

INTG 388

Paper #4

Fall 2017

Prompt

According to Wilbur Mercer,

"You will be required to do wrong no matter where you go. It is the basic condition of life, to be required to violate your own identity. At some time, every creature which lives must do so. It is the ultimate shadow, the defeat of creation; this is the curse at work, the curse that feeds on all life. Everywhere in the universe.[Dick, 2008]

We spent some time in class looking at the experiences of the characters in Philip K. Dick's novel through the lens of this quote and trying to understand the various degrees to which Mercer's prophesy can be fulfilled. For this, your final paper, you will embark on a personal reflection about this quote.

You must reflect on the revelation that you will be required to violate your identity and the ways in which a personal understanding of this revelation can be translated into a deeper understanding of others. Consider questions such as: What do you see as your identity and why? In what ways have you or might you be forced to violate that identity? How does the knowledge that this is a shared experience color your perspective of others?

For this reflection your goal is to not only arrive at a statement of personal meaning and value but to explore the ways in which you can live by those values and apply them to your life and your interactions with others. You must make a clear and explicit connection between your personal statement and your current and future interactions with those around you.

Artificial intelligence will be your guide through this reflection. You must use your past, present, and future interactions with Artificial Intelligence to shape and contextualize your thoughts. In doing so you must look both at weak and strong AI. To explore the problems and possibilities of strong AI you must at least pull observations and analysis from Philip K. Dick's novel [Dick, 2008] as well as McGrath's paper [McGrath, 2011]. In considering weak AI you may go back to AI we looked at in the beginning of the course or bring in new forms of weak AI. In either case, your exploration of weak AI must be backed by cited sources and compliment your reflection on strong AI in some way. All told, your reflection should use AI as a spring board for exploring Mercer's revelation. The reflection is not about AI, per se, but about what AI can teach us about ourselves and

our fellow human beings.

Requirements & Logistics

DUE	Electronically via Moodle by 6:30pm on Monday, December 11th.
FORMAT	Typed. Double-spaced.
LENGTH	1500–2000 words
MINIMUM REQUIRED EXTERNAL SOURCES	4 (Book, Paper, +2)

Detailed instructions for electronic submission will be handed out in class. Grades are based on the quality and clarity of the writing, the appropriateness and quality of observations, the depth and sufficiency of the analysis, and the clarity and validity of the conclusions with respect to the overall reflections. Be sure to review *On Reflection and Reflective Writing*¹ if needed.

¹ <https://jlmayfield.github.io/teaching/INTG335/intg335-reflection.pdf>

The Writing Center

Wonderful ideas and deep reflection can be lost or ruined by muddled writing. I grew most as a writer when I cared deeply about the things I was writing and didn't want there to be any uncertainty on the part of my readers. Perhaps more than other forms of writing, reflective writing is ultimately a reflection of ourselves. You should want to put your best word forward when it's you on the page. Writing well is hard. It takes practice. It requires help. I encourage *all* of you to take this opportunity to step up your writing game. The writing center is here to help you. They're awesome. Don't wait until my grade to get feedback on the quality and clarity of your writing.

The Monmouth College Writing Center offers unlimited, free peer tutoring sessions for students at MC. Peer writing tutors work with writers from any major, of any writing ability, on any type of writing assignment, and at any stage of their writing processes, from planning to drafting to revising to editing. We are located on the 3rd floor of the Mellinger Teaching and Learning Center, and the Writing Center is open Sun-Thurs 7–10pm, and Mon-Thurs 3–5pm on a first-come, first-served basis. No appointment necessary! International students can sign up to work with the same writing tutor for a weekly session. Learn more about the Writing Center at our website: <http://blogs.monm.edu/writingatmc/writing-center/>

References

Philip K. Dick. *Do Androids Dream of Electric Sheep?* Ballantine Books, New York, NY, 2008.

James McGrath. Robots, rights and religion. In James F. McGrath, editor, *Religion and Science Fiction*. Wipf & Stock Pub, 2011. ISBN 9781608998869.