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PORTRAYAL OF THE GENRE OF SCI-FI IN THE WORK "THE VELDT" BY RAY BRADBURY

Bachelor´s thesis

2023   **Juraj Fraňo**

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Study program: Foreign Languages and Intercultural Communication

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Educational workplace: Department of Intercultural Communication

Thesis supervisor: Mgr. Katarína Zamborová, PhD.

Bratislava 2023   **Juraj Fraňo**

Acknowledgement

Declaration of oath

I hereby confirm that I have written this thesis on my own and that I have not used any other media or materials than the ones referred to in this thesis and that I have cited the sources used, either literally or in terms of content.

Abstrakt

Fraňo, Juraj: Zobrazenie žánru sci-fi v diele „Step" od Raya Bradburyho.- Ekonomická univerzita v Bratislave. Fakulta aplikovaných jazykov. Katedra interkultúrnej komunikácie. – Vedúca záverečnej práce: . Mgr. Katarína Zamborová, PhD. Bratislava: FAJ, 2023, 61s.

Bakalárska práca sa zaoberá analýzou poviedky autora Raya Bradburyho, Step. Poviedka sa vyznačuje kritikou technológie a jej dopadu na ľudské životy, najmä rodinu. Práca je rozdelená na tri hlavné kapitoly. Prvá kapitola definuje žáner Sci-fi, poskytuje stručné zhrnutie histórie jeho vzniku a vývoja, zároveň určuje niekoľko základných kategórii a pod-žánrov. Kapitola taktiež pojednáva o kariére a prínose Raya Bradburyho do sveta literatúry a zároveň rozoberá, akým spôsobom autor využíva symboliku v jeho dielach. Druhá kapitola sa venuje cieľu a metodike práce. Tretia a finálna kapitola zahŕňa samotnú analýzu diela s podrobným sústredením sa na príbeh, postavy, motívy, myšlienky, slovnú zásobu a symboliku. Cieľom práce je identifikovať sci-fi elementy, poukázať na prognózy a nebezpečenstvá technológie spomenuté v poviedke a porovnať ich s realitou súčasnosti.

Kľúčové slová: rodina, technológia, konzumizmus, sci-fi, Ray Bradbury, symbolika

Abstract

Fraňo, Juraj: *Portrayak of the genre of Sci-fi in the work "The Veldt" by Ray Bradbury.-* University of Economics in Bratislava. Faculty of Applied Languages. Department of intercultural communication. – Thesis supervisor: Mgr. Katarína Zamborová, PhD. Bratislava: FAJ, 2023, 61p.

The bachelor´s thesis deals with the analysis of the short story by the author Ray Bradbury, The Veldt. The short story features a critique of technology and its impact on human lives, especially the family. The thesis is divided into three main chapters. The first chapter defines the genre of Science Fiction, briefly summarising the history of its origin and development while identifying several basic categories and sub-genres. The chapter also discusses Ray Bradbury's career and contribution to the world of literature, while also examining the author's use of symbolism in his works. The second chapter explains the aim and methodology of the thesis. The third and final chapter includes an analysis of the work itself, focusing in detail on the story, characters, themes, ideas, vocabulary and symbolism. The aim of the thesis is to identify the science fiction elements, point out the projections and dangers of technology mentioned in the short story and compare them with the reality of the present day.

Keywords: family, technology, consumerism, Science Fiction, Ray Bradbury, symbolism

Content

Introduction

There are many great authors representing this fascinating genre (the fascinating genre of sci-fi), ranging from the classics like Jules Verne with his Journeys to the Moon, the Basin of the Ocean, or the Core of the Earth, or H.G. Wells, with his War of Worlds, or The Time Machine, or the more recent authors like Orson Scott Card (Ender´s game), Liou Cch'-sin (The Three-Body Problem), Andy Weir with The Martian, even Steve King, with some of his works like The Mist, Under the Dome, or Dark Tower, that all have clear sci-fi elements in them.

It is certainly true, that Ray Bradbury, the famous author of Fahrenheit 451 also belongs to the few truly remarkable authors who contributed to defining the genre of sci-fi. It is his short, but tough-provoking story, that will be the main focus of this bachelor´s thesis. The Veldt is a cautionary tale of how technology can disrupt human lives and destroy a family. It is a story about parents who let their modern automatic house carry out their duties, which ultimately cost them everything. Our goal is to dissect this work in great detail and provide an analysis of its messages, themes, and implications.

In the first chapter of the thesis, we will provide a theoretical basis for the sci-fi genre by discussing its definition, history, and various subgenres that is to provide a deeper understanding of what it means to call something SF. The presented information will serve as a foundation for our further investigation of The Veldt.

Additionally, we will be concentrating on Ray Bradbury. We will discuss his career and contribution to the world of literature and screenwriting. We will also examine the author's frequently explored themes, ideas, and tendencies when it comes to using symbolism in his stories, to lay the groundwork for the analysis of The Veldt.

The second chapter will lay out the bachelor's thesis's goals and methodology. Our goal is to determine, why The Veldt is considered to be Science Fiction, and through what aspects it is associated with the genre. Furthermore, we aim to analyse its themes, and messages, examine Bradbury´s prognoses of the future, and his portrayal and criticism of the technology. We will then compare these criticisms with reality, to discuss whether they hold true and are relevant to our society, and way of living in the present.

The third chapter will focus on the short novel itself. Firstly, we will do an introduction to the story followed by a detailed synopsis. Then we will focus on the characters and their motivations. After that, we will examine the setting, and what makes The Veldt sci-fi. We will identify the themes, and messages of the story, and dedicate ourselves to commenting on the present dangers of technology. Then we will move to vocabulary and symbolism found in the short novel. Lastly, we will conduct a discussion by comparing what we found, with the insights from other authors, who likewise dedicated themselves to analysing this intriguing piece of literature.

1. Science Fiction

1.1 Definitions

It is hard to define the genre of Science Fiction, yet everyone seems to know what to expect of the work if it is marked as such. The problem comes when we try to divide distinguish SF from classic fiction. Genres usually tend to blend with and borrow elements from each other, and sometimes the rules where one genre stops and the other continues, are just not clear enough. The term Science fiction also owes its vagueness to the fact that it is a relatively new genre.

Adam Roberts, a British writer of sci-fi novels states in his book: History of Science Fiction that, there were many attempts by thinkers to define SF in a concrete way, but there is almost no consensus beyond the agreement on SF being a form of a cultural debate in a literary form or other increasingly popular forms of media, like cinema, video games, television and comic-books. Although, he outlines what he thinks are the three most influential definitions. The first definition from the book comes from the Yugoslavian writer and academic Darko Suvin, who defines science fiction as[1]: "a literary genre or verbal construct whose necessary and sufficient conditions are the presence and interaction of estrangement and cognition, and whose main device is an imaginative framework alternative to the author' s empirical environment." [2]

We can divide Suvin´s definition into three parts. The first establishes science fiction as a literary genre, which can be a novel or a short story or any other kind of literary work and/or verbal construct, meaning something that is not written down, but only in the spoken form. In the second part, he states that there need to be conditions of cognitive estrangement. This in simpler words means that SF is something that feels familiar and mysterious at the same time it is a different world or a reality with distinct rules and laws of nature. There is a certain profoundness in imagining other alternate realities.

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[1] ROBERTS, Adam. The History of Science Fiction. 2nd Edition. Egham, UK: Palgrave Histories of Literature, 2016. p. 7-20, ISBN: 978-1137303120
[2] SUVIN, Darko. On the Poetics of Science Fiction Genre, National Council of Teachers of English, 1972, p. 372

In the words of Patrick Parrinder "by imagining strange worlds we come to see our own conditions of life in a new and potentially revolutionary perspective." [3]

The third part of the definition, as was hinted before, uses "imaginative framework alternates to author´s environment," (alternate worlds) as the main basis of its story. This means that the possibilities of the author´s imaginary world determine the preconditions of the narrative that will play out in that alternate version of reality.

Suvin in his explanation of SF also suggests the term novum, which means a particular object of focus that is original to science fiction, these can be commonly used terms like robot, spaceship, time machine, alien, cyborg, android etc. All the listed words have a basic definition which is generally agreed upon. [4]Australian literary critic and novelist Damien Broderick drew from the insights of Suvin and on their basis developed his own theory:

"SF is that species of storytelling native to a culture undergoing the epistemic changes implicated in the rise and supersession of technical-industrial modes of production, distribution, consumption, and disposal." Broderick sees SF as a storytelling that describes the reaction of culture to technological progress and the new additions it brings to the areas of production, distribution, consumption, and disposal.

"It is marked by metaphoric strategies and metonymic tactics, the foregrounding of icons and interpretive schemata from a collectively constituted generic mega-text" i.e., all previously published SF "and the concomitant de-emphasis of 'fine writing' and characterisation, and certain priorities more often found in scientific and postmodern texts than in literary models: specifically, attention to the object in preference to the subject." [5]As Broderick suggested in the other part of his definition, science fiction is also defined by metaphoric and metonymic strategies which are the styles of writing and storytelling of every science fiction published to date and their unique similarity with writing styles of scientific or postmodern texts (texts from the second half of 20th cent. and 21st century) in

[3] PARRIDER, Patrick,, Revisiting Suvin's poetics of science fiction. In Learning from other worlds: Estrangement, cognition and the politics of science fiction and Utopia, Liverpool: Liverpool University Press.
, 2000, p. 4
[4] ROBERTS, Adam. The History of Science Fiction. 2nd Edition. Egham, UK: Palgrave Histories of Literature, 2016. p. 7-20, ISBN: 978-1137303120
[5] BRODERICK, Damien. Reading by Starlight: Postmodern Science Fiction. London and New York: Routledge, 1994. p. 155, ISBN-13: 978-0415097895

contrast to other literary models, specifically the priority of object (new phenomena, technology) before the subject (themes and the story).

Adam Roberts explains that Suvin and Broderick in their respective definitions focus more on the actual content of SF texts. But writer and critic Samuel Delany has a different approach. He sees the SF as "a vast play of codic conventions, a shared game of signification that readers can apply to texts at the level of the sentence as much as the level of the text, to social performance and semiotic engagement." He says that utterances like "her world exploded" or "he turned on his left side" mean something different depending upon whether the reader sees them in the context of SF or regular fiction. In a realist text, the first case would be metaphor and the second would be referring to posture, while in SF the former could be literal, and the latter could mean activation of the left side of the mechanical body with a switch.[6]

Delany suggests: "Most of our specific SF expectations will be organized around the question: what in the portrayed world of the story, by statement or implication, must be different from ours in order for this sentence to be normally uttered?" To rephrase it, Delany sees SF as a particular approach to reading, a lens through which we see the work and understand its content. In the words of Adam Roberts, it is "a reading strategy". [7]

Concluding from all the above, the definition of SF can be summed up as a matter of content or a strategic reading approach to the work that is discussed. Looking at the subject as a content the name of the genre suggests that it is made up by two defining aspects. Science and fiction.

The word science suggests that the genre is focused on the technological and scientific. Meaning that it is based on rationalism and reality and focuses on technological development, inventions and how these inventions influence societies of the imaginary worlds they inhabit. But the word fiction adds to this scientific rationale some hypothetical

[6] ROBERTS, Adam. The History of Science Fiction. 2nd Edition. Egham, UK: Palgrave Histories of Literature, 2016. p. 7-20, ISBN: 978-1137303120
[7] DELANY, Samuel R. Silent Interviews on Language, Race, Sex, Science Fiction, and Some Comics: A Collection of Written Interviews. Hanover/London: Wesleyan University Press, 1994. p. 27-31, ISBN: 978-0819562815

element, something unreal, not native to our world and reality or something simply undiscovered.

The fundamental question the authors of sci-fi ask, is: How would technology impact the life of humanity, planet Earth, space, and reality itself? The strength of the genre is the relative tangibleness of its fictional elements. Although, the imaginary elements of science fiction are not always well explained and do not always work according to the eternal logic of the worlds created by the writers. This is where the science fiction and fantasy genres meet. And depending on how far the fictional works steer from what we consider a SF formula, we can talk about whether they are science fiction or lean more towards the fantasy genre. Fantasy takes a more religious approach, with supernatural beings and events, the terms used are magic, gods, or elves (fictional creatures), SF uses more materialistic terms even though magic in fantasy can have concrete rules, the SF is more literal with raw scientific and grounded terms.

1.2 History of Science Fiction

Science Fiction as a genre emerged in the 19th century, reached the mainstream in the 20th century (that's what we consider a boom in popularity for SF) and to this day continues to evolve, and happens to be more and more prominent in the entertainment industry. Even though SF was prevalent in the 20th century, in recent years we have also witnessed a rise of books, and films with sci-fi-themed narratives ranging from Matrix to Interstellar, or the recent Dune. We can certainly say that the genre is thriving.

But back to the 19th century, SF is a product of the Industrial Revolution; Adam Roberts suggests that it was the European cultural and religious crisis that sparked the new way of thinking that reflects on the works from that era and even today. Since the 19th century, there is a divide between religion and science. The first SF texts began as protestant fantastic writings that deviated from the catholic traditions of magical and fantastical romances and stories. Brian Aldiss argues that SF begins with Mary Shelley´s Frankenstein in 1818. His argument stands on the presumption that SF could not have originated early than in the 19th century, because this is when science, as we understand it now for the first time, became accepted and widespread in society. [8]In the words of Peter Nicholls: "SF

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[8] ALDISS, Brian. Billion Year Spree: The True History of Science Fiction. Garden City, New York: Doubleday, 1972. p. 25

proper requires a consciousness of the scientific outlook … a cognitive, scientific way of viewing the world did not emerge until the 17th century, and did not percolate into society at large until the 18th (partly) and the 19th (to a large extent*)"*[9]

Of course, there were texts before, that shared the aspects of SF, some of the examples date back to ancient times, namely, ancient Greece. People from that era were well-versed in sciences, and one of the most studied areas was the cosmos. So naturally, a lot of writers used this as an inspiration for their stories. But almost all surviving ancient novels involve elements, that by today´s standards would make them a Fantasy Fiction. This is because the ancient Greeks were used to fantastic terminology and did not distinguish between the terms magic and science as we do now. They studied space, and at the same time worshipped celestial bodies as their gods. So, it is harder for modern readers to perceive these novels as Science Fiction. Nevertheless, the elements that we would now ascribe to SF like voyages to the Moon or Sun were described in the works of Lucian of Samosata (2nd century BC). Even the predecessors of what would we now call androids, robots or cyborgs appeared in ancient Greek literature for example when Cyprian king Pygmalion falls in love with the statue of an ideal woman, asks Aphrodite to bring the statue to life and marries the woman. Or when Prometheus shapes man from mud.

After Ancient times, there was mostly an absence of SF works until the 17th century when Cyrano de Bergerac described the first space rocket in his Voyage dans la lune and L'histoire des etats et empires du Soleil. A good example of SF in the 18th century was Emanuel Swedenborg´s imagining of Mars, Jupiter and Venus and the life on these planets.

The 19th century sees the biggest rise of SF works yet with Voyages to the Moon by hot air balloon by Edgar Allan Poe, there was also Mary Shelly´s Frankenstein (1818) marked by Brian Aldiss as the first science fiction as we mentioned before, or Carlo´s Collodi´s Pinocchio (1883) a wooden boy, who comes to life. Jules Verne (1828 – 1905) with his voyages to the moon, the Earth's core, and the ocean's basin is considered to be a father of

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[9] CLUTE, John, and NICHOLLS, Peter. Encyclopedia of Science Fiction, 2nd edition. London: Orbit, 1993. p. 8

SF along with H. G. Wells with his works like War of the Worlds – attack of Martians on the planet Earth (1898) or The Time machine (1995).

In the early 20th century, Hugo Gernsback, sometimes also called the father of SF founded the first SF magazine called Amazing Stories. 1940 – 1960 is considered the Golden era of Science Fiction with authors like Isaac Asimov, with his works like I Robot, Nightfall and others, Frank Patrick Herbert with his Dune saga, and Ray Bradbury with his Fahrenheit 451, whose short novel The Veldt is the focus of this bachelor´s thesis.

In the 1960s, and 1970s we observe the birth of the New Wave SF, which took a darker undertone, experimenting with a more cynical approach like antiheroes, tackling themes like political uncertainty, sexual liberation, and machine control on human life. The primary inspiration for writers came from modernist and postmodernist works. The writers related to this era were William S. Burroughs with his Nova trilogy and Samuel R. Delany with his short novel Babel-17. [10]During the 1970s we see for the first time the move of SF from books to TV shows like Star Trek which borrowed from the ideas of the authors like Isaac Asimov and its continuation in the 1980s with Star Trek Next Generation. SF also reached cinema with a generation-defining original Star Wars trilogy inspired by Frank Herbert´s Dune. In the 1980s, the new wave of SF slowly disappears, but a new genre – Cyberpunk emerges, building on the same or similar themes. One of the most influential Cyberpunk works happens to be the first one, Neuromancer by William Gibson. The other most influential cyberpunk work comes from the realm of cinema, e.g., Bladerunner, a dystopian future with synthetic humans and big corporations controlling almost everything. [11]

That brings us to the 21st century. Science fiction is very popular, many books, movies, and videogames owe their setting to the genre with Dystopian future cities like in the videogame Cyberpunk 2077, Or the fate of humanity, when we gets into contact with aliens in Three-Body Problem, or many books that got their own movie adaptations like Hunger Games (Suzanne Collins), Ender's game(Orson Scott Card), The Road (Cormac McCarthy) and many, many others.

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[10] MITTRA, Archita. *What Is New Wave Science Fiction?* [Internet source]. The Portalist. August 26. 2021.
Available at: https://theportalist.com/new-wave-science-fiction
[11] GILKS, Mark. FLEMING, Paula, ALLEN, Moira. *Science Fiction: The Literature of ideas.* [Internet source]. Writing- World. 2003. Available at: https://www.writing-world.com/sf/sf.shtml

Concluding from all of the above, we can say, that SF is a relatively new genre, sparked by the Industrial Revolution, one of the biggest leaps in the science of the last 200 years. In the context of SF, the upcoming 20th century was characterized by the Golden Age of the genre, with some of the most influential writers, among whom belongs Ray Bradbury, the author of the subject of our thesis. 21st century follows with many promising writers, who haven´t yet joined the ranks of the classics like Isaac Asimov, Jules Verne, Franz Kafka, or H.G. Wells etc. but with time, they too can reach this status, as many of their works are certainly influential e.g., The Liou Cch'-sin´s Three-body Problem, or The Martian by Andy Weir. It is certain, that there is no shortage of material for inspiration, as science advances at an astonishing rate. So, with the short but rich history of the genre, as we know it, we can conclude that we have a future of potential before us with the dawn of AI, along with genetic engineering, exploration of space, Elon Musks' colonisation of Mars etc. Assuming, of course, humanity won´t be struck down by some disaster like aliens, authoritative political regimes, the aforementioned AI, new technology or some kind of force of nature, which are all the topics the sci-fi deals with.

1.3 Subgenres of Science Fiction

Science fiction can be broadly divided into two categories based on what aspects of science and its impact on life they portray and discuss. The two main subgenres of science fiction are Hard science and soft science. There are also other flavourful, thematical categories that will be explained further.

1.3.1 Hard Science Fiction

Hard science strictly follows facts and principles, it is based mostly on reality and focuses on developing hypothetical scenarios that are theoretically possible and based on the current scientific knowledge. It deals with sciences such as math, physics, biology, chemistry, engineering, and computer science.

The phenomena and the technology in hard science are explained in great detail through the author´s logically developed hypotheses based on the realities of the scientific consensus of their era. Writer and novelist Joshua A. Johnston says: "Hard sci-fi authors are interesting because they operate within the limits of the world in which they write, so

hard sci-fi from the 1960s looks very different than hard sci-fi from the 2010s. In many ways, going back and reading hard sci-fi from the 1940s is a history lesson in and of itself."

In a true hard sci-fi novel, the obstacles and problems of the story are often rooted in science, and usually so are the solutions. Hard sci-fi writers avoid writing tactics such as deux ex machina, or the "god from the machine": that use unexplained technology or phenomena to save the day. A good example of deux ex machina is a form of technical jargon completely made up by the author, like much of the technobabble in Star Trek e.g., the bioregenerative subspace phaser.

A prime example of Hard science fiction is Andy Weir´s Martian, also adapted into a film, which has an abandoned NASA astronaut on Mars, trying to survive. The is grounded in the current scientific knowledge and tries to solve every problem logically with respect to the present-day scientific consensus. Other influential Hard SF works include Isaac Asimov´s Robot novels, with his three laws of robotics Or Arthur C. Clarke´s 2001: Space Odyssey with detailed human technology, and alien structures or the Liou Cch'-sin´s Three-body Problem which delves deep into hypotheses like Dark Forest hypothesis or the conundrums of physics like, you guessed it, the three-body problem.

1.3.2 Soft Science Fiction

Soft SF is the most common version of sci-fi. It involves a technological advance but does not delve deep into technical details of the technology, laws of physics and mechanics, of the made-up worlds. It is mostly a backdrop, a canvas for the writer to introduce rich societies and cultures with their own complex politics, philosophical and ethical problems. Soft SF focuses more on psychology, sociology, politics, and history, all these can be summed up as the soft or social sciences.

The problems in Soft SF are often political, like evil dictators, empires, and political intrigue. The solutions to those problems often involve political counter-manoeuvring, and allying with others, building groups of resistance or militia. Soft Science Fiction similar to Hard SF reflects the era it was written in. It can show the fears of the current political situation like the Cold War or criticism of industrialism and consumerism.

A classic example of Soft SF is Edgar Rice Burrough´s John Carter trilogy with geography, politics, religion and rich history of inhabitants of Mars, the dystopian fiction of the

totalitarian state of George Orwell´s 1984, Ray Bradbury´s Fahrenheit 451 with numb and consumerist society, and Frank Patrick Herbert's Dune with political intrigue history and development of a galactic empire through numerous generations. [12]

1.3.3 Other thematical categories

Beyond Hard and Soft SF, there are other subcategories of SF that are focused more on specific types of stories and settings. There are many such categories. The ones listed here are the most known and different in some fundamental ways to earn their place as an individual category.

Cyberpunk

Cyberpunk is a genre that originated in the 80s as an evolution and continuation of the experimental New Wave era. It has a dystopian setting in an alternative present, but usually, the future, where society deals with technology and its integration into human lives. The common themes in cyberpunk are the alteration of human bodies and minds with mechanical parts, and computer chips for enhancement of their physical and cognitive abilities. The topic of Virtual reality and its impact on human lives is also commonly discussed.

The genre frequently asks these questions: what makes us human, can AI have consciousness, is it another lifeform with its rights and responsibilities, can we upload our consciousness onto a drive in a computer and is it also a life form, is a virtual reality worth living in? The worlds of cyberpunk often involve megacities with powerful corporations that control everything. Corruption, consumerism, politics, and private security forces are some of the most defining themes of cyberpunk. Neuromancer by William Gibson is considered to be the first representation of cyberpunk, the novel tackles themes like individual identity and relevance of physical human embodiment.

With the rise of cyberpunk, the subgenre slipstream also emerged. It does not stick to conventional rules of the genre of SF, but experiments with elements of fantasy and other

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[12] *What Is Science Fiction Writing?* [Internet source]. MasterClass. September 2. 2021.
Available at: https://www.masterclass.com/articles/what-is-science-fiction-writing-definition-and-characteristics-of-science-fiction-literature

narratives. It is a product of New Wave SF, and its defining trait is a feeling of something surreal, closely resembling fantasy, in more simple terms, it is kind of weird.[131415]

Steampunk

Steampunk is a wordplay on Cyberpunk, the word is relatively new, invented in 1987 by K.W. Jester. But the genre is older and draws its inspiration from the Victorian setting (19th century) when steam power was the most used and the most powerful source of energy. It can be set in the past when steam power was prevalent or in present and future with an alternate history where the technology never advanced from industrial steam power, but new possible advances were created in this area. The science in steampunk puts emphasis on the use of coal, and clockwork technology, with lots of mechanical parts like cogwheels and gears, moving parts and automatons. It tackles themes like the dehumanising effects of industrialization, corruption, and rebellion. Various works like the stories of Jules Verne with the submarine or Edgar Alan Poe´s hot air balloon can be considered steampunk because of the nature of the machines described in novels.[16]

First Contact

The First Contact subgenre deals with the theme of the initial meeting between humans and aliens. The first contact may occur in space, on Earth, or on another planet. The story usually leads to an invasion like in H. G. Wells´s War of the Worlds or the exchange/passing on of advanced technologies like in The Story of your life by Ted Chiang where aliens give humans the ability to see the future through their unique language, the book was also adapted for cinema screens in Denis Villeneuve´s Arrival.[17]

[13] IVEY, Alice. *What is cyberpunk: A beginner's guide to the sci-fi genre*. [Internet source]. Cointelegraph. February 6. 2023.
Available at: https://cointelegraph.com/news/what-is-cyberpunk-a-beginner-s-guide-to-the-sci-fi-genre
[14] MITTRA, Archita. *What Is New Wave Science Fiction?* [Internet source]. The Portalist. August 26. 2021.
Available at: https://theportalist.com/new-wave-science-fiction
[15] *Slipstream Genre.* [Internet source]. Tvtropes.
Available at: https://tvtropes.org/pmwiki/pmwiki.php/Main/SlipstreamGenre
[16] *What is Steampunk?* [Internet source]. YouTube. September 17. 2020.
Available at:
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EGgs66Q4dDs&t=501s&ab_channel=CuriousXP
[17] GILKS, Marg. ALLEN, Moira. *The Subgenres of Science Fiction.* [Internet source]. Writing-World. 2003.
Available at: https://www.writing-world.com/sf/genres.shtml

Space opera

Space opera is a subgenre that refers to large-scale sci-fi with massive interplanetary battles, and classic heroes with old-fashioned romance like in the Western, but it is in space. The term comes from soap opera, which is a melodramatic tv series, that evolved, and got its name from horse opera, a cliché Western movie, hence the comparison. The most popular and generation-defining example of opera is Star Wars with its intergalactic battles, larger-than-life villains (Emperor Palpatine), sword fights (lightsabres) and romance (Han Solo and Leia or Anakin and Padme).[18]

Utopian, Dystopian fiction

The subgenre of Utopian fiction usually describes idealistic places, where everything ranging from politics, laws and customs are in perfect harmony. The population does not live in fear, there is no propaganda, censorship, freedom of creativity, information and independent thought. It is usually satirical. An example of utopian fiction is Thomas More´s Utopia, which was a political satire with a perfect religious society living on an island.

Dystopian fiction on the other hand is the opposite of utopia. The people in dystopian fiction live in very bad conditions, there is a big divide between social classes. People experience mass poverty, oppression, disease, war, and overcrowding. In dystopian fiction, we frequently see the impact of totalitarianism and oppression by corporate, religious, technological, or bureaucratic entities. The aforementioned George Orwell´s 1984 is a great example of a dystopian world with the rule of the communist party that suppresses any individualism, or Ray Bradbury´s Fahrenheit 541, where a firefighter burns books, so the people do not educate themselves, stay obedient, in both cases the need for control is present.[19]

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[18] SALAO, Cole. *Space Opera Explained: Definition and Examples of Deep Space Adventures.* [Internet source]. TCK Publishing.
Available at: https://www.tckpublishing.com/space-opera/?utm_content=cmp-true
[19] GREEN BODHI, Michael. *What is Dystopian Function?* [Internet source]. Studiobinder. February 14. 2021.
Available at: https://www.studiobinder.com/blog/what-is-dystopian-fiction-definition-characteristics/

Apocalyptic, postapocalyptic fiction

Apocalyptic Fiction usually depicts a world or humanity being destroyed by some force of mass destruction like climate change, nuclear holocaust, viral pandemic (zombie apocalypse or any kind of virus), the rogue Ai (Terminator). It usually involves the destruction of major human cities. Post-apocalyptic fiction on the other hand shows the impact of the apocalypse. Like in The Road by Cormac McCarthy, the world destroyed by fire and earthquakes, or land devastated by nuclear war in Metro 2033 and its sequels by Dimitrij Gluchovskij.[20]

Time travel fiction

Time travel is an exploration of the past or future with a help of a machine, or a phenomenon that can somehow warp time and space (black hole). It can also involve travelling faster than the speed of light, to beat the time itself. The subgenre was popularized by H.G. Wells with The Time Machine (1888). This concept in particular was and still is used often for the intriguing problems it presents.

There are also a lot of scientific paradoxes that writers can explore, like the grandfather or Temporal paradox, where you go into the past and kill your grandfather before he cannot produce your parents, so you could not be born and kill him. This could lead to the possibility of alternate timelines for example. Another phenomenon, writers could explore is the ability to slow down time, or the time going by at different speeds for different people, objects, or places, which also occurs on a small scale in nature. We saw this concept being developed in Christopher Nolan's movie Interstellar. There are many options with this subgenre, and they certainly are worth exploring.[21]

Our goal, when it comes to explaining these so-called "flavourful" subcategories was to demonstrate the possibilities, and diversity of the genre, even though genres are flexible, and can bleed into each other, their categorisation can also help us understand their boundaries, and classify them in a most comprehensible way. But going back to the beginning of this subchapter, Soft Science Fiction and Hard Science Fiction neatly divide

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[20] *What Is Apocalyptic and Post- Apoalyptic Fiction?* [Internet source]. MasterClass. September 29. 2021.
Available at: https://www.masterclass.com/articles/what-is-apocalyptic-and-post-apocalyptic-fiction
[21] RANKIN, Alan. *What Is Time Travel Fiction?* [Internet source]. April 11. 2023.
Available at: https://www.languagehumanities.org/what-is-time-travel-fiction.htm

the works of the genre into two groups based on whether the author focuses more on politics, society, and its philosophical and ethical challenges, or the technology and the intriguing physics behind it. Of course, genres can diverge drastically depending on the topic they treat, and with more variety, the emergence of new subcategories is inevitable.

1.4 Ray Bradbury

Ray Douglas Bradbury, born on August 22, 1920, in Waukegan, Illinois, died on June 5, 2012, in Los Angeles California) was an American author and screenwriter who inspired generations of sci-fi authors. He is one of the most celebrated 20th-century American writers and is considered to be one of the greatest sci-fi writers in the world. He left a monumental impact on the world of SF with the works like Martian Chronicles, Fahrenheit 451, and the collection of short stories The Illustrated Man, which includes the subject of this bachelor´s thesis The Veldt. [22]Bradbury was known as a prolific author, producing large quantities of stories. He states that he wrote at least a thousand words every day, from the age of twelve on. As he says:

"For I believe that eventually, the quantity will make up for quality. Quantity gives experience. From experience alone can quality come. […] To fail is to give up. But you are in the midst of a moving process. Nothing fails then. All goes on. Work is done. If good, you learn from it. If bad, you learn even more."

In other words, by writing in large quantities, you eventually deliver quality, and this mentality definitely shows in the sheer legacy of stories, he produced. In his lifetime he has published more than 30 books and has written nearly 600 short stories [23]of varying genres, including fantasy, SF, horror, mystery, and Realistic Fiction. But he was not known only for his diligence, but also for the originality and imaginativeness of his worlds, his gift for language, symbolism, and insights into the human condition. Interestingly enough, even though he is considered by many, to be a great sci-fi author, he considers himself to be primarily a fantasy author.

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[22] GREGERSEN, Erik. *Ray Bradbury*. [Internet source]. Britannica.
Available at: https://www.britannica.com/biography/Ray-Bradbury
[23] *Ray Bradbury*. [Internet source]. National Endowment for the Arts.
Available at: https://www.arts.gov/honors/medals/ray-bradbury

Ray Bradbury: "I define science fiction as the art of the possible. Fantasy is the art of the impossible. Science fiction, again, is the history of ideas, and they are always ideas that work themselves out and become real and happen in the world. And fantasy comes along and says, 'We're going to break all the laws of physics."[24]

According to this statement, his idea of SF is that it portrays something that is possible to happen in our world. This was also his argument against critics of his Martian Chronicles, who said that his portrayal of Mars was inaccurate, and did not represent reality. His reply was simply that the world is not real, the things he wrote, could not happen. The only book, he considers to be SF is Fahrenheit 451 which sees a society where books are banished and burned in an attempt to censor information and knowledge, in order to have an ignorant and malleable society. That would be his ultimate nightmare. Nevertheless, many of his works, including The Veldt are being put into the sci-fi category for their close resemblance with the tropes of the genre.

1.4.1 Early life

As a child, Bradbury loved horror films, like The Phantom of the Opera (1925), his early inspiration also came from the works of L. Frank Baum, who is known for his book The Wizard of Oz, Edgar Rice Burroughs (The Princess of Mars), Charles Dickens, and Edgar Allan Poe. He was also inspired by great sci-fi authors like H.G. Wells and Jules Verne. But according to Ray, it was a carnival magician Mr. Electro, who first sparked Bradbury´s imagination, with his performance. It was a few days after that act when he first started to write as a child and continued to write every day until his 80s.[25]

He came from a blue-collar family and after graduating high school, he could not afford college. But he was determined to learn and educate himself. As a young adult, he was selling newspapers, following a weekly routine of three ten-hour shifts reading and writing at the library.[26]

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[24] *Ray Bradbury's Tips on Writing and Creativity.* [Internet source]. Turner Stories. March 24. 2019. Available at: https://www.turnerstories.com/book-reviews/2019/3/24/ray-bradburys-tips-on-writing-and-creativity
[25] GREGERSEN, Erik. *Ray Bradbury.* [Internet source]. Britannica. Available at: https://www.britannica.com/biography/Ray-Bradbury
[26] *Ray Bradbury.* [Internet source]. StudySmarter. Available at: https://www.studysmarter.co.uk/explanations/english-literature/american-literature/ray-bradbury/

1.4.2 Writing career

1938 was the first time when his SF writing got into the limelight when he published his first short story, "Hollerbochen´s Dilemma" in the fanzine (amateur magazine) Imagination. In 1939 he published his own fanzine Futuria Fantasia. In 1943 he began his career as a full-on writer and in 1947 he published his first collection of short stories called Dark Carnival. The 1960s were his golden years when he published his most celebrated works like The Martian Chronicles (1950), followed by The Illustrated Man (1951). In 1953 he published a book that is by many considered to be Bradbury´s magnum opus, Fahrenheit 451. During this period of SF, he was encouraged and aided by several genre writers of that era: Leigh Brackett, Edmond Hamilton, Henry Kuttner, Robert A. Heinlein, and Jack Williamson. With many of whom he would meet weekly.[27]

He was also an accomplished screenwriter. In 1954 he was offered work on the script for the film Moby Dick (1956) spending six months in Ireland with the director John Huston. After the success of Moby Dick, there was a demand in Hollywood for Bradbury´s writing talent and that led to him writing scripts for the TV series Playhouse 90, Alfred Hitchcock Presents, and The Twilight Zone.

In 1957 he wrote one of his most personal works, Dandelion Wine, which is fictionalized autobiographical novel about a 12-year-old boy from Green Town, Illinois, and his magical, timeless summer. Later he published a collection of stories A Medicine for Melancholy (1959), and the dark fantasy novel Something Wicked This Way Comes (1962).

In the 1970s he no longer wrote short fiction and focused more on poetry and drama. He got back to writing mystery stories with the detective novel Death Is a Lonely Business (1985). In 2006 he published his final novel, Farewell Summer, which was a sequel to Dandelion Wine.[28]

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[27] ELLER, R., & Touponce, W. F. Ray Bradbury: The Life of Fiction. Kent, OH: The Kent State University Press, 2004. p. 13

[28] GREGERSEN, Erik. *Ray Bradbury*. [Internet source]. Britannica.
Available at: https://www.britannica.com/biography/Ray-Bradbury

1.4.3 Writing, themes

Bradbury in his writings focuses on the soul of a human more so than on a sci-fi aspect and the world of his stories. First, he creates an idea, and after that, he makes characters to personify this idea. He thinks of a human as of profoundly individualistic being. The focus of Bradbury is on the soul of a human. He exposes an individual for what he is and then shows him what he could be. He explores his goals, his desire to grow, striving for knowledge. The main character in Ray´s stories usually undergoes some transformation. By the end, most of the time the character attains some profound realization. [29]

The novel Fahrenheit 451 for example, follows the main character Montag, who burns books, to destroy knowledge, to keep society subservient, pumped only with the never stopping advertisement, and kept ignorant with censorship. The people of this alternative America are hollow, giving into consumerism and shallow pleasures. One day Montag meets a young rebellious woman Clarisse, who intrigues him with her peculiarity, questioning all around her. This is a wake-up call for the protagonist, who starts to question the supposed happiness inside him and the advertisement-ridden world around him. Seduced by curiosity, he starts to read books and is formed by his newfound awareness. In the end, he is armed with information, he refuses to live in a sleeping society. He leaves everything behind him and starts a revolution by destroying the city he lived in with the hope of rebuilding with the foundation of knowledge, not ignorance.

This story shows the importance of personal growth in Bradbury's writing. But this transformation never occurs without some obstacles and sacrifices. There is a recurring theme of fear of dying without achieving the person's full potential. The protagonist usually deals with loneliness, nonfulfillment, and dangers presented by society and technology. The goal of Bradbury is to show how an individual can better the world around them, by striving to be better themselves, achieving their inner Utopia. [30][31]

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[29] *Critical Essay Understanding Bradbury's Works*. [Internet source]. CliffsNotes.
Available at: https://www.cliffsnotes.com/literature/b/bradburys-short-stories/critical-essay/understanding-bradburys-works
[30] *Themes, Motifs, and Symbols in Farenheit 451*. [Internet source]. Albert. 1.3.2022.
Available at: https://www.albert.io/blog/themes-motifs-and-symbols-in-fahrenheit-451/
[31] BRADBURY, Ray. Fahrenheit 451. New York, NY: Simon & Schuster, 1953. p. 4,5, ISBN-13: 978-1451673319

1.4.4 Symbolism

These themes are depicted not only by the narrative but also by rich imagery. The Summer imagery for example is portrayed in Dandelion wine, where it represents beauty, joy, and all the happy, and important memories. This is also expressed in the dandelion wine that the main character Douglas Spaulding makes with his brother, and grandfather, as the line from the book says: "Hold summer in your hand, pour summer in a glass, a tiny glass of course, the smallest tingling sip for the children…" Comparably, the summer in Something Wicked This way comes represents the good in people, as opposed to autumn, which represents the evil. Another instance of this imagery is observed in the short novel All Summer in a Day which is about people living on Venus, seeing the sun only once in 7 years. The sun, and by extension summer in this case is used to illustrate how important is the connection of humans with nature, as the people in Venus have been deprived of it.[32][33][34]

As was mentioned before, Bradbury often likes to focus on human nature, and it is no different with his mirror imagery. In many of his novels, it is used to reflect the constant dissatisfaction of the main character with themselves, it reveals how they view themselves and shows them the hard true reality. It also can have a different meaning and that is an image, of how the individual wishes to be viewed by other people a narcissistic fantasy. Bradbury believed that a person should accept what they are and not try to be something else, but a better version of themselves. One of the examples of mirror imagery is in the end of Fahrenheit 451, when one of the characters suggests, that they should build a mirror factory to really look at themselves, as a symbol of self-understanding[35]. Or the mirror maze in Something Wicked This Way Comes which had a way of driving people crazy by showing them the horrifying truth of what they are also supports the notion of self-

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[32] BRADBURY, Ray. Dandelion Wine. New York, NY: Avon Books, 1999. p.14, ISBN-13: 978-0380977260

[33] All Summer in a Day [Internet source]. PDF
Available at:
https://www.mukilteoschools.org/site/handlers/filedownload.ashx?moduleinstanceid=183&dataid=731&FileName=6-All-Summer-in-a-Day-by-Ray-Bradbury.pdf

[34] *Dandelion Wine Imagery*. [Internet source]. GradeSaver.
Available at: https://www.gradesaver.com/dandelion-wine/study-guide/imagery

[35] BRADBURY, Ray. Fahrenheit 451. New York, NY: Simon & Schuster, 1953. p. 157, ISBN-13: 978-1451673319

acceptance, when a character Charles Holloway stuck in the maze accepts what he is, even with wrinkles and all.[36]

We established before that Ray Bradbury was fascinated by carnivals from early childhood. No wonder it is a recurring theme in many of his novels. We can see it in the short collection of stories Dark Carnival, Something Wicked This Way Comes, or even in The Veldt. His carnival imagery represents the existence of evil in the world.[37] According to Bradbury´s belief, a person holds a potential for evil within themselves, and it is up to them to exercise good, to be continuously able to combat the evil. Something Wicked This Way Comes particularly is a great depiction of this imagery as all of the novels is centred around it. The carnival in this instance represents all the evil and temptation with its many attractions that all have a sinister side like the aforementioned mirror maze or the carousel which changes the age of who rides it based on the direction it spins. The carnival comes to town only in October, the time of scares, with people like Mr. Dark, and the Witch who embody the evil in men, and can't stand goodness or happiness.[38]

Another evocative Bradbury´s means of expression is fire, which is used as a purifier, or destroyer of evil, and a symbol of transformation, and regeneration like the bomb in Fahrenheit, which in the end destroys the city. Water on the other hand is used in a traditional sense as a source of life, the life cycle, and a symbol of change, and rebirth. Illustrated by the quote from Fahrenheit 451 "After a long time of floating…he knew that he must never burn again,"[39] meaning that the government does not have a hold over Montag.[40]

The ultimate example of the vivid imagery used by Ray Bradbury is a smile, and by extension laughter, which represents the power of love, which is according to the author the strongest and most humanizing force a person possesses. Again, the smile, and laughter from Something Wicked This Way Comes depicts it clearly, when Charles Holloway

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36 Something Wicked This Way Comes Symbolism, Imagery, Allegory. [Internet source]. Shmoop. Available at: https://www.shmoop.com/study-guides/literature/something-wicked-this-way-comes/analysis/symbolism-imagery-allegory
37 BRADBURY, Ray. The Illustrated Man. New York, NY: Harper Voyager, 2013. p. 5, ISBN-13: 978-0062079978

39 BRADBURY, Ray. Fahrenheit 451. New York, NY: Simon & Schuster, 1953. p. 134, ISBN-13: 978-1451673319
40 Ray Bradbury's Use Of Water and Fire Symbolism In Farenheit 451. [Internet source]. Samplius. Available at: https://samplius.com/free-essay-examples/ray-bradburys-use-of-water-and-fire-symbolism-in-fahrenheit-451/

destroys the Witch with a smile etched on the bullet that never reached her. Or when he shatters the mirror maze with his laughter.[41][42]

The primary message of Bradbury´s stories is the importance of individualism and reaching the potential of oneself. Other themes he often taps into are the dangers of technology and consumerism, which can be seen in works like 451 Fahrenheit or The Veldt and many others. The settings of his stories a lot of times are of a sci-fi nature, but the real centre of attention is a human with their needs, wants, and striving to be better, achieving the inner utopia so to say, and by that matter, being able to improve the world around them. That seems to be Bradbury´s final and most important idea. To inspire and encourage personal growth, a transformation of an individual for the betterment of the place they inhabit, the society, they live in.

[41] BRADBURY, Ray. Something Wicked This Way Comes. New York, NY: Avon Books, 1998. p. 149-158, ISBN-13: 978-0380729401

[42] *Critical Essay Understanding Bradbury's Works*. [Internet source]. CliffsNotes.
Available at: https://www.cliffsnotes.com/literature/b/bradburys-short-stories/critical-essay/understanding-bradburys-works

2. The Goal, and the Methodology

The goal of this bachelor´s thesis is to do a literary analysis of the short novel The Veldt, by Ray Bradbury. In this process, we aim to determine, why The Veldt is perceived as a SF, and what aspects associate it with the genre. Moreover, we want to point out the prognoses and the dangers of technology in the work, compare them with reality, and find out whether they manifest in a similar manner in our own life in the present.

In this literary analysis, we will use several methods to dissect this short novel. The first method will be analysis, which means that we will look at the story as a whole, and then gradually we will work our way toward its essential elements, examining each one in great detail, to ascertain their role in the full picture.

We will read the novel multiple times, at first focusing on the overall feel and the basic plot structure. Then we will read it again, to establish the themes and the roles of the characters. Subsequently, we will focus on the lexicology (vocabulary), and semiotics (symbolism) used in the story.

The practical part of the thesis will include a brief, but detailed synopsis, where we will sum up the main points of the story in chronological order. Then we will concentrate on characters, dissect their roles, and what ideas they represent.

Next, we will examine the setting of this short novel, and what makes it a SF. We will look into the worldbuilding, and the technology, that appears in the novel. The next logical point would be then to discuss the themes, and the plot with the method of synthesis, by inspecting the most important elements and determining their meaning in the broader sense, transcending the isolated story of The Veldt.

In the subsequent part, we will be focusing on lexicology and semiotics. We will analyse the words that the author made up to represent the technical terminology of his futuristic setting and deduce their meaning by analysing word-formation basis, and the context, that Ray Bradbury provides. We will also select several symbols, that Bradbury used in his short novel, and determine their significance in the story of The Veldt in contrast with their use in his other works. Lastly, we will conduct a discussion, by comparing our findings, and observations with other theses and works, that focused on dissecting The Veldt.

3. The Veldt: Analysis

3.1 Introduction to the Story

The short story The Veldt is set in a Future America and follows a family of four: the father George Hadley, his wife Lydia with two ten years old children (likely twins), Peter and Wendy. They live in a modern house called a Happylife home that they bought, so they would not have to do any chores. The fully automatic house makes their food, brushes their teeth, bathes them, dries their hair, cleans their rooms, plays, sings for them, etc. It is what we would now call a smart house, but with far more capabilities, than even today's state-of-the-art houses. Basically, it can do everything for the family, and fulfil any material desire. The defining feature of the house is the nursery, a VR (virtual reality) chamber, with holographic panels, that can put to life anything you are thinking about at the moment. This room is the centre point of the story. It is closely tied to the actions and behaviours of the characters, and even the name of the novel, as the hot African Veldt is the place being projected on the panels at throughout the story. The novel is short, nonetheless, it is full of profound ideas, and symbolism. It tells us what can happen if we rely too much on technology with things that are meant to be done by humans, like parenting, and taking care of the environment you inhabit. The following subchapter includes a detailed synopsis of the story.

The Synopsis

It all begins with Lydia (the mother) being weary of the nursery. She points out that the room has changed in recent days, and suggests to George (the father), that they should go check it out, or call a psychologist. George, although a little reluctant agrees to go investigate the nursery.

Upon entering, the room comes to life and presents them with a hot African Veldt with vultures in the sky, and a pack of lions in the distance eating something, the smell of death is in the air. Lydia says she heard a scream before. Done eating, the lions start to go toward the parents, and then charge at them. The pair runs off and Lydia horrified tells George to lock the door to the nursery. George is hesitant because the kids, especially Peter went into a temper tantrum when they locked it last time. But Lydia presses more to lock the nursery, even to lock the house for a month, to set her nerves straight. She tells George, as she feels

useless since they bought the house, which took all her work as a mother. She points out that George has been also nervous lately, drinking, and smoking a little bit more every day. He locks the nursery. Something jumps against the door, from inside the nursery.

At dinner, they eat alone, for the children are at a carnival, and have televised home that they would be late. Wondering how the kids could have death thoughts at such a young age, they establish that the children spend too much time in a nursery. George goes into the nursery again and tries to change the scenery, but he cannot. It should project whatever the one standing in the room wanted, but the Veldt does not go away. Lydia suggests that Peter could have been tinkering with the machinery.

Now the children come, and parents ask them about the nursery, Peter lies that there is no African Veldt, and Wendy goes to the room, to show them, that it is completely normal. Now it is a lovely fairy-tale forest. After they fail to confess, George sends them to go to sleep. At the nursery, he notices his old wallet, on the floor, chewed up by a lion with blood smears on both sides. He pays it a little attention.

At night the parents cannot sleep, they talk about how the children are hiding something. Here we are given information about the purpose of the nursery, which would be to help the kids to deal with their neurosis. Parents ponder on how they spoiled their children, that they have given them everything, letting them come and go as they like. Lydia points out that since George did not give permission to take the rocket to New York a few months ago, they have been decidedly cold to the parents. George decides to call David McClean (psychologist) to go have a look at the room. A moment later they hear two screams from downstairs, and after that a roar of lions. The screams seem familiar to them.

The next morning Peter gets into an argument with his father, asking him if he is going to lock up the nursery for good. George tells him, that he is considering it. Peter snaps and angrily asks, what's wrong with Africa, admitting, that they were, in fact, imagining it. Father says that they want to go on a vacation and turn the whole house off for a month. Aggravated Peter threatens George not to even consider shutting the house down.

David McClean arrives. Children are allowed to go to play in the nursery, so the patterns on the panels can be ready for the psychologist. Another two screams come from the nursery. The adults go to look at the nursery, and after further examination, David McClean tells the parents, that these are very bad signs. The children are spoiled and too attached to

the house. The chamber has become a channel for distractive thoughts, and they need to go to therapy. The psychologist says that they should shut the nursery for good, that for the children the room has become more important than the parents. They find Lydia's bloody scarf on the floor, and George asks if the lions could become real. David says that he does not think it is a possibility.

After David McClean leaves, they turn off the nursery. Children are hysterical and furious, they scream, throw things around, sob, and jump on the furniture. They throw themselves on the couch and start weeping. Lydia driven by pity and compassion asks George to turn on the nursery just for this once. George refuses, saying that for too long they were living in destructive comfort. He goes to shut down every machine in the house. Peter tells George, that he hates him, and wishes him to be dead. Wendy was still crying, and Peter joins her again. They wail to let them for just a moment into a nursery. Lydia also tries to persuade George, that they cannot be so abrupt with shutting everything down. George finally agrees to let them go for just a minute, then they'll go on vacation, and turn the nursery forever. Children now are happy and smiling with teary eyes. David McClean is due to arrive in 30 minutes, and George goes to dress. Lydia escorts the kids into the nursery, then joins George to go dress too.

Then they hear the children screaming to come to the nursery. Parents rush into the room, but the children are nowhere to be seen, only lions in the distance. The door slams behind them. They hear George telling the house, to no let the parents shut it down. As the lions approach, both parents scream and realize why the other screams were so familiar.

The novel ends with David McClean coming into the house and greeting the children who are eating a little picnic lunch. Behind the children, David sees a hot African Veldt, lions in the distance, who just finished eating. And now, mirroring the beginning, the vulture's descent to go feed on what is left of the corpses.

3.2 The Characters

There are five characters in The Veldt, George, Lydia Hadley, their children Peter, and Wendy, and the psychologist David McClean. In this subchapter, we set out to analyse the personal characteristics and decisions of each character. The Family can be divided into two groups, the parents, and the children. The parents are fleshed out as characters the most.

When it comes to any situation, we see both of them stating their points of view, they discuss things together a lot. They never undermine each other in front of their children and show harmony in their decision-making, even though it is usually George, who takes the final decision, but not without talking it over with his wife.

George is a father, who means good for his family and cares for them deeply. In the beginning, he does not feel the growing problem in their household as much as Lydia, but when he does pick up on it, he acts quickly. We could even make a case, that George is a main character. There is almost never an instance, where he would be absent from the story. The imaginary camera of the author always seems to be focused on him. And this is not just the only sign of him being the protagonist. His development throughout the story, even if short, is a classic example of Bradbury's style of writing and evolving the character, with Lydia being the catalyst for his awakening, followed by him uncovering the signs that have been there, when he couldn't see them, like Peters behaviour, when he was denied something (the rocket, or the picture painter,). We see George gradually arriving at the conclusion, that radical changes must be made in order to free the family from the slavery of comfort, and finally deciding on the next step, which sealed the fate of the parents for good, if you view the ending as their deaths.

Lydia Hadley the mother of the house, George's wife, is a caring, and compassionate person. In this story, she represents the classic role of a woman in a family. Even though the dynamic in a relationship with a partner can vary between many types of temperaments of men and women alike, there is no denying that a very common role of women is to be a sort of counsellor to the man, who is the decision maker. Because women, in particular, seem to be good at seeing the bigger picture, picking out the details, and sensing when something is wrong, or putting a man on the right track. It is no secret, that many men go for advice from their significant others, even though they appear to be strong and independent decision-makers. It can be observed in many families. There is a saying in Slovak: The man is a head, but the woman is a neck that points it to the right direction.

This also applies to Lydia, who feels uneasy in the house, picking up on hints of the underlying problem, when she sees herself becoming useless, and the same with George. She senses how the house slowly eats away at the soul of every family member, with the admittedly appealing comfort, that it offers. She does not feel like a mother anymore. The house is more efficient in everything whether it is cooking, bathing or tidying. All these

frustrations creep up to her gradually, and it is the nursery, that finally pushes her to a breaking point of wanting to shut everything down. But interestingly enough, in the end, it is Lydia, who underestimates the severity of the situation, and driven by compassion for her children, she begs George to let them go into the nursery for the last time, in this case, the attitudes of parents are reversed as opposed to the beginning. And as we know, George ultimately agrees, which is the fatal decision.

When it comes to the twins Peter and Wendy, it is a whole other case then the parents. They have been given a free hand in everything: when to come, and go, where to play, and how much., they grew to be spoiled by what their home offers. They are attached to the house and by extension, to the nursery, and only like to indulge themselves with sensory pleasures, as Peter says in the story: "I want to look, and to feel, and to smell, what else is there to do?" They do not feel any need to grow, to become something more than mindless consumers.

Peter, who is the more developed character of the two children is shown to be very resourceful, and intelligent. For example, when the nursery did not change the scenery, Lydia assumed, that he must have been tinkering with the machinery, she also commented on his IQ implying that it is very high. Peter also appears to be the talker, more so than his sister Wendy. He always seems to be the centre of the conflict, whether the parent was talking about the past, when they first shut down the nursery for a few hours, or in the more recent conflicts, he was the one who let his frustrations be known the most.

The fifth character of this short story is David McClean, the psychologist. He is a calm and rational person. He knows how the nursery works and can make out the thought processes of the children from the patterns from the wall projections. He serves as a wake-up call for the parents to realize the severity of their situation. And pushes them into the endmost radical decision, that determines the conclusion of the story.

3.3 The setting, and what makes the Veldt a Sci-fi?

For The Veldt to be Sci-fi, there must be certain elements, that indicate, that it belongs to the genre. In this work, there are several, mainly in the very nature of the house, and the outside world. But since this is a short story, there is not much time to give attention to the

worldbuilding considering also, that the story is focused predominantly on the family. Nonetheless, there are bits here and there that illustrate the future world the family lives in.

3.1.1 The Carnival

First of these little glimpses into the outside world is the carnival, that was taking place in the city, where the children were at the start of the story. Aside from being a symbol, that Bradbury uses in many of his stories, of which significance we will talk about in the themes and symbols section of this analysis, it gave us several bits of crucial information, about the kind of world they inhabit. One of which is the fact that the children went to the carnival alone. That would suggest that this future America is so safe, that a pair of 10 years old siblings can freely travel, and enjoy the marvels of carnival, without the danger of crime or some other accident caused by another person. This also could not be due to a lack of care on the part of parents, because in the story they demonstrate that they care for the well-being and safety of their children. That also applies to the before mentioned travelling, with George not allowing Peter and Wendy to go take a rocket to New York alone, reasoning that they are too young for it, which clearly shows, that there are some limits to the freedom of the children.

This brings us to another hint, that points to how civilization advanced in this futuristic America: the rocket. The short novel was released 6 years before the launch of the satellite, Sputnik 1, [43]which was the first man-made object sent into space. It is known that Ray Bradbury like many other sci-fi authors was fascinated by new technology, and let it be his source of inspiration. So, it is not a surprise that a rocket, one of the greatest technical marvels of his era made it into his story. As indicated in the short novel, it would be a transportation device used not only to go into space but rather as a means of more public and down to the Earth transport.

Going back to the carnival, the helicopter flight, that the children experienced even though possible in present is not something, that would normally be a part of carnival attractions. The worldbuilding of The Veldt serves as an indicator of where human civilization and capitalism would lead with these pieces of high technology, that were a recent novelty in

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[43] WILLIAMS, R. David. Sputnik 1 [Internet source]. NASA September 28. 2022
Available at: https://nssdc.gsfc.nasa.gov/nmc/spacecraft/display.action?id=1957-001B

the times of the writing of this story. We can imagine that the portrayal of the helicopter flight as a casual carnival attraction would be far more striking, to the contemporary readers of Bradbury´s era, than to present-day readers. Maybe that speaks to how far we have come as a civilization. It is a sign that the messages of the story could also apply to us as to what we consider to be normal. But sticking with the setting, the most important element, which was not discussed yet, is the house itself.

3.3.2 The House

The Happylife home, and its machines, as was said before, is an automatized habitation with an answer to almost every problem concerning the physical well-being of a person. When it comes to bathing, cleaning, eating, shoe-tying, painting pictures, even rocking into sleep, with all the ambient noises, that could soothe the person into a deep calm slumber, the house, and its devices are unmatched. It is a utopian vision of a home, that could fulfil your every material need.

Using common sense, and knowing the usual themes and messages of Ray Bradbury, we can deduce that such a house must come with its fair share of problems. Not physical, but psychological, and that is precisely the focus of the author in this story. He shows us how life, where you have everything, can hurt and twist a soul of a human. And he demonstrates this most effectively with the nursery.

3.3.3 The Nursery

It was a room 12 x 12m long, and 10 meters high, with walls, that could project anything the mind could conjure up, with built-in **odorophonics** and **sonics** as Ray Bradbury called them, which simulated wind, smell, temperature, and sound. It was a virtual reality, but not in a compact head display like Oculus Rift or any type of VR headset that we have now, but it was a whole room, filled with every stimulus that we could sense. This nursery was so real that it could not be distinguished from reality. The only thing that was connecting it with the real world was the door linking it to the house. The room is the playground for the kids. They love it there, it is their obsession, the one thing they cannot give up. It also serves as a window into the psyche of children for parents to see, as the room projects whatever the kids think about.

From a storytelling point of view, we could see the nursery as a mirror, showing us the harshness of what the children have become. It is also the one thing, that sets the events in motion when Lydia and George eventually too through this room realise how deeply this lifestyle has affected their lives and psyche. But it is not a clear mirror. During several reread a reader gradually understands, how Bradbury uses it for dropping hints for them, and the characters. But at first, it only provides a feeling of unease. The reader knows that something is wrong, but they cannot really put a finger on it, and this is how they are put into the shoes of a character in the first reading.

But examining the story again makes the reader realize how obvious the hints were. They may ask themselves:" How could I not have seen them; how could the characters not have seen them?" All this serves as a reminder of how technology can alter our lives even without us registering it. Technology can effectively seduce with its freshness and novelty, but it is the danger, that can be extraordinarily hard to spot, mainly when the integration is so fast, that people feel left out, as an outsider if they are not using it. But we are getting ahead of ourselves. All the dangers of the technology will be discussed and analysed thoroughly in the next section, which focuses on the themes, and the plot.

3.4 Themes, and the Plot

The Veldt is a story about a family, living in the future America of an unspecified time period, where technology has made life so much easier with automatization. We do not know how long they have been living in the house, aside from the fact, that David McClean (the psychologist) had come to check the nursery a year ago, so they had to be living there at least just a little bit more than a year. We are told that they bought the house so they would not have to do anything, and just could focus only on their work and live basically a carefree life of blissful indulgence.

By the end of the story, the parents start to question the motivation of their purchase, contemplating if it was for their pride, money or just foolishness because at last, it cost them the respect of their children, and made them all spoiled, and eventually killed them. Although, whether they really died, is intentionally open to interpretation, for the purposes of tension, and uncertainty.

Ambiguity is a powerful tool to make the reader think about the story long after its conclusion. This was the aim of the author, to encourage us to think about the dangers of technology while chewing over the ending. And whether they really died or not is not so important, because even if they did survive, the emotional damage was still inflicted. And after that experience, the whole family would probably have to take the therapy.

3.4.1 The family

The story is in fact, at its core, about family issues, the importance of parenthood, and how technology, and comfort can hurt the human character. It shows parents that are being outgrown, outperformed by their own house, and starting to lose purpose because of how it treats them and cares for them. The problems that a normal human would have, such as everyday tasks of cooking, cleaning, taking shower, all vanished from this household. It shows children that have been given everything gradually losing any kind of attachment towards their parents, as the house and the nursery step by step become their new parents. In the words of David McClean: "You've let this room and this house replace you and your wife in your children's affections. This room is their mother and father, far more important in their lives than their real parents."

At the risk of overinterpretation, we could say, that the house represents the mother, always caring, making sure, the children are well-fed and safe, even to a fault. On the other hand, the nursery could represent the father, as someone who is for the children a means for playing, the protector or a representation of control and dominance, as the children are clearly engulfed with the room. Overall, Bradbury in this short story explores how the lack of purpose affects the parents, how the absence of discipline, duties, and neglect from the parents, lead to the spoiling, of their children and hollowing of their character. All this must have been slowly leading to this point, month by month. We as readers only come shortly before the conclusion to see all its horrific implications. It is a tragic tale of a family, that realized the toll that the house took on their souls when it was simply too late.

3.4.2 Bradbury and the soul

The soul is a focus of many of Bradbury´s stories. A lot of his protagonists experience some sort of lacking in their character, whether it is striving to be better, or a desire to fill in the place that has been hollowed out and filled with shallowness. The protagonists of his stories usually start as sleepers, meaning that they are oblivious to their problems, and problems around them. Then they experience some sort of awakening like the Montag from Fahrenheit 451 which we mentioned in part that dissected the use of symbolisms in Bradbury´s writing. before. In this case, it is Lydia, who tells George, that something is wrong with the nursery, which sends both parents on the path to uncovering the sinister nature of their house. But contrary to Bradbury´s other stories, here the characters don't get to learn from their mistakes, because ultimately, they fail to prevail, and meet their demise.

3.4.3 The death of the parents

Death is a concept, that Bradbury plays with a lot in this short novel. The case could be made, that parents die in this novel literally and metaphorically. The metaphor is when the children emotionally detach themselves from their parents. It is a gradual process in which we see only the climax. And the other is their real deaths, if, of course, you interpret the ending that way. The whole reading in fact feels tense like there is a hidden danger, looming, even if the characters or the readers do not realize it yet, there is a foreshadowing of death from the beginning to up until the finale. This all serves to amplify the fear of the real threat: the psychological danger of technology´s impact on humans. And indeed, it all dawns on you slowly, but it is truly an unnerving concept to think about, especially because it is tangible and, in many ways, manifesting already in our lives already.

3.4.4 The dangers of technology

As we said before, when reading the Veldt, the reader feels from the start the author's criticisms and concerns for the impact of technological advancement on the human psyche. By dropping hints, some subtle, some not so much, Bradbury shows the reader the problems, that excessive consumerism, comfort, and automatization can bring. But this realisation creeps up on them slowly, to the point when they start questioning their own material needs, compulsions, and the answers of the modern world to them.

Taking into account the unquestionably positive benefits of technology, it is almost common knowledge at this point, that it can also have real negative effects on your psyche, or social life, or any kind of other consequences, like the side effects from drugs, or other types of technology. But based on the context of this story, and the examples made before, the observant reader can deduce where we are going with this criticism. It is the Digital Era. Whether mobile phones, computers, the internet, or social media, all that is meant to make it easier to contact someone, to connect with them, can in many cases have the opposite effect.

The literature is clear on this, there have been countless studies made on the topic, like the study of Utah State University (2019) that conducted a survey on 631 parents across the United States between the ages of 21-60. The research revealed, that 88% of participants agreed that techno-interference is a big problem in our society with 62% of the surveyed claiming, that it is a big issue in their family. Concerningly, 45% consider technology a big problem in their marriage, and 43% report that their partner uses their phone in bed daily, or almost daily.[44]

Another study from 2019 researching the connection between smartphone addiction, and sleep disclosed, that 39% of 1043 young adult participants, between 18 and 30 years, experience smartphone addiction, from which 68.7% had poor sleep quality, compared to 57.1% of those without the addiction[45].

The statistics of the University of Nevada also reveal a rapid spike in phone usage during the Covid Pandemic. The common effects that are according to this article connected to excessive use of smartphones are increased loneliness, fear of missing out, and the feeling of attachment towards the devices, which create anxiety, and stress, when it is not used for a certain amount of time.[46]

[44] REESE, Julene. *New Study Shows Impact of Technology on Relationships.* [Internet source]. Utah State University. November 18. 2019.
Available at: https://www.usu.edu/today/story/new-study-shows-impact-of-technology-on-relationships
[45] SOHN, Sei Yon. KRASNOFF, Lauren. REES, Phillipa. KALK, Nicola J. CARTER, Ben. *The Association Between Smartphone Addiction and Sleep: A UK Cross-Sectional Study of Young Adults.* [Internet source]. Frontiers in Psychiatry. March 2. 2021.
Available at: https://www.frontiersin.org/articles/10.3389/fpsyt.2021.629407/full
[46] *Smartphone Addiction: How Technology Affects Public Health and Social Relationships.* [Internet source]. The University of Nevada. Available at: https://onlinedegrees.unr.edu/blog/smartphone-addiction/

Even Steve Jobs, the pioneer of smartphone technology admitted the potential dangers of his devices, like the iPad, when he revealed in an interview in 2010, that he does not allow his children to use this technology.[47]

As we can see, the criticisms of Ray Bradbury were clearly warranted. The technology may not have gone in the direction, he predicted. Like many of his peers, Bradbury´s vision of the future was one of the abundances of energy, where the size would not be a problem, the big houses, many devices, and the easiness of transport. Not to say, that we did not evolve in that direction also, but not to the extent, that the authors of yesteryear expected. Instead of many sci-fi authors flying cars, we now have the internet, where others have envisioned rooms with images mirroring reality, we have smartphones and VR. Instead of easy access to energy, we have access to information. With the rise of the internet, computers, and smartphones everything has been made smaller, more compact, easy to use, and easy to access. But the dangers are still there, and the same as Ray Bradbury feared. There are countless points of view that can be considered when criticizing the technology, that we have now. And taking into account, that we are writing a bachelor´s thesis and not a book, we will stick to the dangers, that have been criticized in The Veldt. That is the dependence on technology, addiction, and lack of a connection that it can create between humans.

The use of smartphones is very common in any developed country, and as demonstrated in the studies before, it has a great impact on how we operate in our world and perceive it. The time we spend on the smartphone, television (although not so much today) and computers, whether it is for work, video games or social media is disconcerting enough, but when we take into equation the children, it is a whole another story. Many who are adults now, or were teenagers, when this digital era started can feel the effect, that all these devices and the internet have on our daily life.

This technology is so helpful, yet so distracting, and many of the now adults can feel how they are overly dependent on their devices which became almost extensions of ourselves. But when we take into consideration children, who were practically born into this digital age, it all becomes more frightening. When the adults are so dependent on this technology, what about the kids, that were given their first smartphones in the early stages of their

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[47] OTERO DEL RÍO, Mariel. *Why didn't Steve Jobs let his kids use iPads?* [Internet source]. My San Antonio. September 18. 2021.
Available at: https://www.mysanantonio.com/business/article/Why-didn-t-Steve-Jobs-let-his-kids-use-iPads-16468409.php

development? Many young parents that have children know how it is easy to just give a phone or a tablet to their children, or sit them in front of the computer, and then they can have their peace and quiet for hours on end.

Parallel to the nursery from The Veldt, smartphones have the power to capture the attention of children, to have them consume for quite some time. All their flashy colours, and a never-ending stream of entertainment, whether it is mobile or video games, TikTok shorts or YouTube videos, it is all too tempting to put down. Not to say, that there is something inherently wrong with video games, or videos, they can be a lot of times very fulfilling and meaningful forms of art and entertainment. But the sheer quantum and accessibility of it is overwhelming sometimes even for an adult, never mind a child. And it is a hazardous game to play when they are exposed to it from a young age, as the habits that they learn young, especially with great repetition, are very hard to break when they are older.

In fact, children that used to spend a lot of time in front of the screens were shown to be more distracted, and emotionally unstable than the ones who did not, as was suggested in the study from 2018, that was examining the association between mobile technology use and child adjustment in early elementary school age. [48]And equally to the short novel, a decrease in creative play was also observed. That as a matter of fact, may be the most dangerous, concerning the negative effect of these devices, and Ray Bradbury was so observant to point it out long before it became so severe as it is now.

The spirit of creativity in fact can be considered the most important aspect of our humanity. We are indeed productive creatures, engineers that can create meaning in life, that can make an order from the chaos of nature and build with the sheer innovative potential of a thinking being. That is one of the things, that is separating us from the other animals living on this planet. We better not destroy this aspect of our humanity with some of our own creations.

3.5 Vocabulary

It is a common practice for Sci-fi or fantasy writers to use imaginary words, as it gives them the liberty of what they can conjure up with their imagination. They can range from a gibberish of the Star Trek MacGuffins like the multi-phasic temporal convergence to more

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[48] HOSOKAWA, Rikuya. *Association between mobile technology use and child adjustment in early elementary school age.* [Internet source]. National Library of Medicine. August 25. 2018. Available at: https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC6059409/

conventional, and now widely used examples like starship or teleportation. In the case of Ray Bradbury, it is certainly the latter. His terms at least in this story are pragmatic and easy to understand, and their purpose can be often comprehended from just that one word or phrase.

Odorophonics, and Snonics

Some of the first made-up words that the reader encounters in the short novel are the odorophonics and sonics, which are mechanisms inside of the nursery that blows wind, and odour at anyone, who steps into the nursery or synthesizes the sounds, as the word sonics suggest (sonics – from a Latin word: Sonos, which means the sound), all these mechanics work together to give the perfect experience, indistinguishable from reality.

Happylife home

The inner workings and the themes of the house have been already analysed. Nevertheless, Happylife home itself is a very clever name. It is ironic that the house brought the family the exact opposite of happiness. And that the author's most important comment, is that a life with everything eventually leaves you with nothing, a hollow shell of your former self.

The many machines in the house.

Shoe tiers, voice clocks, stoves, heaters, shoe shiners, shoe lacers, body scrubbers, swabbers, massagers, or picture painters. All these devices are based on reality, and the purpose of each of these gadgets can be easily understood. The point that Ray Bradbury wanted to make with them, is how many of the tasks, that a human would carry out, in the time of writing of this short novel, would be automatized in the possible future. And admittedly, a lot of the machines described in his story did become a reality in some form. We do not need to talk about stoves and heaters, but electric massagers, or swabbers in the form of a robotic vacuum cleaner with an option to swab the floor would certainly be an outright sci-fi for the contemporary readers of Ray Bradbury. But what could possibly be the most unbelievable for them is something, that could be classified as a picture painter, and that is AI-generated art, which took the world by storm. These are images created with certain rules, based on the input of a user. The most known forms of this artwork are images,

that are processed by an AI art generator, to transfer them into another style, like for example The Lord of the Rings, if it was an 80s dark fantasy movie. These types of work are truly fascinating and serve as a reminder of how far we have come as a civilization, with our technology, especially, when we compare them with SF works like The Veldt.

Super sensitive color film, mental tape film, and the mental combination

In the story, the super-sensitive color film is mentioned in connection to the holographic panels of the nursery. It is clear, how the era of the author represents his writing. It was the good old fashion film tape that obviously inspired Bradbury to use it as a base for what is essentially a display panel. Now we know that technology went a little different way, with LCD (liquid crystal displays), which use liquid crystals, a kind of filter through which the light shines, to project an image, or OLED displays, which use individual diodes, that light up with colour. Nonetheless, for the time, the film tape was a fitting choice of inspiration, because it facilitated the readers of that era to easily imagine, how such technology would look like. For them, it was practically a 360°C cinema room.

The mental tape film is another imaginary extension of film technology, but this time, it was meant probably as some sort of a sensor, that could capture the thoughts of the person standing in the nursery, and then interpret them, by displaying them on the panels. Another of its properties was probably a capacity of storing these thought signals because as it was shown in the story, the room had the ability to stay in the state of the initial image projected. This image was called the mental combination, so the mental tape film also fulfilled the role of the storage device. This is, of course, different from the current storage devices like hard disks, which function on the basis of rotating disk with magnetic coding (kind of like CD, but instead of magnets, the data is read by laser), or SSD disk, which works on a basis of halogen storage, that can have data be transferred, or erased electronically.

3.6 Symbolism

Ray Bradbury is known for his imaginative and clever use of symbolism. Reading through his works, we can notice patterns of the same kind of symbols appearing in different stories, of which meaning can be parallel with his previous work or can take on a whole another

meaning. It is like his trademark, the imprint of Ray Bradbury, that distinguishes it from the works of other of his colleagues. In this short novel, we see some recurrent symbols with the same or slightly altered meaning, or completely original ones.

Sun

One of the symbols that also occur in Bradbury´s other writings is the sun. But opposite to author´s other works, where the sun represented God, or life, and nature itself, like in the short story All Summer in a Day here it has a little different meaning. Sure, the nature aspect is still there, because it is presented in a hot African Veldt, but, here, it represents hatred, which seeps from it in the form of heat. This was the observation of psychologist David McClean, who studied the patterns of thought crystalized on the holographic panels.

Vultures

They appear at the beginning and the end and serve as a wrap-up that ends the story in a neat circle. This is a commonly used technique not only in writing, but also in a cinema, or another type of entertainment. But what is the purpose of these predatorial animals in this case? They, similarly, to lions foreshadow death, which eventually comes for the parents.

House full of dead bodies. A mechanical cemetery

This imagery stuck with me personally the most. It represents all the different machines now plugged off the power. All the different massagers, shoe tiers, heaters, and other devices that made life easier. The implications of this symbolism are especially tragic, because of how the children react to them. They wail and weep in desperate disbelief, in contrast with the deaths of their parents, that were met with emotionless reactions due to their detached relationship.

Carnival

First, we looked at the carnival as a sci-fi element, now we will discuss its symbolism. We established before, that Bradbury usually uses carnival as the representation of evil in the world, and it is no different in the Veldt. The arguably most important message of this particular story is the dangers of consumerism and shallow pleasures. And what is a carnival if not precisely that? In the novel, the children were said to be full of hot dogs, and

candy which in large quantities are of course not good for a balanced diet. And this is exactly what Bradbury wants to show us through this imagery. The imbalance in the lives of the children, the ever more growing dependence on superficial materialism.

The Veldt

The hot African Savana is a symbol, which comes up again and again in the story. It represents all the hatred, and the wish for the death of the parents, that the children hold against them, from the hot sun to the lions, and the vultures. All that is felt by the Veldt is death, hostility, and resentment. As the psychologist says in the story, it has become the channel for destructive, and hateful thoughts, all directed toward the parents. Some may say that it also can represent the unstoppable, and unbound force of nature that is not to be tempered with.

Overall, equally to his other work, Bradbury leans heavily into symbolism to illustrate his ideas. And it is his vivid imagery that makes his stories so memorable, as a lot of these symbols are burned into your mind with their visceral expressiveness that helps keep you thinking about them, and the ideas they represent.

3.7 Discussion

The Veldt is an engaging story, and there have been many that attempted to analyse all of its intricacies. For example, Dr Oliver Tearle makes an interesting point, that we failed to mention in our analysis. It is the implications of the names, that Ray Bradbury used for the children, Peter and Wendy. These names are clearly derived from the Peter Pan story, where Peter Pan is cursed with permanent childhood which contrasts with Peter, and Wendy who come and go as they please, do not have to do any chores, and can do whatever they please. Dr Tearle builds upon this idea by discussing how technology threatens the relationship between the child and a parent, and how the children in turn "have also lost their boundless creativity," which was replaced with destructive thoughts manifesting in the nursery. He comparably to our analysis comments on the picture painter, and how Peter wanted to use it instead of painting himself, which is in Dr Tearle´s words "a symbol of creativity."

Furthermore, he mentions how this willing passivity idea is developed on in the other work of Ray Bradbury, the short story The Pedestrian, where all of society spend almost all their time in front of the TV.

Dr Oliver Tearle also touches on the concept of the uncanny. He describes it as the "familiar within the unfamiliar, or the unfamiliar lurking within the familiar." This is a Freudian concept, as Dr Oliver Tearle mentions. He gives us a classic Freud example of inanimate objects coming to life like dolls, or carved crocodiles on the table, which start to move on their own. Tearle compares this concept with the lions in the nursery. As they are only the projections on the panels, they are not real. But in the end, it is indicated, that they materialize, and kill the parents. According to him, this makes the lions clearly uncanny, by how suddenly their nature changes from a simulation to something real.[49]

This uncanny aspect of the story was also inspected in great detail by Ilse Marie Bussing López, who dedicated herself to analysing the technology, and architecture of Bradbury´s imaginary Happylife home.

In her article/analysis, Ilse Marie López first provides the context on how the technological advancement of the 1950s, and the socio-economical changes that came with it, morphed the society of America., and how this development deeply affected the views and thought processes of Ray Bradbury, which were eventually put on the paper, and expanded upon in the works like The Veldt, the Pedestrian, or Fahrenheit 451.

But focusing on The Veldt, Ilse Maria López goes into great detail, about how the 1950s in America saw a rapid increase of house appliances, consumerism, and the rise of television, providing the context to the themes, and messages in the said work of Ray Bradbury. She also, as many others points out the commentary of Ray Bradbury, how the overreliance on technology can undermine the traditional family structure. We see that with the children (Peter, and Wendy) who challenge and threaten parental authority. Although Maria López acknowledges all these themes that are present in The Veldt, her focus was mostly on the uncanniness of its setting, mainly the architecture, and feel of the Happylife home, and the nursery.

Maria López describes the uncanny comparably to Dr Oliver Tearle. She explains it as "that which is both homey and unhomey", in her words "this ambiguity is precisely what causes

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[49] TEARLE, Oliver. *A Summary and Analysis of Ray Bradbury's 'The Veldt'*. [Internet source]. Interesting Literature.
Available at: https://interestingliterature.com/2022/06/ray-bradbury-the-veldt-summary-analysis/

it to be disorienting and frightening." In her work, she points out how the uncanny manifests in the story of The Veldt, why it can solicit the feeling of unease, and why it can even frighten us. She focuses more on the architectural structure of the Happylife home, and the uncanniness of its machines, which can feel almost sentient, but not quite. She mentions the twisted nature of the home, where the chores, that would be normally done by a human, are carried out by machines, like cooking. Or the uncanniness of the destructive repetition of the projections from the children in the nursery.[50]

It is safe to say, that all the elements of this story contribute to the feeling of unease that was the intention of the author, mainly by the technology, and architecture of the imaginary house, but also by the state of the characters, which have been shaped by its comforting but dangerous nature. As demonstrated in the short novel, human beings are not made to only experience comfort, because it eventually twists our character to the point, that we become a monster. That seems to be a theme, that generally, all who analysed this short story can agree upon.

But going back to the historical context, other authors have also commented on how Ray Bradbury criticizes the increase of consumerism in the 1950s, David Seed suggests: "The Veldt" in particular "satirizes the consumerist ethic of the automated house, which displaces the parents from any active functions in the household." As many critics have mentioned, the integrity of family is a very important aspect of life, that Ray Bradbury holds dear, and explores in many of his works. Marvin E. Mengling claims that "The Veldt dramatizes a theme found in many of his earlier works — that machines cannot successfully replace human love and affection." [51]

Overall, we could say, that the danger of consumerism and overreliance on technology can be considered one the most important themes portrayed by sci-fi authors in general, and Ray Bradbury himself dedicated many of his stories to these ideas, whether it is in Fahrenheit 451, The Pedestrian, or The Veldt. And there is no shortage of it even in TV, and cinema production, for example, the Black Mirror series, where each episode shows

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[50] BUSSING LÓPEZ, Ilse Marie. "Architecture, Technology and the Uncanny: Infiltrating Space in 'The Veldt' and in 'The Digital House Project'." Revista de Lenguas Modernas, vol. 0, no. p. 102-106, January 25. 2017.
Available at: https://www.researchgate.net/publication/315597531_Architecture_Technology_and_t he_Uncanny_Infiltrating_Space_in_The_Veldt_and_in_The_Digital_House_Project
[51] GREENBERG H. Martin, OLANDER D. Joseph, Writers of the 21st Century: Ray Bradbury, New York, Taplinger Publishing Company, 1980. p. 93, ISBN 0-8008-6638-X

how technology can go too far. In the words of David Seed: "One of the most recurrent themes in science fiction is its examination of humanity's relation to its own material construction[52]".

In conclusion, Ray Bradbury´s story is unique by how effectively it explores these relevant themes with the use of distinctive symbolism, ambiguity, and uncanniness. As Dr Oliver Tearle says: "Bradbury's skill is in tapping into our fears of uncanny phenomena in order to deliver a ghastly cautionary tale about our relationship with technology."[53]

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[52] SEED, David. Science Fiction: A Very Short Introduction. Oxford: Oxford University Press. 2011. p. 47
[53] TEARLE, Oliver. *A Summary and Analysis of Ray Bradbury's ´The Veldt´*. [Internet source]. Interesting Literature.
Available at: https://interestingliterature.com/2022/06/ray-bradbury-the-veldt-summary-analysis/

Conclusion

In the bachelor´s thesis, we analysed The Veldt, a short novel by a famous sci-fi author, Ray Bradbury. Our goal was to identify sci-fi elements in the novel to deduce why it is associated with the genre. The Veldt very openly criticizes the detriment of technology on the human soul and its potential for the destruction of a family and society. So, it was our secondary goal to examine these criticisms and compare them with the reality of modern-day life with the aim of finding some correlation.

In the first chapter, we established that we could look at SF in two different ways: as a matter of content, and as a reading strategy. Looking at sci-fi as content, we identified two main parts of the SF: science, and fiction. The word science suggests that the plot of the genre is rooted in a real-world scientific basis, be it an invention, natural phenomenon, or even an imaginary future society. The word fiction means, that we take this scientific basis, and build on it, taking it as a setting, or a plot device. The concept of SF as a reading strategy on the other hand means, that we use our knowledge, and expectations of the genre, to view the content of the literary work or any other type of work at hand through the lens of SF. For example, we do not expect magic in SF, we assume, that the events, and phenomena in the work have some scientific, explanation, or at least are loosely based in a scientific context.

Furthermore, we went on to provide a brief summary of history of the Science fiction, examining the works with scientific elements that date to ancient times, further to the Industrial Revolution, which gave birth to the genre as we know it now. We also went over the 20th century, which was considered to be a Golden Age of SF up to the present, hinting at the possible future of the genre.

Next, we explained the main two subgenres of SF. Soft Science Fiction, which focuses more on the human experience, politics, and morality, and Hard Science Fiction, which deeply explores, and logically builds on ideas based on the hard sciences like physics, mathematics, or biology. Moreover, we selected, and dissected some of the well-known, and well-established subgenres of SF, like cyberpunk, time travel, or dystopian fiction.

At the end of the chapter, we examined the author of The Veldt, Ray Bradbury. We looked into the start of his career, and how Mr. Electro first sparked Bradbury´s imagination at the

young age of twelve years. We discussed his biggest literary contributions, like the collection of short stories The Illustrated Man (including The Veldt), or the dystopian novel Fahrenheit 451 which is by many considered his magnum opus. We also delved deep into his commonly explored ideas, and themes, and his use of symbolism. When it comes to symbols Bradbury is very effective in portraying his ideas, something we saw also in The Veldt. We investigated his use of fire imagery (a tool for cleansing, and destroying), his frequent mirror imagery (self-acceptance, self-critique), and a few other of his commonly used and recurring symbols.

In the second chapter, we established our goals, and methods of our analysis. We set out to identify the sci-fi element, point out the prognoses and the dangers of the technology in the short novel, and then compare them with the reality of the present to see if there are some parallels.

The third chapter focused on the novel exclusively. We have made a comprehensive synopsis, that included all of the important story points. We also mention many of the more subtle details, that helped to illustrate the intentions and the ideas of the author. The goal for the synopsis was to be a reduced-down substitute for the actual short novel, so by the end, the reader hopefully would have a good understanding of the whole story.

In the subsequent part, we dissected the five characters, that appeared in The Veldt: George, and Lydia Hadley, their children, Peter, and Wendy, and the psychologist David McClean. We studied the behaviour and choices. We found out that both parents are caring, and want the best for their children, but they relied too much on their house to carry out their duties for them, including parenting. That lead them to be spoiled, including children, and they only realised when it was too late. Speaking of the children, they were so attached to the house to the point, that they lost their love, and respect for the parents, and started to develop only hate for them, which lead to killing them in the end, be it indirectly. The psychologist, David McClean was there to only meet the concerns that the parents had, and it was also through his suggestion, to down the nursery indefinitely, that he sealed the fates of the parents, also not realising the severity of the situation.

After the characters, we moved on to the setting. We found several elements, that could be considered sci-fi. The one obvious is the house itself, and the nursery. The house is a building, that can carry out many of the chores, that would be done by humans even today.

Like brushing the teeth, cooking, bathing, cleaning etc. But, despite the emergence of smart houses that with a press of a button can carry out basic commands like dimming the lights, playing music, and closing the garage door, the home from the short novel still is something that we would consider to be from a SF. Another clear sci-fi element is the nursery, a virtual reality room with holographic panels, comparable to our headsets like Oculus Rift that project a Virtual Reality on a display close to our eyes, the difference being also that the nursery could sense the thoughts of the people in the room, and project them to the walls. The difference is that the nursery is a room, a space, like a multidimensional cinema. And the last obvious sci-fi aspect is the rocket transport mentioned in the novel. Even though we have rockets, planes, and fast trains, the rocket is not used commonly as public transport in contrast to the short novel, where it was used for transporting passengers within America, and probably beyond, but there is no further evidence for that assumption.

Subsequently, we focused on the themes. After a thorough investigation of the story, we concluded, that it is a tale of a family destroyed by the overwhelming possibilities of technology, which points to how overreliance on its convenience can hurt our psyche and alter our natural functioning in the world and damage our creativity. Regarding the attachment of the children to the nursery, we made a connection to how many parents nowadays rely too heavily on their phones to do the parenting, because it is very easy for children to stay glued to the screen for hours, taking the load off the parent. But as we demonstrated with the finding of the studies excessive phone use can damage our relationships, decrease creativity, and instigate anxiety.

In the vocabulary section, we examined the words, Ray Bradbury used for naming the devices and mechanics of the house. We concluded that many of the names fulfil are there to characterise the nature of the object. Like the odorophonics, which were mechanics of the nursery, that blew wind and smells, or the super sensitive colour film, a material of which the panels in the nursery were made, which indicates, that it was based on the technology of the film tape, which was a widely used technology back then.

The penultimate part of the third chapter dealt with the symbolism in The Veldt. We discussed the symbols like the vultures who were foreshadowing death, the Sun, and The Veldt representing the hatred of the children towards the parents, or the carnival imagery, which is similar to Bradbury's other works represents the evil in the world, in this case in from of consumerism.

The last part of the third chapter saw a comparison of our findings with other authors. Dr Oliver Tearle for example pointed at the parallel between the names of the children, Peter and Wendy, and the characters of the story of Peter Pan. He said that it is a satire on how the children in Peter Pan are in perpetual childhood, in contrast with the children of The Veldt, who grow up too quickly. Dr Tearle also touched on the use of the uncanny in the work, suggesting that the lions represent uncanniness, because they should not be real, but in the end, it is implied, that they were. The concept of the uncanny was also commented on by Ilse Marie Bussing López, who focused more on the uncanniness of the architecture of the smart house in The Veldt, highlighting the almost sentient nature of the devices and the house itself. Dr Tearle also emphasizes how technology can threaten human relationships. Marvin E. Mengling also makes a similar claim that "machines cannot successfully replace human love and affection."

In conclusion, The Veldt is an important story, because it touches on the issue of consumerism in our society, which even in the 1950s was a big concern of Ray Bradbury. And even more so today in the world of plenty, at least in the Western culture, this cautionary tale still remains relevant, as many people face the seductive appeal of ultimately destructive consumerism. Clichéd as it sounds, maybe now more than ever we need stories like this, to remind us, of what really counts for a human in this world, that being creativity and the family, and a healthy relationship with the ever-present technology.

Resumé

Ray Bradbury je jeden z najuznávanejších a najvplyvnejších autorov 20. storočia. Je inšpiráciou pre mnohých spisovateľov. Slovami Stevena Kinga: „Bez Raya Bradburyho by nebol žiaden Steven King". Neil Gaimen sa k autorovi vyjadril takto: „Viem si predstavovať rozličné svety a miesta, ale neviem si predstaviť svet bez Bradburyho." Dosah Raya Bradburyho vo svete literatúry je obrovský. Písal v rôznych žánroch od fantastickej literatúry, hororu, sci-fi, mysterióznej literatúry až k realistickej fikcii. Napriek rôznorodosti žánrov, v ktorých písal, Ray Bradbury je pokladaný za jedného z najvýznamnejších spisovateľov sci-fi 20. storočia. Žáner obohatil mnohými poviedkami zozbieranými v zbierkach poviedok, ako sú Ilustrovaný muž alebo Temný karneval, a knihami ako Marťanská kronika alebo 451 stupňov Farenhaita, čo mnohí pokladajú za jeho najlepšie dielo.

V tejto bakalárskej práci sme sa venovali jeho poviedke Step, ktorá opisuje, ako môže technológia zničiť rodinu alebo dokonca aj spoločnosť. Pri analýze poviedky sme sa sústreďovali na sci-fi elementy s cieľom zistiť, čo ju spája so žánrom, rovnako sme sa aj zameriavali na prognózy a kritiku technológie v diele, ktorú sme následne porovnávali s realitou súčasnosti. Práca je rozdelená na tri kapitoly, ktoré pozostávajú z teoretickej časti, cieľa a metodiky a nakoniec praktickej časti.

V prvej kapitole sme sa venovali definícii sci-fi, zistili sme, že sa dá na žáner pozerať dvomi spôsobmi, v kontexte obsahu a stratégie čítania. Ak sa pozeráme na sci-fi ako obsah, môžeme identifikovať jeho dva hlavné komponenty, „science" (veda) a „fiction" (fikcia). Z tohto môžeme usúdiť, že spisovatelia tohto žánru sú inšpirovaní reálnymi vedami ako fyzika, matematika, biológia, politika atď., ale zároveň stavajú na ich konceptoch a posúvajú ich hranice do takej miery, že zasahujú do fikcie. Na druhej strane sci-fi ako stratégia čítania znamená, že naše poznatky a očakávania od žánra aplikujeme pri čítaní sci-fi textu. Ako sa táto stratégia uplatňuje v praxi? Napríklad tak, že keďže vieme, že sci-fi sa zaoberá fenoménmi založenými na vede a realite, tak očakávame, že javy v diele budú mať vedecké vysvetlenie alebo aspoň ukotvenie v nejakom vedeckom kontexte na rozdiel od mágie, ktorá väčšinou žiadne vysvetlenie nemá.

Ďalej sme sa venovali histórii vzniku a vývoja žánra. Ustanovili sme, že žáner, ako ho poznáme teraz, vznikol v 19. storočí počas priemyselnej revolúcie, aj keď sci-fi elementy

môžeme nájsť už v antike (napríklad Cesta na Mesiac alebo Slnko od Lukianosa zo Samosaty). Rovnako sme sa venovali aj 20. storočiu, ktoré sa označuje ako zlatý vek science fiction, kvôli mnohým vplyvným autorom vrátane Raya Bradburyho, ktorí sa podieľali na obohatení a rozšírení žánra. Nakoniec sme popísali, ako sa žánru darí v súčasnosti a vymenovali niekoľko inšpirácii zo sveta vedy a pokroku, ktorých by sa mohli chytiť súčasní alebo nastávajúci spisovatelia.

V ďalšej časti sme vysvetlili dva hlavné pod-žánre sci-fi, soft science fiction a hard science fiction. Soft science fiction sa upriamuje na vedy ako politika, sociológia a história. Upriamuje sa skôr na človeka ako morálne stvorenie a spoločnosť. Hard science fiction sa sústreďuje na vedy ako fyzika, matematika alebo biológia. Jej hlavným cieľom je rozvíjať a stavať na fenoménoch a myšlienkach, ktoré sú v daných vedách ustanovené.

V poslednej časti prvej kapitoly sme zhrnuli kariéru a prínos Raya Bradburyho. Riešili sme, ako sa stretnutie s pánom Elektrom, kúzelníkom na karnevale, stalo už v jeho 12 rokoch prvým podnetom na to, aby začal písať. Spomenuli sme jeho najznámejšie diela - zbierky poviedok Ilustrovaný muž (obsahujúce Step), Temný karneval, knihy Púpavové víno a jeho najvplyvnejšie dielo 451 stupňov Fahrenheita. Taktiež sme sa venovali častým témam, myšlienkam a symbolike v jeho dielach. Došli sme k záveru, že Ray Bradbury sa sústreďuje hlavne na človeka a jeho individualitu, rozoberá jeho strachy, nedostatky, hodnoty a ambície. V rámci symbolizmu Bradbury používa viacero opakujúcich sa motívov: oheň - symbol ničenia očisty a znovuzrodenia, karneval - symbol zla, úsmev - symbol šťastia, dobra a nádeje alebo zrkadlo, ktoré vyjadruje pravú, častokrát potláčanú stránku človeka.

V druhej kapitole sme si určili ciele a metodológiu. Cieľom bolo, ako sme spomínali, nájsť sci-fi elementy v diele a porovnať jeho prognózy a kritiku technológie so súčasnosťou. Naša metodika pozostávala z analýzy diela, kedy sme podrobne rozobrali príbeh, postavy, zasadenie, hlavné myšlienky, slovnú zásobu (pomenovania vymyslených sci-fi javov a objektov v poviedke) a symboliku.

V tretej kapitole sme rozobrali samotné dielo, ktoré sleduje rodinu v automatickom dome s holografickou miestnosťou podobnou virtuálnej realite. Poviedka opisuje vplyv tejto technológie na vzťah medzi deťmi a rodičmi, ktorý sa stále horší, zatiaľ čo sú deti viac a viac naviazané na dom a holografickú miestnosť. Táto virtuálna miestnosť má na stenách

projekciu africkej stepi, čo vyjadruje rastúci hnev voči rodičom, ktorí pre deti predstavujú už iba prekážku medzi nimi a pohodlným domovom. Príbeh končí smrťou rodičov, keď ich deti zamknú v holografickej miestnosti, v ktorej sa zmaterializujú levy z africkej stepi (predtým iba vyobrazenia na holografických stenách), ktoré ich roztrhajú na kusy.

Na začiatok praktickej časti sme urobili detailné zhrnutie poviedky, po ktorom nasledoval rozbor piatich postáv, ktoré sa ukázali v Stepi: George a Lydia Hadley, ich deti, Peter a Wendy a psychológ David McClean. Počas analýzy sme došli k záveru, že obaja rodičia chceli to najlepšie pre svoje deti. Ale rozhodnutie prenechať ich automatickému domu starosť o domácnosť aj o Petra a Wendy spojené s neúmernou voľnosťou, ktorú dali svojim deťom, ich nakoniec stálo všetko. Deti si postupne vytvorili vzťah k domu, ktorý im poskytoval ochranu a zábavu, zatiaľ čo vzťah ku rodičom chátral. Nakoniec neostalo nič iba nenávisť (vo forme stepi v holografickej miestnosti) voči rodičom, ktorí im z pohľadu Petra a Wendy iba bránili v užívaní si života v pohodlí. To všetko eskalovalo až do brutálneho finále, kedy ich deti s pomocou spomínanej miestnosti zabili. Psychológ David McClean iba potvrdil obavy rodičov, ktorí si všimli, ako sa deti v poslednom čase začali voči nim správať. To viedlo k fatálnemu rozhodnutiu rodičov vypnúť celý dom aj s holografickou miestnosťou, čo zapečatilo ich osud.

Ďalej sme skúmali zasadenie s cieľom identifikovať sci-fi elementy. Samotný automatický dom, ktorý umýva, zaväzuje šnúrky a varí jedlo spolu s holografickou miestnosťou, čo vie snímať myšlienky, boli najjasnejšie ukazovatele, ktoré by sme aj v dnešnej dobe pokladali za science fiction. Ďalším sci-fi znakom je raketa, ktorá v tomto príbehu bola spomenutá ako komerčný typ transportu podobný lietadlu.

Následne sme sa venovali myšlienkam a posolstvám poviedky. Po dôkladnom zanalyzovaní príbehu sme dospeli k záveru, že prílišné spoliehanie sa na technológiu a prílišný komfort dokáže viesť k ničeniu vzťahov, psychiky a kreatívneho potenciálu. Na túto myšlienku sme nadviazali v sekcii Nebezpečenstvá technológii, kde sme demonštrovali, ako digitálne technológie pôsobia na ľudí a hlavne deti v súčasnosti podobne ako v poviedke.

V nadchádzajúcej časti sme rozoberali slová, ktoré Ray Bradbury použil na pomenovanie svojich vymyslených mechaník a prístrojov, ako sú napríklad odorophonics („odor" – zápach), and sonics („sonos" – zvuk), mechanizmy, ktoré v holografickej miestnosti

simulovali vietor a vône spolu so zvukmi. Ďalšie príklady jeho vymyslených termínov sú super sensitive color film, čo bol materiál, z ktorého boli vyrobené holografické panely. Slovo „film" odkazuje na filmový pás, čo bola v dobe písania tejto poviedky bežne používaná technológia.

Ďalej sme skúmali Bradburyho použitie symbolizmu v Stepi. Rozpoznali sme viacero motívov, napríklad supy v holografickej miestnosti ako predzvesť smrti, spomínaný karneval predstavujúci zlo a nebezpečenstvo konzumu alebo rozpálené slnko v africkej stepi vyjadrujúce hnev detí voči rodičom.

V závere praktickej časti sme porovnávali naše zistenia s ostatnými autormi, ktorí sa vyjadrili k poviedke. Dr. Oliver Tearle vo svojej analýze poukázal na to, že mená Peter a Wendy boli inšpirované postavami Petra a Wendy z rozprávky o Petrovi Panovi. Podľa Dr. Tearleho satiricky vyjadrujú, ako na rozdiel od Petra Pana deti v Stepi vyrástli až príliš rýchlo so slobodou, ale bez povinností dospelého človeka. Dr. Tearle taktiež spomenul výraz „uncanny" (podivné) v súvislosti s levmi, ktoré sa zmaterializovali a prirovnal ich k tomuto konceptu v bábikách a neživých predmetoch, ktoré zrazu ožijú. „Uncanny" v súvislosti so Stepou opisovala aj Ilse Maria Bussing López, ktorá ho skúmala v spojení s architektúrou automatického domu a ako taký dom môže sám o sebe pôsobiť ako živý. Na záver sa Dr. Tearle vo svojom zhrnutí Stepi vyjadril aj k tomu, ako technológia môže narúšať ľudské vzťahy podobne, ako povedal Marvin E. Mengling vo svojej analýze „stroj nedokáže úspešne nahradiť ľudskú lásku a náklonnosť." V podobnom duchu sa nesie aj myšlienka našej práce. V Stepi sme našli viacero aspektov, podľa ktorých sa dielo dá pokladať za sci-fi. Ale možno dôležitejšie ako samotný žáner, do ktorého dielo patrí, je práve jeho posolstvo, ktoré v dnešnej dobe rapídneho pokroku je ešte relevantnejšie ako kedykoľvek predtým.

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