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Karl Marx vs Andrew Ure: Views on Industrialization

By Emerald Landry

Look around you, and try to think about how your surroundings would change if all machine manufactured items suddenly disappeared. You wouldn't have your lamps, your pencils and pens, your electronics, or your furniture. You wouldn't even be able to read this, regardless of whether you are viewing it on a computer or a printed sheet of paper, because almost everything you own and interact with was made by machines. This is because of the invention of the steam engine, which has allowed for many changes in society and the economy, such as advancements in transportation, agriculture, mining, and manufacturing. This, in turn, has allowed for industrialization: the development of industries on a wide scale. The most well known example of this is the Industrial Revolution, an event that took place from 1760 to 1840, during which machine manufacturing became the main form of production. Though it may seem like the Industrial Revolution was absolutely beneficial to society, that is not entirely true considering the negative effects it had on the workforce, since factories often had poor working conditions, and the workers were paid very low salaries despite working many exhausting hours each day. Karl Marx wrote about this in the *Communist Manifesto*, a pamphlet published in 1848 examining industrialization, class antagonism, and communist theory. Andrew Ure wrote about industrialization as well, in *The Philosophy of the Manufactures*, thirteen years before the *Communist Manifesto*. Although both were pro-industrialization, Andrew Ure saw machines and automation as helpful to humanity and believed that hiring unskilled workers was beneficial to factory owners, while Marx believed that the exploitation of workers was detrimental to society

and would only fuel class antagonisms. This brings us to understand that the Industrial Revolution was a controversial event in history.

To start off, Andrew Ure believed that the advancement of manufacturing technology was beneficial to society, not only for the factory managers and the upper class, but for the workers as well: “The constant aim and effect of scientific improvement in manufactures are philanthropic, as they tend to relieve the workmen either from niceties of adjustment which exhaust his mind and fatigue his eyes, or from painful repetition of efforts which distort or wear out his frame.”¹ Although it seems that Ure had some sympathy for the working class and its struggles, he still agreed with the idea of unskilled labor, since he writes that “by the infirmity of human nature it happens, that the more skillful the workman, the more self-willed and intractable he is apt to become.”² Ure believed that automation was the best method of manufacturing, but hiring unskilled workers was also a profitable option, as it would ensure that the workers would be more obedient and therefore more productive. He also believed that hiring women and children in factories would also benefit factory owners because it costed less: “It is, in fact, the constant aim and tendency of every improvement in machinery to supersede human labour altogether, or to diminish its cost, by substituting the industry of women and children for that of men.”³ His idea was true, since according to the Courtauld Silk Mill Workforce, there were a total of 114 male workers and 899 female workers employed at the Courtauld Silk Mill, and the highest wage a woman could earn was 11 shillings weekly as a gauze examiner; meanwhile, the highest wage a man (other than the mill manager) could earn was 32 shillings weekly as an overseer.⁴

¹ Andrew Ure, “The Philosophy of the Manufactures,” in *History 10 Semester 2 Course Reader*, ed. Jason Brooks (Santa Cruz: Kirby School, 2021), 22.

² Ure, 23

³ Ure, 23.

⁴ Samuel Courtauld, “Courtauld Silk Mill Workforce,” in *History 10 Semester 2 Course Reader*, ed. Jason Brooks (Santa Cruz: Kirby School, 2021), 39-40.

On the other hand, Marx believed that society was becoming more and more feudal, “splitting up...into two great classes, directly facing each other: Bourgeoisie and Proletariat.”⁵

Marx saw that industrialized capitalist society was harmful and oppressive to the proletariat:

Modern industry has converted the little workshop of the patriarchal master into the great factory of the industrial capitalist. Masses of labourers, crowded into the factory, are organized like soldiers ... Not only are they slaves of the bourgeois state; they are daily and hourly enslaved by the machine, by the overlooker, and, above all, by the individual bourgeois manufacturer himself.⁶

Here, Marx blames the poor conditions of the working class on “modern industry,” as well as on factory owners. Friedrich Engels, the co-author of the *Communist Manifesto*, also wrote about the proletariat in his publication *The Condition of the Working Class in England*, which describes poor air quality inside the factories, child labor, physical distortion from excessive work, low wages, and the likelihood of losing a limb or even being killed by the machinery.⁷ Both authors argue that the changes that took place during the Industrial Revolution were not all positive, as they led to the further oppression and mistreatment of the working class as well as technological advancements.

The Industrial Revolution was a time of disagreement and tension, with both benefits and drawbacks. Ure saw automation, as well as unskilled labor, as the best option for industry, since he looked at it from the perspective of the bourgeoisie. Marx and Engels had a completely different view, since they put themselves in the shoes of the proletariat and wrote about how the power of the bourgeoisie and industrial capitalism were a detriment to society. If the Industrial

⁵ Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels, “Communist Manifesto,” in *History 10 Semester 2 Course Reader*, ed. Jason Brooks (Santa Cruz: Kirby School, 2021), 29.

⁶ Marx and Engels, 33.

⁷ Friedrich Engels, “The Condition of the Working Class in England,” in *History 10 Semester 2 Course Reader*, ed. Jason Brooks (Santa Cruz: Kirby School, 2021), 24-27.

Revolution and the invention of the steam engine never took place, then most of the products consumed in our world today would not exist. However, the problems of the Industrial Revolution are still present today, along with its benefits. There are even examples today of the exploitation of workers, mostly happening in developing countries, such as low salaries and child labor, the type of conditions that Friedrich Engels wrote about in *The Condition of the Working Class in England*.

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La Malinche

By Brian Carreno

La Malinche has often been compared to the famous Native American Pocahontas. However, unlike Pocahontas, who is seen as a hero, Malinche is seen as a traitor to her people.⁸ Malinche was a Native Nuhan woman who helped Hernan Cortes and the Spanish by acting as their interpreter in Mexico. Today, her name is used as an insult synonymous with traitor. Although La Malinche's reputation paints her as a traitor, she played a minor role in the conquest of Mexico as an ambassador for the Spanish and doesn't deserve the reputation she currently holds.

La Malinche's reputation is regarded negatively because of her involvement with Hernan Cortes and Spanish conquistadors, since she served as an interpreter for them. Many believe she is a traitor to her people, the Nuhan, because she aided the Spanish. For example, in an NPR article by Jasmine Garsd, we learn, "Ultimately...characterizing Malinche as a traitor and Pocahontas as a heroine gives the women a free will they didn't really have. Becoming a savior or a villain, taking on a lover, or rejecting him — these are choices. Neither woman had much say in her fate."⁹ Additionally, many people criticize her based on her reputation in history. However, the only real example of her potentially betraying her people was when she gave a command on behalf of the Spanish, illustrated in the Lienzo de Tlaxcala.¹⁰ Furthermore, not many know too much about Malinche's past and how she got to where she was. *The True History*

⁸ Jasmine Garsd, "Despite Similarities, Pocahontas Gets Love, Malinche Gets Hate. Why?," *NPR*, November 25, 2015, accessed October 16, 2020, <https://www.npr.org/sections/goatsandsoda/2015/11/25/457256340/despite-similarities-pocahontas-gets-love-malinche-gets-hate-why>.

⁹Garsd.

¹⁰ Brown University, "Lienzo de Tlaxcala," Mesolore, Brown University, 2012, accessed October 19, 2020, <http://www.mesolore.org/viewer/view/2/Lienzo-de-Tlaxcala#>.

of the Conquest of New Spain states, “They gave the little girl, Doña Marina, to some Indians from Xicalango. . . . The Indians of Xicalango gave the child to the people of Tabasco, and the Tabasco people gave her to Cortés.”¹¹ Malinche was given as a gift to the Spanish, and didn’t have a choice in her actions. Additionally, she did not do much to help the Spanish other than translating.

Many argue that Malinche was the reason why the Spanish were able to conquer Mexico, but this is untrue. Her role in the conquest was minor, as an interpreter. She was not even the only one translating for the Spanish. A concrete piece of evidence that supports this claim is in *The True History of the Conquest of New Spain*, which says, “Doña Marina knew the language of Coatzacoalcos, which is that common to Mexico, and she knew the language of Tabasco, as did also Jerónimo de Aguilar, who spoke the language of Yucatan and Tabasco, which is one and the same.”¹² This proves that Malinche was not the only person translating for the Spanish. Another reason many argue that Malinche played a large role in the conquest of Mexico was her role as an ambassador for the Spanish, particularly when she helped to make peace with the Nuhan and Aztecs. However, this role was minor as well. Bernal Díaz Del Castillo, one of Cortes’s men, said in *The True History of the Conquest of New Spain* that “Doña Marina and Aguilar spoke kindly to them and gave them beads and told them not to be so mad any longer, but to make peace with us, as we wished to help them and treat them as brothers. . . .”¹³ This shows that Malinche didn’t do much besides be an ambassador and interpreter for the Spanish conquistadors.

Malinche doesn’t deserve the reputation that she has today of a traitor who played a large role in the conquest of Mexico. She played a minor role in the conquest of Mexico as an

¹¹ Bernal Díaz del Castillo, *The True History of the Conquest of New Spain*, 1576.

¹² Castillo, 5.

¹³ Castillo, 6.

ambassador and interpreter for the Spanish. There were other factors that resulted in the conquest of Mexico such as the Spanish being highly advanced in weapons and armor which completely overpowered the artillery of the Aztecs. La Malinche is seen as a traitor to her people, but in the eyes of a historian, she is someone who played a minor role in the conquest of Mexico and doesn't deserve the reputation she has today.

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Literary Analysis of *The Inspector*

By Violet Melcher

The Inspector, by Nikolai Gogol, illuminates corruption within a small town government, exploring the different ways both people and governments are impacted by corruption. The play begins as a lowly government worker from Saint Petersburg makes his way into town. A rumor spreads within the town that he is an official sent to evaluate the inner workings of their local government. The mayor, as well as other public servants, work to present their town in the best possible light, mainly through bribery. Ivan Alexandrovich Khlestakov, the gambling-prone, low-ranking official from Saint Petersburg, takes advantage of these bribes, purposefully withholding the fact that he is not the man the townspeople think he is. Though the characters attempt to achieve approval and material gain through deception, they continuously expose the corrupt happenings within their bureaucracy. Showing both the corruption of the people and the government system, Gogol critiques corruption in a way that is still worth the attention of modern societies.

Many characters throughout this work continuously lie and deceive others for the purpose of material gain. Both the main characters, Anton Antonovich and Ivan Alexandrovich Khlestakov, as well as many side characters, corrupt themselves and the systems they play a part in. One instance of this is when the judge is accused of taking bribes in Act I. He openly admits to the claim, saying, "I tell people quite openly that I accept bribes, but what sort of bribe, eh? Greyhound pups" (13). The judge upholds the law within this community, so this suggests that the idea of justice within this system is full of institutional corruption, which, due to the frequency, has become normal. Another instance of abuse of power emerges when the Mayor discusses the possible corruption in the postmaster's office. The mayor says "Postmaster,

couldn't you just...stop every letter that passes through your post office...melt the seal" (17). This again shows the fraud that takes place. How can anyone be trusted if the leaders, the most powerful men, continue to use misconduct to their advantage? The corruption and fraud that occurs within this community ultimately shows the misconduct that influences the power of civil servants, the powers that affect the citizens' lives, and the overall perception of bureaucracy.

As the people within this small town show their true colors, the mayor, Anton Antonovich, tries to deceive Khlestakov into thinking his town isn't the slightest bit corrupt. This ultimately exposes the immoral actions of the Russian government to the audience and reveals the dishonorable inworkings of that bureaucracy. Anton Antonovich tries to hide the wrongdoings of his community from Khlestakov, purposefully trying to cover up the fact that the judge takes bribes, the police abuse their power while coming in drunk to work, and the postmaster opens and reads all of his letters. Any normal government inspector would see this and quickly report back to Saint Petersburg, ultimately leading to the dismissal of officials like Anton Antonovich. To keep this from happening, they show Khlestakov a good time and fill his pockets with gold. Anton Antonovich tells himself that "there's no man who doesn't have his own sins of some sort," continuing to say that "God himself set it up that way" (13). He uses this as an excuse for his actions, seemingly keeping this in mind as he bribes Khlestakov later in the work. This is yet another instance where the audience can see the acceptance of the role that corruption plays in bureaucracy. To open the play, Gogol references a Russian proverb saying, "It's no good blaming the mirror if the mug's askew" (xiii). From here, the reader may question if Gogol is trying to explain that the mayor is looking for excuses for his mishaps and crimes, or if Gogol is trying to pull the reader into the story as well, trying to get them to accept the corruption and to see it in a more humane way. This suggests that the audience should turn the

mirror towards themselves and their communities, and look at the corruption within one's everyday life. As the play draws to a close, the mayor addresses the audience to forcefully ask them "What are *you* laughing at? You are laughing at yourselves" (140). This is yet another example of Gogol forcing the reader to learn about themselves as they watch, even to start seeing the corruption in their lives. Gogol exposes this town's government and its corruption, while he shows the audience the major flaws in bureaucracy. Corruption runs rampant in this small town, but what could this mean for bureaucracy in general? Is the reader supposed to question their own society and their own government?

In *The Inspector*, Nikolai Gogol draws the reader in and gets them involved in the story, just to turn the mirror around and force them to confront their own bureaucratic systems, expanding the ideas in the play and relating them to society as a whole. Gogol depicts the corruption of powerful people in government and how that affects a town. He continues to illustrate how the roles in government and government itself can contribute to a corrupt system. *The Inspector* is a play that digs deeper into the idea of corruption in general, and forces the audience to relate the ideas discussed in the work to the modern day. Not only are the obstacles of a corrupt government shown and experienced throughout this text, but no matter who the reader is, this play acts as a bridge between a comedic play about the Russian government in the 1830s and the idea of a modern bureaucratic system.

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“Infinite Diversity in Infinite Combinations”: Civil Rights Movement and Vietnam War Allegories in *Star Trek*(1966-1969)

By Tyree Milhorn

“We must learn to live together, or most certainly we will soon die together.” These were the words of Gene Roddenberry, creator of *Star Trek*, during a 1991 interview when asked about possible intolerance in the 23rd century.¹⁴ Casual consumers of television and other media often consider *Star Trek* exciting at best, and mindless geeky drivel at the worst, and in both cases devoid of larger meaning or subtext. Many see the original *Star Trek* (1966-1969) as the height of this pulpy archetype, meant to throw out meaningless creature concepts like salt-sucking yetis (*The Man Trap*) or sentient blobs of pizza dough (*The Devil in the Dark*), or strange half-hearted romances in which alien women are beguiled by the stoic, red-blooded American Captain Kirk. But these assumptions overlook the very real impact that the movements of the sixties had on television then, and even television now. Alongside the anxiety-inducing Vietnam and Cold wars of the sixties, the space race was going full-throttle. NASA’s exploits intrinsically linked outer space to future prosperity, a place away from the chaos and worry of Earth, paving the way for the sci-fi retrofuturism that would birth *Star Trek*.¹⁵ Through the liberal use of worldbuilding and facepaint, issues like race and prejudice are tackled through alien-allegory episodes. Gains in equality during the sixties even influenced *Star Trek*’s casting, notably Lt. Uhura and Lt. Sulu. Many episodes also directly parallel events such as the beginning of the Vietnam War, or propose alternative futures in which Communists prevail. This allegorical retelling was intrinsic to the original *Star Trek*, or *TOS*, and served to help audiences formulate their own opinions on current events. While many casual consumers view the original *Star Trek* (1966-1969) as a simple sci-fi

¹⁴Daniel Bernardi, “*Star Trek* in the 1960s: Liberal-Humanism and the Production of Race,” *Science Fiction Studies* 24, no. 2 (1997): 214, accessed April 28, 2021. <https://www.jstor.org/stable/4240604>

¹⁵Bernardi, 213.

show rife with android romances and technobabble, its creators were anything but apolitical and actively worked to address issues of the time such as the civil rights movement and the Vietnam War.

Though highly allegorical, *TOS* tackled racism and the messages of the Civil Rights movement multiple times, often using its entertainment value to carry deeper messages. As the Civil Rights Movement crowded newspapers, Americans wanted to see it somewhere else—their screens. As stories about race entered the public sphere in a way Americans hadn't seen before, many wanted these stories replicated in easily-digestible stories, a surface-level approach to topics that were much more complex.¹⁶ A self-proclaimed humanist, Roddenberry believed in complete integration of society, as well as that of the starship *Enterprise*. He steadfastly believed that in order to reach his ideal future, intolerance and prejudice would have to be the first to go.¹⁷ Some may argue that his vision had limits, such as his whiteness and his belief in assimilation, and though they are correct, this does not mean that *TOS* did not address race, and by extension the Civil Rights Movement.¹⁸

The Civil Rights Movement impacted *TOS* partially through the inclusion of two characters of color in the main crew: Lt. Nyota Uhura, played by Nichelle Nichols, and Lt. Hikaru Sulu, played by George Takei. While Sulu's casting directly contradicted the popular trope of the scheming villain role, brought on by yellow peril,¹⁹ Nichelle Nichols's role caused the most stir.²⁰ Many may know Uhura for her part in the first interracial kiss on American

¹⁶Bernardi, 213.

¹⁷Bernardi, 214.

¹⁸Nancy Reagin, ed, *Star Trek and History* (Hoboken: John Wiley & Sons, Inc, 2013), 27.

¹⁹BGSU, "Asian Immigration: The 'Yellow Peril'," Race in America, accessed May 5, 2021. <https://digitalgallery.bgsu.edu/student/exhibits/show/race-in-us/asian-americans/asian-immigration-and-the--yel>.

Yellow Peril is often defined as the irrational fear that Asian immigrants seek to destroy "Western" institutions such as democracy, Christianity, and capitalism.

²⁰Reagin, 24.

television, but her character had a greater impact than a single kiss. Whoopi Goldberg, an award-winning actress and *Star Trek: The Next Generation* cast member, recounted: “When I was nine years old, Star Trek came on, I looked at it and I went screaming through the house, ‘Come here, Mum, everybody, come quick, come quick, there’s a black lady on television and she ain’t no maid!’ I knew right then and there I could be anything I wanted to be.”²¹ Uhura’s character is best understood as a product of the Civil Rights Movement and other events during the sixties.²² While many of the roles for Black actors in the sixties consisted of maids or chauffeurs, Uhura was a full-fledged crewmember, as much a part of the Enterprise as Scotty or McCoy. The call for equality from the Civil Rights Movement inspired her creation, predicting the fruitful future of the sit-ins, marches, and protests of the sixties, all leading towards a brighter future.²³ Her presence on the Enterprise’s bridge both “evoked and played against the contemporary historical context,” as historian Margaret Weitekamp puts it.²⁴ Weitekamp argues that Uhura’s purpose was to challenge preconceptions about black women, and that her loyalty to Starfleet, her dress, and her personality were specifically designed to combat stereotypes. Uhura’s very existence was a political statement, and spoke to the great effect that the Civil Rights Movement had on *Star Trek*.

Alongside the casting choices of *TOS*, several episodes dealt with race, though allegorically. As addressing human racism would be too forward, the writers often created fictional species and societies to convey these concepts. The first of these episodes was “Let That Be Your Last Battlefield,” which aired in 1969 during *TOS*’s third season. The episode focuses on two aliens, Lokai and Bele, members of a species in which each individual is bichromatic,

²¹CBS Entertainment, “Goldberg,” Star Trek, CBS Studios Inc, accessed May 5, 2021, https://www.startrek.com/database_article/goldberg-whoopi

²²Reagin, 24.

²³ Reagin, 26.

²⁴Reagin, 24.

half-black, half-white. While Lokai's people are white on their right sides, Bele's are black, and through the course of the episode the audience learns that this is the basis for a thousand-year war fought between the two groups.²⁵ This episode primarily tackled personal prejudice, using seemingly insignificant discrepancies between Bele and Lokai's peoples to illustrate the absurdity of racism. This episode neglected the institutional and systemic history of racism, highlighting irrational personal prejudice as the basis of all racial conflicts.²⁶ The audience, however, is meant to apply this strange interaction to their own views on race, and possibly reconsider just how significant they deem skin color. In addition to the audience's expected reaction to Bele and Lokai's feud, the crew of the Enterprise was similarly befuddled. At one point during the episode, Lokai approaches Chekov and Sulu, attempting to get them to side with him against Bele. However, when he appeals to their own experiences with racism or prejudice, they reply:

Chekov: There was persecution on Earth once. I remember reading about it in my history class.

Sulu: Yes, but it happened way back in the twentieth century. There's no such primitive thinking today.²⁷

This conversation is a stark reminder of Roddenberry's future, in which intolerance (at least on Earth) is a thing of the past. Not only does the feud between Lokai and Bele serve to show the futility of baseless bias, but to show the possible future of humanity, in which racism is so unacceptable that it has become entirely alien.

²⁵Star Trek, episode 15, season 3, "Let That Be Your Last Battlefield," written by Lee Cronin, directed by Jud Taylor, performed by George Takei and Walter Koenig, aired January 10, 1969. <https://www.netflix.com/watch/70178555?trackId=200257859>.

²⁶Bernardi, 33.

²⁷Lee Cronin, *Let That Be Your Last Battlefield*.

The Enterprise crew is similarly befuddled during the episode “The Cloud Minders,” which also aired in 1969. In this particular escapade, Kirk and co. descend on the planet Ardana, looking for a rare mineral called zenite, which is in high demand. They encounter a floating city, populated by beautiful, intelligent, and incredibly racist beings. These people, residents of the city Stratos, consider themselves superior to their land-walking counterparts, the Troglytes. After several violent encounters with Troglyte terrorists, Kirk and Spock investigate the mines, only to find that the gases produced by the zenite has caused mental degradation to the Troglytes’s brains, making them slow thinkers prone to violence. The issue of racism is finally resolved when Kirk convinces the High Advisor of the Ardanans that the issue with the Troglytes is not their biology, but their surroundings.²⁸ While this episode explored systemic racism through the systems and beliefs in place that kept the Troglytes confined to the mines, it produced an allegory based on the “race as culture” phenomenon, as film scholar Jacob Pullis puts it, and reinforced negative stereotypes about who is oppressed and why.²⁹ However, race is undeniably addressed, however poorly, and the concept of intolerance as alien is reiterated in Spock and Kirk’s opinions on the entire matter, again pushing forth the notion of future equality.

Race and race theory appear again and again in *TOS*, whether as episodic plot lines or full time characters. Behind the makeup and the sixties miniskirts, real thought was put into the episodes addressing racism and into the casting of characters of color. As protests and speeches filled the outside world, inside the studio, producers cast characters and wrote plotlines reflecting and theorizing on the world outside, carrying the ideas and hopes of writers and viewers alike. Even Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. was a fan. He convinced Nichelle Nichols to stay on the show

²⁸ Star Trek, episode 21, season 3, “The Cloud Minders,” directed by Jud Taylor, written by Margaret Armen, aired February 28, 1969 on NBC. <https://www.netflix.com/watch/70178559?trackId=200257859>

²⁹Jacob Pullis, “Star Trek as an Agent of Cultural Reproduction,” Trinity College, Accessed April 29, 2021, pp. 24.

when she considered quitting, telling her that she “didn’t have a black role, she had an equal role,” and that that was the role he wanted his children to see and believe in.³⁰

The Vietnam War played a huge role in the plotlines and worldbuilding of *TOS*, forming the basis for several iconic features of the universe. Three major episodes, along with one major species, were all influenced by the Vietnam War and the anti-war protests. The American opinion on the Vietnam War can be tenuously divided into three major sections: support due to misinformation, fear of annihilation, and anti-war sentiments. Many Americans spent the beginning of the Vietnam War in the first section of opinion. Early information on the war available to American civilians consisted of a blanket statement that a country called South Vietnam (allied with the United States) had been shockingly attacked by its neighbor, North Vietnam, a communist state motivated by its close ties with Russia and China.³¹ The *Star Trek* episode “A Private Little War” reflects this early generalization. The episode follows Kirk and McCoy, stranded on an alien planet, Neural, at war. The village people, who are secretly being supplied with high tech weapons by the violent Klingon Empire, have attacked the peaceful, pastoral hill people.³² Without much analysis, it is quite clear that this setup mirrors the information readily available to American civilians at the start of the Vietnam War. The Klingons, who have long been stand-ins for both Communist Russia and China, are shown as the dangerous insurgents, a ruthless, cruel enemy that opposes everything Starfleet stands for. The people of Neural are a simple people, who left to their own devices would do harm to no one and continue their simple way of life, but who are easily influenced by the evils of the outside world.

³⁰Jessica Brunetto, *Trek Nation*, directed by Scott Colthorp (2010; Roddenberry Entertainment, 2011) Amazon.

³¹H. Franklin, “*Star Trek* In the Vietnam Era.” *Science Fiction Studies* 21, no. 1(1994): 25, accessed May 20, 2021. <https://www.jstor.org/stable/4240304>.

³²*Star Trek*, season 2, episode 19, “A Private Little War,” written by Jud Crucis, directed by Marc Daniels, aired February 2, 1968 on NBC, <https://www.netflix.com/watch/70178530?trackId=200257859>.

One of the clearest reflections of the Vietnam War in the episode is the character of Nona, the wife of the Hill people's chief, Tyree. From the beginning, Nona is presented as a dangerous, scheming, and malicious woman, hellbent on seizing control of Neural. She is a kind of femme fatale, and shares many of her traits with the popular portrayal of Madame Nhu, wife of Ngo Dinh Nhu, younger brother to President Diem. Madame Nhu was characterized by the American press as a "dragon lady" who was known for her blunt demeanor and sway over President Diem.³³ Her fictional counterpart, Nona, uses strange magic to entrance Kirk, all as part of her plan to take over both the hill and village peoples. She betrays and nearly kills Tyree, comes to blows with McCoy, and is generally an antagonistic character. She meets her end when the village people kill her after she attempts to side with them, a brutal fate likely inspired by the hate that many Americans felt towards Madame Nhu.³⁴ The Klingon/communist threat, the role of Starfleet/the U.S. as a peacekeeper, and Nona/Madame Nhu as a dangerous interloper combine to form a fictionalized, sci-fi version of the simplified propaganda many Americans were subjected to in the early days of the Vietnam War.

Anti-war protests were a huge part of the American civilian experience of the Vietnam War, and as such were reflected in *Star Trek*. Widely considered one of the best episodes of *TOS*, "City on the Edge of Forever" follows Kirk and Spock after they are stranded in New York in the 1930s. Kirk falls for Edith Keeler, an optimistic young social worker who dreams of a better future, but soon finds that if she achieves her goal of pacifism, Starfleet will cease to exist. Specifically, the pacifism movement that she begins will stall the U.S.'s entrance into WWII, therefore allowing Nazi Germany to win, and for Earth's future to be irrevocably changed.³⁵

³³Bernardi, 30.

³⁴Bernardi, 30.

³⁵Star Trek, episode 28, season 1, "City on the Edge of Forever," directed by Joseph Pevney, written by Harlan Ellison, aired April 6, 1967 on NBC, <https://www.netflix.com/watch/70109463?trackId=200257859>

However, this was in no way the original version of the plot. Early versions of the plot echo the popular “doomed love” trope found in countless *TOS* episodes, but as it progressed through revisions, it took on a more political tone. It eventually evolved into the statement aired in 1967, two days after Martin Luther King Jr.’s “Declaration of Independence from the War in Vietnam” speech.³⁶ It was also aired close to the 1967 Vietnam War protest in Washington D.C., some of the revisions likely having been inspired by the huge turnout of the event.³⁷ Kirk and Spock deliberate on Edith Keeler’s fate, as while Spock sees the logical inevitability of her death, Kirk is blinded by his growing love for her. Keeler represents the anti-war cause as a whole, true-hearted but temporally misplaced. War, Kirk believes, is just, especially when leveraged against a great evil. Keeler is never portrayed as an idiot or simpleton, but simply in the wrong time.³⁸ Eventually, Kirk is forced to stand by and watch as Keeler is hit by a car, thereby righting the timeline and allowing for Starfleet to continue onwards. Keeler is undeniably a stand-in for the anti-war protesters, and her death is clearly a reference to the supposed necessity of the Vietnam War. Interestingly, when during an interview, producer Robert Justman was asked if the writers intended to make the parallels between Keeler and anti-war sentiments, Justman replied: “Of course we did.”³⁹

The final episode referencing the Vietnam War was “The Omega Glory,” which aired in 1968, just following the Tet offensive. The Tet offensive was a brutal episode of the Vietnam War, which marked the beginning of American withdrawal from Vietnam.⁴⁰ A major blow to American morale, the series of coordinated attacks impacted the civilian view of the war, moving

³⁶H. Franklin, 26.

³⁷Reagin, 93.

³⁸H. Franklin, 27.

³⁹H. Franklin, 26.

⁴⁰History, “Tet Offensive,” History.com, A&E Television Networks, LLC, April 3, 2020, accessed May 30, 2021, <https://www.history.com/topics/vietnam-war/tet-offensive>.

it from an optimistic, justified war to a bloody monstrosity that guaranteed mutual destruction.⁴¹ This episode of *TOS* is a clearer reference to the Vietnam War than any episodes prior, actually going so far as to use the labels “communist” and “yankee.” The episode begins with Kirk, Spock, and McCoy beaming down to the planet Omega IV. Once there, they find a missing starship captain who has gained the trust of the locals, an Asian-coded people called the Kohms. The Kohms are brutal, cruel, and subservient to their new white captain, but above all, are sworn enemies of the Yangs, white people living outside of Kohm settlements who have taken to barbarism and can no longer speak.⁴² The story progresses as the lost captain, Captain Tracey, orders for the Enterprise crew to be killed, and they are put into a cell along with two Yangs. Kirk soon discovers that the Yangs can speak, but have been keeping this a secret from the Kohms and Tracey. Soon, a war begins and the Yangs achieve victory over the Kohms, freeing Kirk, and allowing him to witness their sacred rights. Their ceremony, it happens, is the awkward, rambling reverence of the American flag and legal documents. This perversion of American doctrine, as well as the loss of “liberty for all” reflects a very real fear present after the Tet offensive. Many Americans, devastated by the results of the campaign, began to believe that the only thing the Vietnam War assured was mutual annihilation.⁴³ The only solution to this catastrophic end, as said by Kirk, is to reinvigorate the practice of “We the people.” That is, the belief that justice is not only for the Yangs, but the Kohms as well. This belief in equality is a stark reminder of the desperation for peace that many Americans began to turn towards. The incorporation of such obvious Vietnam War references clearly turns this episode into a political statement, acting as a translation of the growing fears in the American populace.

⁴¹H. Franklin, 30.

⁴²Star Trek, season 2, episode 23, “The Omega Glory,” written by Gene Roddenberry, directed by Vincent McEveety, aired March 1, 1968 on NBC, <https://www.netflix.com/watch/70178539?trackId=200257859>.

⁴³H. Franklin, 31.

Aside from specific episodes, *TOS* also addressed the Vietnam War in its creation of one of—if not the most—iconic space-faring species of the *Star Trek* universe. Klingons first appeared in the episode “Errand of Mercy,” which aired in 1967.⁴⁴ They instantly became an iconic “villain group,” not unlike the Siths of *Star Wars* or the Orcs of *Lord of the Rings*. The Klingons are brutish, violent, and in their earliest inceptions, red or brown skinned with facial hair reminiscent of racist Chinese caricatures. Though Klingons evolved into a more three-dimensional race after *TOS* with characters like Worf, the first Klingon in Starfleet, and B’elanna Torres, the half-Klingon engineer of the starship *Voyager*; the original Klingons were nothing more than cruel, monstrous, communist allegories. From the very beginning, the Klingons were pitted against all of Starfleet’s values—diversity, peace, and kindness—and were shown to have an easy relationship with cruelty and malice.⁴⁵ As the audience was encouraged to think of Starfleet as the U.S., it is only natural that the writers choose communism as the greatest threat to Starfleet’s prosperity. Moving away from a simple dichotomy of Starfleet v. Klingon Empire or America v. communism, the Klingons exhibited the brutishness and cruelty that many Americans believed was inherent to communism. Even moreso, producer Gene L. Coon said during an interview that “[The actors] have always played [the Klingons] very much like the Russians . . .” and in this context of Soviet Russia, playing a Russian on television in the sixties was the same as playing a communist, save for Lt. Chekov, who represented the Americanized dream of Russia’s future.⁴⁶ The creation of Klingons is intrinsically linked to the fear of communism, informed and motivated by the Vietnam War and the political context of the sixties. This entire species is a Vietnam War reference, and likely the longest lasting one in the *Star Trek*

⁴⁴*Star Trek*, season 1, episode 26. “Errand of Mercy,” written by Gene L. Coon, directed by John Newland, aired March 23, 1967 on NBC, <https://www.netflix.com/watch/70109461?trackId=200257859>

⁴⁵ Gene L. Coon, *Errand of Mercy*.

⁴⁶Reagin, 97.

franchise, thereby proving the direct influence that the Vietnam War upon not only *TOS*, but all of *Star Trek*.

These direct allusions to the Vietnam War informed and even created entire arcs and episodes of *TOS*. Opinions on the war and on communism fueled many of the episodic plotlines, and even the creation of iconic species and moments. These allegories were prominent features of *Star Trek*, both to the writers and to the audience, and served as stark reminders of the political context of the sixties, even today.

Many would argue that even if *TOS* included episodes on race or the Vietnam War, these causes were so poorly addressed that it negates the attempt completely. While Uhura and Sulu served as a mostly positive take on racial equality, episodes such as “The Paradise Syndrome” were absolute nightmares in terms of racial eloquence.⁴⁷ While “The Omega Glory” spoke on the horrors of war and promoted peace, the Kohms portrayal was anything but well done, pulling on centuries of racist caricatures.⁴⁸ As most of the writers were white men who viewed the world through an Americanized, homogenous lens, it is unsurprising that their attempts to address the diverse nature of their world often fell short. However, the untactful nature of many episodes does not erase that many causes were addressed. *Star Trek* was and is a political show, often addressing the issues of the era, however well. In some cases, *TOS* did actually achieve its intended goal, such as Uhura’s famously influential casting, which was a source of inspiration for Whoopi Goldberg, Martin Luther King Jr., and even an entire generation of NASA astronauts.⁴⁹ Regardless of its so-called failure, *TOS* had an impact, and served as a vehicle for various modes of political and societal thought.

⁴⁷Reagin, 128.

⁴⁸Gene Roddenberry, *The Omega Glory*.

⁴⁹Reagin, 29.

The political and social contexts of the 1960s were integral to the creation of *Star Trek*. Even seemingly apolitical, geeky features of the show were in fact influenced by the political leanings of the writers and producers. Kirk and Edith Keeler's romance was a statement on anti-war protests, Klingons were space-communists, and Uhura's famous kiss broke the mold for acceptable television romance. *Star Trek* is not only an enjoyable romp through new worlds and civilizations, but a sort of analysis on American culture, and a retelling of some of the most important events of its era. The Vietnam War and Civil rights movement allegories of *TOS* became the feminist and multiculturalist allegories of *Star Trek: The Next Generation*, became the oppressor v. oppressed and capitalist allegories of *Deep Space 9*, with this pattern continuing into today's *Star Trek: Discovery*'s unflinching take on queerness, family, and cultural stereotypes. The legacy of *TOS* is the continued political allegories of its franchise, the merging of the fantastical with the realistic, of the future and today. *Star Trek* asks questions about what it means to be human, to be equal, and to be just, bringing messages and questions to generations of geeks and nerds, drawn in by the aliens, staying for the allegories.

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