

Call for Abstracts
Philip K. Dick and Philosophy
D.E. Wittkower ed.
Open Court Popular Culture and Philosophy Series

There are few authors as popular as Philip K. Dick who offer anything even approaching the amount and quality of philosophical content that his works contain. His novels and short stories not only reference, but *primarily concern* central philosophical issues, and his career as a whole took place at that point where existential dread meets epistemology and metaphysics. Dick wrote of his work that “I am a fictionalizing philosopher, not a novelist . . . the core of my writing is not art but *truth*.” For this volume we seek proposals that will present and analyze Dick’s philosophical work in the spirit in which he approached his writing: serious, careful, entertaining, and funny.

We plan the release of the volume in Fall 2011, as soon as possible after the release of *The Adjustment Bureau*. This means the entire book is planned on a reduced schedule, and we will be seeking some authors to volunteer to rewrite immediately after the movie debut, March 4, in order to incorporate *The Adjustment Bureau* into their chapter. These will likely be chapters dealing with issues of free will and choice. For further information, watch the trailer here (<http://www.theadjustmentbureau.com/>), read the short story here (http://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Adjustment_Team.djvu), and feel free to contact me with any additional questions.

Chapters may concern any of Dick’s novels or stories, or movies based upon them, although ideally we would prefer that there be some upfront mention and discussion of one of his most famous movies—*Blade Runner*, *Total Recall*, *Minority Report*, *A Scanner Darkly*, or *The Adjustment Bureau*. In addition to addressing the movies, we would be especially interested in chapters also dealing with *Do Androids Dream of Electric Sheep?*; *Ubik*; *Flow My Tears*, *The Policeman Said*; *A Scanner Darkly*; *Radio Free Albemuth*; *VALIS*; “King of the Elves,” “Adjustment Team;” and “We Can Remember It for You Wholesale.”

Chapters should be interesting and engaging to readers who have only seen the movies, while still providing insightful discussion and elaboration for readers who have read his texts. To put it another way, chapters should have the same relationship to Dick’s writing as Dick found *Blade Runner* to have to his novel *Do Androids Dream of Electric Sheep?*:

After I finished reading the screenplay, I got the novel out and looked through it. The two reinforce each other, so that someone who started with the novel would enjoy the movie and someone who started with the movie would enjoy the novel.

We welcome submissions from any philosophical tradition. Any number of topics would work very well. Here are a few ideas:

- What is a 'free will'?
- Is there 'Elbow Room' in *The Adjustment Bureau* and *Minority Report*?
- William James and David Norris’s Pragmatic Solution to the Problem of Free Will

- Amor Fati, or, How I Learned to Stop Worrying and Love Determinism
- Mortality and the "burned so very, very brightly" theodicy in *Blade Runner*
- Foreknowledge, Divine and Otherwise, in *The Adjustment Bureau* and *Minority Report*
- The Will to Believe . . . a pink beam of light?
- Epistemic responsibility, Gettier problems, and the pink beam
- How can I tell reality from Recall?
- Does a Replicant have an essence?
- The Replicant's Sickness Unto Death
- Means-ends rationality in *A Scanner Darkly*
- Personal identity in *A Scanner Darkly*
- Moral character, habits, and memory in *A Scanner Darkly*
- Memory and the self; Hume, Locke and *Total Recall*
- Is a Replicant a person?
- "All those moments will be lost in time, like tears in the rain:" Roy Batty's capacity for qualia
- *The Man in the High Castle: On the Uses and Abuses of Alternate History for Life*

Please send a 200-300 word abstract to d.e.wittkower@gmail.com prior to **September 9th**. Keep in mind that you'll have to commit to working on a tight schedule. Finished chapters, approx. 4000 words, will be required by **November 18th**, with a rewrite due **Jan 31st**, 2011.

Feel free to contact me with any questions.

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