

# The Man in the High Castle and Philosophy

Subversive Reports from  
Another Reality

EDITED BY

BRUCE KRAJEWSKI AND  
JOSHUA HETER



OPEN COURT  
Chicago

**VOLUME 99** *Louis C.K. and Philosophy: You Don't Get to Be Bored* (2016) Edited by Mark Ralkowski

**VOLUME 100** *Batman, Superman, and Philosophy: Badass or Boyceout?* (2016) Edited by Nicolas Michaud

**VOLUME 101** *Discworld and Philosophy: Reality Is Not What It Seems* (2016) Edited by Nicolas Michaud

**VOLUME 102** *Orphan Black and Philosophy: Grand Theft DNA* (2016) Edited by Richard Greene and Rachel Robison-Greene

**VOLUME 103** *David Bowie and Philosophy: Rebel Rebel* (2016) Edited by Theodore G. Ammon

**VOLUME 104** *Red Rising and Philosophy: Break the Chains!* (2016) Edited by Courtland Lewis and Kevin McCain

**VOLUME 105** *The Ultimate Game of Thrones and Philosophy: You Think or Die* (2017) Edited by Eric J. Silverman and Robert Arp

**VOLUME 106** *Peanuts and Philosophy: You're a Wise Man, Charlie Brown!* (2017) Edited by Richard Greene and Rachel Robison-Greene

**VOLUME 107** *Deadpool and Philosophy: My Common Sense Is Tingling* (2017) Edited by Nicolas Michaud

**VOLUME 108** *The X-Files and Philosophy: The Truth Is In Here* (2017) Edited by Robert Arp

**VOLUME 109** *Mr. Robot and Philosophy: Beyond Good and Evil Corp* (2017) Edited by Richard Greene and Rachel Robison-Greene

**VOLUME 110** *Hamilton and Philosophy: Revolutionary Thinking* (2017) Edited by Aaron Rabinowitz and Robert Arp

**VOLUME 111** *The Man in the High Castle and Philosophy: Subversive Reports from Another Reality* (2017) Edited by Bruce Krajewski and Joshua Heter

**IN PREPARATION:**

*The Americans and Philosophy* (2017) Edited by Robert Arp and Kevin Guilfoyle

*Jimi Hendrix and Philosophy* (2017) Edited by Theodore G. Ammon

*American Horror Story and Philosophy* (2017) Edited by Richard Greene and Rachel Robison-Greene

*Iron Man versus Captain America and Philosophy* (2018) Edited by Nicolas Michaud and Jessica Watkins

*Stephen King's Dark Tower and Philosophy* (2018) Edited by Nicolas Michaud and Jacob Thomas May

*Amy Schumer and Philosophy* (2018) Edited by Charlene Elsbey and Rob Luzzey

*1984 and Philosophy* (2018) Edited by Ezio di Nucci and Stefan Storrie

*Scott Adams and Philosophy* (2018) Edited by Dan Yin, Galen Foresman, and Robert Arp

*Twin Peaks and Philosophy* (2018) Edited by Richard Greene and Rachel Robison-Greene

**VOLUME 71** *The Catcher in the Rye and Philosophy: A Book for Bastards, Morons, and Madmen* (2012) Edited by Keith Dromm and Heather Salter

**VOLUME 73** *The Wire and Philosophy: This America, Man* (2013) Edited by David Bzdek, Joanna Crosby, and Seth Vannatta

**VOLUME 74** *Planet of the Apes and Philosophy: Great Apes Think Alike* (2013) Edited by John Huss

**VOLUME 75** *Psych and Philosophy: Some Dark Juju-Magumbo* (2013) Edited by Robert Arp

**VOLUME 79** *Frankenstein and Philosophy: The Shocking Truth* (2013) Edited by Nicolas Michaud

**VOLUME 80** *Ender's Game and Philosophy: Genocide Is Child's Play* (2013) Edited by D.E. Wittkower and Lucinda Rush

**VOLUME 82** *Jurassic Park and Philosophy: The Truth Is Terrifying* (2014) Edited by Nicolas Michaud

**VOLUME 83** *The Devil and Philosophy: The Nature of His Game* (2014) Edited by Robert Arp

**VOLUME 84** *Leonard Cohen and Philosophy: Various Positions* (2014) by Jason Holt

**VOLUME 85** *Homeland and Philosophy: For Your Minds Only* (2014) Edited by Robert Arp

**VOLUME 86** *Girls and Philosophy: This Book Isn't a Metaphor for Anything* (2015) Edited by Richard Greene and Rachel Robison-Greene

**VOLUME 87** *Adventure Time and Philosophy: The Handbook for Heroes* (2015) Edited by Nicolas Michaud

**VOLUME 88** *Justified and Philosophy: Shoot First, Think Later* (2015) Edited by Rod Carveth and Robert Arp

**VOLUME 89** *Steve Jobs and Philosophy: For Those Who Think Different* (2015) Edited by Shawn E. Klein

**VOLUME 90** *Dracula and Philosophy: Dying to Know* (2015) Edited by Nicolas Michaud and Janelle Pöttsch

**VOLUME 91** *It's Always Sunny in Philadelphia: The Gang Gets Analyzed* (2015) Edited by Roger Hunt and Robert Arp

**VOLUME 92** *Orange Is the New Black and Philosophy: Last Exit from Litchfield* (2015) Edited by Richard Greene and Rachel Robison-Greene

**VOLUME 93** *More Doctor Who and Philosophy: Regeneration Time* (2015) Edited by Courtland Lewis and Paula Smithka

**VOLUME 94** *Divergent and Philosophy: The Fractions of Life* (2016) Edited by Courtland Lewis

**VOLUME 95** *Downton Abbey and Philosophy: Thinking in That Manor* (2016) Edited by Adam Barkman and Robert Arp

**VOLUME 96** *Hannibal Lecter and Philosophy: The Heart of the Matter* (2016) Edited by Joseph Westfall

**VOLUME 1** *Seinfeld and Philosophy: A Book about Everything and Nothing* (2000)

**VOLUME 2** *The Simpsons and Philosophy: The Doh! of Homer* (2001)

**VOLUME 3** *The Matrix and Philosophy: Welcome to the Desert of the Real* (2002)

**VOLUME 4** *Buffy the Vampire Slayer and Philosophy: Fear and Trembling in Sunnydale* (2003)

**VOLUME 9** *Harry Potter and Philosophy: fAristotle Ran Hogwarts* (2004)

**VOLUME 12** *Star Wars and Philosophy: More Powerful than You Can Possibly Imagine* (2005)

**VOLUME 13** *Superheroes and Philosophy: Truth, Justice, and the Socratic Way* (2005)

**VOLUME 17** *Bob Dylan and Philosophy: It's Alright Ma (I'm Only Thinking)* (2006)

**VOLUME 19** *Monty Python and Philosophy: Judge Nudge, Think Think!* (2006)

**VOLUME 30** *Pink Floyd and Philosophy: Careful with that Axiom, Eugene!* (2007)

**VOLUME 35** *Star Trek and Philosophy: The Wrath of Kant* (2008)

**VOLUME 36** *The Legend of Zelda and Philosophy: I Link Therefore I Am* (2008)

**VOLUME 42** *Supervillains and Philosophy: Sometimes Evil Is Its Own Reward* (2009)

**VOLUME 49** *Zombies, Vampires, and Philosophy: New Life for the Undead* (2010)

**VOLUME 53** *Martial Arts and Philosophy: Nothing and Nothingness* (2010)

**VOLUME 54** *The Onion and Philosophy: Fake News Story True, Alleges Indignant Area Professor* (2010)

**VOLUME 55** *Doctor Who and Philosophy:igger on the Inside* (2010)

**VOLUME 57** *Rush and Philosophy: Heart and Mind United* (2011) Edited by Jim erti and Durrell Bowman

**VOLUME 58** *Dexter and Philosophy: Mind er Spatter* (2011) Edited by Richard reene, George A. Reisch, and Rachel obison-Greene

**VOLUME 60** *SpongeBob SquarePants and Philosophy: Soaking Up Secrets Under the Sea!* (2011) Edited by Joseph J. Foy

**VOLUME 61** *Sherlock Holmes and Philosophy: The Footprints of a Gigantic ind* (2011) Edited by Josef Steiff

**VOLUME 63** *Philip K. Dick and Philosophy: o Androids Have Kindred Spirits?* (2011) Edited by D.E. Whittkower

**VOLUME 64** *The Rolling Stones and Philosophy: It's Just a Thought Away* (2012) Edited by Luke Dick and George A. Reisch

**VOLUME 67** *Breaking Bad and Philosophy: Adder Living through Chemistry* (2012) Edited by David K. Koepsell and Robert p

**VOLUME 68** *The Walking Dead and Philosophy: Zombie Apocalypse Now* (2012) Edited by Wayne Yuen

**VOLUME 69** *Curb Your Enthusiasm and Philosophy: Awaken the Social Assasin Within* (2012) Edited by Mark lkowski

for full details of all Popular Culture and Philosophy® books, visit [www.opencourtbooks.com](http://www.opencourtbooks.com).

*Volume 111 in the series, Popular Culture and Philosophy*<sup>®</sup>, edited by George A. Reisch

To find out more about Open Court books, visit our website at [www.opencourtbooks.com](http://www.opencourtbooks.com).

Open Court Publishing Company is a division of Carus Publishing Company, dba Cricket Media.

Copyright © 2017 by Carus Publishing Company, dba Cricket Media

First printing 2017

All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system, or transmitted, in any form or by any means, electronic, mechanical, photocopying, recording, or otherwise, without the prior written permission of the publisher, Open Court Publishing Company, 70 East Lake Street, Suite 800, Chicago, Illinois 60601.

Printed and bound in the United States of America.

*The Man in the High Castle and Philosophy: Subversive Reports from Another Reality*

ISBN: 978-0-8126-9963-0

Library of Congress Control Number: 2017942595

This book is also available as an e-book.

# Contents

Thanks	vii
<b>I Now Wait for Last Season</b>	1
1. Juliana in Plato's Cave DENNIS M. WEISS	3
2. Say Heil! to Architecture FERNANDO GABRIEL PAGNONI BERNS AND EMILIANO AGUILAR	15
3. Saving Hitler's Life DONALD MCCARTHY	25
<b>II The World Dick Made</b>	35
4. Cruel Optimism and the Good Nazi Life LUKASZ MUNIOWSKI	37
5. In the Neutral Zone, a Libertarian's Home Is Their (High) Castle M. BLAKE WILSON	47
6. The Self-Willed and Ignorant Law MARC W. COLE	59
7. What if Your Hero Is a Fascist? BRUCE KRAJEWSKI	71
<b>III Captives of Unchance</b>	81
8. Is It Free Will If You Pay for It? JOHN V. KARAVITIS	83
9. Could the Axis Have Won the War? MIGUEL PALEY	93
10. Defying Fate BENJAMIN EVANS	105

significance of the historical moment, Frink constantly looks for a way to avoid it. Even after being exposed to the films made by the Man in the High Castle, regardless of believing them, Frink wants to destroy them and just run away. Juliana wants to act, while her fiancé just wants to hide and lead what he assumes is a normal life, marry her and have children.

This is the life that Smith aspired to and succeeded in reaching, yet he fails to enjoy it, because he constantly needs to defend the current order. While he's right that it is under threat, Smith fails to allow himself just a moment to enjoy the fruits of his labor. His wife is clearly stressed, while the children do their best in keeping up appearances—something they have learned from both of their parents. Is this what Frink would want? Doubtful, just as it is doubtful that Smith envisioned his life to be that way.

Both of them are perfect case studies of Lauren Berlant's "cruel optimism," as their attachments failed to make good on their promise of the good life.

## 5 In the Neutral Zone, A Libertarian's Home Is Their (High) Castle

M. BLAKE WILSON

The greatest menace in the twentieth century is the totalitarian state. It can take many forms: left-wing fascism, psychological movements, religious movements, drug rehabilitation places, powerful people, manipulative people; or it can be in a relationship with someone who is more powerful than you psychologically.

—PHILIP K. DICK in Charles Platt, *Dream Makers*, p. 150.

Philip K. Dick exorcised many psychological demons through his work—those involving the appearance-reality distinction, the difference between madness and sanity, and the fractioning of the self—but a coherent and clear political stance does not emerge.

However, by combining Dick's paranoia with the moral positions he takes in *The Man in the High Castle* and other works, it's possible to decipher what kind of political mind is at work behind the idea that the United States lost World War II. Throughout these works, Dick takes a strong stance about self-ownership and privacy rights. These rights destabilize the powerful—Nazis, in particular—and strengthen the powerless and humble characters, like Juliana and Frank, who act as Dick's heroes. Like Juliana, in her staggering journey to the High Castle in order to topple fascism, we are also morally obligated to prevent her fictional world from becoming our reality. Libertarianism—the moral and

political philosophy that stands for more rights and less government—is the best way to fulfill that obligation, and the desire for liberty is what motivates these characters as they struggle against totalitarianism.

### To the High Castle

Unlike Ayn Rand, whose fiction repeatedly slams readers over the head with its political standpoint (as in *Atlas Shrugged* and its defense of free-market capitalism), Dick's political views in *High Castle* are more subtle. Some of those views, however, are obvious. For starters, it's evident that *High Castle* is anti-fascist. Nazis are bad. Don't be like them. Actually, if you're a Nazi, life in *The High Castle* looks pretty good. But for the rest of us, life looks pretty lousy, and that's because you have few or no rights.

Totalitarianism is bad because it violates rights, and one of the rights it violates more than others is the right to privacy. This right protects many of the other rights that totalitarian governments want to take away: your decisions about self-determination, how you use your property, whether you have children and what kinds of sex you have, and with whom. Dick himself was wary—no, he was downright terrified—of power and authority in general: bosses, teachers, and, most importantly, the police and the governments they defend.

Libertarians share similar fears. Like Dick, they fear the loss of privacy, the punishment of so-called deviant or esoteric lifestyles, and the imposition of state-imposed racism. They also fear the military, particularly when it gains the upper hand over other institutions. These fears, of course, are the realities of those persecuted by the Nazi and Imperial Japanese elites in *The Man in the High Castle*.

From the 1950s through to his death in 1982—*The Man in the High Castle* was published in 1962—Dick believed he was living in an increasingly totalitarian United States, an evil empire marked by political corruption (Watergate, the Pentagon Papers), the decimation of civil rights (privacy in

particular), and violence (such as state violence in the form of police brutality and war, and also crime or street violence). So, Dick's alternative to the fascism of *The Man in the High Castle* is not "the real world" where Dick lived: that real world was, for Dick, the inspiration for the novel.

During the Eisenhower era Dick feared that there was a "great movement toward a totalitarian state," where "anybody who is a dissenter is labeled as a traitor" (*Philip K. Dick: In His Own Words*, p. 121). In this sense, *The Man in the High Castle*'s world is just a fictionalized version of the world Dick inhabited, where all it takes is selective amnesia about rights—and privacy rights in particular—to turn the world of *The Man in the High Castle* into political reality.

### Give Me Libertarianism or Give Me . . .

As D.E. Wittkower writes in *Philip K. Dick and Philosophy*, "it is not so surprising that Dick will turn out to be a social-political philosopher rather than an epistemologist or metaphysician. His questions are still about value and how we should live" (p. 107). Questions about value and how we live are ethical questions, while epistemologists deal with questions about truth and knowledge (how can I claim to know something?) and metaphysicians field questions about being and reality (what kinds of things exist? What is real?). *The Man in the High Castle* is about *who* has political power, *how* can that power be used (control, benevolence, violence), and *what* can be done when the power is abused. It indeed deals with ethics, but also with politics and law which are subsets of ethics.

Dick's own political thinking—revealed primarily through interviews—tends to be naive and self-contradictory. In an interview shortly before his death, Dick effused that he was "anti-capitalist" yet "not a Marxist," that "Mussolini was a very, very great man," and that the "paradigm of evil" is the "totalitarian state." Although Mao was one of the greatest totalitarian leaders in the modern world, Dick admitted he cried when "that great man" died, while paradoxically

considering himself an expert in “opposing authority” (*Philip K. Dick: In His Own Words*, pp. 119–121, 142, and *Philip K. Dick: The Last Testament*, p. 89).

Despite these quotes, the political message of *The Man in the High Castle* and other writings (particularly *A Scanner Darkly*) is clear: the loss of privacy is a major moral and political problem. Privacy protects how people make moral decisions and how they choose to live, and it’s one of the primary rights in the libertarian’s quiver. The opposite of libertarianism is totalitarianism, and totalitarianism is recognized by the absence of a right to privacy. A person has a right to privacy—in their thoughts, home, or actions—if they have the right to exclude others from those places and if others are under a duty of not to interfere with them. No right to exclude? No duty of noninterference? Then there is no right to privacy, and the results are the terrifying worlds of both *The Man in the High Castle* and another classic literary dystopia about the loss of privacy, George Orwell’s *Nineteen Eighty-Four*. So who’s a libertarian and why is privacy so important to them?

Libertarianism is based upon the idea that, as John Locke writes, you have a property in your person, which “nobody has any right to but” yourself. This, of course, is the right of self-ownership. Human beings, by virtue of the fact that they are not an android or a rock, possess certain rights just like they possess DNA or possess an arm or leg. From here, libertarianism splits off into right and left branches.

A conservative libertarian (we’ll call them “right libertarians,” or just the “right”) opposes the state because it’s coming for their God-given rights to their guns, property and their religion, while a liberal (or “left”) libertarian opposes it because they want to use drugs, choose (or not choose) to have an abortion, and not get drafted. They share at least two basic beliefs: first, the basis of liberty is self-ownership, and second, liberty requires privacy. Lockean self-ownership means that everybody owns themselves, and the state acts beyond its authority when it treats people as if it owns them. Because you own yourself, you have rights

like the right to privacy that the government may never violate—even if violating your rights leads to the greater good. If the state violates these rights, you have no obligation to obey it. In fact, as Locke makes clear, you have an obligation to resist it.

Although they agree about self-ownership, right and left libertarians have very different ideas about property rights. Right libertarians justify world and resource ownership in terms of “finders, keepers” and voluntary transactions, while the left denies that self-ownership can ever translate into world ownership: either everyone owns the world, or no one does. This permits everyone to have a stake in all the world’s resources, and that means taking property from its current owners, such as large multinational corporations, through either pitchforks-and-torches-type force or legal force through something like eminent domain. So, unlike many right libertarians who fear governmental power but ignore corporate domination, left libertarians fear the government and corporations.

Dick falls into the latter category. In 1982, just two weeks before he died, Dick made this clear when he told biographer Gregg Rickman, “I have no respect for the free enterprise system because it is inequitable. . . . Everything that we left-wingers ever predicted about the free enterprise system has all come true” (*Philip K. Dick: The Last Testament*, p. 148). The system, Dick says, exists “for the welfare of the rich and the powerful at the expense of the poor and the powerless. If you are a human being and you are in danger of freezing to death, you had damned well better throw out this government [the Reagan Administration] one way or another because it will let you die” (pp. 149–150).

### Dick’s Politics of Paranoia

Both right and left libertarians fear control, spying, manipulation, and limitation on choices, all of which are kept in check by a right to privacy. If you feel secure in your “persons, houses, papers, and effects” (that’s the Fourth Amendment

speaking), then you probably have strong privacy rights. If you don't feel secure, then you—like the oppressed groups in *The Man in the High Castle*—probably have weak or non-existent privacy rights. Dick's paranoia about his own privacy seeps into his conceptions of the state and of authority and therefore his characters. Dick was "terrified of Authority Figures like bosses and cops and teachers," and this explains why he became his own boss as a freelance writer (Olander and Greenberg, p. 216).

Dick had an understandable fear of fascism, but also a potentially irrational fear of his own government. His paranoia is often the result of a belief that obvious authorities (the president and the FBI) and not so obvious authorities (corporations, sinister societies) are operating both in front of and behind the scenes. They jointly spy, exploit the weak, dehumanize the disadvantaged, and suppress dissent through charges of treason. Despite his paranoia, it is unlikely that the police in Dick's nonfictional California were defending totalitarianism, but, like the Kempeitai and the SD in *The Man in the High Castle*, when they get too much power they cross the line and violate privacy rights. The Founding Fathers understood that a Constitution ought to prevent the police—and the government that employs and directs them—from crossing that line by establishing the Bill of Rights. From the looks of it, there's no Bill of Rights protecting anyone in the Reich or the Pacific States.

One of the reasons for Dick's insecurity about privacy, and a key event in his biography, was the infamous break-in of 1971. On assignment for *Rolling Stone*, Dick's literary executor and biographer Paul Williams writes that in November of that year, Dick "unlocked the front door of his house in San Rafael, California, and turned on the living-room lights. His stereo was gone. The floor was covered with water and pieces of asbestos. The fireproof, 1,100-pound asbestos-and-steel file cabinet that protected his precious manuscripts had been blown apart by powerful explosives" (*Only Apparently Real*, p. 13). In a 1981 interview, Dick attributed the break-in to a privately organized and government sponsored "nation-wide

para-military organization" that harasses self-described left-wingers like him as well as anti-nuclear protestors (*Philip K. Dick: The Last Testament*, p. 86). There's nothing that makes a paranoid feel more secure than proving their fear of the government with facts, and the break-in did just that for Dick. He wrote about the breakdown of privacy in America in *The Man in the High Castle*, and then experienced it himself first-hand.

Dick's paranoia about privacy is a recurring theme in his work. The plot of *A Scanner Darkly* (both the novel and movie) revolves around privacy and its loss in a technologically advanced culture. (As I type this, I pause to check my iPhone. I have a home security camera which gives me a view of the inside of my home and dog through an app. I've often wondered if one day I'll tune in to my own home from my office and see myself sitting there, reading a book or watching TV, oblivious to the fact I am watching a version of myself. If you've read *A Scanner Darkly* or seen the movie, you know exactly what I'm talking about. Paranoia? Sure.)

### How Do We Stop It from Happening Here?

Because they support a strong privacy right—again, the right to exclude the state from your body or home—libertarians (both kinds) are committed to limiting the power of police either through legislation or through the courts. One simple set of laws is already contained in the Bill of Rights. When added to other protections in the Bill, such as protections for speech and religious freedoms as well as private property, the courts have located a general privacy right that protects against state interferences with birth control, abortion, wiretapping, and property (unless that property is taken, pursuant to the Fifth Amendment, "for public use," and "just compensation" is provided). This right means that you have the right to exclude the state from those protected areas, and that the state has a duty not to interfere with the exercise of your rights in those areas.

The violation of privacy in the Pacific States was made vividly clear in Season One, episode 6 when Juliana, after getting a job in the Trade Ministry, is horrified to find that her stepfather, Arnold, isn't a bus driver: he heads up the domestic surveillance unit for the Japanese. The usual Phildickian paranoia turns from irrational fear to rational fact: the police and their lackeys are eavesdropping, bugging phones, and keeping tabs on what appears to be hundreds of telephone conversations. The loss of privacy goes hand in hand with the loss of liberty.

Libertarians are committed to a smaller or minimal state that does not engage in this kind of activity. Such a state requires few rules, and it's no coincidence that many contemporary libertarians (mostly on the right) believe that the rules and ideas contained in the Constitution are sufficient to guarantee a secure yet free state. But can the libertarian minimal state prevent a takeover by *internal* fascists? One of the most chilling implications of *The Man in the High Castle* is that the Nazis won by drawing out the domestic bullyboys (John Smith, for example) from the stained fabric of racist America and sucking them into either being traitors during the war, or ambitious pragmatists afterward. As they say, if you can't beat 'em, join 'em. Judging from their rapid and uncompromising rise to power after the war's end, Smith and other American Nazis joined 'em without even *trying* to beat 'em.

### The Pacific States: The Lesser of Evils?

What about the Japanese totalitarians? In the novel, Dick appears to softball Japanese fascism. According to Dick critic Darko Suvin, Dick's assumption that a victorious Japanese fascism would be radically better than a German one is "the major political blunder" of *The Man in the High Castle* (Olander and Greenberg, p. 76). Suvin also writes that "Dick repeatedly hints that the atmosphere of the USA is the antithesis of that found in the PSA. This dichotomy is embodied in Mr. Tagomi. In the novel, Tagomi—realizing that there's no balance between the powerful evil and the saintly

weak—exclaims, "There is evil! It's actual, like cement. Evil is not a view." Dick frequently has the understanding that political people and their power (be it military, economic, or industrial) are evil in contrast to his heroes, who tend to be ordinary people like Juliana and Frank. Although he stretches the mold a bit because of his political position as Trade Minister, Tagomi is a prime example of this kind of evil-fighting hero.

According to critic Patricia Warrick, "the totalitarian spirit, implemented by techniques and machines, creates this evil. It is evil because it destroys the authentically human spirit" (p. 188). For Dick, Satan acts through the Fascists, and Tagomi refuses to partake in their evil by declining to sign the form that will send Frank to a certain death in Germany. Dick implies that the world would be just if it was ruled by a man like Tagomi. Why does Dick place so much faith in this character? The answer may lie in a traumatic episode from Dick's biography

In an interview, Dick tells the story of seeing a World War II newsreel as a child which showed American soldiers killing a Japanese soldier with a flamethrower. The audience, Dick said, laughed and cheered. As the soldier was running and burning to death, Dick was "dazed with horror at the sight of the man on the screen and at the audience's reaction" and thought, "something is terribly wrong" (*Dream Makers*, p. 154). Coupling this story with Tagomi's moral compass, Dick takes sides in the novel on behalf of the Japanese. This favoring of the Japanese is thoroughly demolished in the TV show, where the Japanese have an uneasy alliance with the Reich that culminates in the murder of Juliana's sister, and, even worse, in the Nazi-like execution of Frank's sister and children. Whatever moral high ground Tagomi might possess as a Phildickian hero is smashed by the actions of his countrymen, and the Pacific States of America is no better than the Reich.

Why wouldn't oppressed white people flee the PSA for the Neutral Zone, which resembles what John Locke, Thomas Hobbes and other philosophers call the "state of nature"?

Maybe, as Hobbes argues, any kind of government—even an oppressive one—is better than the anarchy of the state of nature because at least your fellow citizens are intimidated by the same government you also fear and therefore provides security against one another. This is a scary idea: because the threats to your security by other governments or from your own neighbors are worse than the threats from the government itself, any government—even a really, really bad one—is better than no government at all. In that case, the loss of privacy is outweighed by the gain in security.

### F is for Fascist and Fake, but not Fake Fascists

Dick loved to play with the idea of the fake, and *The Man in the High Castle* is full of fakes including Frank's gun and the phony Sitting Bull artifact. But although the violence is real, the explanation for it is fake. Thanks to Tagomi's mystical vision at the end of the story (it's roughly the same in both novel and the show) and to Juliana's encounter with *Grasshopper* novelist Hawthorne Abendsen (he's the filmmaker in the series), we discover what it must have felt like for Charlton Heston's character at the end of the original 1968 version of *Planet of the Apes*: we're home, and we never left it.

What's fake in *The Man in the High Castle* is the claim that the pre-Reich USA lost the war. *Grasshopper*, both film and book, is true: the United States won the war. Or, more accurately, *part* of it won: the absolute worst features of American culture—racism, violence, the violation of basic human rights—are the ones that triumph in the *Reich* government that 'replaced' the US government. The leaders themselves, aided by men like John Smith, always wanted a fascist, racially-pure USA, but knew it wouldn't play in Peoria. So the US won, or could have won, but faked a loss: the important, powerful, and evil people threw the fight and collaborated with the losers to bring the losers' ideology to the States from within.

The Germans aren't the victors: the *American* Nazis are. Recall John Smith's chilling portrayal of a loving suburban father cheerily wishing his neighbor Harry "Sieg Heil" on VA day—in Nazi America, Victory in America Day has replaced the Fourth of July—and then urging his thugs to torture a helpless prisoner until he dies. He supposedly fought for us, and now he's running the show against us. He won.

Dick's subtext is that the United State was already morally evil and capable of implementing political evil, but the takeover by Nazis would need to be pulled off as a trick or a fake because even the Americans wouldn't have capitulated to the 'enemy.' America won—it's right there in *Grasshopper's* novel and newsreels—then fabricated a loss in order to ease the transition to the ideology many Americans, or at least the ones who run the government and the corporations, *really* believed in. Not only can it happen here, but I've got news for you: it *already* happened here.

In the alternative world of *The Man in the High Castle*, America fought against racist fascists (and won) but in doing so it fought against its own racism and military aggression—and lost. It fought against a version of itself as many wished it to be: racially pure and highly efficient, with no jazz or rock music and no gender equality. *The Man in the High Castle* is, according to Suvin, "the high point of Dick's explicitly political anti-utopianism," partially because it reveals the "affinities between German and American fascism, born of the same social classes of big speculators and small shopkeepers." The alternative history depicted in the story is that of a minority view—fascism—that becomes the mainstream.

### "Sunrise" and the Triumph of Evil

In "Sunrise," Frank is in the custody of the Kempeitai and is tortured. He meets Randall—the resistance member Juliana met at the train station—and learns about the revolution. Frank wants no part of it. Randall says "Evil triumphs only when good men do nothing." Frank screams. Randall's words are inspired by a quote from the Anglo-Irish political writer,



Edmund Burke, whose actual words were, "The only thing necessary for evil to triumph is for good men to do nothing." Burke was a conservative who disapproved of the French Revolution's radical changes because they disrupt established social harmony (though he was more favorable to the American Revolution). Burke would probably have shrugged his shoulders at the Pacific States: revolution would be too costly with little chance of winning, and life's better there than in the Neutral Zone or the Reich. In fact, that's Frank's take on revolution—until he's tortured and released, of course. Then he becomes a revolutionary and a failed assassin.

With a slight twist to Burke's quote, Dick once said that "ethics may far more involve an abstention from evil than a commission of good. We tend to regard ethics and morality as motivations to do good, good works. It may be actually more identifiable authentically with a balking and a refusal . . . to do something, from some kind of innate perception that this is not done" (*Philip K. Dick: In His Own Words*, p. 144). This was the case with Tagomi, who refuses to do evil by refusing (in the novel) to authorize Frank's deportation to Germany.

In *The Man in the High Castle*, too few people refused, too many people acted, and when they acted they violated people's rights. But there's little hope for totalitarianism if nobody shows up to the torch-lit midnight rallies. Libertarianism means less law and more liberty. It uses the basic idea of freedom to put constraints on the state when it tries to use law to promote the kind of racism, loss of privacy, and violence saluted by Obergruppenführer Smith's "Sieg Heil!"

Dick's fear—and it's a fear shared by anyone who can grasp the humanitarian message of the story—is that here in the United States, maybe even in our own neighborhoods, someone is watching Obergruppenführer Smith with admiration and thinking the world would be a better place had Dick's alternative history been the true one.

The alternative to the alternative history is reality. And that's not science fiction at all.

## 6 The Self-Willed and Ignorant Law

MARC W. COLE

But we see law bending itself more or less towards this very thing; it resembles some self-willed and ignorant person, who allows no one to do anything contrary to what he orders, not to ask any questions about it, not even if, after all, something new turns out for someone which is better, contrary to the prescription which he himself has laid down.

—PLATO, *The Statesman* (lines 294a10–c8)

Obergruppenführer John Smith's face was contorted in agony, as if his father's heart was torn out. The doctor told him that his son had a disease that, under Nazi law, required his son's death.

This scene is loaded with philosophically interesting material, including the nature of statecraft. Why does the state control who lives and who dies? Why is the law blind to this father's love of child? Presumably, the Reich wants the best possible society for those it deems worthy. Who got to say that this sort of law was best for citizens? The Reich as well as Japan in *The Man in the High Castle* are often called fascist regimes. Undoubtedly. However, the structure of these governments was discussed favorably by Plato 2,400 years ago. Let's call the template "Plato's Republic" after the name of his book, *The Republic*.

**BRUCE KRAJEWSKI** is Professor and Chair of the Department of English at the University of Texas at Arlington. He has written about fascism in *The New York Times*, and published a few bits about philosophy and esotericism. He wonders whether Maurice Blanchot is correct in his famous essay on science fiction when Blanchot writes, "No one is interested in the existence of a completely different time of a completely different world."

**DONALD MCCARTHY** is an adjunct professor at SUNY Old Westbury and a graduate of the City College of New York's MFA program. He's published both fiction and non-fiction at venues such as *Salon*, *Paste Magazine*, *Alternet*, *Plots with Guns*, and more. He has yet to visit an alternate universe, but his desire to do so grows with every passing day.

**LUKASZ MUNIOWSKI** is a doctoral student at the Faculty of Neophilology at Warsaw University. He's working on a thesis entitled "Tools of the Weak: The Transgressive Art of Hubert Selby, Jr." In addition to a publication about *Last Exit to Brooklyn*, he also has a piece in *Acta Philologica* on Michael Jordan as a mythical figure.

**FERNANDO GABRIEL PAGONI BERNIS** (PhD student) works at Universidad de Buenos Aires (UBA) as Professor in "Literatura de las Artes Combinadas II." He teaches seminars on international horror film and has published chapters in books such as *Peanuts and Philosophy: You're a Wise Man Charlie Brown!* (2017) and *Horrors of War: The Undead on the Battlefield* (2015). He lives in an alternate universe where TV reality stars become presidents and people in the Oscars can't keep straight who's won the prize. How very self-indulgent of him.

**MIGUEL PALEY** is a pataphysicist, head coach of The New School Men's Basketball team (The Narwhals), and a PhD candidate in philosophy at The New School for Social Research. When not screaming at his team to play defense, Miguel writes on Bergson's philosophy of mind and its influence on the work of Emmanuel Levinas, Alfred Whitehead, and Hans Jonas. He also deeply admires the names of Üexkull and Hundertwasser. Gabriel Garcia Marquez once made him gross lemonade.

**FRANKLIN PERKINS** is Professor of Philosophy at the University of Hawai'i at Mānoa, a position he came to through a number of factors, including a middle-school decision to study martial arts, an encounter with Leibniz's writings on China, and Allied victory in World War II. In *The Grasshopper Lies Heavy*, he is most likely a carpenter. In this reality, instead, he is editor of the journal *Philosophy East and West* and author of *Heaven and Earth Are not Humane: The Problem of Evil in Classical Chinese Philosophy*, *Leibniz: A Guide for the Perplexed*, and *Leibniz and China: A Commerce of Light*.

**ELIZABETH RARD** is currently working on her PhD in philosophy at UC Davis in California. Neighbors describe her as perfectly pleasant, but with a rather distorted memory of history. She will regularly stare blankly while famous historical events are discussed, and will sometimes reference wars that no one else seems to remember, all while drinking her five-cent instant tea, admiring her marigolds dreamily, and enjoying a suspicious looking smoke from a packet marked "Land-o-Smiles."

**DENNIS WEISS** is a fan of all-things televisual and when he's not watching television he is Professor of Philosophy at York College of Pennsylvania where he regularly teaches courses on the intersections of philosophy, technology, popular culture, and science fiction. He's authored articles exploring the philosophical implications of Buffy, Data, Dick, and Sarah (a certain clone) and is the editor of *Interpreting Man* (2003) and *Design, Mediation, and the Posthuman* (2014). He is currently at work on a project examining the rise of the posthuman in twenty-first century television.

**M. BLAKE WILSON** is Assistant Professor of Criminal Justice at California State University, Stanislaus. Before that, he was a graduate student working on political philosophy. Before that, he was a criminal defense lawyer. Before that, he was a law student tracking down Philip K. Dick books at a time when most of them were out of print. He contributed a chapter to *The Who and Philosophy* (2016) by pretending to understand Nietzsche, tragedy, and Pete Townshend.

As a PhD student in Environmental Psychology at the University of Gröningen, **STEPHANIE J. ZAWADZKI** spends most of her