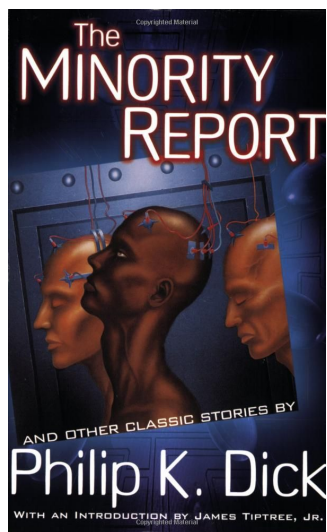


First page of a Comparative Literature assignment on Dystopias. This paper required understanding of global structures in writing. Genre style and subject matter is another important concept. The building blocks of writing, whether in fiction or copy editing, are the keys to a global approach for a piece of writing.

Literary Devices in a Dystopia

Dystopian literature grew out of utopianism and has since become the dominant form of utopian writing today. Utopia translates to mean "a non-existent good place" (Sargent 2). When



there is a place that is seen as entirely ideal, there must also be a place that is the opposite, namely a dystopia, or a bad place. Though it seems like there should be a fine line between the good and the bad, this is not always the case. Utopias can easily turn into dystopias, and these categories are solely based off of perspective; one person's dystopia could be someone else's utopia. "The Minority Report" by Philip K. Dick is a short story that explores the idea of a dystopian society in which crimes are stopped before the criminals commit them. Though this could be seen as a utopian-like idea, the way in which the story is written illustrates otherwise. The plot, through the use of characterization and setting, have negative undertones that show that this society is not a utopia. Philip K. Dick's "The Minority Report" creates a dystopian reality through the use of several literary devices.

The plot of "The Minority Report" largely involves a society that is under a totalitarian rule of law enforcement. The story begins *in medias res*, meaning in the middle of things. Beginning the story this way establishes a sense of confusion where the reader is going to have to figure things out, as the characters in the story are trying to figure out who framed Anderton for murder. The initial confusion sets the tone for the rest of the story. Though starting in the middle does not always create a critical or threatening tone, it does in this case, paralleling the plot line. The culture that is created is one that has many strict crime policies. People are arrested before they commit crimes in order to prevent any crime from occurring. To do this, "precogs" are used to see into the future. These precogs are human beings, though they are not treated as such. They are kept in a room and are vegetable-like due to the fact that they are being slaved to a machine. The way in which the precogs are treated and the idea of getting arrested without being able to prove that you can change are plot points that are dystopian in nature. After Anderton is accused of murdering a man, he obtains a new identity and goes into hiding. "The identification cards described him as Ernest Temple, an unemployed electrician, drawing a weekly subsistence from the State of New York" (Dick 339). In this "new reality" for Anderton, he is unemployed and living off money from the state. Though this is not actually occurring, the idea of poverty and unemployment is mentioned. From almost any point of view, poverty, slums, and unemployment would not exist in a utopia.