complete, “Ralph and Jack looked at each other while society paused about them” (Golding 40). Their saving grace comes in an unexpected package, though. Piggy, the whiny and unpopular boy of the group, wears spectacles. Suddenly, Piggy becomes vital to the boys’ survival. The only way that they manage to start a fire is with the help of the glasses. In their improvised society, glasses become their most important technology as it gives them access to fire.

Because they depend solely on the glasses as their source of fire, the glasses in turn gain power over the group of boys. With the fire, they are able to not only cook any meat that they successfully hunt and kill, but they can also use fire as a signal to passing ships and planes. The fire, and in turn the glasses, are their only hopes for survival or rescue. Such an utter dependence on a single tool turns it into a repressive force, dictating the boys and their behavior for the remainder of their stay on the island.

Two of the boys, Ralph and Jack, eventually disagree over how the island group ought to run business. Ralph believes that their main focus should be on keeping the fire going as a signal. Jack, on the other hand, has lost all civility on the island. He appreciates the benefits of hunting animals for food, and asserts that their energy and time should be spent on such activities, rather than keeping a fire going non-stop. The disagreement ultimately leads to a split between the group of boys. The two set up camp on opposite ends of the island, showing their complete unwillingness to work together or compromise.

Jack soon realizes that despite the disagreement and split, he and his hunting group still need the fire to make use of the meat they have acquired. They make a raid of the other camp, taking some fire with them while also letting the others know that they are welcome to join the

hunters. The next time that Jack and his crew want fire, however, is not as civil. They decide that they need to possess Piggy's spectacles permanently. They creep to Ralph's remaining members and sneak into Piggy's shelter. After Jack and his hunters run away, Piggy reveals that they have stolen his spectacles and consequently Ralph's hopes of maintaining a signal fire.

Such behavior from Jack and his group of boys shows the true dominance and power that the spectacles, their most cherished and valuable tool, holds over the entire group. The very function and usage of the technology is debated. Should the spectacles and fire be used to signal passing ships or should the boys focus on hunting and starting the fire only when necessary to cook the meat? Unable to reach an agreement or compromise, their makeshift society falls apart. The available technology causes a severe split in the survivors.

On the one hand, Ralph and Piggy maintain a more civil demeanor, honoring a conch shell that symbolizes their desired order. Jack, however, juxtaposes their civility as he tumults down a path of ever increasing barbarity. Jack holds a unique sense of instinct and "perceives almost intuitively the use of mask, dance, ritual, and propitiation to ward off-and yet encourage simultaneously-fear of the unknown" (Oldsey 94). He covers his civil face with paint, allowing him to better blend into the wilderness of the island so that he can hunt pigs without scaring them off with his pink cheeks. With the paint on his face, Jack "capered toward Bill, and the mask was a thing on its own, behind which Jack hid, liberated from shame and self-consciousness" (Golding 64). It had changed his persona completely, giving him a pass from the choir boy he had been previously.

Jack develops a further tool that Ralph does not use - the spears with which he hunts the pigs on the island. The hunters must fashion the spears out of sticks they find in the woods. They

sharpen them and learn to throw them with accuracy. He and his hunters further chant in unison, “Kill the beast! Cut his throat! Spill his blood!” causing violence to sweep amongst the boys (Golding 152). Even Ralph joins the hunters on an occasion. Their chanting is so hypnotic that when Simon runs to the group and tells them about the true identity of a dead man in the trees, they murder him without reason.

Simon is not just another death in the novel, however. Simon was a character that managed to oppose the characteristics of both Ralph and Jack, giving him a unique position. While Ralph has a learned civility, passed on to him from the world of adults, Simon has a pure morality. Among the other boys, he is a “lonely visionary, the clear-sighted realist, logical, sensitive, and mature beyond his years” (Oldsey 95). He is quiet and composed, expressing a closer relationship with nature than any of the other boys possess. It is a relationship far different from Jack’s, though possibly equally primal in nature. They both hold a bond with the wilderness that could not have been taught to them in their prior English lives. His kindness towards even the youngest on the island expresses his inherent morality.

Jack and the other hunters had erected a sow’s head on a spear, a form of offering to the beast they believe inhabited the island. Simon comes across the sow and names it the Lord of the Flies. The name holds great significance, especially in relation to Simon as they are both Biblical images. “Lord of the flies” is a translation of “Beelzebub,” another name for the devil. While in its presence, Simon seems to hallucinate, believing that it speaks to him. It goes on to taunt him and the boys, teasing that they thought “the Beast was something you could hunt and kill” (Golding 143). He hears it tell him that the beast the boys fear so much is actually within each of them. It is once he hears this that Simon realizes the figure the boys had seen hung in the trees

was not a beast at all, but a dead man with a parachute. It is after this realization that Simon runs to find the others and is savagely killed. With this murder, Jack, Ralph, and the rest of the boys kill the only one that was truly moral and kind amongst them. They have let their fear, evil, and hatred become the best of them.

The savagery does not end with the death of Simon, though. Jack's camp had either convinced the remainder of the boys to join its ranks or had killed them. Piggy had been killed while trying to reinstate the significance of the conch. He attempted appealing to Jack's and Ralph's reason, imploring that the civility and order that the conch allowed them was better than the savagery they were embracing. He asks them if it was better to "be a pack of painted Indians... or to be sensible like Ralph" (Golding 180). In continuation, he begs the question "Which is better, law and rescue, or hunting and breaking things up?" (Golding 180). With such an appeal, Piggy truly shows himself to be the rational one of the group. However, his pleas were useless. Another of the boys, Roger, dislodges a boulder which destroys the conch shell that Piggy so valued and knocks Piggy off the mountainside, killing him in the process.

Now completely without companions, Ralph escapes into the jungle where he is forced into hiding. Jack decides to start a fire that sweeps the entire island in an attempt to force Ralph into the open so that he can be finished off. Before Jack is successful, though, Ralph finds a naval officer on the beach. The naval officer is initially amused by the boys, but soon realizes what has actually been happening on the island. If the officer had not made his appearance at that time, it can be assumed that Ralph would have probably been murdered by the savage Jack. The boys had lost all civility. The conch that had represented any order and rules since the beginning

had been destroyed. The kind Simon and the rational Piggy had both been murdered. Their most technologically advanced tools, spectacles, spears, and fire, had torn the group apart.

Technology in A Clockwork Orange

Anthony Burgess's *A Clockwork Orange* follows a group of teenagers slightly older than the boys in *Lord of the Flies*. Their leader, Alex, partakes in often violent crimes, such as robbery, assault, and rape. Alex finds that his leadership position is being questioned by his followers, or "droogs". They insist that they cause some true mayhem and Alex complies in order to completely assert himself as their rightful leader. The group of delinquent teens sets out to rob the home of a wealthy woman, during the process of which she is knocked unconscious by Alex. When he opens the door to let his droogs in, he finds that their mutiny continues and he is hit by one of them, Dim. They abandon him with the elderly woman, leaving him for the police.

Alex is found responsible for the death of the elderly woman, who dies from her injuries. It is with this murder that his life begins to truly change. He is sent away to prison, where he behaves well, hoping it'll find him a way out sooner. However, one of his cellmates launches an attack on Alex, and when Alex fights back he ends up killing the cellmate. The government eventually approaches him with the opportunity to try a new treatment that promises to cure criminals of their violent tendencies. Alex willingly takes on the experimental treatment, believing the state is no match for him and that he'll be able to trick his way through it and toward freedom. After all, his crimes are "expressions of resistance to political and economic authority" and the opportunity to overcome the state in such a manner would be the ultimate rebellion (Sumner 56).

The treatment that is being tried out on Alex is called the Ludovico Technique. It consists of an injection that causes Alex to feel nauseous. During his state of nausea, he is forced to watch film clips and videos that depict an assortment of violent acts. He is confused by his new feelings, since he used to feeling “horrorshow” (similar to the Russian for “good”) at such actions. One of the doctors replies that what he is feeling is the natural response, that he is “being made sane... being made healthy” (Burgess 121). The injections and violent videos would continue to be coupled together until Alex associates violence with nausea without the use of the injection. In such a way, it takes on a form of aversion therapy, while creating associations that Alex did not hold previously. The treatment further makes sexual arousals or inclinations turn Alex into a bundle of uneasiness and weakness.

A Clockwork Orange, like *Lord of the Flies*, does not necessarily show technology that was uncommon during the Cold War. Cinema and television were growing in popularity, and so to utilize such a medium for the Ludovico Technique makes it realistic and possible. The fact that Alex was forced to watch the violent films, with eyes pried open, further adds to the idea of surveillance that is often found in these dystopian novels. As Alex must observe the violence, so a group of doctors and researchers observe him.

The state demonstrates that it is successful by presenting Alex to a bully. Instead of acting aggressively in response to the bully, as he would have done prior to his imprisonment, Alex collapses in front of him. The state is applauded for their successful transformation of a convicted murderer. While he is being proclaimed cured and fixed, the chaplain from the prison believes that Alex has been stolen of his free will. The chaplain asserts that “when a man cannot choose he ceases to be a man” (Burgess 93). His concerns are ignored and Alex is released to

return home and to the rest of society. The Ludovico Technique had turned out to be “a behavioural conditioning technique that will help to shore up state power” (Sumner 49).

Although nausea in the face of aggression and violence may seem like a small price to pay to ensure that a criminal keeps from raping and murdering again, the treatment had not stopped there. To maximize emotional impact, the videos that Alex had been forced to watch had symphonical music playing in accompaniment. Therefore, once out in society again, whenever Alex hears such music, he feels the same nausea and uneasiness as he does when he is faced with violence or sexual inclinations. Beethoven had been his favorite composer, and before being sent to prison, he had been very fond of listening to his compositions while in his room. Afterwards, when Alex attempts to relax in a similar manner, he finds that he cannot handle the music he once loved.

Once Alex returns home, he discovers that his parents have replaced him with a tenant. They are unwilling to evict the tenant from Alex’s former room, and so he finds himself wandering the streets homeless. He eventually finds his way to the house of the woman he had killed. He goes to the house anyway, realizing it may be his only chance to survive. The dead woman’s husband, F. Alexander, takes Alex into his home as he does not recognize Alex as the murderer. He becomes engrossed in Alex and the conditioning that he had endured during his imprisonment. F. Alexander had been skeptical of the state to begin with, but the appearance of Alex on his doorstep became a convenient opportunity for him to truly rebel against the state and its methodology. However, his interest should not come off as kindness. In Alex, he, as the government had before him, sees the perfect opportunity to make a point to the rest of the world.

Alex tells F. Alexander about the unfortunate side effect against classical music that the conditioning had procured. With this information, Alexander is just further convinced to make Alex into an example of the state's brutality. However, Alex's self-inflicted misfortune does not cease with the seemingly kind-hearted Alexander. In his usual careless nature, Alex reveals that he was mainly responsible for the death of Alexander's wife on that fateful night. He is then removed by the husband's more radical associates. He is not taken to safety, however, and is instead trapped in a bare room that is located close to his parents' residence.

The treatment that Alex is met with may seem well-deserved. After all, he had knocked the deceased wife to unconsciousness and caused her premature death. He then attempted to gain sympathy from the husband, who was passionate about ensuring that the current government not win re-election. If Alex's punishment were truly just being kept in a dreary room, then it might be possible that things were going better for him than he deserved.

It does not end there, however. In a form of torture, Alexander's associates pretend to leave Alex alone in the apartment. While Alex is sleeping in the locked room, they begin playing his formerly beloved Beethoven. He can hear the music seeping through the walls and is immediately hit with the dread and nausea that he had been conditioned to feel. He "who had loved music so much" was "crawling off the bed and going oh oh oh" and "banging on the wall creeching 'Stop, stop it, turn it off'" (Burgess 187). Overcome with desperation, Alex turns to the only option he has of escape - the window. Looking out through the window onto the ground, he yells to the world, "Goodbye, goodbye, may Bog [God] forgive you for a ruined life" (Burgess 188). He takes the extreme move to attempt suicide by jumping out of the high window, though he is not killed by the fall.

The motivation behind Alex's loss of will to live is the true point of interest. The thing that had once brought him joy and relaxation had now turned into his lethal enemy. Unlike Winston Smith in *1984*, who must face a cage of starved rats, a fear he held since childhood, Alex must face a previously cherished recreation with anguish. This can be said about his beloved acts of violence, which had become recreation rather than necessities. Alex and his droogs did not live in a society in which they were forced to roam the streets to survive. They had chosen the lifestyle, most likely out of simple enjoyment of its processes and perks. After all, he asserts that "what I do I do because I like to do" (Burgess 45). Classical music, on a similar hand, was not a widely enjoyed type of music. When Alex tried sharing his love of it with others, they did not understand his fascination with it. However, the key difference between his love of classical music and that of violence was that the music did not cause harm. On the contrary, while listening to the music, Alex remained in his room, away from trouble.

The true reverence he held for the music is thus seen by Alex's suicide attempt. Trapped in a mind that has stripped him of true free will and that has turned his beloved Beethoven into an instrument of torture, Alex's suicide attempt is explained. The government, by employing its experimental Ludovico Technique, had taken a violent criminal off the streets and beaten him down with nausea and recorded acts of violence to the point that he is encouraged to resort back to violence, this time against himself. It was even one of Alex's arresting officers that stated "violence makes violence" (Burgess 76). If a murderer turns suicidal, can it truly be said that his desire and ability to kill has been stifled? Rather, it has simply been redirected and reconditioned. Rather than kill a stranger on the street, he is tempted to kill himself to escape the prison of his new mind.

After jumping out of the window, Alex awakens in a hospital bed. As expected, the unfortunate turn of events after his release has made the government nervous about the bad publicity. Alex is placed in a mental institution and offered a deal with the government. He will receive a high-paying job only if he agrees to side with the government, proclaiming that indeed he has been cured with their help. He pleasantly discovers that his feelings of nausea have disappeared when thoughts of violence flood his mind. Alex soon slips back into his old self, partaking in violence and aggression on the streets, now flanked by new droogs. After running into his former comrade, Pete, he sees that Pete has completely moved on from their previous exploits. Alex realizes after the encounter that he may be outgrowing his delinquent phase as well, and that it may in fact be time to become a sensible and productive member of society.

With such an ending, *A Clockwork Orange* wraps up its ideas on the use of repressive techniques and technology to curb certain human behavior. It becomes evident through the course of the novel that the government's solution to battling criminal behavior, its Ludovico Technique, was little more than torture for its patients. Nauseating injections, especially formulated for no higher purpose than to make the recipient sick while simultaneously being shown grotesque videos penetrated the mind in more traumatic ways than beneficial ones. These forms of technology, more troublesome because of their commonality, stripped the patient of free will, opening his mind to become malleable to the government's desires. As seen with the case of Alex, he does not become a fully functioning member of society until the treatment had been reversed, and he was able to reach his own conclusions.

Chapter 3: The Dichotomy between Technology and Creative Expression

American Dystopian Novels and the Counterparts to Technology

Fahrenheit 451

The society in *Fahrenheit 451* condemns books, and so it becomes clear that they juxtapose technology. Millie, Guy Montag's wife, demonstrates what humans can become when they lose their curiosity because of the technology of the time. She is a dull character, almost like a robot herself. She blindly follows society's expectations without questioning their true purpose or repercussions, seen especially with her decision to turn in her own husband for owning books. Millie is thus a troubling case since "security of knowledge and complacency of thought were for [Ralph Waldo] Emerson pernicious concepts that sapped the life out of living," seen too with Millie's suicide attempt (Boatright 2). She is first and foremost concerned with her parlor walls, the main source of entertainment for her and the rest of society. These parlor walls, resembling advanced television sets that can eventually surround the viewer completely, go beyond entertainment, however. They become almost human for individuals that are as engrossed in them as Millie. They are practically family members for her, things to interact with rather than simply watch and be entertained by.

Millie is so in tune with the technology of the day that it is a small leap to understanding why she believes the state's regulations are worth following. The state has provided society with the technology that makes such parlor walls possible, and thus it is partly gratitude that convinces society members, such as Millie, to turn in book hoarders and readers in to the firemen. When Guy openly admits to having a book in their home, Millie turns him in to the

state. She is aware that by doing so to her own husband, she will be forced to leave their home. She effectively ends her life as she knows it, and she will have to start over without Guy.

Such blind obedience to authority resembles that of the Party members in *1984*, where children accuse parents and spouses accuse each other of treachery and acting against the state. Such behavior appears strange, though could be explained by the major component of both novels, the lack of freedom of expression. Literature is the ideal way for individuals to set their ideas and beliefs in writing. It is then easy to distribute and reference. Reading such written works encourages personal thought and reactions, with “reading as a means to thinking” (Boatright 3). No single work results in a single reaction, either. Discussions ensue and a discourse continues as long as the text is being read by members of society. With such characteristics, *Fahrenheit 451* sets up a dichotomy between literature, or creative expression, and technology.

Literature and technology go beyond their differences in promoting independent thought, though. With independent thought, individuals become more interesting to each other. They have more reason to interact and follow up on potential friendships. Guy Montag meets far more individuals throughout the course of the novel than does Millie. He meets a young girl, Clarisse McClellan, one night while returning home from work. Their conversations, though short lived, resemble a deeper understanding and intimacy than could be accomplished among Millie and her friends.

Although Guy is initially uneasy with Clarisse’s manner of speaking and divergent ideas, she makes him question his own life. She shares that her own interests and free spirited ways have not sat well with her classmates, and she has become an outcast at school. Guy Montag

himself appears to be an outcast as well. He begins questioning his role as a fireman, thinking about the legends that firemen used to put out fires rather than start them. He is not as confident as his coworkers that burning people alive because they hid books in their homes is an appropriate reaction. In the ultimate act of rebellion and isolation, Guy even begins gathering books to keep in his own home.

The relationship with Clarisse thus becomes a form of liberation for Guy. His subtle doubts about the society he has grown up in become fully conscious thoughts thanks to Clarisse. In such a way, the friendship empowers him, convincing him that he is not alone or crazy. The complexity of the friendship finds no equal in the superficial friendships that Millie has. While her friendships are grounded in discussion about the parlor walls and petty gossip, they do not contribute to the expansion of thought or expression. They are shallow and could easily be replaced with new individuals.

To gain more insight on the books he becomes obsessively fascinated with, Guy tracks down Faber, a former English professor that he had met in a park some time before. Guy convinces Faber to trust him by bringing him a rare copy of the Bible. The quick trust that builds between the two is exemplified by Guy's decision to run to Faber's home once his own house has been burned down by the firemen. Faber suggests that Guy continue his trek in the direction of some former book-lovers, out in the countryside. By assisting Guy in such a way, Faber has put himself in danger. Such a friendship would not have been possible without books and the connections they are able to form between individuals.

The group of men that Guy meets during his run from the city do not consider the parlor walls, the mechanical hound, or nuclear weapons as the ideal representations of mankind. Rather,

writings that are centuries old hold more relevance for them. For instance, Guy Montag is able to recall Bible verses, such as Revelations 22:2, “And on either side of the river was there a tree of life . . . and the leaves of the tree were for the healing of the nations.” The verse holds within it the possibility for healing, more than any of the technological advancements could wish to accomplish. This distinction points to the dichotomy that arises between technology and writing. While writing is able to comfort, heal, or inspire betterment, technology is able to distract, destroy, or pit mankind against itself. The group strives for the much needed healing and rebuilding, and hope to overcome the nuclear apocalypse of the city with their remembered book excerpts to guide them.

The book-lovers continue to exemplify the differences that literature and technology cause in the development of thought and the power of the individual. The men that Guy Montag meets outside of the city are realistic when it comes to carrying books with them. They are aware that the best way to transport books across the country is to memorize messages or thoughts from the books they have read. According to them and their methods, books do not lose their power when their pages have been destroyed as long as there is someone that can share their message. The parlor walls do not have this same possibility. They do not provide lasting thought, rather fleeting entertainment. This aspect expresses the extent of which literature can affect independent thought, which greatly surpasses that of technological entertainment systems.

Sirens of Titan

In an age of space travel and living on Mars, the simple act of writing becomes vital to creative expression. The three main characters all partake in writing, though in different

manners. Winston Rumfoord takes writing away from the creative realm the furthest. He writes the *Pocket History of Mars*, which tells the “tale” of “the war between Earth and Mars” in “glorious perfection” (Vonnegut 167). Rumfoord describes the history of the war in “the barest, flattest, most telegraphic terms” (Vonnegut 167). Rumfoord’s writing is unimaginative, using simple sentences that stick strictly to fact.

Considering Winston Rumfoord’s text in comparison with the other writings found throughout *Sirens of Titan*, it is no surprise that his end in the novel is unsatisfactory. He does not partake in creativity, though his individualism exists purely through his extreme selfishness. He collaborates with the Tralfamadorians, ultimately at the cost of human lives and humanity itself. The Tralfamadorians may have been controlling and manipulating human life for their own gain, but Rumfoord was equally as responsible for destruction in his time. He orchestrates the colony on Mars, stripping individuals of their Earthly identities and existences. He tears family apart, leaving the women to fend with the few children that are on Mars while the men are trained into a mindless army.

Rumfoord goes beyond heading the Mars army that attacks Earth, however. Coming back to his *Pocket History of Mars*, he publishes a work directly related to the war he initiates. He thus takes advantage not only of the individuals involved in the fighting, but the situation itself as well. The book becomes almost a biographical work, touching upon instances that were strictly existent because of Rumfoord himself. Such conditions make him arguably as manipulative as the Tralfamadorians that influenced human life at its very core in order to transport their message of “Greetings” (Vonnegut 306).

The writings that Malachi Constant, or Unk at the time, and Beatrice Rumfoord create completely contrast Winston Rumfoord's work. They write for themselves, for the pure sake of expression and learning about themselves. The pieces they compose are not necessarily intended for anyone else, and are instead natural and honest texts that serve the purpose of a creative outlet.

Beatrice Rumfoord, like Malachi Constant, spends a portion of her life on Mars. Her identity is reformed, and she is renamed Bee. When she shares with her supervisor a sonnet she has written, she is sent to the hospital. She writes that "every man's an island," portraying the sense of isolation that the members of the colony on Mars must endure (Vonnegut 153). While at the hospital, she has her memory erased. Her attempts to convey her emotions through poetry have not been successful, and instead had been met with further repression.

Beatrice continues her expression through writing while on Titan. She remains mostly in isolation, signaling to Malachi when she would like to see him. The willful isolation serves her well. She devotes her last moments writing "a book called *The True Purpose of Life in the Solar System*" (Vonnegut 314). In the book, she goes against Winston Rumfoord's notion that human life was purely designed to assist the Tralfamadorians in relaying their message. Her writing sets up a clear dichotomy between creativity and technology. It seeks to proclaim that the machine Tralfamadorians affected those that ended up serving them in such personalized manners that it can be argued they had nothing to do with humanity at all. She is so passionate about her writing that her ultimate goal is to finish before she dies. Beatrice even writes while she eats and is eventually successful in the completion of her book that will probably not be read by anyone since it is left on Titan.

While on Mars, individuals must have their memories erased. If they begin to question too often or begin to remember too much from their previous identities, they must have their memories erased once more. Unk had such treatments repeatedly. After the final instance of such erasure, Unk is required to kill a man whom he appears to not recollect. He thus unknowingly kills his best friend, Stony Stevenson. However, their relationship is not completely lost, due in part because of Unk's ignorance on the matter and a letter that he finds.

Unk finds the letter under a turquoise stone. Although he is uncertain as to who has written such a letter, it is addressed "Dear Unk" (Vonnegut 124). The author of the letter expresses that the letter contains "the things I know for sure" and further questions that ought to be answered at some point (Vonnegut 124). The knowledge that it contains spans all subject areas, including suspicions towards Boaz, history, biology, astronomy, and psychology.

Reading the letter, Unk begins to believe that whoever has written it is "a marvelous old man with a white beard and the build of a blacksmith" (Vonnegut 132). The author possesses an aura of mystery and acts as a savior for Unk and his state of confusion. However, at the close of the letter, he finds the signature of the writer. In clumsy and large script, Unk finds the three letters of his own name staring back up at him. This letter that he has written has assisted him more than anything else could have. It has provided him with his memories, and "was literature in its finest sense, since it made Unk courageous, watchful, and secretly free" (Vonnegut 132). Such a description of the letter, and literature in general, can further be applied to not only other creative expressions in the novel, but the banned books in *Fahrenheit 451* or Winston Smith's diary and Goldstein's book in *1984*. These works are capsules of freedom, opening the door to free thought and individualism that has otherwise been repressed by technology.

British Dystopian Novels and the Counterparts to Technology

1984

Winston Smith's first true and committal rebellion against the Party and Big Brother comes when he decides to buy a blank journal. The act of writing down his thoughts severely limits the power that the Party's technological intrusions can play on the mind. With his thoughts transferred onto the paper, Winston is not only able to store information in a convenient manner, but indeliberately comes to new realizations and conclusions.

The journal ensures that Winston will eventually (if not immediately) be caught and tortured by the Party. However, he continues to attempt to hide his disobedience. He strategically positions himself out of the purview of the telescreen and once he has finished writing a passage, he places a speck of dust in order to notice whether someone else has been reading the journal. Of course, as is later revealed in the novel, the lengths he goes to are not enough to keep the Party from discovering his betrayal and reading his deepest thoughts.

By writing, Winston is able to explore new ideas, expand on his thoughts, and reach deeper into his mind than many others in society. His writing encourages independent thought, and is one of the few things not dictated by the Party or telescreens. He escapes from the limited language of Newspeak, delving into vocabulary that is attempted to be stamped out of society's speech. The very nature of Newspeak limits independent thought as much, if not more, than the technology that litters Oceania. Language is far from simple since "language served a galvanizing function and enlivened how he articulated ideas" (Boatright 4). Words, and thus ideas, that are not considered necessary by the Party are eliminated from the dictionary, shrinking language to its most bare and simple possibility. With such a process, the regime hopes

they will successfully eliminate all opportunities to betray them, leaving only vocabulary and ideas that fall in line with their regulations.

Winston's gradual descent of betrayal shows that the Party's concerns over language are not misplaced. Oceania's undemocratic system of governance points to the idea that "living in a democracy... means we should validate multiple perspectives on ideas and that it is our ethical responsibility to welcome and pay attention to polyvocal viewpoints" (Boatright 2). Big Brother does not do so. After Winston purchases the journal and begins writing in it, he begins questioning his work and the state of society once there would no longer be anyone with a memory of the way things were before the current regime. He starts spending more time in the Prole districts, searching for anyone that can tell him that things were in fact better before Big Brother was always watching. Although he is not successful in this mission, his desire to work against the Party is not hindered.

Goldstein, the supposed enemy of the state, had a possible book circulating around the world, explaining his ideas. Winston had not been sure whether such a book could possibly exist until he had promised his allegiance to the underground anti-Party movement, the Brotherhood. He has the "Book" delivered to him secretly in a briefcase. When he finally has time to devote to reading it, he does so in the secret bedroom he and Julia had been using. He is fascinated with what he reads, though he finds that he does not learn much more than he had already figured out on his own. The Book explains the true meanings behind the three Party slogans and asserts that the Proles are the only way in which the Party can be overthrown. Julia falls asleep while Winston reads aloud, supporting his claim that she is not a full rebel, rather only in superficial ways.

Having Goldstein's ideas floating around in a book forms a bridge between *1984* and *Fahrenheit 451*. Books prove to be the ideal way to share ideas on a large scale. Their effects are longer lasting than any other vessel of information since they promote thought and independent reactions. While books are not completely eradicated from society in *1984*, they are severely limited and controlled by the government. The Ministry of Truth is responsible for publishing books for the Proles to keep them entertained. Since books are not being written for all people by their fellows, they do not properly express independent thought and creative expression. Rather, they are about as useful in expanding the mind as the parlor walls in *Fahrenheit 451*.

To further undermine the Party's structure and regulations, Winston and Julia take part in a sexual and emotional relationship. Such a relationship goes against the isolation that the Party attempts to promote, encouraging relationships purely for the sake of reproduction. However, their relationship creates sensations that had largely been lost. Love and admiration were only ever felt for Big Brother. Winston's feelings toward Julia, though, exemplify individuality. The presence of the feelings meant that not everyone was the same, and that in fact, people were worthy of holding their own characteristics. Telescreens may subject society to the same programs and broadcasts, keeping them on a strictly planned regiment, but if people began looking to others for unique entertainment, telescreens and the Party would lose their hold. In such a way, Winston's and Julia's relationship was a celebration of their individuality.

Lord of the Flies

The mob mentality that runs rampant in *Lord of the Flies* shows not just the dark core of human nature, but also the importance of independent thought. The characters that do not

allow themselves to be sucked into the chanting hypnosis that the hunters experience remain pure and rational throughout the novel. Piggy remains rational and insistent on rules and orders until his unfortunate death while Simon isolates himself from the others, becoming more in tune with nature and realizing that what they really ought to fear is the monster found within each of them.

The extent to which mob mentality sweeps the impressionable boys is especially seen with Simon's death. The repetitious chanting diminishes their individuality, creating a single entity that functions under a single mind. There is one thing on their collective mind, and that is to kill. They are so swept up by their own chanting and desire to kill that it does not even seem to matter to them what or who they end up killing as long as blood is spilled. It is thus Simon's misfortune that he decides to run to the group that night. After having passed out by the sow's head, which he had deemed to be the Lord of the Flies, and realizing that the supposed beast in the tree was actually a dead man, he sets out to inform the others. With the confusion and blinding power of their chant, however, the boys proceed to kill Simon, seemingly unaware of what was actually taking place.

Even though Simon is killed while the hunters survive, this should not be taken that mob mentality triumphs over independent thought. Rather, it shows the true danger that minds repressed and obsessed with the tools at their disposal, such as the hunters' spears and fire, can cause. Simon had not taken part in the chaos and insanity that had struck the other boys over such tools, and, therefore, he had spent his time on the island without any guilt. The other boys noticed his strangeness, and judged him for it. However, once discovered by the naval officer on the beach, it becomes evident that they are ashamed of their actions. They had turned murderous and reckless, killing off the boys that were trying to keep them grounded.

A more key player in the exploits on the island was Piggy. Without his spectacles, the majority of the boys would probably have not survived on the island, whether it be from lack of food and nutrition or from lack of heat. Because of his spectacles, Piggy then becomes the bearer of comfort for the boys. Beyond their ability to start fires, though, the spectacles are the only way that Piggy is able to see clearly. They thus not only show Piggy the world, but the boys their weakness.

Despite the power that his spectacles hold on the island, though, Piggy does not let his possession of them turn him manipulative and forceful. Instead, he remains rational and in control of his emotions. He values the conch that Ralph had found more than even Ralph does by the end. When all hope seems lost, Piggy returns to his hope of convincing the other boys, mainly Ralph and Jack, that remaining civil and orderly is better than running wild. However, his sound mind and thoughts are lost on the hot-tempered Jack and the arrogant Ralph, leaving Piggy dead in the end.

Without the ability to get past the power that their island technology provides them with, and thus holds over them, the majority of the boys become slaves to it. They are not able to realize that they could easily work together, that by splitting up into two separate camps they are ensuring everyone fails, or that they are acting paranoid about an imaginary beast in the trees. Why does an entire group succumb to such shortcomings? The answer, it appears, is rather simple. The entire group of boys allows two individuals, stubborn in their own ways, to dictate their each move. Rather than working together to find the ultimate solution, they immediately elect Ralph as their leader. They are impressed with the conch and the properties he has assigned it.

Once the conch has lost its novel impressiveness, they turn to Jack's forceful leadership, finding the aspect of hunting and the satisfaction of warm meat more enticing than building shelters and keeping a fire going. In such a way, the group of boys are more like sheep than free-thinking human beings. It is simple fortune that the naval officer arrives when he does. Otherwise, Ralph would have been killed. For a time, peace may have followed, but chances are another boy would have a new idea and a new division would have formed in the group. The boys would have not succeeded on the island until they learned the true value of individualism and independent thought.

A Clockwork Orange

Despite its use in the state's technological therapy technique, classical music exemplifies creative expression. Listening to the works of Mozart and Beethoven is on the same level of thought and influence as reading a book. The music induces a range of emotions and reactions that differ from song to song as well as person to person. The "extraordinary power of music to elicit and express human feelings" sets it apart from much else (Friedman 87). Classical compositions demonstrate the independence that comes in having the ability to freely react to a song, without any external expectations. For Alex, however, this freedom is stripped away when he is treated with the Ludovico Technique.

With the extent of free will practiced in the process of composing and listening to the classical music that Alex had so enjoyed, technology appears to create a dichotomy with music. In *A Clockwork Orange*, technology is seen as a repressive force, used to treat criminals by subjecting them to tortuous levels of nausea and violent films. Alex is no longer capable of

forming independent thoughts when it comes to violence, aggression, and sexual inclinations. Although his actions and preferences had been harmful to society beforehand, the lack of ability to choose for himself makes him less human.

In the ultimate twist of fate, though, it becomes evident that his joy and affection towards classical music was greater than his desire to be a delinquent member of society. He is easily manipulated with classical music, evidenced by his suicide attempt after being forced to listen to it through the walls of the locked bedroom. Remembering his past enjoyment of classical music, he does not have the personal power to keep from feeling sick. Alex lost a part of himself that was uniquely him, an expression of his individuality and independent thought.

After his release back into society, Alex wanders, lost and unwanted by even his parents. He eventually ends up at the library, where the majority of people are an older generation. Unfortunately for Alex, he runs into a man that he and his former droogs had tormented in front of that very library. The instance had occurred before Alex had been sent to prison. The gang had thrust the man's books onto the ground, insulting him and criticizing him for taking part in reading. However, it appears to be hypocritical behavior for Alex to be preventing an individual from reading when he values his access to classical music. Once he himself loses that pleasant access to classical music, though, he finds himself at the library once more. This time, Alex is the one that is attacked and expelled from the library, unwelcome at another source of free will and thought.

When in dire need of inspiration and support, Alex finds none except in F. Alexander, the writer and husband of the woman Alex had killed on that fateful night. As a writer, it could be expected that F. Alexander would stick with Alex in his plight to regain his free will. After

all, Alexander is a dissident, blaming the government for being ineffective and ultimately responsible for the death of his wife. He may appear sympathetic with Alex's situation, but in the end he simply sees an opportunity. Alex would make the ideal example for his purposes and desires for the government. He would thus sacrifice Alex for his own motives, turning into nothing better than the government itself. With his intentions in hand, Alex continues to be a pawn, passed on from one entity to another.

With all of these concepts in hand, it points to the ultimate dichotomy in the novel - that between good and evil. However, *A Clockwork Orange* takes a unique spin on this classic theme. It makes sure to include the question of "Why?" in relation to all actions. Why does Alex behave violently in the beginning of the novel? He chooses to do so. He finds pleasure in causing mayhem and getting away with it. Why does Alex initially stop behaving violently? The government's treatment has forced him to either abstain from all violent behavior or pay the consequences - those being unbearable nausea. He has thus by this point not transitioned from evil to good, but rather is still inherently evil. It is not that he wishes to cease his delinquent ways, rather he wishes to avoid feeling sick.

It is not until Alex attempts to commit suicide that the true difference materializes. His conditioning has been reversed, and he is free to carry on his previous habits. This he does, until realizing that such a life no longer satisfies him as it once did. Once freely and independently deciding to change his behavior, Alex transitions into a more developed and cultured character.

Conclusion

Technology in the Novels

The Cold War dystopias are all tied together through a common landscape that has been ravaged by what humanity prematurely dubbed as “progress”. Throughout the studied novels, humanity in all cases has lost a part of itself to the repressive hold of technology, their own creation. Those who possess and control technology are those that have a hold on society itself. The technology, whether it be in the form of a telescreen or mechanical hound, observes individuals and keeps them under surveillance. Fear turns the wheels of such novels, keeping society always in line and always motivated to stay on the good side of those with the technology.

Technology represses humanity into societies that are so afraid of what it may reveal about them that they turn against each other. Anyone that may appear different or suspicious is immediately made an outcast. In *1984*, nothing is sacred. Children are encouraged to spy on their parents, ensuring that they follow the state’s regulations even in their own four walls. Spouses are only permitted in order to reproduce for the sake of the state. Affection, which is otherwise associated with families, is stomped out. Feeling affection for an individual would be a celebration of their individualism. Similar attitudes toward family are portrayed in *Fahrenheit 451*, seen especially through the relationship between Millie and Guy Montag. Although it would be initially expected of Millie, Guy’s wife, to remain faithful and to protect him, this is not the case. Instead, Millie calls the firemen when she believes that Guy’s book collection is getting out of hand, knowing that she will lose her home and husband.

Affection for family and others is replaced with fearful admiration for technology. In *Fahrenheit 451*, Millie is obsessed with her “parlor walls” which are television-like walls that create a submersive experience for the viewer. The characters with which she interacts are more her family than her own husband. When she turns Guy Montag in for possessing books, she is more upset about leaving her parlor walls behind than ending her marriage. A state that has created a technology so encompassing that the real people in their lives are less important has succeeded in repressing its society. When the mechanical hound that has replaced a breathing dog is added to the mix, it is evident that through their technology, the state is able to successfully monitor people. When monitoring falls short, people turn on each other since significant relationships have become endangered.

The telescreens that act as surveillance and control in *1984* are not as loved and coveted as Millie’s parlor walls. However, they are a fully integrated part of daily life for all except the “proles”. Any Party member, though, should always expect to be watched and analyzed. Such consistent surveillance forces society to conform to the Party’s expectations and regulations. Even their thoughts aren’t safe as every twitch of the muscle and drop of sweat can be picked up the telescreens. Every spoken word and activity is assessed and can determine an individual’s safety. Individualism is repressed through such a system that makes conforming simply the easier option. When the alternative is torture and death, it is no surprise that such a system can triumph over Winston Smith in the end.

Technology plays a slightly different role in *Sirens of Titan*. The Tralfamadorians, an alien race of machines, had sent one of their own, Salo, to convey a message across the universe. However, he becomes stranded on Titan when his spaceship breaks down. In order to get the

necessary piece to fix Salo's ship, the Tralfamadorians have been manipulating Earth and humanity. Although this involved similar surveillance and control as in *Fahrenheit 451* and *1984*, humanity is not aware of the influence that these machines have had on Earth. However, as seen through Malachi Constant's early assumption that "someone up there" likes him, there was a large emphasis on external luck and circumstance, rather than internal ability.

In *Lord of the Flies* and *A Clockwork Orange*, technology does not play the same surveillance role as in the other novels. Rather, it has a more individual-based impact on society. Through its presence and the nature of its usage, technology manages to repress individuals into a crazed mode. The boys in *Lord of the Flies* depend on the technology that they have on the island, a pair of glasses and hunting tools, to survive. Possessing the glasses, which are their only method of starting a fire, becomes a point over which they kill. On the other hand, in *A Clockwork Orange*, Alex's mind has been so warped and conditioned from watching violent film clips that he loses the ability to think freely. The films had classical music as their soundtrack, causing Alex to feel nauseous at the music he had previously cherished. Distraught over such a reality and unable to cope with the torture such music now inflicted, he attempts suicide.

The extent to which technology becomes involved in human life ultimately leads to the dystopian societies that are exemplified through the studied novels. Those who possess the technology have clear power over others, and they do not hesitate in exerting that power. Whether it be the state reconfiguring Alex's psyche or the Tralfamadorians manipulating all of human life to help one of their own, people are being repressed and their individualism nearly wiped away.

The Dichotomy between Technology and Individualism

The very nature of technology contrasts individualism from the beginning. The manufacture of technology aims for conformity, the assurance that one product will be the same as the next. In such a sense, it promotes common qualities and crushes any unique or individual differences, which would be considered flaws or defects in this context. When imposed in great use, such as in the societies of the Cold War dystopias, technology transfers its own conformed nature to those that are subjected to it.

As seen in the novels, such as *1984* or *Fahrenheit 451*, conformity can lead to dangerous extremes. The family unit falls apart. Betrayal can be found between spouses or parents and their children. Novels such as *A Clockwork Orange*, *Sirens of Titan*, and *Lord of the Flies* express the vitality of individualism. When humanity loses its free thought, people grow miserable, suicidal, and murderous. Humanity loses itself when it loses the ability to think independently.

Throughout each novel, it becomes evident that creativity and independent thought are the only way to truly combat such a system of repressive technology. Creativity cannot be controlled in the same way as technology, and it definitely does not aim for the same product time and time again. Rather, it encourages individualism and expression. The novels manage to set up a dichotomy between the two in such a way, often through the presence of books and writing.

Through the ban on books, the government in *Fahrenheit 451* points to the importance of books. If they were not dangerous and potentially harmful to the regime, the ban would not be necessary. However, books do that which the state cannot stand for at the time. They can inspire

and foster independent thought. While the technology of the time monitors and conforms, books are the culmination of creative expression. The same can be seen with Winston Smith's journal in *1984*. As soon as he begins writing in it, he knows he has broken Party regulations beyond repair. Through the act of writing freely, Winston is able to expand his own thoughts and gain insight into particular occurrences. It is an effective method of reflection, and, therefore, dangerous to the state.

Sirens of Titan continues the emphasis on writing, showing Beatrice, Unk, and Winston Rumfoord and their respective written works. Beatrice delves into a reflective piece until her last breath, assessing the true role that the Tralfamadorians played in life on Earth. While still on Mars, Unk writes a letter to himself, detailing everything that he knows. The letter was vital to his success since he often had his memory erased. Winston Rumfoord, however, wrote a brief history book about Mars. It was short and without creativity, strictly regurgitating fact. With their work and expression, Beatrice and Unk are able to finish their lives in satisfaction, despite the manipulation they had endured their entire lives.

Alex's appreciation for classical music sets up the dichotomy in *A Clockwork Orange*. Before the state-sponsored treatments that Alex went through for being a violent criminal, classical music was a tranquil experience, contrasting his aggression. However, once exposed to the Ludovico Technique, Alex becomes nauseous not only at the thought of violence, but classical music as well. Music, in of itself, is a classic method of creative expression. Its enjoyment is stripped from Alex, leaving him in a state of despair.

The boys in *Lord of the Flies* show similar reactions to technology. Before their realization that Piggy's spectacles are their only method of starting a fire, the boys are willing to

come together as a single group and work together. However, the group splits into two camps, one concerned with the fire and the other focused on hunting. It is truly only a single boy, Simon, that remains isolated from both camps. He remains independent in his thought, and anxious of the direction in which the boys are headed. His demeanor and attitude, those of individualism and thought, strongly contrast the mob mentality that sweeps up the remainder of the boys.

With the bipolarity of the world during the Cold War, further dichotomies become apparent. The binary oppositions, considered through a structuralist lens, include that between communism and democracy, the individual and the state, and liberation and oppression. Along with the dichotomy between creative expression and conformity, these relationships are prevalent throughout the studied novels. On the surface, they appear stable and strictly opposites, though through closer analysis, these relationships reveal themselves to be far less stable.

The major feature of writing is not always a rendition of creativity. In the society of *1984*, novels are written and mass produced for the Prole districts. Nonsensical songs are similar written. These works are intended to distract the Proles, keeping them entertained. In such a way, despite being written words, they behave more like the parlor walls in *Fahrenheit 451*. Furthermore, Winston Smith participates in rewriting history to keep it in line with the most current Party politics. Such an undermining of the written word, such as newspaper articles, points to a fragile characteristic of writing, made possible through doublethink. In such a way, writing may also act as a form of repression. In these instances, however, it has been implemented by the state in power, taking away the individuality of the act of writing.

Relevance of Technology to the Cold War

The Cold War was a time of rapid expansion of technology, namely nuclear weapons. The tense relationship between the United States and the Soviet Union brought with it anxiety over the potential for a nuclear war, and potentially mutually assured destruction. Fears over infiltration and treason swept the United States, while Great Britain felt pressure from the proximity of the Soviet bloc and the expansion in US power.

The studied novels should not be taken out of context. Nuclear anxiety plays a leading role in most of them, and is at the very least present in the others. Any mention of nuclear warfare in the novel, and the effects that society is met with from it, correlates to what conditions the world had been facing at the time. Whether it be the nuclear war that caused the boys of *Lord of the Flies* to be abandoned on the island or the ever-lasting wars in *1984*, nuclear warfare goes hand-in-hand with Cold War dystopias. Nuclear anxiety was a real and present danger, and the novels portray just how significant of a worry it was at the time.

Although it may seem that nuclear concerns were only felt on a national level since they were matters that could really only be controlled by the governments, they transcended into all classes of people and had individual impacts on lives. Violent characters such as Alex from *A Clockwork Orange* or Jack from *Lord of the Flies* relate to the nature of the technology of the time, as “nuclearity is imbued with violence and power” (Hogg 538). Daily life thus held a “deep-rooted understanding of the potential violence,” not only for the literary characters, but for the British and Americans themselves (Hogg 538). Without the power to prevent or control the mass destruction that nuclear weapons could inflict, individuals grew anxious and concerned.

With technology headed towards such a grim potential, it should not come as a surprise that individuals grew apprehensive of the technological progress that humanity was making. These fears were expressed in several ways, one of which were the dystopian novels. These works point toward a future that could easily become reality. If they were not based in glimpses of reality, then they would have not had the continued impact on readers as they do. Their tales and anxieties are plausible enough to instill a continued study of these texts. Such novels have been able to provide valuable insight on the human mind as well as societies, emphasizing the danger that technology can play when it is motivated by violence and a pursuit for power.

Significance of the Cold War Dystopias

The studied novels continue to be important elements of contemporary discourse. Significant themes of surveillance and destructive properties of military advancements are concerns that are prevalent in modern day society and politics. Big Brother is not a thing of the past or an imagined society in *1984*. Instead, it is a relatable fear, connected to National Security Agency scandals or a lack of privacy on the internet. Society continues to fear intrusive surveillance measures, mirroring concerns from the studied novels. Due to such seemingly timeless themes, the dystopian novels from the Cold War continue to be relevant and discussed.

In several instances, they appear to be ahead of their time, namely with their treatment of television and visual influences on society. Millie Montag from *Fahrenheit 451* is a believable character, especially in modern times, where obsession with television or similar media is not uncommon. Her treatment of the parlor walls remains shocking and eye-opening in a time that technology has become a personal and dear portion of many societies. In such ways, these novels

continue to raise questions and touch upon fears that have persisted since the conclusion of the Cold War.

Contemporary dystopian novels have significantly changed in nature from those written during the Cold War. The most popular dystopias are targeted towards young adult audiences. They have become a recent trend, often involving violence among teenagers. Series such as *Divergent* and *Hunger Games* point to new concerns in society, though do not appear to be as concerned with technological advancements as those written during the Cold War. This difference would then appear to imply that modern society has come to terms with technology and the daily benefits that it can provide. Since the Cold War followed the dropping of the atomic bombs in Japan, the reality of nuclear weapons was more prevalent. There have not been recent uses of atomic bombs, and so their destructive nature has become a secondary concern.

Technology, instead, is more closely associated with advancements in computer science. Considering the vital role that computers and smart phones play in contemporary society can help to explain the persistent relevance of *Lord of the Flies*, though. The boys clearly show the troubles that can occur when society has too great of a dependence on technology, consequently forgetting innovative instincts. With younger generations growing up with such technology, they become more dependent and reliant upon the ease with which they can accomplish certain tasks. What then happens if these technologies become suddenly and unexpectedly unavailable? Would incidents similar to those in *Lord of the Flies* become an unfortunate reality? Such questions, yet to be answered, keep these novels on reading lists and significant points of inquiry.

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