

Civilization and Its (Dys)contents: Savagery, Technological Progress and Capitalism in Industrial and Information Dystopias

Daphne Jong

Abstract

The figure of Prometheus—depicted as both a benefactor of human civilization and an instigator of retribution as a result of hubris—emblemizes the double-edged nature of technological progress. Modern concern about whether technology¹ contributes to the advancement of human civilization or if it represents dehumanization has become a hallmark of the dystopian genre. Such a premise beckons the question as to whether dystopian literature pits humanity against technology in order to criticize technological progress and the extent to which such dystopias are inherently anti-progress, especially due to such novels' fetishization of 'savagery,' a world uncorrupted by civilization and its technologies. By examining critical theory and the representation of technology in dystopian literature written during the Industrial Age and the Information Age, which I respectively label as 'industrial dystopias'² and 'information dystopias,'³ this article aims to explore the relationship between technology and humanity, looking at the transition from the mechanized-self to the quantified-self in industrial and information dystopias and how each novel (re)negotiates the relationship between technology and humanity at two different points of radical technological transformation in human civilization. This article will ultimately argue that dystopian literature about technology is not an indictment of technological progress but a criticism of technological utopianism when embedded within the logic of capitalism.

¹ In this thesis, the term 'technology' will be used to describe any application of scientific knowledge for practical purposes

² In this article, the term 'industrial dystopia' will be used to describe dystopian fiction written in the twentieth century in response to the rise of mechanization as a result of the Industrial Revolution

³ In this article, the term 'information dystopia' will be used to describe dystopian fiction written in the twenty-first century, where industrial dystopias criticize the mechanization of human life in the Industrial Age, information dystopias are preoccupied with how the information economy has led to the quantification of human life.

“Man has become a god by means of artificial limbs, so to speak, quite magnificent when equipped with all his accessory organs; but they do not grow on him and they still give him trouble at times...”

– Sigmund Freud, *Civilization and its Discontents*

Dystopian Fiction and the Problem of Technological Progress

The rise of technology has become concomitant with the budding popularity of utopian and dystopian fiction, a genre that is distinctly preoccupied with imagined, alternative societies. Although progress—be it through the technological or sociopolitical structures of civilization—is seemingly utopian in nature, the human desire to create a better world creates dystopian impulses. M. Keith Booker observes that “even during the triumphant rise of science to cultural hegemony in the seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries, writers [...] were already warning of the potential dangers (especially spiritual) of an overreliance on scientific and technological methods” (Booker, 1994). Where utopian thinking had been strictly restricted to the territory of fiction during the fifteenth to sixteenth-century, modern technology has enabled utopian ideas to become a reality. Despite this, the reality created by technology during the enlightenment and industrial revolution inadvertently generated an air of marked skepticism towards utopian thinking; a society based on unity, progress and perfectibility suddenly seemed less humane and a potential model for totalitarianism, resulting in a dystopian turn during the twentieth-century.

Dystopian fiction fuses two fears—the fear of technology and the fear of a utopia created by technology. Howard P. Segal wrote that “technological pessimism has become an integral part of the emerging culture of postmodernism,” whilst Leo Marx saw this disenchantment as a “vision of a postmodern society dominated by intense, overlapping, quasi-autonomous technological systems” (Segal, 1994; Marx, 1994). The dystopian imagination posits an alternative society where utopia is achieved yet human impulses smart under the stifling structures of a technologically advanced civilization. This was born out of a reality that suggested that technological progress would not have an emancipatory effect on human civilization; mechanization was antithetical to humanity, especially as the industrial revolution turned workers into cogs in a machine whilst digitization turned human users into commodified data. Such a reality led to a dystopian turn in critical theory and literature, paving the way for twentieth-century industrial dystopias such as *Brave New World* (1932) and twenty-first century information dystopias like *The Circle* (2013) and *Super Sad True Love Story (SSTLS)* (2010). Although industrial dystopias render human beings part of the greater “machine”, leading to the mechanization of the self and information dystopias turn human beings into bytes of information, an exploration of these novels will reveal that both industrial and information dystopias are ultimately a socioeconomic critique of commodification rather than a critique of technological progress in and of itself.

Industrial Dystopia: The Assembly Line and the Mechanized Self

Technology is often configured as inherently structural and inimical to human freedom in dystopian literature. In *Civilization and Its Discontents*, Freud sees civilization as a word that “describes the whole sum of the achievements and the regulations which distinguish our lives from that of our animal ancestors” and exists “to protect men against nature and to adjust their mutual relations” (Freud, 1989). The technological gains that are concomitant with the advancement of civilization enforces the false notion that material comfort is a valid exchange for freedom. In *Brave New World*, Huxley criticizes the “civilized” rules by which the World State abides as those ways are at odds with the normal ways of human life that the novel textually describes as “savage”. His view is informed by his own experience of the triumph of the technology over the human spirit as the novel was written post-World War I, an era when technological progress was sought at all costs. The dystopian reality of *Brave New World*'s eugenic super-state has led John Attarian to see the novel as an “indictment of tyranny and technology” (Attarian, 2003). Huxley envisions a future where humanity becomes subordinate to the systematic machine as the social population is artificially engineered, children are raised through psychological manipulation and the past has been destroyed through the eradication of books and monuments related to the former society. The novel immediately sets up an antithetical relationship between technology and humanity, implying that technological utopianism requires sacrificing basic human freedoms.

Brave New World imagines a society where technology is not made for man as technology has “tamed” society, producing a population of slaves who have grown to love rather than despise their servitude. Huxley's vision anticipates Marcuse's criticism in *One-Dimensional Man*, which describes the development of “a non-terroristic economic-technical coordination which operates through the manipulation of needs by vested interests” as a phenomenon called “technological rationality” (Marcuse, 2002). Technological rationality runs counter to humanist values in *Brave New World*—subservience to the state is enabled through technology yet Huxley demonstrates the potential for revolution through the figure of the Savage, a character which represents humanity's free, natural state. The possibility of exercising freedom is predicated upon the conscious rejection of civilization and happiness; as John the Savage fervently proclaims, “I don't want comfort. I want God, I want poetry, I want real danger, I want freedom, I want goodness. I want sin” (Huxley, 2006). Huxley pits the values of humanism—freedom, morality, God—against those of the anti-humanist World State, which does not see man as an autonomous being but as mere parts in the social machine. Adorno reads the society of *Brave New World* as one where everyone is “unconditionally subordinated to the functioning of the whole” (Adorno, 1983). Huxley's satirical moderation of the rallying motto of the French Revolution—“Community, Identity and Stability”—

illustrates the death of the individual in a mechanized world. His use of the word “Identity” is a witty choice; the term is imbued with multiple meanings as it refers identity of an individual, yet it also signifies the state of being identical to everything else. In *Brave New World*, the word identity represents the latter as the Fordian system eliminates individuality and creates a standardized populace through biotechnical engineering.

The citizens of *Brave New World* have submitted to the totalitarian power of the Fordist World State like parts on an assembly line, a notion that is exemplified by the World State’s implementation of human cloning: “[S]tandard Gammas, unvarying Deltas, uniform Epsilons. Millions of identical twins. The principle of mass production at last applied to Biology.” Huxley satirizes the mechanization of man as a result of the introduction of mass production technology in the early twentieth-century. The father of the assembly line, Ford, even replaces God as the object of worship in the World State. This dystopian vision of mass production reflects widespread fears about the dehumanizing effects of a highly-mechanized world during Huxley’s period. In Charlie Chaplin’s *Modern Times* (1936), Little Tramp works on the assembly-line and repeatedly tightens the bolt on parts in front of him before the conveyor belt is sped up to the point where his body begins to twitch uncontrollably in a way that mirrors the motion required to tighten a bolt. The notion of the human body becoming increasingly machine-like reaches its height in a later scene, where Little Tramp gets trapped on the conveyor belt and is fed into the machine; as his body rolls through the cogs, he literally becomes a cog in the machine.



FIGURE 1. Charlie Chaplin, *Modern Times* (United States: Charles Chaplin Productions, 1936).

This imagery of the human body becoming a part of the machine is similarly evident in *Brave New World*, where Mustapha Mond

comments how the “wheels” of society “must turn steadily,” tended by “men as steady as the wheels upon their axles, sane men, obedient men, stable in contentment.” The metaphor of men as “wheels” illustrates that the citizens of the World State are mere parts; human subjects are only valuable if they fulfill their designated social function. The use of technology—from pharmacology to eugenics—creates efficient social arrangements and maintains social stability but this is done so at the cost of human freedom. Technology is used to create a mass-produced population of same-ness because individuality threatens social stability. As the Director of the Central London Hatchery and Conditioning Center states, individuality “threatens more than the life of a mere individual; it strikes at Society itself.” The Director’s emphasizes that human autonomy undermines social order and that stability is dependent on a placid acceptance of the status quo.

The power of the World State is maintained through biotechnological, pharmacological and psychological engineering, producing a conditioned subjectivity that allows society to regulate itself. Marcuse calls this conditioned subjectivity the “happy consciousness,” a perceptive mode where the individual accepts the parameters of the status quo even if is morally questionable because their basic needs and desires are being satisfied (Marcuse, 2002). Mond expresses that there is no need for religion, philosophy or any other forms of critical thought “when our minds and bodies continue to delight in activity”—what need there is “of consolation, when we have soma? of something immovable, when there is the social order.” The technological civilization has no need for human nobility and heroism because these are “symptoms of political inefficiency.” In the World State, “immovable” universal principles are rendered useless because the social order fulfills the desires of its citizens and provides them with a happy consciousness. Despite this, the happy consciousness of the World State is an oppressive apparatus disguised as freedom. Much like Robert Nozick’s critique of the utilitarian belief that happiness is the only good through his thought experiment, the “experience machine,” which asks whether the individuals would choose to enter a pleasure generating machine despite the fact that it is not reality (Nozick, 2013), Huxley criticizes a hedonistic world where pleasure is the only good because the society presented in *Brave New World* is one where technology merely generates an outward appearance of contentment.

Citizens of the World State are provided with unlimited sexual freedom but this process of de-sublimation—allowing the libido freely expend itself on sexual acts—becomes oppressive; it reduces the possibility for sociopolitical resistance by exhausting the libidinous energies needed for the masses to rebel against the status quo. Mond himself knows this, as he informs the Savage: “what you ought to do is on the whole so pleasant, so many of the natural impulses are allowed free play, that there really aren’t any temptations to resist.” Even when this fails, Mond notes that “there’s always soma to give you a holiday from the facts.” The widespread use of soma in *Brave New World* is a seemingly utopian form of technology, “there’s always soma to calm

your anger, to reconcile you to your enemies, to make you patient and long-suffering,” and soma represents progress because “[i]n the past you could only accomplish these things by making a great effort and after years of hard moral training.” With technology, Mond expounds that “[a]nybody can be virtuous now [...] Christianity without tears—that’s what soma is.” Despite Mond’s compelling argument, the Savage feels unease as technological progress has eradicated the potential for genuine feeling and critical thought. Huxley satirizes the modern reliance on technological panaceas as soma provides the Savage’s mother, Linda, with a happy consciousness and reprieve from trauma of the Savage Reservation yet her expression is described as one of “imbecile happiness.” Huxley proposes that that “imbecile happiness” is the only type of happiness that can be achieved in the *Brave New World*. Although the technology of *Brave New World* provides the citizens of the World State with pleasure, it is a pleasure that the Savage perceives as frivolous and hollow. The Savage is a symbol for the autonomous human subject because, supposedly like the reader, he feels uncomfortable about the World State’s inauthentic happiness. This sense of discomfort stems from the ability for autonomous human subjects to recognize deception and reject that which is perceived as inauthentic.

Huxley suggests that the only way to escape from the oppressiveness of false happiness is to reject the comforts of civilization. The conditioned, happy consciousness blindly acquiesces to social reality but the unhappy consciousness is capable of conceiving a world beyond civilization’s status quo. The Savage’s rejection of civilization implies that savagery and the nobility of the human spirit is more important than the artificial happiness that civilization provides. He sees the beauty in isolation, self-awareness, individuality and suffering as he quotes a line from *Othello*: “If after every tempest come such calms, may the winds blow till they have wakened death.” For the Savage, human happiness is at its greatest when it is accompanied by human suffering; achieving an authentic form of happiness requires struggle but it is inherently superior to the comfort achieved through technology, which is why the Savage claims the right “to grow old and ugly and impotent; the right to have syphilis and cancer; the right to have too little to eat” and even “the right to be tortured by unspeakable pains of every kind.” Huxley uses the Savage’s character to reinforce the dichotomy between civilization and savagery as well as technology and nature: technological progress can eradicate suffering but progress is achieved at the expense of humanity.

The novel fetishizes the primitivism of mankind’s natural state when the Savage rejects the technologies of civilization in favor of the nobility of the human spirit, clinging onto his knowledge of human nature, spiritual beauty, mortality and religion. Baccolini and Moylan contend that the dystopia novel generates a “critical encounter that ensues when the citizen [in such a text] confronts, or is confronted by the contradictions of society” (Baccolini & Moylan, 2003). By choosing to be ‘savage’ over the seemingly utopian luxuries of a

technologically advanced civilization, the Savage exemplifies the persona described by Baccolini and Moylan: “a character who questions the dystopian society” and perceives “a deeper and more totalizing agenda in the dystopian form” (Baccolini & Moylan, 2003). The Savage’s ability to see beyond the utopian façade of the World State and rebel against conformity and material hedonism functions as a celebration of the Noble Savage, a character uncorrupted by civilization. The reader is compelled to identify with the Savage and abide by “old-fashioned” ideas of love, monogamy and freedom over the efficiency of technological progress. By compelling the reader to imagine something less utopian in an age where utopias can be achieved, Huxley challenges the reader to interrogate the form and desirability of a technological utopia.

The Savage becomes an embodiment of mankind’s desire to claim the most basic of rights, the right to be human, yet technological progress undermines humanity by eradicating freedom and individuality. In this sense, the Savage is the quintessential Noble Savage, a figure that defined as “stifled by the constraints of civilized society” (Baldick, 2004) due to his constant quest for pure primitivism. Civilization is designed to be utopian and savagery is seemingly dystopian yet this dichotomy is often inverted as savagery is seen as a more free and natural state. The Savage Reservation is technologically primitive but the Savage is afforded greater freedoms than the citizens of the World State with his unfettered access to philosophy, literature and nature. Huxley uses the Savage to illuminate the problem of a mechanized society that values material comfort over upholding individuality and the beauty of the human spirit. By lifting the veil behind a seemingly utopian civilization, *Brave New World* positions itself a novel that is inherently anti-progress, a belief is rooted in Freud’s writings about the incompatibility between man and civilization but also Rousseau’s notion that civil society’s desire for progress has resulted in social ills such as war and famine. To Rousseau, the savage man “wants only to live and remain idle” whilst the civilized man “sweats and scurries, constantly in search of ever more strenuous occupations: he works to the death, even rushes toward it in order to be in a position to live, or renounces life in order to acquire immortality” (Rousseau & Gourevitch, 1997). In this sense, technological progress is a Sisyphean trap and the Savage’s bold rejection of civilization embodies Rousseau’s notion of romantic primitivism, which stipulates that man’s ideal world lies backward rather than forward in time.

The dystopian reality of *Brave New World* is one where the World State has achieved stability through technological progress but the technologically advanced civilization presented in the novel is one of regress rather than progress. The word “Stability” in the World State’s motto, “Community, Identity and Stability,” illustrates that the World State lacks conflict but the word also conveys a lack of progress. The ultimate goal of the system is merely to uphold the system itself, leading to stagnation and therefore, regression. This is epitomized by Mond’s suggestion that “History is bunk,” which implores the citizens

of the World State to ignore the past in order to maintain social stability. The dystopian propensity to ignore the past means that there is ironically no past or future, merely a changeless present. As Adorno observes, the World State's discarding of everything "not in line with most recent methods of industrial production" and "all continuity of life" ultimately "cripples men" because "the inescapable self-sufficiency of their lives, the law of pure subjective functionalism – all result in pure desubjectivism. Purged of all myths, the scientifically manufactured subject-objects of the anti-Welgeist are infantile" (Adorno, 1983). In one passage, Huxley uses an almost cinematic-like montage of three narrative voices spliced on top of each other in order to dramatize the underlying contradiction between civilization and infantile regression:

"All crosses had their tops cut and became T's. There was a thing called God."
It's real morocco-surrogate.
"We have the World State now. And Ford's Day celebrations, and Community
Sings, and Solidarity Services."
"Ford, how I hate them!" (Huxley, 1932)

The diminished distinction between the symbol ("cross") and the referent ("Christianity") when the Holy cross metamorphoses into Ford Model Ts, belies a critique of Fordist material consumerism. God has been replaced by the blasphemous worshipping of Henry Ford, the father of the assembly line, where the capitalist pursuit of maximum efficiency and profit has led to the deterioration of the spiritual "self." This can be seen when secular rituals of the state as a bastardized re-interpretation of religion; the song chanted during the Orgy-Porgy is presented as a combination of American evangelism, nursery rhymes and sexual orgies:

Orgy-porgy, Ford and fun,
Kiss the girls and make them One.
Boys at one with girls at peace;
Orgy-porgy gives release.

The ridiculous nature of the song points to the triviality of secular rituals, where spiritual worship has been replaced by a worship of material consumerism, but also the fine line between civilization and savagery. The Orgy-Porgy is configured as a sort of tribal dance that claims to allow citizens to get in touch with their libidinal energies but it becomes evident that it is nothing more than a diminished expression of the libidinous id. The citizens of the World State act like pre-civilized men, able to release their primal urges but unable to derive spiritual joy from concepts of personal relationships such as family, which is ironically perceived as savagery: when the Director mentions that "the father and the mother," the students fall into an "uneasy silence" over the mention of such "smut." Adorno believes that the "kernel of the controversy" in *Brave New World* "is the hard and fast disjunction that one cannot be had without the other, technology without death and conditioning, progress without manipulated infantile regression" (Adorno, 1983). The behavior of the "civilized" characters

in *Brave New World* ultimately demonstrates the contradiction between advanced technology and a psychologically as well as spiritually regressive mentality that exists at the heart of the World State, evoking the human cost of technological progress and its economic entrapments.

Information Dystopias: The Rise of Neoliberalism and the Quantified Self

The type of technological progress depicted in *Brave New World* responds to the mechanization of mankind due to the rise of Fordist mass production and the assembly line in the industrial age but contemporary dystopian literature emerges out of the information age, where industrialization has been replaced by digitization. Huxley has undoubtedly exerted a massive influence over the dystopian genre with *Brave New World* owing to his suggestion that society can be controlled through pleasure rather than violence, yet the novel responds to state centralized use of technology for social control and the impact of mechanization on mankind, which is no longer applicable in the neoliberal era of distributed computing systems. Contemporary dystopian novels such as Dave Eggers' *The Circle* and Gary Shteyngart's *SSTLS* depict societies where man does not become part of a machine but a digitized data assemblage. This is evident in *The Circle*, when Mae is told that the Circle is not only a "workplace" but a "humanplace:" "We're not automatons. This isn't a sweatshop. We're a group of the best minds of our generation [...] our humanity is respected" (Eggers, 2014). The society of *The Circle* may have eradicated the industrial-era workplace where workers were mindless automatons, but it becomes evident that quantification can lead to more sinister implications than mechanization. Much like Huxley satirized excesses that were already bubbling at the surface of his contemporary world in *Brave New World*, Eggers and Shteyngart explore the explosive rise of information technologies in the twenty-first century and its effects on mankind. Seemingly utopian at the surface, *The Circle* and *SSTLS* both explore the dystopian impulses within information technologies in order to reflect on contemporary anxieties about the quantification of human life.

The Circle is set on the corporate campus that is "four hundred acres of brushed steel and glass." The abundance of glass symbolizes the role of transparency in the novel as the company's mission, "all that happens must be known," is outwardly utopian – surveillance implies "an era where we don't allow the majority of human thought and action and achievement and learning to escape as if from a leaky bucket" but it also means diminished privacy. Eggers satirizes contemporary technology companies like Google, conveying the potential for corporate control, social alienation and diminished privacy that results from technological progress. Readers witness the totalitarian undertones of *Brave New World* in *The Circle* yet state-sanctioned totalitarianism is reconfigured as corporate totalitarianism as Eggers masks the Circle's corporate tyranny as utopia. Eamon Bailey, one of the three founders of the Circle, praises the democratic

implications of covering every inch of public space with surveillance cameras called SeeChange: “Tyrants can no longer hide. There needs to be, and will be, documentation and accountability, and we need to bear witness.” The utopian potential of the Circle’s technology is made more apparent when applied to child-tracking as Bailey proclaims: “you take all child abduction, rape, murder, and you reduce it by 99 percent. And the price is that the kids have a chip in their ankle.” Despite this, Mae’s ex-boyfriend, Mercer, points out the issue of consenting to such surveillance: “Surveillance should not be the tradeoff for every goddamn service we get.” In the dystopian vein of *Brave New World*, *The Circle* projects a society where technology can create a secure and stable utopia but only through the destruction of personal autonomy and privacy.

Luna Dolezal argues that with the “imperatives of a data economy [...] human life becomes, in a sense, peripheral to data life” (Dolezal, 2016), which is an issue that is dramatized *The Circle*. The Circle combines social media metrics, banking and biometric data into a “universal operating system” called TruYou so that “[a]nytime you wanted to see anything, use anything, comment on anything or buy anything, it was one button, one account.” When information is prioritized over human life, moral and personal issues arise. Mercer expresses frustration over how social media has destroyed any opportunities for genuine interaction, telling Mae: “Every time I see or hear from you, it’s through this filter. You send me links, you quote someone talking about me, you say you saw a picture of me on someone’s wall [...] it’s always this third-party assault.” Mercer’s description of social media’s control over human interaction is an even more insidious type of surveillance than that imagined by Foucault in *Discipline and Punish*. The Circle’s diffuse matrix of information gathering evokes Deleuze “society of control,” which suggests that the Information Age is moving away from Foucault’s disciplinary society. Like Deleuze describes in *Postscript on the Societies of Control*, the Circle’s “dispersed installation of a new system of domination” means “We no longer find ourselves dealing with the mass/individual pair. Individuals have become ‘dividuals’ and masses, samples, data, markets or ‘banks’”(Deleuze, 1992). Every social interaction in *The Circle* becomes part of the collective because in a world where “Privacy is theft,” personal data must inevitably become subject to pervasive monitoring.

The Circle’s continuous monitoring and storage of personal data leads its users to become part of what Kevin Haggerty and Richard Ericson described as “surveillant assemblages,” which creates subjects that become abstracted from their social contexts and personal data stands in as proxy for the infinitely complex individual (Haggerty & Ericson, 2000). During Gus’ presentation about a newly developed technology at the Circle called LuvLuv, a human search engine that provides everything from an individual’s allergies to their favorite sports based on what is publicly available online, Mae feels a sense of unease. She asks herself what “had so mortified her during Gus’s presentation:” “Was it the pinpoint accuracy of the algorithms? Maybe.

But then again, it wasn't entirely accurate, so was that the problem? Having a matrix of preferences presented as your essence, as the whole you? Maybe that was it. It was some kind of mirror, but it was incomplete, distorted." Her statement epitomizes the notion that technological progress has resulted in individualization, which ultimately undermines the authenticity of the self so that it becomes "distorted." Authentic behavior is spontaneous but social media makes authenticity untenable. Mae's need to continuously self-monitor against the Circle's social media rubric transforms complex human behavior into quantifiable metrics: "she embarked on a flurry of activity, sending four zings and thirty-two comments and eighty-eight smiles. In an hour, her PartiRank rose to 7,288." By abiding to the logic of social media, Mae lacks the spontaneity of self that allows for authentic behavior. When social networks are transcoded into the digital world, human identity is reduced to bytes of data. In this regard, technological progress has not only resulted in an infringement of privacy but a sense of diminished authenticity as the "self" has become a part of the surveillant assemblage.

Users willingly relinquish their data to the Circle because they believe in the power of technology to eliminate disease, improve democracy, reduce crime and make knowledge accessible to all, but Eggers criticizes such a blind faith in technological utopian potential. Mae's character demonstrates the flawed logic of technological progress; she initially possesses humanistic traits, expressing unease about aspects of the Circle's practices, but she eventually becomes a post-human slave that naively buys into the utopian promises offered by the Circle. Mae is an unsympathetic protagonist but also an unreliable narrator as she possesses an irrational commitment to the Circle's mission and a skewed perception towards the Circle's dystopian reality, made explicit by the novel's satirical tone. *The Circle's* narrative focalization is Mae but the narration takes place in the third person, allowing the implied author to satirize Mae's words and actions. The reader is not expected to agree with Mae's convictions, particularly when she describes the fates of the Circle's opponents:

'[E]very time someone started shouting about the supposed monopoly of the Circle [...] soon enough it was revealed that that person was a criminal or deviant of the highest order [...] Who but a fringe character would try to impede the unimpeachable improvement of the world?' (Eggers, 2014)

For Erika Gottlieb, satire is an aspect of the essential didacticism of dystopia: the genre's use of satire allow for the novels to function as warnings (Gottlieb, 2009). In the case of *The Circle*, the object of satire is a naïve conviction in the power of technology to serve the good of humanity as Eggers warns against technological progress at the expense of human relationships and needs.

Mae's increasing disengagement from those around her signals her diminishing humanity as well as the collapse of the natural. She loses touch with her parents after they refuse to install SeeChange cameras in their home but she fails to recognize the destruction of her

relationship with her parents as a loss, prioritizing technological progress over her own family: “They would find each other, soon enough, in a world where everyone could know each other truly and wholly.” She does not recognize the sinister implications of SeeChange’s surveillance, instead perceiving her parents’ refusal to adapt to technological progress and the utopian promises of transparency as a “selfish hoarding of life.” Mae, with her ingested health sensor and SeeChange necklace, epitomizes technological progress and civilization—a notion that is further augmented by her foil, Mercer. Unlike Mae, Mercer represents nature and savagery—he is a craftsman that builds things with his hands, frowns upon technology and enjoys the outdoors like “some caveman.” The relationship between Mae and Mercer ultimately symbolizes the conflict between technology and nature as well as civilization and savagery—a conflict that reaches its apotheosis when Mae uses SoulSearch, a criminal crowdsourcing technology, to track down Mercer. After Mercer moves to the mountains to escape from the Circle’s reach, Mae operates under the misguided assumption that using the Circle’s technologies to find Mercer makes “perfect sense:” “How better to prove to him the reach and power of the network and the people on it?” However, Mercer runs away at the sight of the crowd and cameras, to Mae’s frustration: “something about his inability to give in, to admit defeat, or to at least acknowledge the incredible power of the technology at Mae’s command...and she knew that she wouldn’t give up until she had received some sense of his acquiesce.” Mae’s insistence on Mercer acquiescing to technology reaches a terrifying conclusion when the crowd continues to chase him and Mercer drives off the cliff in front of millions of watchers, plunging tragically to his death. As in *Brave New World*, where John the Savage commits suicide, the death of the “savage” character—Mercer—at the hands of Mae in *The Circle* signifies a new take on colonialism: technology as the colonialist, chasing nature towards inevitable annihilation.

The terrifying nature of technology’s triumph over humanity is inherent when Bailey consoles Mae regarding Mercer’s suicide. He tells Mae, “you were trying to help a very disturbed, antisocial young man, trying to bring him into the embrace of humanity, and he rejected that [...] If you reject humanity, if you reject all the tools available to you, then bad things will happen.” Bailey’s statement is ironic as his understanding of humanity has been perverted in the sense that the Circle does not represent the interest of humanity, it merely looks after its own interests—the enlargement of corporate power. As a result, Bailey’s logic is not merely incorrect but threatening to humanity as he suggests that individuals must acquiesce to technological progress or perish. In this regard, Mercer’s death does not represent a rejection of the “embrace of humanity” as Bailey suggests but the virtual death of the very kind of humanity that Mercer—and the reader—embodies. The Circle’s mission to close the “circle” so that the entire world is forced to become a part of the surveillant assemblage means that humanity will no longer be able to escape from the Circle’s totalizing

reason. Mae believes that transparency had “liberated from bad behavior” and that since “she’d gone transparent, she’d become more noble” but the events that unfold around her suggest anything other than liberation: Mercer is chased to his death by cameras, Annie falls into a catatonic state after genetic technology reveals her slave-owing ancestry and Ty is imprisoned on the Circle’s campus for attempting to take down the company. Despite this, Mae continues to believe wholeheartedly in the Circle’s mission of “closing the Circle” and sees the criminalization of privacy as a desirable form of progress: “Completion was imminent, and it would bring peace, and it would bring unity, and all the messiness of humanity.” The geometrical symbol of the Circle represents unity, totality and closure but like a Cartesian circle, Mae and the Circle’s reasoning is ultimately flawed because the Circle may appear to be a utopia but it is, according to Mercer, a dystopia: “it sounds perfect, sounds progressive, but it carries with it more control, more central tracking of everything we do.”

Anxieties about the rise of the data-driven subject are taken even further in *SSTLS*. Throughout the novel, Shteyngart illustrates “frightening appendage” (Shteyngart, 2013) of the handheld devices and wearable technologies can reduce the man and body to data assemblages, governed by marketplace agendas. Shteyngart re-imagines the iPhone as an *äppärät*, a multifunctional communications device that is worn around the neck like a pendant—similar to the SeeChange camera that Mae wears around her neck in *The Circle*. As a result of the widespread adoption of *äppärät*, data becomes an integral part of every human interaction in *SSTLS*. The EmotePad app translates physiological responses like pulse rates and blood pressure into quantitative emotional data so that when you look at a woman, it “tells her how much you want to do her” (Shteyngart, 2011). Meanwhile, the RateMe app mediates social encounters by providing data about PERSONALITY, FUCKABILITY, MALE HOTNESS and SUSTAINABILITY. The protagonist, Lenny, observes how “Streams of data were now fighting for time and space around us. The pretty girl I had just FACed was projecting MALE HOTNESS at 120 out of 800 [...] The bar was now utterly aflash with smoky data.” Lenny’s friend, Vishnu, even evaluates their social standing in a quantitative manner as he notes: “Noah’s the third hottest, I’m the fourth hottest, and Lenny’s the seventh.” Exaggerated to the point of absurdity, getting “your data in order” and establishing one’s “ranking” within the social hierarchy becomes necessary for the ‘connected’ citizen.

In the technologically-mediated world of *SSTLS*, data becomes so tightly interwoven with socio-political norms that technology dictates peoples’ statuses within society. Lenny’s *äppärät* profile combines the many spheres of everyday life—work, social interaction, health, finances—into a convenient package of information for the public to see:

LENNY ABRAMOV [...] Income averaged over five-year-span, \$289,420, yuan-pegged, within top 19 percent of U.S. income distribution. Current blood pressure 120 over 70. O-type blood. Thirty-nine years of age, lifespan estimated at eighty-

three (47 percent lifespan elapsed; 53 percent remaining). Ailments: high cholesterol, depression. [...] Spending power: \$1,200,000 per year, non-yuan-pegged. (Shteyngart, 2013)

The quantitative detail in this passage is overwhelming and, according to Annie McClanahan, “lacks the consistency of a more qualitative account of personality or physical appearance” (McClanahan, 2014). This blend of health, financial and social data ensures “normalization” in the Foucauldian sense; combining of medical knowledge with human capital through surveillance technologies allows biopower to take hold over human life (Foucault, 1990) as the state produces a disciplinary society by harnessing power over the bodies of its subjects. In *SSTLS*, biopower is amplified and facilitated by information technologies, which continuously emit data with every “verbal,” “stream,” and “FAC.” As Dolezal observes, “technologically enabled biopower ensures that the idiosyncrasies of individuals and everyday life follow universal categories” (Dolezal, 2016) so that everyone must conform to societal norms. Lenny’s social world is one where human beings are primarily viewed as publicly digitized data in a way that becomes more extreme than the quantification of social interaction in *The Circle*. Data enables individuals like Lenny to find out everything about those around them: “I learned that [Sally] was a heavier girl than Eunice [...] her LDL cholesterol was way beneath the norm.” Society’s preoccupation with viewing human beings as information is described by McClanahan as an “alienating experience” because characters’ encounters with their data personas is not “an anxiety of a reduction but the anxiety of excess” (McClanahan, 2014). The excess of data in *SSTLS* results in “the experience of being understood as ‘quantitative granularity,’ of being defined not only by a carefully limited array of personal details but by an indefinite accumulation of data” (McClanahan, 2014).

Data becomes a means to determine what is socially acceptable in Shteyngart’s novel, invoking Deleuze’s idea of “the new medicine,” where medicine is combined with capitalism so that the “dividual” can be controlled. The use of medical data democratizes medical care by putting health in the hands of the individual, however, it becomes apparent that freedom and oppression can result from the same technologies. The data gathered through the *appärätis* conveys unique markers that distinguish the ‘individual’ but, in actuality, marks human beings as “dividuals.” Technology allows people to distinguish between different “selves” yet when these selves become separated from its owner, they can be reconstituted in ways beyond their control. Medical data enables Lenny’s workplace to determine who is “in” and who is “out” as Lenny’s high BMI provokes his colleague’s disgust: “How dare you just waltz back in here like that with that body mass index of yours.” Even opting out of the surveillant assemblage becomes problematic; when Lenny encounters a “fat man” at the airport in Rome, Lenny describes him as “nothing” because he lacks physical and economic worth: “No one would look at him except for me (and then only for a minute), because he was at the margins of society, because he was without rank [...] he had no business being

mixed up with real HNWI in a first-class lounge.” In this sense, the logic of inclusion and exclusion is embedded within information technologies: the physically and economically vulnerable are considered illegitimate members of society. Only by becoming a part of the surveillant assemblage, and therefore defined as a commercial subject, can a person “exist.”

Lenny soon ceases to exist in the superficial, technologically-mediated civilization as he is not only physically and economically insignificant but a savage character who is entirely out of touch with commercial reality. Like John the Savage and Mercer, Lenny eventually rejects civilization and moves to a small farmhouse in Valdarno Valley of the Tuscan Free State, hoping to escape from mainstream society’s obsession with data, finance and youth: “I wanted to be in a place with less data, less youth, and where old people like myself were not despised simply for being old, where an old man, for example, could be considered beautiful.” Shteyngart demonstrates that despite advancements in technology, nature will always prevail: “Our genocidal war on free radicals proved more damaging than helpful [...] In the end, nature simply would not yield.” The triumph of savagery over civilization is exemplified by the developments in Lenny’s character from the beginning to the end of the novel. Lenny’s final diary entry, which is marked by his emphatic proclamation that, “*I am going to die,*” stands in stark contrast to his initial diary entry, where he writes, “*I am never going to die.*” This chiasmic-like structure illustrates the progression of Lenny’s character, from an individual that was desperate to adhere to the demands of technological civilization, to a “savage” character who embraces humanity, even if it results in the deterioration of beauty and youth. He reclaims his “savage” identity, changing his name from Lenny Abramov to Lenny Abraham, “which seemed to me very North American, a touch of leisure suit, a touch of Old Testament.” Much like John the Savage proclaims that he wants God and freedom and sin in *Brave New World*, Lenny embraces his “savage” Jewish identity and rejects modern Jews’ blasphemous worshipping of financial and technological gods. Shteyngart, like Eggers and Huxley, depicts the savage character’s “escape” as a means to critique civilization’s preoccupation with capitalistic interests and advocates a return to a more natural, unfettered state.

Lenny’s rejection of civilization demonstrates that the world of *SSTLS* is unable to satisfy the human individual despite the proliferation of material wealth. The subjugation of the “self,” with the help of technology, is antithetical to the natural order and merely perpetuates commercial interests. Such profound networking of citizens in *SSTLS* enables commercial and state powers to track and influence peoples’ behaviors but as in *The Circle* and *Brave New World*, mankind is ultimately responsible for their own oppression due to their overreliance on their *āppārātis*. The *āppārāt* functions as an extension of the citizens’ physical selves and many are unable to live without the reassuring mediations offered by the technology: “Four young people committed suicide in our building complexes, and two of

them wrote suicide notes about how they couldn't see a future without their *äppäräti*. In one of the suicide notes, one wrote that he 'reached out to life' but 'found there only "wall and thoughts and faces", which weren't enough. He needed to be ranked, to know his place in this world" much as Mae is constantly compelled to work "on her Partirank" and publicly broadcast her daily life. Technology in both *The Circle* and *SSTLS* enable a more "open" society, enabling freedoms that totalitarianism would never approve, but these societies are also ironically "closed" because these freedoms can only be expressed within an oppressive environment of perpetual social surveillance and pressure.

Technophobia Masking Fears of Capitalism

Both industrial and information dystopias demonstrate the dehumanizing potential of technological progress, as evident by how technology is used to stifle individuality and freedom in *Brave New World*, *The Circle* and *SSTLS*. These novels all seek to celebrate the "savage" character, an unruly individual that symbolizes freedom—a world beyond the artificial entrapments of a technological civilization. As Michael Ryan and Douglas Kellner write: dystopian fiction "concerning fears of machines or of technology negatively affirm social values as freedom, individualism and the family" (Ryan & Kellner, 1990). By fetishizing nature and savagery over technological progress and the comforts of civilization, dystopian fiction about technology suggests that humanity must triumph ultimately over technology. Such a dichotomy is inherently technophobic and anti-progress, suggesting that dystopian literature about technology promotes a Luddite view of technology where individuals should return to a more natural state of being, away from the dehumanizing forces of technology, but I believe that the tensions in these novels are much more multifaceted than the pitting of humanity against technology. In the foreword to *America by Design*, David Noble observes how "[c]hanges in technology are [...] the principle cause of industrialization [...] Yet new inventions, new processes, and new applications of scientific discoveries do not in themselves dictate changes in production" (Noble, 2006). Revolutions in technology do not restructure human relations as "technological changes tend to be absorbed into existing social structures; far from revolutionizing society, they merely reinforce the existing distribution of power and privilege" (Noble, 2006). Although Huxley writes about industrial technologies used to facilitate the mechanization of man whilst Eggers and Shteyngart are primarily concerned with information technologies' quantification of human life, the thread that connects such disparate representations of technological progress in society is capitalism.

Civilization comprises of technological structures that are indicators of progress but they are also concomitant with the development of capitalism. In the industrial age, human beings were mechanized and reduced to cogs in the machine due to capitalist notions of efficiency. In the information age, human beings are quantified and reduced to data in order to bolster corporate power.

These two developments illustrate that capitalism ushered in new forms of cultural production and these cultural productions are facilitated by technology. *Brave New World* has been perceived by Jerome Meckier as a satire of early-twentieth century American capitalism: “With Ford as a synonym and stand-in, each new uncomplimentary use of his name further condemned the World State for being America writ large” (Meckier, 2002). By satirizing America, Gregory Claeys believes that Huxley is not displaying “anti-American snobbism” but using America as a “leading instance of its definitive characteristics” (Claeys, 2010). Huxley demonstrates how technology can be used to create a cybernetic system that manufactures conformist behavior so that society is controlled through efficiency and consumer fantasies of pleasure rather than sadism. The society of *Brave New World* is “totalitarian” in the sense that the World State uses technology to manipulate needs and indoctrinate society according to vested interests similar to the way Marcuse described advanced capitalist societies as “totalitarian” because they are controlled by the hegemony of capital (Marcuse, 2002). Huxley’s World State is a society with a “conscriptio[n] of consumption,” in which “[e]very man, woman, and child [is] compelled to consume so much a year. In the interests of industry.” Citizens are transformed into docile and consuming subjects through the use of hypnopaedic technology to manufacture needs; this is exemplified by Lenina’s repetition of the phrase “Ending is better than mending.” The World State’s form of governance imitates the way that capitalist societies exert social control over human life: the wielding of normalizing, cultural power. In this regard, *Brave New World* is more concerned about how capitalism makes servitude attractive than technology itself.

Huxley’s representation of a “liberal” totalitarian order that achieves social stability through the manufacturing of social needs acts as a critique of Fordist manufacturing and its tendency to dehumanize citizens rather than a critique of technological progress. As Marcuse writes: “[t]echnology is always a historical-social project: in it is projected what a society and its ruling interest intend to do with men and things” (Marcuse, 2009). By this logic, technology is structured and constituted according to the interests that produce it, leading capitalist interests to become embedded within technology. Fears about technological progress is not necessarily pathological but a cultural symptom that can uncover the logic of capitalism. In *Postmodernism, or, The Cultural Logic of Late Capitalism*, Frederic Jameson notes how “[i]t is important to persuade ourselves [...] that we are *inside* the culture of the market and that the inner dynamic of the culture of consumerism is an infernal machine from which one does not escape” (Jameson, 2007). Technologies such as hypnopaedia, soma and mass production may facilitate the creation of a docile populace but it is only when technology is embedded within a capitalist logic does human freedom come under threat. The World State is able to establish hegemony by manufacturing false needs, ultimately producing a submissive and conformist society. Spending money not only keeps citizens gratified but workers busy; mass consumption and mass

production go hand in hand, creating an endless cycle where the general populace no longer possesses the capacity to rebel against the status quo. As Brad Congdon rightly observes, *Brave New World* is “a preemptive critique of the type of belief systems which might be mobilized to make the society of the future possible” (Congdon, 2011). The type of belief system that Huxley criticizes is one where consumer capitalism is worshipped in place of God, as citizens of the World State adopt blasphemous colloquialisms like “Oh, Ford!” and “for Ford’s sake.” John the Savage appears to offer an attractive alternative to the dystopian reality of the World State; however, I believe his desire for “savagery” is not a rejection of a technological civilization but a rejection of a “one-dimensional” civilization which perpetuates a culture of superficial gratification. In this regard, I agree with Jake Pollerd’s view that “[i]t should not be imagined [...] that Huxley endorses the Savage’s worldview” (Pollerd, 2010). When we read *Brave New World* through the lens of Marxist critical theory as well as the context of Huxley’s contemporary world, it becomes obvious that the object of Huxley’s satire is not technological progress but capitalism.

The pernicious nature of capitalism is even more profound in the twenty-first century. Although mechanization and quantification both suggest that technology has dehumanizing consequences, it is only through the lens of capitalism do both of these transmutations become pernicious. Shoshana Zuboff, who coined the term “surveillance capitalism,” aptly sees a relationship between the economic and commercial logic of Fordism and Googlization, writing that in the twenty-first century, “Google is to surveillance capitalism what Ford and General Motors were to mass-production and managerial capitalism a century ago” (Zuboff, 2016). As such, the representation of technological progress in the twenty-first century is entwined with capitalist and neoliberalist ideals. State power in *Brave New World* becomes private power in information dystopias as technology becomes a means for corporations to gain control. In both *The Circle* and *SSTLS*, the masses relinquish their rights as humans and citizens by delegating their power to corporate actors. Although Eggers and Shteyngart’s use of information technology to commodify and dehumanize its users easily points to a Luddite view of technology, I believe it is increased consumerism and the rise of the “corporation” in both novels that has altered society’s values as private corporations usurp spaces that were previously occupied by public actors.

The Circle satirizes twenty-first century technology companies like Google and Facebook whilst the America that Shteyngart envisions in *SSTLS* is essentially a corporatocracy where corporate identities have merged to form institutions like “LandO’LakesGMFordCredit” and “UnitedContinentalDeltamerican.” These two novels convey a heavily privatized vision of consumer culture, suggesting that dehumanization is not a result of quantification but neoliberalist ideals reified through technology. Zuboff observes how the intersection between technology and neoliberalist ideals exists “to predict and modify human behavior as a means to produce revenue

and market control” (Zuboff, 2015). According to this mode of capitalism, Nick Couldry notes that corporations accumulate power by “data extraction rather than the production of new goods, thus generating intense concentrations of power over extraction and threatening core values such as freedom” (Couldry, 2016). In *The Circle*, corporate surveillance promises convenience as Eamon Bailey proclaims that his eighty-one year old mother refused to have SeeChange cameras installed in her house but he installs them anyway because that way “I know she’s safe, and that gives me a sense of peace. As we all know here at the Circle, transparency leads to a peace of mind.” Unlike surveillance instigated by totalitarian governments in earlier dystopian novels like Orwell’s *1984*, commercial collection of data in *SSTLS* is societally beneficial and reflects Zygmunt Bauman and David Lyon’s conception of “liquid surveillance,” where surveillance circulates fluidly beyond government surveillance: “[t]empted by the allure of consumer markets,” the masses “are so groomed to the role of self-watchers as to render redundant the watchtowers in the Bentham/Foucault scheme” (Bauman & Lyon, 2012). The masses in *SSTLS* even allow their health data to be publicly surveilled as prompts them to make healthier choices, but this merely disguises what Sheldon S. Wolin describes as an “inverted totalitarianism,” a “political coming-of-age of corporate power and the political demobilization of the citizenry” (Wolin, 2010) as everything is commodified and the masses are falsely lulled into surrendering their liberties.

Despite the benefits of surveillance and quantification, inverted totalitarianism is as tyrannical as *Brave New World*’s state-sanctioned totalitarianism as it brings human beings under the hegemony of corporate powers. Even the Circle admits that “We’re here to be a gateway to all the world’s information, but we are supposed to be supported by advertisers who hope to reach customers through us.” When corporate power grows closer to the individual subject than the individual himself, man lacks agency and freedom. In *SSTLS*, technology is designed to free mankind from the tyranny of aging but it ultimately entraps characters within a consumer-capital logic. Baudrillard wrote that in a consumer-capital culture, “one manages one’s body [...] as one might handle an inheritance” (Baudrillard, 2014), which is why Lenny’s boss, Joshie Goldmann, undergoes treatments so his body looks like “a thick young mass of tendons and forward motion” whilst Eunice shops with “suburban abandon” in order to improve her FUCKABILITY rating. Capitalist discourse leads to the dehumanization of man in *SSTLS* as individuals subconsciously evaluate human relations in terms of commodity logic. Like *Brave New World*, the object of satire in both these novels is not technologies like SeeChange cameras or beta-dechronification treatments but capitalist logic. According to Richard Barbook, “neo-liberalism seems to have successfully achieved the contradictory aims of reactionary modernism [...] Because the long-term goal of liberating everyone will never be reached, the short-term rule of the digerati can last forever” (Barbook, 2000). The digerati of *The Circle* and *SSTLS* have freed

themselves from the entrapments of Fordism through information technology but the prevailing logic of capitalism prevents information from truly setting humanity “free.”

Industrial and information dystopias initially set up technological progress as a threat to human freedom by mobilizing the dichotomy between savagery and civilization. It is easy to interpret technology as the part of civilization that manufactures human discontent: as Freud wrote in *Civilization and its Discontents*, advances in technology has enabled man to establish “his control over nature in a way never before imagined” but this “has not increased the amount of pleasurable satisfaction which they make expect from life” (Freud, 1989). Although Freud is right in asserting that the advancement of civilization has enforced the idea that security is the proper exchange for unhappiness, I believe that industrial and information dystopias target the socioeconomic rather than technological structures of civilization. Technology is morally neutral can be used for social good in the hands of humanists. This is evident in Huxley’s later work, *Island*, where Huxley details the same technologies used in *Brave New World* but drugs lead to enlightenment rather than pacification and hypnopedia allows for enhanced learning rather than indoctrination. The contrast between *Island* and *Brave New World* demonstrates that in the hands of capitalists, technology can be used “to train up a race, not of perfect human beings, but of perfect mass-producers and mass-consumers” (Huxley, 1994). Similarly, in information dystopias like *The Circle* and *SSTLS*, technology is only dystopian when its powers are relinquished to neo-liberal ideologues like Eamon Bailey and Joshie Goldmann, leading corporate profit to triumph over human needs. As futurist Ray Kurzweil aptly observes, technology can lead to “a flowering of individual expression, creativity, and communication or to an era of efficient and effective totalitarian control” (Kurzweil, 1990) and in industrial and information dystopias, technological utopianism ultimately takes a dystopian turn when technology is absorbed into the totalizing logic of capitalism.

References

- Adorno, T. W. (1983). *Prisms*, 1st edn. Massachusetts: MIT Press.
- Attarian, J. (2003). "Brave New World and the Flight from God", in *Aldous Huxley*, 1st edn. New York: Infobase Publishing.
- Baccolini, R., & Moylan, T. (2003). "Dystopia and Histories", in *Dark Horizons: Science Fiction and The Dystopian Imagination*, 1st edn. London: Routledge.
- Baldick, C. (2004). *The Concise Oxford Dictionary of Literary Terms*, 1st edn. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Barbrook, R. (2000). "CYBER-COMMUNISM: How the Americans are Superseding Capitalism in Cyberspace". *Science as Culture*, 9 5-40.
- Baudrillard, J. (2014). *The Consumer Society: Myths and Structures*, 1st edn. London: Sage Publications.
- Bauman, Z., & Lyon, D. (2012). *Liquid Surveillance*, 1st edn. Cambridge: Polity.
- Beauchamp, G. (1986). "Technology in The Dystopian Novel". *Modern Fiction Studies*, 32, 53-63.
- Booker, K. M. (1994). *The Dystopian Impulse in Modern Literature*, 1st edn. Westport: Greenwood Press.
- Chaplin, C. (1936). *Modern Times*. United States: Charles Chaplin Productions.
- Claeys, G. (2010). "The Origins of Dystopia: Wells, Huxley And Orwell", in *The Cambridge Companion to Utopian Literature*, 1st edn. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Congdon, B. (2011). "'Community, Identity, Stability': The Scientific Society and the Future of Religion in Aldous Huxley's Brave New World". *ESC*, 37, 83-105.
- Couldry, N. (2016). "The Price of Connection: 'Surveillance Capitalism'". *The Conversation*. Retrieved from <https://theconversation.com/the-price-of-connection-surveillance-capitalism-64124>.
- Haggerty, K. D., & Ericson, R. V. (2000). "The Surveillant Assemblage". *British Journal of Sociology*, 5, 605-622.
- Deleuze, G. (1992). "Postscript on the Societies of Control". *October*, 59, 3-7.
- Dolezal, L. (2016). "Human Life as Digitised Data Assemblage: Health, Wealth and Biopower In Gary Shteyngart's Super Sad True Love Story". *Medical Humanities*, 42, 219-224.
- Eggers, D. (2014). *The Circle*, 1st edn. New York: Vintage Books.
- Foucault, M., & Sheridan, A. (2012). *Discipline and Punish*, 1st edn. New York: Vintage.
- Foucault, M. (1990). *The History of Sexuality*, 1st edn. New York: Vintage.
- Freud, S., Strachey, J., & Gay, P. (1989). *Civilization and Its Discontents*, 1st edn. New York: W.W. Norton.
- Gissing, G. (2016). *The Private Papers of Henry Ryecroft*, 1st edn. Auckland: The Floating Press.

- Gottlieb, E. (2009). *Dystopian Fiction East and West: Universe of Terror and Trial*, 1st edn. Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press.
- Huxley, A. (2006). *Brave New World*, 1st edn. New York: Harper Collins.
- Huxley, A. (2006). *Brave New World Revisited*, 1st edn. New York: Harper Perennial.
- Huxley, A. (1975). *Island*, 1st edn. London: Chatto & Windus.
- Huxley, A. (1994). "Science and Civilisation", in *The Hidden Huxley*, 1st edn. London: Faber and Faber.
- Jameson, F. (2007). *Postmodernism, Or, The Cultural Logic of Late Capitalism*, 1st edn. Durham: Duke University Press
- Kurzweil, R. (1990). *The Age of Intelligent Machines*, 1st edn. Massachusetts: MIT Press.
- Marcuse, Herbert, "Industrialization and Capitalism in Max Weber", in *Negations: Essays In Critical Theory*, 1st edn (London: MPG Books, 2009), pp. 151-171
- Marcuse, H. (2002). *One-Dimensional Man*, 1st edn. London: Routledge.
- Marx, L. (1994). "The Idea Of 'Technology' And Postmodern Pessimism", in *Does Technology Drive History?*, 1st edn. Massachusetts: The MIT Press.
- McClanahan, A. (2014). "Bad Credit: The Character of Credit Scoring". *Representations*, 126, 31-57.
- Meckier, J. (2002). "Aldous Huxley's Americanization Of The "Brave New World" Typescript". *Twentieth Century Literature*, 48, 427-460.
- Moylan, T. (2000). *Scraps of the Untainted Sky*, 1st edn. Colorado: Westview Press.
- Noble, D. F. (2006). *America By Design: Science, Technology, and the Rise of Corporate Capitalism*, 1st edn. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Nozick, R. (2013). *Anarchy, State and Utopia*, 2nd edn. New York: Basic Books.
- Poller, J. (2010). "State versus the Individual: Civil Disobedience in Brave New World", in *Civil Disobedience*, 1st edn. New York: Infobase Publishing.
- Rousseau, J., & Gourevitch, V. (1997). *Rousseau: The Discourses and Other Early Political Writings*, 1st edn. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Ryan, M., & Kellner, D. (1990). *Camera Politica: The Politics and Ideology of Contemporary Hollywood Film*, 1st edn. Indiana: Indiana University Press.
- Seed, D. (2015). "Aldous Huxley, Brave New World", in *A Companion to Science Fiction*, 1st edn. London: Blackwell.
- Segal, H. P. (1994). "The Cultural Contradictions of High Tech: Or the Many Ironies of Contemporary Technological Optimism". *Technology, Pessimism, And Postmodernism*, 17, 175-216.
- Shteyngart, G. (2013). "O.K., Glass". *The New Yorker*. Retrieved from <http://www.newyorker.com/magazine/2013/08/05/o-k-glass>

- Shteyngart, G. (2011). *Super Sad True Love Story*, 1st edn. London: Random House.
- Wolin, S. S. (2010). *Democracy Incorporated*, 1st edn. New Jersey: Princeton University Press.
- Zuboff, S. (2015). "Big Other: Surveillance Capitalism and the Prospects of An Information Civilization". *Journal of Information Technology*, 30, 75-89.
- Zuboff, S. (2016). "Google as a Fortune Teller: The Secrets of Surveillance Capitalism". *Frankfurt General Newspaper*, Retrieved from <http://www.faz.net/aktuell/feuilleton/debatten/the-digital-debate/shoshana-zuboff-secrets-of-surveillance-capitalism-14103616.html>.