

**THE SIGNIFICANCE OF COMPOSITION IN SUPPLEMENTING  
EXTRATEXTUAL NARRATIVE:  
A TOPICAL CUE ANALYSIS OF *STAR TREK: DISCOVERY* TO PROVIDE  
NARRATIVE MEANING WITHIN INSTRUMENTATION**

**BY**

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# CONTENTS

|   |     |
|---|-----|
| Abstract.....   | i   |
| ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS .....  | iii |
| DEFINITION OF TERMS .....   | v   |
| CHAPTER 1 – INTRODUCTION.....   | 1   |
| EXPOSITION.....   | 1   |
| RESEARCH STATEMENT .....  | 3   |
| Background of Statement.....  | 3   |
| Exposition of Statement .....   | 4   |
| BACKGROUND ON STUDY .....   | 5   |
| Purpose of Study .....  | 5   |
| Objective of Study .....  | 6   |
| Significance of Study .....   | 8   |
| Assumptions, Limitations and Delimitations.....   | 10  |
| CHAPTER DESIGN.....   | 10  |
| CONCLUSION TO INTRODUCTION .....  | 11  |
| CHAPTER 2 – LITERATURE STUDY .....  | 12  |
| AN INTRODUCTION TO <i>STAR TREK</i> .....   | 13  |
| The Vision of <i>Star Trek</i> .....  | 15  |
| STAR TREK AS A UTOPIAN ALLEGORY .....   | 19  |
| The Theory of Utopianism.....   | 21  |
| <i>Star Trek</i> 's Heterotopia and the Maternal/Paternal Dichotomy of <i>Voyager</i> ..... | 28  |
| CHAPTER 3 – METHODOLOGY.....  | 35  |
| CHAPTER 4 – APPLICATION OF ANALYSIS .....   | 46  |
| THE CONSIDERED CUES AND ANALYTIC OBSERVATIONS .....   | 47  |
| THE ANALYSIS .....  | 47  |
| <i>Star Trek: The Original Series</i> .....   | 48  |
| <i>Star Trek: Discovery</i> .....   | 56  |
| Concluding Remarks.....   | 78  |
| CHAPTER 5 – CONCLUSION TO STUDY .....   | 81  |
| REFERENCE LIST .....  | 83  |



## Abstract

### **The Significance of Composition in Extratextual Narrative: A Topical Cue Analysis of *Star Trek: Discovery* to Provide Narrative Meaning Within Instrumentation.**

This dissertation is an exploration of the latest instalment of the *Star Trek* franchise, *Star Trek: Discovery*. In its most rudimentary form, this is a study of the characteristics of the soundtrack, but intrinsically, it is an investigation into the extratextual narratives which the music conveys – the story the music tells – through its musical design. In a great sense, the narrative bases itself on the “*Star Trek* vision” which perpetuates progressive ideals, at times obstinately against the grain. The vision promises a future and critiques a present, and centres itself around theories of utopianism in various incarnations, from assertions of racial equality through the allusion to Afro-futurism in the racially volatile mid-century, to the hyper-representation of queer identities during a time of ideological turbulence in the American landscape of the late 2010s. Empowerment and idealism-to-a-fault have always permeated throughout the *Star Trek* vision. The music arguably shares this. This dissertation will explore these themes of idealism and utopianism, in contexts of heroism and romance, by considerations of the musical cues in applicable narrative moments, through harmony, melody, and instrumentation.

Existing analyses of the *Star Trek* musical corpus are sparse, and the field of academia that concerns itself with *Star Trek* rarely ventures into musicology and music theory. Individual theses and journal articles can be identified, of which only a handful align with this study’s analytical methodology, and even fewer with the focus area of *Discovery*. While concern of this scarcity is valid, the sparse research field contributes to a more creative research approach and methodology. While semiosis is a core figure in the research, other methodological paradigms such as spectromorphology are referenced. Linguistic and morphological notions are key in the ultimate methodology of the analysis.

A model of analysis synergises various semiotic and typographic methodologies, with the non-technological aspects of spectromorphology – that is, an approach that designs its assertions around aural observation rather than pure pictographic interpretation. Tomaszewski, seminal semiotic film music theoretician’s approaches, the approaches of analysts Metz, the theories behind Smalley’s analyses, and the writings of Getman, all come together to inform the design of this study’s methodology. Within this study, *Star Trek: Discovery* (2017-2024) will be analysed and an investigation into the nonverbal linguistics of the instalment will require, at times, references to earlier instalments to ultimately ascertain not only meaning but a definitive

sense of evolution or divergence within the soundtrack. *Discovery* is the flagship series of the fourth wave of television media in the *Star Trek* franchise – the first wave was the genesis series, *Star Trek: The Original Series* (1966-1969); the second wave was the exodus, expanding the *Star Trek* universe with multiple new series, *Star Trek: The Next Generation* (1987-1994) the progenitor and the central narrative of this era of *Star Trek*; the third wave consisted of one series, *Star Trek: Enterprise* (2001-2005). *Discovery* lay the groundwork for a new generation of *Star Trek*, modernly situated and trailblazing notions beyond the *Star Trek* vision. Its music, in its divergent style and nature, assures this novel progression.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This dissertation has been an arduous task, and the journey to reach the destination was not simple – in fact, nothing could truly prepare me for all the kinks in the path, all the rocks that my wagon had to weave through, and all the logs that had to be picked up or driven around. There have been countless concepts, topics, titles, literature reviews, and faltered intentions that have all gone to dust over the course of the two years, and I find it hard to reconcile my dissertation with the research proposal I submitted in December 2022. But, by and large, I have been able to craft an academic text that fulfils my intentions – to say something worth saying.

Through this journey, as it is with most of the journeys in my life, my parents were at my side unconditionally. After finishing my bachelor's degree, I was forced to move back home, countless kilometres from my friends and my old life, and sheltered in the sting of the warm Worcester sun. Having moved back, I relied heavily on the support of my parents to keep me running – I would have ended my research long ago had it not been for my mother who made a point of having us do our respective degrees together. When she received her PhD, it was a moment where I realised the beauty of honouring knowledge and effort, and so, she inspired me, and *inspires* me, daily. To Dr Deidre Forbes I say thanks. And to the unwavering straightforwardness and staunch, critical support of my father, Mr Mark Forbes, I express my gratitude. When things became tough, it was he who raised his voice first in defence of me and offered me strong and blunt wisdom when I was at heavy impasses. My sibling, Angela, is a prospective anthropologist and a naturally intelligent and creative mind (irritatingly so). They offered the best of both blunt honesty regarding my endeavours and a sense of calmness that granted me the ability to reevaluate many of my situations. The prospect of Angela's bright future exhilarates me.

There are people who I hold significantly dear in my life – such is my best friends and confidantes Vernon Simons and Reynhardt Buys. Vernon is a critical and objective ear that was there to 'spit the facts' throughout the majority of my adult life. I can share any idea with him knowing that he would remind me that I am either delusional or ambitious, but in either case, he always would support me. His journey through life, navigating all which is thrown his way with a calm demeanour and stoic faith, inspires me. I oftentimes note that Reynhardt is my musical partner, and while they are an actuary by trade, the music they make and the art we collaboratively create keep my spark for music-making alive. They are also the only person, I believe, that has heard every iteration of my dissertation, from hodgepodge to completion, in

painful detail, without complaint. Above all of this, so many of the concepts and ideas that constitute this dissertation are brainchildren of Reynhardt. My gratitude for both these friends are endless.

Another notable mention that this dissertation would not exist without is my dear friend Lizé Briel, a phenomenal composer and academic who has been at my side in our collective studies since second-year music technology. Lizé and I did our master's degrees at the same time, and I appreciate that I could often use her as a soundboard for thoughts and ideas, and I am privileged to be there for her likewise. Truth be, Lizé transcribed all the analysed work of music in this dissertation, from ear to paper, making my research possible, while still completing her own dissertation and portfolio. To Lizé, thank you.

I thank the people that have been fuel to my study, those who lead me to refine and redefine everything I had done up to this point. Here, of course, I speak of my two academic supervisors – my current Mr Theo Herbst, and my former Dr Bongani Ndodana-Breen. Mr Herbst took me in last minute, when things were nearing completion with still a lot of words in my brain, and he helped me find a calm amid the manic downpour. He listened to my every idea, enriched me with the brilliant ideas of his own, and together made a strong connection that guided me to the end. Dr Ndodana-Breen was my academic mentor for two years, and he taught me things of academia that are invaluable. Most notably, he taught me the importance of channelling my identity in whatever I am creating, be it academic texts, composed music, or performance. Both these men have a staggering corpus of knowledge which they bestowed upon me, and I am more of a well-rounded academic and musician because of them.

I acknowledge my initial 'supervisors' that built me up to be the academic and musician I am today – my former piano lecturer Prof Pieter Grobler and my former composition lecturers Dr Antoni Schonken and Arthur Feder. They taught me how to interpret and express music, and I cannot be a creator without acknowledging those who taught me how to create.

The staff of the South African College of Music's W. H. Bell Music Library, staff at the Music Library of the Stellenbosch Conservatory at Stellenbosch University, academic colleagues and peers, and lecturers all assisted in attempting to gain access to the sheet music, and their efforts are acknowledged and their efforts are appreciated.

I thank the University of Cape Town for granting me the opportunity to attempt to be an academic, a career which I have thus far enjoyed greatly; at the same time, I acknowledge the

role Stellenbosch University played in laying the groundwork – the Conservatory and Majuba, both places obscure to a reader but immensely impactful in the resulting Aidan Forbes.

## **DEFINITION OF TERMS**

|                 |  |
|-----------------|--|
| Utopianism      | The area of sociology that considers theories of societal perfection; generally understood as the <i>ne plus ultra</i> of societal evolution. It can exist in various metaphoric forms other than grand societal manifestation.        |
| Heterotopianism | Foucault’s theory countering utopianism but sharing intrinsic attributes achieved so through possibly disturbing means.  |
| Feminism        | Referring to the trend of social empowerment of feminine members of society and representation throughout common culture; the field of study that concerns itself with the study of female social identity and gender criticism.       |
| Queer           | Formerly a slur, thereafter a word confined to popular culture and the niche of the queer community, “queer” is now an official and accepted umbrella term for the LGBTQIA+ community and individuals within it.                       |
| POC             | People of colour; denotes disenfranchised communities that do not have a largely European ancestry, especially in reference to the African individuals and diaspora.   |
| Sci-fi          | Science Fiction; the field of literature and media that portrays narratives of the technological, scientific, or (xeno-)biological fantastical, oftentimes connoted with space, or set in futures or augmented contemporary realities. |
| Afro-futurism   | The area of cultural practice and study popularised in the mid-century that considers the representation of black liberation in media through futurist narratives and ideals of a hyper-futurised African hinterland.                  |

|                   |   |
|-------------------|---|
| Morphology        | A research and study type that bases itself around the considerations of morphemes in language, morphemes being “the smallest units of meaning in language”. <sup>1</sup>               |
| Spectromorphology | The study of sound delineated by its properties on the sound spectrum as conveyed by spectral visualisations and graphs, ultimately to ascertain meaning in ways similar to semiosis.   |
| Typology          | The consideration of signs and symbols in textual study, primarily in social science and literary study.  |
| Semiosis          | The area of linguistic study related to signs; a methodology regarding meaningful units within a language model. Also: semiotics; semiology.  |
| Semiotician       | An academic whose field of specialisation is semiotics. Also: semiologist.  |
| Signs             | Units or figures within a language model that have a consistent contextual meaning. Can be applied to nonverbal models.   |
| Codes             | A linguistic system that uniformly classifies signs.  |
| Topics            | Musical figures that are extracted from a larger whole that have meaning, oftentimes (in the case of this study) affective. It is either a sign or a unit that is constituted of signs. |
| Motifs            | Smaller musical units that have contextual meaning; oftentimes (in the case of this study) a sign. It may be definers of topics or thematic material.                                   |
| Cues              | An entrance of musical material in a soundtrack, including theme music. It can be performed or listened to individually and is oftentimes individually titled.                          |
| Instalment        | A multi-episodic unit of media within a franchise, disseminated either on television or on streaming platforms. Also: series.   |
| Franchise         | The overarching collection of instalments and filmography.  |

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<sup>1</sup> Paul, P. V. 2023. O Morphology, Morphology, Wherefore Art Thou, Morphology? A Call for Research. *American Annals of the Deaf*, 168(4):131.

|           |   |
|-----------|---|
| NBC       | The National Broadcasting Company, a visual media dissemination organisation in the United States of America.     |
| Paramount | An American visual media dissemination conglomerate.  |
| Desilu    | A defunct American television media company, operational until 1967.  |
| [x]       | A demarcation of symbols within the musical excerpt.  |
| t.s.      | Time-stamp. Refers to the time codes that the excerpts are extracted from (on music streaming platforms Spotify). |



## CHAPTER 1 – INTRODUCTION

A dream that became a reality and spread throughout the stars.<sup>2</sup>

### EXPOSITION

This is, in truth, not a study on *Star Trek*, but a study on composition methodology within episodic visual media and its effectivity as proven by *Star Trek* as case study. This is achieved through a cue analysis. The soundtrack of *Star Trek*, in its various incarnations, is crafted in a way that distinguishes it from many forms of visual media that have run parallel to it. This is especially the case in modern scoring in a world where online streaming is the basis of most episodic media and syndicated media intake (in the West). To add to this, *Star Trek* is a beautiful allegorical story with a remarkable soundtrack.

The corpus of academic literature on *Star Trek* lacks research, especially in the field of musicology and its adjacent thought areas. However, the soundtrack and scoring of *Star Trek*, especially as it has evolved to that of the modern style, warrants consideration. So too does the extramusical elements of the storyline justify a thorough study. The narrative of *Star Trek*, over its generations, has consistently portrayed a futuristic universe that aims to exemplify a utopian tomorrow. The elevated futurism of the mid-century, with the flying cars and sky-houses of *The Jetsons*, seem miniscule when the reality of *Star Trek* is weighed against it – a united multi-planetary society with fleets of spaceships soaring through the expanse, accompanied by technological feats of physics and artificial intelligence, and the erasure of the systemic shortcomings of capitalism. And music is the centre of the utopian society’s painting.

Whether by the valiant bravado of the *Star Trek* hero, or the soft-hearted lull of romance, the narrative elements do not fail to remind the viewer that *Star Trek* is a story that is prophetic – how the person of the future is only fulfilled if they embody and defend the ethos of the utopian society. While this role has, in more recent releases, been subjected to critical contest, to the *Star Trek* viewer, heroism and upstanding morality are still what define the franchise’s leading (hu)man. Earlier narratives of, romance and femininity are enshrouded by duality that either enhances or negates the valiant storyline, one of the franchise’s first notions of narrative complexity. It is, nonetheless, a reminder that the utopian story is fulfilled only by the presence of love. Such plot centres are integral to the telling of the *Star Trek* tale, and the franchise is

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<sup>2</sup> “Whom Gods Destroy” (1969). *Star Trek: The Original Series*. Season 3, Episode 16. Directed by: Herb Wallerstein. Written by: Lee Erwin & Jerry Sohl. First broadcast: 3 January 1969. Los Angeles: NBC.

intertwined with a message of hope and bright forward-thinkingness. It says: in utopia humanity would prevail.

Discrediting music from this storytelling is remiss – as much as film composers generally find themselves falling back to generic and stock tropes inherited from the film soundtracks preceding, *Star Trek* has a unique and precise musical language. Fans and (some astute) academics alike have grown to understand that there is an iconicity in the music of *Star Trek: The Original Series*, and musical cues from the instalment like *Ruth* and *2<sup>nd</sup> Kroykah* have become synonymous to the topics which they portray in their scenes. When a *Star Trek* fan thinks ‘love music’, it is probable that *Ruth* is their point of reference. And so, *Star Trek* approached numerous topics with music that effectively exemplified them. *Star Trek: The Original Series* sets the groundwork for these stylistic archetypes, and its legacy is a continuance of soundtrack and scoring that would be the script to the script, and an intrinsic part of the viewing experience.

While the *Original Series* was known to contest social settings in its contemporary, the franchise’s latest generation, starting with the release of *Star Trek: Discovery* in 2017, takes this systemic contest further by not only contesting society but also the *Star Trek* narrative as it has been up to this release. The new narrative and novel characteristics that *Discovery* brought are not only among the most considerable elements in *Star Trek*’s run, but also warrant keen and dedicated study, which it has not been awarded to a deserving extent.

Considering *Discovery* holds further value beyond the realms of *Star Trek* academia, this dissertation proposes to be a resource for better understanding the latent abilities of visual media composers. This text aims to inform how a composer can utilise their written music as narrative elements beyond the minimalistic methodologies of contemporary film scoring.

The study is a handbook (albeit short) on what to do in the instance of composing for televised (or, rather, streamed) media, where the tactics of film writing are not always applicable, and the crafted expectation is vastly different. In this short-form episodic visual media, extratextual musical natures like leitmotifs and connoted instrumentations need to be sustained throughout multiple episodes, even seasons, while still, especially in the case of modern short-form visual media like *Star Trek: Discovery*, being able to write original soundtracks for each episode. It is admittedly much easier to write a soundtrack for a multi-episodic instalment in one sitting and then to work alongside showrunners to apply the music accordingly, but it is much more

valuable and effective to write not in bulk, but to sit with the script, sit with the visual media, and produce a crafted soundtrack parallel to every other verbal and extraverbal facet of the visual media.

## RESEARCH STATEMENT

Orchestration can be used as an effective mode of communicating topics within short-form episodic visual media's narrative, and *Star Trek: Discovery* is a suitable case study on the effective use.

### Background of Statement

Observing the musical practices in the *Star Trek* instalments has always been intriguing to the researcher of this dissertation, the musical cues in the 1966 *Original Series* in special regard. It is here where the impetus for this study was born. The soundtrack of the franchise's initial series has become iconic – from the battle music<sup>3</sup>, with its dissonant and sharp, militaristic trumpets and percussion, to the lush strings, harps, woodwinds, and angelic voices that embody romance and femininity<sup>4</sup>; the exotic and foreign has the ring of tambourines accompanying sporadic modal melodies, dissonant harmonic structures sung by woodwinds to evoke a mystic, implicitly 'oriental', foreignness<sup>5</sup>, while the valiant is displayed with adulations of brass and a horn-motif which permeates from title cue to the obscure corners of the franchise.<sup>6</sup> It would be easy to refer to the music of *Star Trek* as whimsical and fantastical, and this study cannot prove or disprove such affective qualities; what can be asked is whether the utopian 'whimsy' is effective, even successful. Instrumentation, orchestral language, and musical colour are supposedly inherently intertwined with the narrative, and, of course, the viewing experience

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<sup>3</sup> An apt and well-known example of a battle music cue is in the scene where Kirk takes on Spock in the episode "Amok Time" ([1967] *Star Trek: The Original Series*. Episode 1, Season 2. Directed by: Joseph Pevney. Written by: Theodore Sturgeon. Composed by: Gerald Fried. First aired: 15 September 1967. Los Angeles: NBC).

<sup>4</sup> Two examples are the cues *Ruth* from the episodes "Shore Leave" ([1966] *Star Trek: The Original Series*. Episode 15, Season 1. Directed by Robert Sparr. Written by Theodore Sturgeon. Composed by: Gerald Fried. First broadcast: 20 December 1966. Los Angeles: NBC), and the romance theme from the episode "Is There In Truth No Beauty?" ([1968] *Star Trek: The Original Series*. Episode 5, Season 3. Directed by Ralph Senensky. Written by: Jean Lisette Aroeste. Composed by: George Duning. First broadcast: 18 October 1968. Los Angeles: NBC)

<sup>5</sup> An example is the music in the episode "The Cage" (*Star Trek: The Original Series*. Episode 1, Season 0. Directed by: Robert Butler. Written by: Gene Roddenberry. Composed by: Alexander Courage. Culver City: Desilu Productions), the original pilot episode that was rejected by NBC and partially aired as part of a different episode later in the first season. This music accompanies the sensual dances of a female alien slave. The cue is titled *Torchy Girl*, and the music goes reused throughout the aired installation.

<sup>6</sup> The first time this motif is introduced as a central figure in the title cue is the episode "The Man Trap" ([1966]. *Star Trek: The Original Series*. Episode 1, Season 1. Directed by Marc Daniels. Written by George Clayton Johnson. Composed by: Alexander Courage. First broadcast: 8 September 1966. Los Angeles: NBC). After this, it reappears in almost each episode's title cue. Otherwise, this motif is used throughout.

would be vastly different if the heroic Captain Kirk's 'fight music' is reused in a context like a space battle, both instances of conflict, but narratively considerably different. At its core, this study will analyse the instrumental language of cues to determine this significance – can narrative topics have their own leitmotifs? – but diverges from the standard area of *Star Trek* study, the *Original Series*, by considering the musical identities within the contemporary niche of the *Star Trek* corpus. The instrumentation of musical cues will be explored, discussing how it correlates with the *Star Trek* narrative and its depictions of utopianism.

Ultimately, this dissertation is about studying the unspoken script of the instruments, and *Star Trek* is an effective vehicle to propagate the notion that music has a unique language in conjunction with visual media. Young contemporary composers can find value from looking toward the soundtrack of *Star Trek* and recognising that it is much more than space-music, but an exemplary figure within the musical realms adjacent to modern Art Music.

### Exposition of Statement

In the dissertation, the research sets out to address the following statement: significant compositional choices can be implemented to ascertain narrative meaning, using musically represented topics within the soundtrack of *Star Trek: Discovery* as a proposedly apt case study; this will be investigated through methodologies that are derived from semiotic study. In this expression, topics are defined as figures of music with meaning that entomb meaningful elements that are akin to signs within linguistics. These meaningful elements are structured and have consistent meaning in their reuse. This draws the parallel of music and script closer, and *Star Trek* is the adequate vehicle to display such a complexity within the relationship of music and the visual media it accompanies.

The statement this research dissertation addresses posits that *Star Trek's* soundtrack is a narrative element with textual qualities that empower the portrayal of topics throughout. These topics are heroism and love, all related through the overarching topic of utopianism. The research statement is approached with considerations of linguistics, applying principles of language and dramaturgy to the soundtrack to solidify the hypothesis that the music is a script.

The central research problem utilises *Star Trek* as a case study for a broader statement – that there is effectivity in approaching music as a script. The problem statement attempts to inform both researcher and composer alike of this effective notion and its applicability to not only *Star Trek*, but also to the greater field of film music design.

## BACKGROUND ON STUDY

### Purpose of Study

The study's motivation is two-fold, addressing *Star Trek*'s scores as a mode of conveying the *Star Trek* vision, one of futurist utopianism, while also informing reader and researcher of its soundtrack's compositional choices to garner an understanding of effective compositional methods. Thus, the research is a probable precursor to a greater text on effective compositional writing for visual media accompaniment.

The output of *Star Trek* academic literature is sparse, especially regarding the most recent releases, and despite being a franchise that has been consistently present in popular social culture for fifty-eight years (at the time of this dissertation's writing), relatively few studies and analyses have been conducted to dissect the *Star Trek* topic. This is especially true of musicological studies and studies in music analysis, notably evident when comparing the academic outputs of such topics of its counterparts in popular culture and science fiction.

Intrinsically, this is part of the motivation of this study's conduct – to contribute to the *Star Trek* academic corpus and broaden the published scope of the analytic understanding of the franchise. The methodology of this study is thematically versatile and can be utilised to contribute to the understanding of other multigenerational and episodic soundtracks, and while derivative of the methodologies of previous analysts, the approach proves a clear effectivity as delineated by preceding researchers while synergising practices with other adjacent analytic writers. What is concluded is a synergistic methodology that is novel enough to warrant consideration.

The researcher also recognises the value of the *Star Trek: Discovery* soundtrack, and the evolution of the franchise's oeuvre deserves greater focus on academic platforms. Numerous composers have contributed to the soundtracks of the various instalments and films in the franchise, and their music, while expectedly diverse and versatile, fulfils not only the embodiment of the *Star Trek* vision, but also fulfils a role and expresses an ability that is applicable to the larger scope of film scoring. Across the board, the composers of the franchise succeeded in making meaning from music, which results from precise compositional considerations. The *Star Trek* composer this dissertation focuses its gaze on is Jeff Russo, the composer for *Discovery* that has shown, as this dissertation aims to prove, his worth in being in the annals of *Star Trek* music creation alongside the great composers of the instalments that

came before. Fledgling composers might learn from understanding the *Star Trek* composers' practices throughout their various soundtracks, and that they too have a responsibility to entertain a sense of dramaturgy.

### Objective of Study

The study sets its aim on informing effective composition practice in short-form episodic visual media – especially as the expansion of streaming services like Netflix and Apple TV increasingly requires new and able composers. *Star Trek* is the focal point of the study, but it serves a purpose of exemplifying the effective practices more than it is the subject of a study solely gazed upon the franchise. Within *Star Trek*, there is embedded a topical element which constitutes what is called the '*Star Trek* vision' – this topic is one of utopianism, manifested in many iterations throughout the franchise. Exploring the elements of utopianism in its various forms within *Star Trek*, but more specifically the 2017 instalment *Star Trek: Discovery*, is assured to yield positive results in acquiring an understanding of effective compositional practices.

These two elements are intrinsically interrelated, as it is posited that the soundtrack of *Star Trek: Discovery* is a mode of displaying the utopianism within the *Star Trek* narrative. Utopianism is subdivided into two distinct topics, Heroism and Love, each substantial to and conjunctive in the existence of the *Star Trek* vision. The study also draws the schism between these two topics together, binding them through the narrative elements of feminism and empowerment that underpin *Star Trek: Discovery*.

Ultimately, whether or not one's preference in music is converse to the soundtrack of *Star Trek: Discovery*, which is both minimalist and harkening to the scores of golden age film, this study proposes that one must accept that there is a valuable nature to the soundtrack and that it is intentionally crafted as a pairing to the textual narrative.

Hereafter follows some notions discussed in the literature review that designs the ultimate analysis' argument.

#### - Utopianism

Throughout, the study returns to the element of (hetero-/)utopianism: not just as the explicit depiction of a society perfected, but also how smaller units of narrative elements depict this. Valiant heroism is a utopian ideal, the perfected 'Kirkian' character embodying for example

what the human of the *Star Trek* future should strive toward; as is the conflict between idea and reality, in narrative, in metaphoric imagery, and in character design and development, indicative of the nature of *Star Trek* utopianism. These assertions of utopian narrative trends are grounded in an extensive corpus of research on the background of the multitudinous elements of utopianism including Platonic theory, heroism, feminism, and futurism, among others.

#### - Star Trek

*Star Trek* is a media franchise that is comprised of twelve television series, which are referred to as ‘instalments’ in this text, and thirteen films, released over the course of 58 years. The three major waves of *Star Trek* instalments define the trajectory of the franchise – the first wave was the run of *Star Trek*’s original series, from 1966-1969; the second wave was kicked off by the sequel *Star Trek: The Next Generation*, first aired in 1987, and consisted of the two other instalments *Star Trek: Deep Space 9* and *Star Trek: Voyager*, whose conclusion brought an end to this era, in 2001; the third wave had one television instalment, *Star Trek: Enterprise*, which aired between 2001 and 2005, but, along with the films in this wave, was poorly received; and the fourth wave was the most recent major wave, now streamed online rather than aired, started off with *Star Trek: Discovery* in 2017.

This study, as laden with information as it is, is still only the tip of the *Star Trek* iceberg, and the theory of utopianism and its application in *Star Trek* is even greater and more extensive than merely a consideration of musical language. This utopian identity of *Star Trek* becomes apparent as the text progresses. The future in which *Star Trek* takes place, as Captain Jean-Luc Picard notes, is simply perfected beyond the impurities of the 20<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup> centuries<sup>7</sup>, and Manu Saadia, a self-proclaimed “Treconomic”, writes of *Star Trek* as “an economic utopia”.<sup>8</sup> Both are enamoured with the notion of the post-capitalist society the humans of *Star Trek* find themselves in.

#### - Semiosis

Semiotics is the study of signs in linguistics<sup>9</sup>. Resources in semiotics are consulted to offer a greater understanding of the methodology-type and, more pertinently, how it is especially

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<sup>7</sup> “The Neutral Zone” (1988). *Star Trek: The Next Generation*. Episode 26, Season 1. Directed by: James L. Conway. Written by: Maurice Hurley & Deborah McIntyre. First broadcast: 16 May 1988. Los Angeles: Paramount Domestic Television.

<sup>8</sup> Robins, K. 2000. Cyberspace and the World We Live In, in Featherstone, M. & Burrows, R. (eds.). *Cyberspace/Cyberbodies/Cyberpunk: Cultures of Technological Embodiment*:135.

<sup>9</sup> Sebeok, T. A. 1991. *A Sign is Just a Sign*: 13. Indianapolis: Indiana University Press.

applicable to a study of this nature. Semiotics considers the signs and signifiers in both verbal and nonverbal language systems, and this study in semiosis is referencing both general linguistic methodology and the intersectionality of the language systems. This dissertation regards especially music as a nonverbal language system that has in recent history been given great consideration in research. The other realms of semiotics that play a role adjacent to the study is visual media and scriptwriting/narrative literature. The application of semiotic methodology in film studies offers an extensive selection of research material that broadens the methodology's definition and use. Translating that definition into a musical analysis requires the analyst to treat music with an intersectional methodology that consults the manners of traditional music semiosis and other similar, some unclassified, methodological approaches.

#### - Feminism and Queer Representation

The necessity to group these two discussion points together hinges on, firstly, their joint absence or neglect in science fiction and, secondly, how they function in tandem in the focal instalment, *Star Trek: Discovery*. Academia has much to say on feminism in science fiction, and though there might be less academic literature on queer representation in science fiction, the literature present are all invaluable. This literature all highlights the sparse field of representative output, especially on the front of critical texts on queer bodies. In *Star Trek: Discovery*, the novelty of leading femininity and saturated queerness are figures central to *Discovery*'s controversial design and reception. Before the release of this instalment, feminine leadership was a subdued, albeit continuously present, note in the *Star Trek* storyline, and sexual orientation seemingly did not exist within the realms of the canonical *Star Trek* storyline. The female and notably desexualised Captain Kathryn Janeway of *Voyager* crawled, if one were to put facetiously, so that Captain Michael Burnham of *Discovery* could run, and nowhere else in the franchise has strong women led a narrative.

#### Significance of Study

Because of the severe scarcity of academic literature in the field of *Star Trek* music, this dissertation aims to be an outcrop in the oeuvre of film music study. Few academics, like Getman and Sommerfield, contribute to the discussion of *Star Trek* music, and this text attempts to contribute to the gap in this field of research. Future film music researchers and composers could simply benefit from a fuller academic corpus, in turn hoping to spur on ensuing research in the topic matters addressed in this dissertation.

Of these topic matters includes the significance that the score of *Star Trek: Discovery* holds when endeavouring to understand film music writing. This study endeavours to inform musicians of the compositional methodologies that have made *Discovery*'s music consequential. While not a complete rarity, it is uncommon that other academic research considers music through analytic methodologies that call toward paradigms of linguistics. Isolating the soundtrack as a linguistic and textual element grants the researcher the ability to review the 'film' music (or rather, television series music) in a unique way and offers composers a distinct understanding of compositional methodology in visual media spheres. With the rapid growth of streaming platforms and the gargantuan output of visual media on these platforms, the necessity for composers is great. This research cannot determine whether all soundtrack-composers for fast-production content are equipped with the knowledge of effective compositional methodologies for their medium, but this dissertation could aid in broadening these composers' abilities by equating effective and easily-accessible methodologies with a case study ingrained in not only popular culture but also the modern streaming trends.

This study's significance, however, is two-fold, and while *Star Trek*'s study is the centralised code of this dissertation's conduct, the nature of *Star Trek: Discovery* as a divergent constituent of the franchise is awarded deserved attention. What makes *Discovery* notable is the novelties in the narrative: hypermodernity, feminism, black-identity, and queerness. While female presence and black representation have always permeated throughout the franchise, situating these marginalised notions at the centre of the instalment is new. What is especially significant is the lack of female, POC and queer representation in popular science fiction and futurist storylines. By and large, *Star Trek*, for as progressive as it has been, has been a masculine storyline, with Captain Kathryn Janeway of the 1996 series *Star Trek: Voyager* being the exception to the otherwise male-dominated history of *Star Trek* heroism. There have, over the years, been critics against this masculinised storyline, but so too against the attempts toward feminising science fiction (one can be reminded of the distaste expressed toward Rey, the first female lead in the *Star Wars* franchise, introduced in 2015, who was critiqued for other variables, too).

Thus, this study wishes to be a significant contributor to the dry landscape of *Star Trek* gender research, a small treatise on synergistic methodology, as well as being a handbook of exemplary compositional use in visual media.

## Assumptions, Limitations and Delimitations

This dissertation proposes that the analysis of isolated cues from the soundtrack of *Star Trek*'s selected instalment would effectively substantiate the research statement's argument. It is assumed that the various musical excerpts considered in this study are apt examples of the topics which they are supposed to represent. It is also assumed that the music is accurately transcribed from available online recordings, especially regarding orchestration.

This necessity for transcription is born from an inability to acquire scores and musical resources of the soundtracks through the standard acquisition methodologies of the University of Cape Town Libraries. With published scores and viable transcriptions not freely available, it was necessary to employ a professional transcriber to translate the audio recordings into musical text. This is the most significant limitation of the study, and its complexity greatly retarded the writing process, at no fault of the transcribers and other academic partners. This limited the number of cues the study could address.

It is furthermore assumed that the research on *Star Trek*'s soundtrack bears applicability to music research outside of the *Star Trek* sphere. This research is proposedly a valuable resource for the study of compositional methodologies, noting that the dissection of figures within the *Star Trek* music is a case study for the effective use of figures within a narrative score. The scope of this topic is wide, and a standardised size framework for MMus dissertations limits the researcher's ability to address all the facets of the research statement. Early drafts of the dissertation were large, and it was the responsibility of the researcher to restructure a big text in a way that conveys topic matters concisely without detracting from its argument. Earlier renditions considered analyses of *Star Trek: The Original Series* and *Star Trek: The Next Generation* very thoroughly, but the limitations in size and time proved the considerations of these various instalments unrealistic. The argument was, in its essence, preserved, but considerably restructured to accommodate a more compact study on *Star Trek: Discovery*.

## CHAPTER DESIGN

Herein is the chapter design, a brief layout of the dissertation.

Chapter 1, as it has been, is a contextual introduction to the study in its multitudinous form. Following is Chapter 2, a literature review that discusses the concepts that craft and constitute the topic. Chapter 3 discusses the methodology employed in the research in all its complexities. Chapter 4 is an application of the analytic approach as discussed in Chapter 1, and Chapter 5

is conclusive remarks on the study. Thereafter follows a reference list of all the cited texts and research material.

#### CONCLUSION TO INTRODUCTION

This study is a novel attempt at dissecting *Star Trek*'s music with a clear mission to make the reader and researcher aware of the extratextual narrative use of musical figures within the soundtrack. The study not only considers the musical cues in the standardised methods of music analysis, but brings together this methodology with notions of semiosis, building an argument around a narrative approach. Texts in film music study and classical semiotics inform the researcher to ultimately present a research text that considers *Star Trek* in a unique light.

## CHAPTER 2 – LITERATURE STUDY

The Literature Study addresses two key elements of the research: *Star Trek*, and the utopian identities embedded within it, which would become the core elements of the analysis. As noted in the Purpose of Study in Chapter 1, the nature of this study utilises the consideration of the utopian facets of *Star Trek*, heroism and love as examples thereof, to assert the notion that the soundtrack is a language model that conveys these narrative figures. Therefore, a keen understanding of *Star Trek*, contextualised within its nearly six-decade lifespan, and an understanding of utopianism, generalised and placed within the paradigm of *Star Trek*, is crucial in building a framework for the analysis of the *Star Trek* soundtrack. First an exposition of *Star Trek* is discussed, with a consideration of the noteworthy “vision” of *Star Trek*; thereafter will be discussed the utopian allegory that is *Star Trek* – what is meant by this is that the storyline of *Star Trek* over its entire lifespan, and the core element of its vision, tells a fable and fantastical construct that fictionalises a ‘could-be’ perfected universe where Earthly humanity is exempt of wraths of the unjust contemporary society, while, initially implicitly but later intentionally, exposing the cracks and fundamental inconsistencies within the utopian architecture.

Discussions on the matter of the utopian theory may consider the uniform architectonic constructs of Le Corbusier’s Paris<sup>10</sup>, Cerdà’s Barcelona<sup>11</sup> and Howard’s Garden City<sup>12</sup>, literature on societal and social constructs like that of More<sup>13</sup>, Fourier<sup>14</sup>, and Plato<sup>15</sup>, and theories of utopian music that align with the writings of Erraught<sup>16</sup> and the notions futurism and Afro-futurism. These all have intrinsic relationships with *Star Trek* – uniform utopian architectonic design, idyllic social environments, and futuristic constructs. However, the Literature Study will only consider the base concept of utopianism by Plato and More’s

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<sup>10</sup> Rodriques-Lora, J., Navas-Carrillo, D., Perez-Cano, M. T. 2021. Le Corbusier’s urbanism: An urban characterisation of his proposals for inner cities. *Frontiers of Architectural Research*, 10.

<sup>11</sup> Miles, M. 2008. *Urban Utopias: The Build and Social Architectures of Alternative Settlements*:60. London: Routledge.

<sup>12</sup> Miles, M. 2008. *Urban Utopias: The Built and Social Architectures of Alternative Settlements*:63-64. London: Routledge.

<sup>13</sup> More, T. 1516. *Utopia*. Basel: Frobenius.

<sup>14</sup> Beecher, J. 1990. *Charles Fourier: The Visionary and His World*:241. Berkeley: University of California Press.

<sup>15</sup> Plato, in Cooper, J. (ed.). 1997. *Plato: Complete Works*:97, 189-190, 1659-1660. Indianapolis: Hackett Publishing

<sup>16</sup> Erraught, A. 2018. *On Music, Value and Utopia: Nostalgia for an Age Yet to Come?*:35. London: Rowman & Littlefield International.

standards, and, following through it, its fundamental cracks, like the heterotopianism embedded in the utopian narrative, with *Star Trek: Voyager* as a brief example case.

The Literature Study intends to usher in the analytic conversation that is executed in Chapter 4.

### AN INTRODUCTION TO *STAR TREK*

The universe of *Star Trek* revolves around the happenings within the United Federation of Planets, a galactic polity that unifies hundreds of celestial bodies. At the centre of this political system is Earth, the bastion of social perfection and home to an exemplary species which inspires countless alien races.<sup>17</sup> Most of the main instalments of the *Star Trek* franchise, from the get-go, follow the journeys of spacefarers on various Starships, which form part of the Federation's interplanetary research and defence fleet, Starfleet. In the first instalment, *Star Trek: The Original Series* (hereon forward referred to as *TOS*), which ran from 1966-1969, the viewer follows the voyages of Starfleet's flagship, the Starship *Enterprise*, during the 23<sup>rd</sup> century. The Starship *Enterprise*'s mission was to survey unexplored territories of space to broaden human understanding of the galaxy. Captain James T. Kirk (William Shatner), commanding officer aboard the Starship, opens the episodes of the *TOS* with a monologue which best describes the motivations of their voyage:

Space: the final frontier. These are the voyages of the Starship *Enterprise*. Its five-year mission: to explore strange new worlds; to seek out new life and civilisations; to boldly go where no man has gone before!<sup>18</sup>

This unites the *Enterprise*'s valiant voyage into the unknown with sentiments of the history of the 'valiant' European pioneers of the previous millennium that trekked across the uncharted frontiers of the continental North America, westward, to 'discover' the unknowns beyond the borders of the colonised lands. The Starship *Enterprise* that Kirk introduces is an allegory to the heroic missions to expand the idealised Western civilisation.

*Star Trek: The Next Generation* (1987-1994, hereon forward referred to as *TNG*) plays out a century later, following the voyages of a new generation of the Starship *Enterprise*, under the

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<sup>17</sup> "Zero Hour" (2004). *Star Trek: Enterprise*. Season 3, Episode 24. Directed by: Allan Kroeker. Written by: Rick Berman & Brandon Braga. First broadcast: 16 May 2004. Los Angeles: Paramount Pictures.

<sup>18</sup> Quote first appeared on air in the following episode: "The Man Trap" (1966). *Star Trek: The Original Series*. Episode 1, Season 1. Directed by: Marc Daniels. Written by: George Clayton Johnson. First broadcast: 8 September 1966 (US). Los Angeles: NBC. It is used in the title cues of the ensuing episodes of the series.

command of Captain Jean-Luc Picard (Patrick Stewart). Their journey is taking place over an indefinite period, and with considerable advancements in technology and science, as well as the growth of the Federation and its subsequent diplomatic tactics, the Starship *Enterprise* reaches farther distances and discovers new unknowns in the galaxy, and plants its seeds deeper within the realms of space. The advent of the VCR at the time of *TNG*'s airing meant that viewers could record and collect episodes, creating their own syndications. Storylines were now more complex, giving way to arcs that continuously grappled with single adversaries and longer, more in-depth deep space missions.

The Starship *Voyager* is the titular ship of *Star Trek: Voyager* (1995-2001, hereon forward referred to as *Voy*). The series' viewer follows this Starship and its hodgepodge crew stranded 70 000 lightyears from the borders of the Federation with no prospects of returning home. The commanding officer, Captain Kathryn Janeway (Kate Mulgrew), is tasked with inspiring her crew to persevere and keep their hope alive for their return home, while at the same time upholding the Federation's ethos and directive to discover new celestial bodies, new species, make new allies, ward off adversaries, and spread the upstanding ideals of the Federation.

However, given the newfound complexities possible in television writing, the journeys of these twenty-fourth century starships brought forth narratives that questioned the integrity of the Federation and presented the flaws in its nature. Adversaries that were in previous generations depicted as the absolute moral antitheses became now complexified with mythos and cultures, and they were now at worst morally ambiguous and at best respectable counterparts.

The most recent generation, at the time of the writing of this dissertation, now disseminated on online streaming platforms, kicked off with *Star Trek: Discovery* (2017-2024, hereon forward referred to as *Disc*), a prequel to *TOS*, set a decade before the voyages of Kirk. While the series starts off with the depiction of the journey of the Starship *Shenzhou*, the destruction of this Starship by the end of episode 2 would lead to the incarceration of the main character, Commander Michael Burnham (Sonequa Martin-Green), whose choices lead to a galactic war between the Federation and its antagonistic counterpart, the Klingon Empire. The disgraced Burnham is stripped of her rank and imprisoned, before being released and reassigned to the Starship *Discovery*, much like the assignment of imprisoned former Starfleet officer Tom Paris (Robert Duncan McNeill) to the Starship *Voyager* in *Voy*. Because of her scientific expertise, Burnham is tasked with aiding in the Starship *Discovery*'s research into alternative methods of energy creation and transport. This is the first major installation in the franchise which does

not follow the story of a captain (starship or otherwise). Burnham initially also depicts an ostensible antidissertation to the typical *Star Trek* hero – flawed, morally grey, difficult to reconcile with. This newest generation is a further development on the evolution of the *Star Trek* character: inner discourse, wavering loyalties, complexified morality, and a questioning of the Federation’s ethos and flawed integrity.<sup>19</sup>

### The Vision of *Star Trek*

In 1966, the *Star Trek* vision came to life behind the glass screens of each American television. Gene Roddenberry, the father of *Star Trek* and the visionary behind the franchise, utilised his enthusiasm for science fiction to create a universe that critiques the viewer’s own. Initially deemed too cerebral by NBC, his commentary had to be diluted and brought into a narrative in ways that are at times more subliminal than palpable. At the end of the day, *Star Trek* became more of a Western, with guns and heroes, and seemed to have lost much of its *elan vital*; instead, through these adaptations it only assured that its message would reach a wider audience through a more general palatability.<sup>20</sup>

Content conventions and strict censorship at the hand of television networks incited further erosion of the *Star Trek* vision. A sense of tension simmered between Roddenberry and the network, NBC<sup>21</sup>, a strained relationship which Roddenberry was considerably vocal about – an example of this tension was expressed in a guest lecture Roddenberry delivered at Wichita State University:

“I can see I face a group of intellectuals this morning.

[laughter from the students]

“I’m being quite serious, though. Really, the greatest laughs, uh, we’ve gotten on the blooper reels have been in showings for astronauts and space laboratories, and [inaudible]. The only place we showed them that we never got a laugh was in, uh,

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<sup>19</sup> Keeler, A. 2019. Visible/Invisible: Female Astronauts and Technology in *Star Trek: Discovery* and National Geographic’s *Mars*. *Science Fiction Film and Television*, 12(1):134.

<sup>20</sup> Geraghty, L. 2007. *Living with Star Trek: American Culture and the Star Trek Universe*:2. London: I. B. Tauris & Co Ltd.

<sup>21</sup> WSUTV, 2015. *Star Trek Creator, Gene Roddenberry Gives Lecture at Wichita State University*, 24 July 2015 [video file]. Available: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=o1M8EiO7ZoY>

showings for television executives [...] which seems to indicate that there is a correlation between sense of humour and intelligence.

[laughter and claps from students]

[...] My quarrel is not with the people, it's with the nature of commercial television as it exists today.”<sup>22</sup>

The *Star Trek* narrative that Roddenberry created ignited the kinds of controversies that the US television networks in this era, heavily puritan, explicitly avoided.<sup>23</sup> *Star Trek* called to elements of Afro-futurism – once again in a way which was subdued for the sake of palatability to white audiences and satisfaction of the white-run NBC, in a volatile time during which racial segregation was actively being protested. An example hereof is in what would otherwise be considered an insignificant, run-of-the-mill episode of *TOS*, where Captain Kirk and Lieutenant Uhura (Nichelle Nichols), a black female bridge officer under the captain, shared the first on-screen interracial kiss between an African American and a white actor (Episode 10, Season 3, “Plato’s Stepchildren”, *Star Trek: The Original Series*)<sup>24</sup> (interestingly, the first interracial kiss on US television was between Shatner and an actress of Asian descent, France Nguyen, ten years before, in the play *The World of Suzie Wong*). The kiss contributed to the momentum of the Civil Rights Era, a period of protest against the longstanding laws that segregated African Americans and their rights from white Americans. Dr Martin Luther-King, the face of the Civil Rights Movement, encouraged Nichols to continue the important work she was doing by depicting Uhura, despite the hardships and backlash she continuously faced as an African American actress, reminding her of her significance – portraying a world where women of colour were able to work and live as equals to white counterparts in a single space.<sup>25 26</sup>

The Civil Rights Era is defined by a movement across the United States, where there was mass upstanding against the laws of segregation that suppressed the human rights of African Americans. Ultimately, it was a movement that worked toward a reality that was considered

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<sup>22</sup> WSUTV, 2015. *Star Trek Creator, Gene Roddenberry Gives Lecture at Wichita State University*, 24 July 2015 [video file]. Available: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=o1M8EiO7ZoY>

<sup>23</sup> Gregory, C. 2000. *Star Trek: Parallel Narratives*:15, 18. London: Macmillan Press Ltd.

<sup>24</sup> “Plato’s Stepchildren” (1968). *Star Trek: The Original Series*, Season 3, Episode 10. Directed by: David Alexander. Written by: Meyer Dolinsky. First broadcast: 22 November, 1968. Los Angeles: NBC.

<sup>25</sup> Gregory, C. 2000. *Star Trek: Parallel Narratives*:18. London: Macmillan Press Ltd

<sup>26</sup> Whitney, A. 2021. Documentaries, in Garcia-Siino, L., Mittermeier, S. & Rabitsch, S. (eds.) *The Routledge Handbook of Star Trek*. New York: Routledge.

utopian – where a nation of people could live on equal footing, being able to look eye-to-eye. At the time, during the 1960s, African Americans had a gross annual income almost half of that of Caucasian Americans, and African Americans represented the majority of US unemployment statistics. Access to basic education for African Americans was limited, with only 20% of African Americans trained in basic commodifiable skills in major cities like Birmingham, Alabama; African Americans were also prohibited from taking up the same space as Caucasian Americans, a law enforced with great violence.<sup>27</sup> The effects of US segregation was most potent in the southern states of the US, where legislation was highly oppressive and conservatism hit POC communities the greatest. The northern states did not live in an idealised state for POCs, but propagated legislation that were actively working toward equity and gave POC communities greater opportunity for growth. In 1963, the Civil Rights Movement had reached its peak. At the Lincoln Memorial, in the US capital city Washington, a peaceful protest was held in empowerment of equality, and hundreds of thousands of people, allies to the Civil Rights cause, attended, a protest against the centuries-old oppression of the African American people. On this day, marked as an integral day in US history, Dr King would deliver a speech that would become one of the defining moments of the Movement.<sup>28</sup> Like this, the kiss became a bastion of hope for millions of Americans.

Nichols anecdotally recounted the tension the scene incited amid network representatives – a resounding fear of the reception of (mainly conservative white) viewers in the southern US states. Roddenberry and Shatner had apparently tried to actively calm the storm in the studio on the day of the shooting, but thirty-six retakes were shot nonetheless, each met with the scrutiny of the anxiety-fuelled network representatives. Ultimately, Roddenberry agreed to record a version without the kiss, which he only agreed to in an attempt to placate the network. At that point, however, the day was over and there was time for only one shooting. With this in mind, Shatner intentionally sabotaged the shot – looking at the camera and crossing his eyes in a manner so foolish that NBC was forced to use the shot with the kiss.<sup>29</sup>

Television writing was ruled by stringent stylistic elements. Episodic formats meant that content was structured in a standardised manner, its flow rarely veering from the norm: characters were explicitly one-dimensional, and without substantial development, or at least character development that required to be reverted to its initial identity by the end of the

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<sup>27</sup> McNeese, T. 2008. *The Civil Rights Movement: Striving for Justice*:8-9. New York: Infobase Publishing.

<sup>28</sup> McNeese, T. 2008. *The Civil Rights Movement: Striving for Justice*:15-16. New York: Infobase Publishing.

<sup>29</sup> Nichols, N. 1994. *Beyond Uhura: Star Trek and Other Memories*:195-196. New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons.

episode. *Star Trek* toyed with character elements of dichotomy, using the characteristically stoic and logical Spock (Leonard Nemoy) to employ tools of complex character development which were at the time novel and against the grain. Spock introduced the element of internal conflict, depicted through his nature as a hybrid species, child of an ‘inherently emotional’ human mother and a father that was a standard cold and calculating Vulcan. Spock wrestled with his *pathétique* and his cold rigidity, and in each episode where he had this struggle, his character was exposed as more complex and multifaceted than what would be expected of a television series. This novel complexity of character was a hit with audiences and these episodes became among the most popular.<sup>30</sup>

Dichotomy plays its role in the frontier narrative, both as a single-cell structure in *TOS* and a developed sense in the subsequent instalments.<sup>31</sup> The American West was a popular topic in media during the mid-century, and narratives of the “wagon-trans”, as Roddenberry puts it, translated over into the solemn, lonely and valiant missions of the Federation’s exploratory fleet, guided by the ideals of the society from whence they came; their travels were, both in the West and in the stars, littered with their rigid puritanism and the way of the damned that confronted them on their journeys.<sup>32</sup> The antagonists to the heroic tale were the Native Americans, that fulfilled either roles of the cunning, sly, and adaptable adversary – the Magua – or of the brute warriors who as foes lived outside of the pioneer’s ethos – the Chingachgook. Both these group-characters are embodied, respectively, through the Romulans, intelligent tacticians, and the Klingons, animalistic and amoral fighters.<sup>33</sup> As the franchise progresses, these antagonists gain depth and character, as stated before, and are emancipated from the identities that they were prescribed, while still retaining the essence of the species that viewers came to know. A dichotomy was opened up that posed Klingons as artistic and creative, but brute and unwavering, as well as Romulans that were understanding and caring, yet calculated and logical.

The *Star Trek* vision – Roddenberry’s vision – has kept the series alive for nearly six decades. The fable of *Star Trek* and the utopian universe it creates evokes fascination among its viewers worldwide. The message, as Roddenberry describes, is a reminder that there is a future greater than the limitations of the twentieth and twenty-first centuries; it is, also, an assurance that

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<sup>30</sup> Gregory, C. 2000. *Star Trek: Parallel Narratives*:16. London: Macmillan Press Ltd

<sup>31</sup> Kapell, W. 2010. *Star Trek as Myth*:19. Jefferson: McFarland & Company, Inc., Publishers

<sup>32</sup> Kapell, W. 2010 *Star Trek as Myth*:19-20. Jefferson: McFarland & Company, Inc., Publishers

<sup>33</sup> Kapell, W. 2010 *Star Trek as Myth*:20. Jefferson: McFarland & Company, Inc., Publishers

there is a future for the human species that is not destined for doom and damnation. This was especially pertinent in the 1960s, when mankind faced worry and uncertainty. Media was proclaiming messages of the end of times, rhetoric which Roddenberry actively tried to counter.

## STAR TREK AS A UTOPIAN ALLEGORY

The human species is to be admired, and they're really going somewhere.

- Gene Roddenberry<sup>34</sup>

A lot has changed in the past three hundred years. People are no longer obsessed with the accumulation of things. We've eliminated hunger, want, the need for possessions. We've grown out of our infancy ... Welcome to the 24<sup>th</sup> century.

- Captain Jean-Luc Picard, *Star Trek: The Next Generation*<sup>35</sup>

The idea of an Earthly Paradise was composed of all elements incompatible with History, with the space in which the negative states flourish.

- E. M. Cioran<sup>36</sup>

Karl Marx originated the Jacobinist ideal of post-capitalist socialism, positing a better societal structure of equal input-equal gain, notions of utilitarian-centric design, with that a focus on what is more considerate of social-societal progression within manufacturing and technological advancement, and the erasure of profiteering. Globalisation is at hand in a socialist society, insinuating that social and cultural inequality would be alleviated as an environment of individuals carry the same identity, and a multifaceted society conducts itself in a centralised manner. Bloch expresses that this would be the presiding definition of Marxist ideology, where the central ethos of socialism, at the time of his writing, “forbids rich and poor alike to steal firewood or to sleep under bridges”.<sup>37</sup> In Bloch's utopian Socialist State, career is replaced with

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<sup>34</sup> WSUTV, 2015. *Star Trek Creator, Gene Roddenberry Gives Lecture at Wichita State University*, 24 July 2015 [video file]. Available: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=olM8EiO7ZoY>

<sup>35</sup> “The Neutral Zone” (1988). *Star Trek: The Next Generation*. Episode 26, Season 1. Directed by: James L. Conway. Written by: Maurice Hurley & Deborah McIntyre. First broadcast: 16 May 1988. Los Angeles: Paramount Domestic Television.

<sup>36</sup> Robins, K. 2000. Cyberspace and the World We Live In, in Featherstone, M. & Burrows, R. (eds.). *Cyberspace/Cyberbodies/Cyberpunk: Cultures of Technological Embodiment*:135.

<sup>37</sup> Bloch, E. 2000. *The Spirit of Utopia*:238. Stanford: Stanford University Press.

virtue, where work is not a necessity and income is not an incentive; where ability, not financial worth, defines success. Bloch admits that this is intensely and intendedly unhealthy for economic stability but acts as a contest to the structure of the capitalist society's economic identity with one that offers an economy fully at the hand of the people rather than the nameless, faceless, unseen state-individual. The Federation's economic philosophy is admitted within *Star Trek* as aligning with Bloch<sup>38</sup>. Picard says:

This is the 24<sup>th</sup> century. Material needs no longer exist. ... The challenge ... is to improve yourself. To enrich yourself. Enjoy it.<sup>39</sup>

The acquisition of wealth is no longer the driving force in our lives. We work to better ourselves and the rest of humanity.<sup>40</sup>

In year 1516, Thomas More originated utopianism in his novel titled *Utopia*, which tells of an island called Utopia. This island society is based on the city-state of Kallipolis from Plato's literary treatise *Republic*. However, Utopia diverts from its Kallipolis prototype through its mode of utopian acquisition – Kallipolis is a state ruled by philosophers and the intelligentsia<sup>41</sup>; Utopia assures its utopianism through stringent regulation of law and policy. Fredric Jameson posits that More's vision of utopianism has two streams of descent outside of the book, one based in systemic modulation and the fabrication of the "ideal" society from what has already been; and the other based in abstract thought, in philosophies of social ideology, economy, and law.<sup>42</sup> Both streams deliver similar promises of a collective community which exchanges individual egotism for a curated paradigm shared throughout – in reality mangled in multitudes of continuous instances to promote group-superiority and propagate discrimination. In the idealist instance of the utopian promise as it is in theory, there is included a promise that, within the collective, individual personality is retained and each individual's being distinguishes themselves and enriches the collective's united personality.<sup>43</sup>

The Federation society of *Star Trek* is that of a Bloch-Marxist-More post-capitalist utopia. This lies inherent in the *Star Trek* economic identity, as one that eliminates the flaw of modern

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<sup>38</sup> Bloch, E. 2000. *The Spirit of Utopia*:245-246. Stanford: Stanford University Press.

<sup>39</sup> "The Neutral Zone" (1988). *Star Trek: The Next Generation*. Episode 25, Season 1. Directed by: James L. Conway. Written by: Gene Roddenberry, Maurice Hurley & Deborah McIntyre. First broadcast: 16 May 1988. Los Angeles: Paramount Domestic Television.

<sup>40</sup> *Star Trek: First Contact* (1997) [Film]. Directed by: Jonathan Frakes. Los Angeles: Paramount Pictures.

<sup>41</sup> Saadia, M. 2016. *Treconomics: The Economics of Star Trek*:22. San Francisco: Pipertext Publishing Co., Inc.

<sup>42</sup> Jameson, F. 2005. *Archaeologies of the Future*:3. London: Verso.

<sup>43</sup> Jameson, F. 2005. *Archaeologies of the Future*:8. London: Verso.

economics: the improbability of “right” direction within the questions required to be answered to fulfil the needs of a functioning economy. Technological and medical advancements are not reserved for an upper echelon but are evenly disseminated among the population, answering to the need for equal provision and accessibility of resources.<sup>44</sup> Because of this free availability, money has no value – it is the core principle of economics that an object only holds fiscal value if it is in demand. *Star Trek* replicators invalidate this demand, being able to create medicine, clothing, furniture, and food, among most things, gratis. Irreplicable resources like dilithium, which fuel the faster-than-light interstellar travel, are thus procured, in this case mined, by Federation citizens that do not receive wages for their work. All menial labour is based on an ethical incentive<sup>45</sup>, unless another unknown source of reward-for-labour exists; this ethical duty falls in line with the Marxist ideal that a perfected Socialist State has a working class driven by the want for the progression and prosperity of society and the fellow man.<sup>46</sup> In greater professional structures, rank is the reward that substitutes money. Starfleet readily promotes officers that display conviction and effectiveness, climbing the ranks from ensign to admiral, without any benefits of income raises or bonuses.<sup>47</sup> And in a society that offers open academic and technological resources to its population, achievement is an expectation to all.

## The Theory of Utopianism

The world of *Star Trek* is an economic utopia.<sup>48</sup>

[A utopia is] a story of what it is to encounter and experience the good society.<sup>49</sup>

Alternatives, hopes, wishes – these are the stuff of utopia, the sense that things could be better, that something other than what is can be imagined and maybe realized.<sup>50</sup>

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<sup>44</sup> Saadia, M. 2016. *Treconomics: The Future of Star Trek*:18. San Francisco: Pipertext Publishing Co., Inc.

<sup>45</sup> Saadia, M. 2016. *Treconomics: The Economics of Star Trek*:42-44, 48. San Francisco: Pipertext Publishing Co., Inc.

<sup>46</sup> Bloch, E. 2000. *The Spirit of Utopia*:238. Stanford: Stanford University Press.

<sup>47</sup> Saadia, M. 2016. *Treconomics: The Economics of Star Trek*:51. San Francisco: Pipertext Publishing Co., Inc.

<sup>48</sup> Saadia, M. 2016. *Treconomics: The Economics of Star Trek*:18. San Francisco: Pipertext Publishing Co., Inc.

<sup>49</sup> Robins, K. 2000. Cyberspace and the World We Live In, in Featherstone, M. & Burrows, R. (eds.). *Cyberspace/Cyberbodies/Cyberpunk: Cultures of Technological Embodiment*. London: SAGE Publications.

<sup>50</sup> Dyer, R. 2002. Entertainment and Utopia, in Cohan, S (eds.). *Hollywood Musicals: The Film Reader*. London: Routledge.

Within the *abstract* utopianist thought exists a duality of Imagination and Fancy. The Imagination denotes the creation of the notion and its primary design as an object that fills a space; Fancy comes thereafter as a secondary, which colours in the Imagination like embellishment and filigree.<sup>51</sup> Nietzsche found (and critiqued) a binary within the utopian story, too, where there is to fill a role of “Good” and of “Evil”. The “Good” is defined by bravery and supposed depth of character, with an absolute ego to boot, while the “Evil” is one-sided and unappealing, insinuated to have cowardice embedded in its supposed strength.<sup>52</sup> This egocentric storyline is born from an Imagination which puts little thought into character and being, as bravery only goes as far as unwavering strength, and evil is unchanging and unforgiving. For one receiving the story, the tale may either be personal or universal, the one only drawing interest from the storyteller (and those who find solidarity in it) and the other eliciting the attention of any listener, respectively<sup>53</sup>; so, too, does the duality of the utopian Imagination-image possess the promise of perfection for either the individual or the group-unit. The individual-utopianism bears a pathos that is placed in the egocentric hero role, softening it by giving this unhuman, object-like perfection, reason and necessity – otherwise, that possession of the wish (which Freud and Jameson describes as the daydream<sup>54 55</sup>) for personal utopianism finds itself to be pitiable and ripe for critique.<sup>56</sup>

Plato alludes to the binary utopianism in his writing on *doxa* and *episteme*, the former the malleable and unreliably changeable idea, and the latter the unquestionable and incorrigible fact<sup>57</sup>; Ideology and Science as an oppositional two-sided unit proposed by Marx, follows this Platonic duality.<sup>58</sup> The promise of utopianism as it is presented compels the viewer to eschew the factual half to play along with the *doxa*'s vision. If one is not able to grant oneself the ability to be imaginative in the pursuit of the utopian idea, no perfection can be pursued. Jameson's description of the utopian creation through systemic modulation, and the creation of utopian thought, complements this.<sup>59</sup> More's account of the fictitious Utopia, with its cultural extremes

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<sup>51</sup> Jameson, F. 2005. *Archaeologies of the Future*:44, 45. London: Verso.

<sup>52</sup> Freud, S. 1954. *The Standard Edition of Complete Psychological Works of Sigmund Freud*, Vol. IX:50. London: Hogarth Press.

<sup>53</sup> Jameson, F. 2005. *Archaeologies of the Future*:46-47. London: Verso.

<sup>54</sup> Jameson, F. 2005. *Archaeologies of the Future*:45-47. London: Verso.

<sup>55</sup> Freud, S. 1954. *The Standard Edition of Complete Psychological Works of Sigmund Freud*, Vol. IX:152-153. London: Hogarth Press.

<sup>56</sup> Jameson, F. 2005. *Archaeologies of the Future*:47. London: Verso.

<sup>57</sup> Plato, in Cooper, J. (ed.). 1997. *Plato: Complete Works*:97, 189-190, 1659-1660. Indianapolis: Hackett Publishing.

<sup>58</sup> Jameson, F. 2005. *Archaeologies of the Future*:48. London: Verso.

<sup>59</sup> Jameson, F. 2005. *Archaeologies of the Future*:3. London: Verso.

and contradictions to the Western reader, will bear no value if its satire is pushed aside and its definition of the Utopian world is taken literally. The abandonment of unwavering rationale, when fact may be false or un conducive to progression, is a necessity in the utopian pursuit. When, after revolution or major political reform, a society is intended on being bettered and a general paradigm is attempted to be shifted, progression is negated when there is not an understanding that the societal *doxa* is conditioned into those who educate, and it therefore does not trickle down to those being educated; thus, utopianism is attempted when the unconditioning of the preset *doxa* of educators is attempted, conditioning them anew.<sup>60</sup> In all these utopian binaries in the utopian definition, the symbiotic relationship of each side of the binary – *episteme* and *doxa*, Imagination and Fancy – is crucial.

As if in honour of the Platonic binary theory, *Disc* centres its narrative around duality in numerous iterations, juxtaposing characters against one another, displaying conflicts in characters' intrapersonal contradictions, setting large social and cultural structures against one another, and ultimately pitting *Disc* against the rest of the franchise.

Michael Burnham is the controversial *doxa* that challenges all which the *episteme* that is the *Star Trek* "hero" has exemplified over the franchise's generations. Her introduction in the first moments of *Disc* displays a young officer, underling to her captain, Phillipa Georgiou, whom is at the offset shown to be an exemplary Starfleet figure and mentor to her young first officer. Burnham defies the archetype of dutiful and unquestioning Starfleet officer when she opposes the decisions of her captain in a critical moment, resulting in the death of Georgiou as well as the deaths of others and the subsequent onset of a galactic war. Burnham is imprisoned in a life sentence for crimes against the Federation.<sup>61</sup> This is the antidissertation of the heroic *Star Trek* lead. Captain Janeway from *Voy* is the most comparable "hero" in the franchise, having stranded her crew tens of thousands of lightyears from Earth by her own decision (however determined by morality and therefore respectable, honoured by Starfleet and her crew; Burnham was considered a traitor and disliked throughout the Federation). Burnham is also mirrored by T'Rell, a Klingon scientist who cares for and protects young Voq, whom she had previously mutilated through numerous experiments. She, like Burnham, portrays a greatly flawed but admirable female in a historically male-dominated role, ultimately becoming the uniter of the broken Klingon Empire, much like Burnham ultimately becomes a respected

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<sup>60</sup> Jameson, F. 2005. *Archaeologies of the Future*:50. London: Verso.

<sup>61</sup> Keeler, A. 2019. Visible/invisible: Female astronauts and technology in *Star Trek: Discovery* and National Geographic's *Mars*. *Science Fiction and Television*, 12(1):133.

leading force in the Federation (and continuously filling the previously male-centric “*Star Trek* hero” role). To further drive the relationship between Burnham and T’Rell home, the first season’s narrative leads Burnham to fall into a romantic relationship with Ash Tyler, who is later revealed to be another victim of T’Rell’s experiments and a vessel of a cloned personality of Voq.<sup>62</sup>

The *episteme* of the utopian theory bears a visage of cleanliness and purity, contrasting a preset taboo. The Marquis De Sade’s book *The 120 Days of Sodom* describes a society of crass, dirty pleasure, unencumbered by prude moral code, where orgies and fetishes are public and natural. The city of Sodom stands in intentional contrast to the utopian identities of the philosophies of Fourier and More; no facet of Sodom is bound by law and there is no regulation to structure the society.<sup>63</sup> To philosopher Herbert Marcuse, sexualisation is detrimental to the movement toward utopianism – to have evolved toward enlightenment, one had to suppress to be able to take hold of the natural world, and no order can be assumed from perverse universal disorder.<sup>64</sup> It is evident through other instalments in his corpus that De Sade had a clear understanding of what a utopian society is: in *Aline et Valcour*, the island of Tamoé is void of any inequality, an absence of military and fleet isolates them from the greater world and abolishes war, private ownership is non-existent, and with that the need for greed, and there is no religion, hierarchy, and ritualistic practice. It is evident that there is an uncanny resemblance to More’s Utopia.<sup>65</sup> De Sade’s clear comprehension of the utopian society furthers Benjamin’s notion that Sodom is a utopia (or, rather, a heterotopia, explained later in the chapter) where the fulfilment of pleasure brings one toward perfection, and finding a community which all work toward and revel in absolute pleasure is the collective which is so central to the utopian philosophy.<sup>66</sup>

The inference that the Federation is More’s Utopia is the flaw of the idealist Federation-narrative, with the Federation’s counterparts in this inference as uncivilised and abhorrent, like Sodom. From their introduction in *TOS*, and the expansion of their character and lore, the *Star Trek* viewer has always been led to believe that Klingons are backwater, war-like, and

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<sup>62</sup> Keeler, A. 2019. Visible/invisible: Female astronauts and technology in *Star Trek: Discovery* and National Geographic’s *Mars*. *Science Fiction and Television*, 12(1):139.

<sup>63</sup> Miller, T. 2018. Perversion and Utopia: Sade, Fourier, and Critical Theory. *College Literature*, 45(2), Spring:332, 336-338.

<sup>64</sup> Marcuse, H. 1966. *Eros and Civilization: A Philosophical Inquiry into Freud*:50-51. Boston: Beacon Press.

<sup>65</sup> Fink, B. C. 1980. Narrative Techniques and Utopian Structures in Sade’s “Aline et Valcour”, *Science Fiction Studies*, 7(1):74.

<sup>66</sup> Miller, T. 2018. Perversion and Utopia: Sade, Fourier, and Critical Theory, *College Literature*, 45(2), Spring:343-344

unevolved. The first introduction of the Klingons displayed them as a conquering force, brutal in asserting dominance to intimidate and abuse.<sup>67</sup> In *TOS*, the Klingons were depicted visually in what was intended to be a derogatory design, human-like but dark of skin, the writer describing their look in the script as “oriental, hard-faced”.<sup>68</sup> From *Star Trek: The Next Generation*, Klingons were given an updated look – less human and more animal-like. Now, Klingons were given a broader culture, shown to be a society which classifies the worth of each Klingon by the honour they display in battle. Combat rules in the Klingon Empire. “Enlightened” Federation citizens, like Captain Benjamin Sisko (Avery Brooks), would display a respect toward and fascination of the Klingon culture and arts, noting their extensive operatic repertoire and literary corpus, and the study of Klingon art music was a prerequisite at the Starfleet Academy; however, the standard human considered Klingon culture, their opera included, to be crass and banal.<sup>69 70</sup> It is notable that other races that share the Klingon’s less-than-human appearance receive a similar distasteful appreciation from humans and their aesthetically similar humanoid counterparts – the Ferengi, short, sharp-toothed, and with big earlobes dominating their head, are for example considered unenlightened and primitive, ideologically lesser than the Federation.<sup>71</sup> Contrasting this is the Romulans, a devious and war-mongering species that asserts dominance over their dominions through fear. From their introduction in *TOS*, their brutal, militaristic nature is lauded with respect. Their human-like appearance and Vulcan heritage further make a compelling case for a positive reception. The aesthetic of their starships are relatable to the Federation ships – their military vehicles, called Warbirds, are sleek and futuristic in design, light in colour and with a relatively well-lit interior<sup>72</sup> (it is necessary to note how the Klingon military ships contrast this: these vessels are

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<sup>67</sup> “Errand of Mercy” (1967). *Star Trek: The Original Series*. Season 1, Episode 26. Directed by: John Newland. Written by: Gene L. Coon. First Broadcast: 23 March 1967. Los Angeles: NBC.

<sup>68</sup> “Errand of Mercy” (1967). *Star Trek: The Original Series*. Season 1, Episode 26. Directed by: John Newland. Written by: Gene L. Coon. First Broadcast: 23 March 1967. Los Angeles: NBC.

<sup>69</sup> “The Alternate” (1994). *Star Trek: Deep Space 9*. Season 2, Episode 12. Directed by: David Carson. Written by: Jim Trombetta & Bill Dial. First broadcast: 9 January 1994. Los Angeles: Paramount Domestic Television.

<sup>70</sup> “A Man Alone” (1993). *Star Trek: Deep Space 9*. Season 1, Episode 4. Directed by: Paul Lynch. Written by: Gerald Stanford & Michael Piller. First broadcast: 17 January 1993. Los Angeles: Paramount Domestic Television.

<sup>71</sup> “Rules of Acquisition” (1993). *Star Trek: Deep Space 9*. Season 2, Episode 7. Directed by: David Livingstone. Written by: Hillary Bader. First broadcast: 6 November 1993. Los Angeles: Paramount Domestic Television.

<sup>72</sup> “The Neutral Zone” (1988). *Star Trek: The Next Generation*. Episode 26, Season 1. Directed by: James L. Conway. Written by: Deborah McIntyre & Mona Clee. First broadcast: 16 May 1998. Los Angeles: Paramount Domestic Television.

known as Birds-of-Prey, named after brutal carnivorous birds that also feast on carrion; further, their design is angular, bird-like, and dark, both on the exterior and in the interior<sup>73</sup>).

A third antagonist in the *Star Trek* narrative is the Borg, a race that consists of billions of individuals from different species, abducted and assimilated into a hive mind society where the body of each is augmented to share a communication network that spans across the entire population. The Borg embody a sort of utopia, alleviated of all the functional impurities, and exists at a peak efficiency. No true hierarchy – save for the Borg Queen – plague the society and, in a style comparable to Le Corbusier, Borg spacecraft have no variation in design and no allotting of different spaces and resources based on class or rank, each Borg being given an enclave that offers precisely what they need. The interlinked communication network synchronises the Borg's movement and choices, and they share a common directive of assimilation of more individuals and species, to increase their network. The Borg adapt intuitively, but lack feeling, personality, and critical thought, mechanistic in nature and subservient to the Borg Matrix/Queen. The Borg exemplify a literal definition of a utopian societal structure, but the truth behind their society is one of malicious order, colonialisation, depersonalisation, and negation of the one in favour of the many. This dichotomy in the utopian/anti-utopian is *Star Trek's* most evident example of Foucault's heterotopianism, where a utopia is defined or exemplified by attributes or means disturbing to an onlooker conditioned to believe in the already defined 'idealised' utopianism.

The cyber-utopian-collective of the Borg can be described in organic insect analogies, swarms and drones, juxtaposed by its literal definition bound to biotechnological augmentation. Cyberworld figures are also posthuman alternatives to the masculine-centric modern warfare, rendering markers of identity like gender and queerness obsolete.<sup>74</sup> Drone collectives like the Borg and, notably too, the Xenomorph collective in the *Alien* franchise, centre their societal structures around non-hierarchical female centres – the Queen in the case of the former, and the Mother (-ship) in the case of the latter. In both cases, the leadership is portrayed as subjectively distasteful figures, the Borg Queen being but an upper torso perched atop a mechanical body and scalped so to have her cranial innards connected to her mechanical body; in the case of *Alien*, there is a Mother, the surrogate that propagates the species, which colonised

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<sup>73</sup> "A Matter of Honor" (1989). *Star Trek: The Next Generation*. Season 2, Episode 8. Directed by: Rob Bowman. Written by: Wanda Haight, Gregory Amos & Burton Armus. First broadcast: 6 February 1989. Los Angeles: Paramount Domestic Television.

<sup>74</sup> Wilcox, L. 2017. drones, swarms and becoming-insects: feminist utopias and posthuman politics. *Feminist Review*:26-27. Thousand Oaks: SAGE Publications.

a human spacecraft (the *Nostromo* in the original film, and the Sevastopol station and Anesidora in the video game *Alien: Isolation*) to create a central base of operation and nest for the alien mother, the spacecraft interiors covered in seemingly organic “gooey” walls and floors, in which the Xenomorph’s eggs are laid. The insect figure, too, opposes the “desirable” human image – perfectly organised in an anti-patriarchal society, where “the fathers are ‘inessential’”. The terror of insects in horror and sci-fi media is built from the horror of empowered feminism and the ultimate promise of man being unable to control the reproduction of the central mother figure. The Borg furthers the terrible image of the matriarchal drone colony by its weaponisation, considerable technological advancement, non-sentiency, and objective philosophy. In *Voy*, the Borg Queen is a hyperintelligent being that upheld her individuality against her collective, displaying the ability to make critical and subjective choices for or against her drones. She is threatening in her ability to lead her men (and others) with a critical rationality. (To Wilcox, incidentally, the Borg Queen is to the Borg what Beyoncé is to her fans – the Queen B to her Beehive). Within the Borg Collective, there are Borg “individuals” that have gained the ability to escape their drone reality and enter a cybernetic space where they can live as individuals with the identities which they had before assimilation – Wilcox defines this world, the Unimatrix Zero, as the Borg utopia. The autonomy challenges the Queen, who insists on eliminating its threat. Unimatrix Zero and its promise of individuality ultimately causes the Borg society’s demise – individuality wins.<sup>75</sup> However, while the female-insect narrative was based in an anti-feminist negativity, it has been adopted as a celebration of femininity. Gilman’s writing uses the orderly nature of the insect society to depict a female utopia threatened by the imperialist male intervention. In other feminist media, the elimination of the need of men for reproduction is welcomed to the degree of eschewing natural selection by preferring cloning to propagate the society.<sup>76</sup> Indeed, this is evident in Borg nomenclature and terminology – simply even their social units, the Unimatrices, allude to the Greek word *matrix*, meaning “womb”.<sup>77</sup>

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<sup>75</sup> Wilcox, L. 2017. drones, swarms and becoming-insects: feminist utopias and posthuman politics. *Feminist Review*:29-30, 38. Thousand Oaks: SAGE Publications.

<sup>76</sup> Wilcox, L. 2017. drones, swarms and becoming insects: feminist utopias and posthuman politics. *Feminist Review*:38. Thousand Oaks: SAGE Publications.

<sup>77</sup> Consalvo, M. L. 1999. The Best of Both Worlds? Examining Bodies, Technologies, Gender and the Borg of *Star Trek*:42. Unpublished doctoral dissertation. Iowa City: The University of Iowa.

Women have become increasingly mechanised, allowing their entry into the working force once reserved only for the masculine.<sup>78</sup> In the masculine narrative, it is a considerable injustice for women to be given the power to have the same input and output as that of men, and any time a woman displays the ability to produce a technological or scientific output, their labour is undermined by the notion that women “cannot [do] technology”.<sup>79</sup> Women’s relationship with machine has been historically intertwined with their identity. Sadie Plant calls the woman’s machine and its interwoven nature the “loom”, the object by which the woman is strengthened to meet the societally allotted might of the man:

Weaving is woman’s compensation for the absence of the penis, the void, the woman of whom, as he famously insists, there is ‘nothing to be seen’.<sup>80</sup>

Haraway, as quoted in Balinisteanu<sup>81</sup>, writes on the erosion of conservative, procreative femininity as the woman becomes technologised:

An origin story in the “Western”, humanist sense depends on the myth of original unity, fullness, bliss and terror, represented by the phallic mother from whom all humans must separate [...] The cyborg skips the step of original unity, of identification with nature in the Western sense [...] Nature and culture are reworked; the one can no longer be the resource for appropriation or incorporation by the other.<sup>82</sup>

### *Star Trek’s Heterotopia and the Maternal/Paternal Dichotomy of Voyager*

Katheryn Janeway, captain of the Starship *Voyager*, is proposed to be the Borg Queen’s apparent foil – a morally upstanding, heroic female lead who governs her ship as a benevolent woman of the people that promises to always give a voice to every one of her crewmembers. She consistently struggles with guilt over the executive choice she made which stranded her crew in the Delta Quadrant, a guilt countered with the reality that this choice saved the lives of

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<sup>78</sup> Consalvo, M. L. 1999. *The Best of Both Worlds? Examining Bodies, Technologies, Gender and the Borg of Star Trek*:44. Unpublished doctoral dissertation. Iowa City: The University of Iowa.

<sup>79</sup> Consalvo, M. L. 1999. *The Best of Both Worlds? Examining Bodies, Technology, Gender and the Borg of Star Trek*:51-55. Unpublished doctoral dissertation. Iowa City: The University of Iowa.

<sup>80</sup> Plant, S. 2000. *The Future Looms: Weaving Women and Cybernetics*, in M. Featherstone and R. Burrows. *Cyberspace/Cyberbodies/Cyberpunk: Cultures of Technological Embodiment*:46. London: SAGE Publications.

<sup>81</sup> Balinisteanu, T. 2007. *The Cyborg Goddess: Social Myths of Women as Goddesses of Technologized Otherworlds*. *Feminist Studies* 33(2), Summer:400. College Park: Feminist Studies, Inc.

<sup>82</sup> Haraway, D. J. 2016. *A Cyborg Manifesto: Science, Technology, and Socialist-Feminism in the Late Twentieth Century*:8. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.

the Ocampan race. This female lead, a first of its kind in the franchise's history, is not as it seems – *Voy*'s narrative is, in a greater level, a heterotopian story where the 24<sup>th</sup> century's idealistic image is exposed as a fallacy, the exemplary human ingenuity and bravura brought down to show the problematic hubris and flawed heroism.

Before Captain Janeway, there was Dr Crusher. Dr Beverly Crusher served as head medical officer and key physician aboard the Starships *Enterprise D* and *E* during the 24<sup>th</sup> century. Like Janeway, Crusher embodies the then-modern female – intelligent, independent and with a considerable success in what was a male-dominated field at the time of the airing of the series *TNG*. She also served her role as single mother with a diligence and commitment which promised that women *can* do it all. She took episodic leads throughout the series, and her presence centre-stage was adopted naturally and unceremoniously, as if she were none other than Captain Picard or Commander William Riker. She proved her ability to command the Starship *Enterprise* during many of Captain Picard's away missions. In a possible future scenario, Dr Crusher is shown to be the captain of the Starship *Pasteur* 25 years after the time of *TNG*.<sup>83</sup> In the other series of this era of the *Star Trek* franchise, which all took place simultaneously in the *Star Trek* universe, the other major chief medical officers aboard the other depicted Federation vessels were altered men, Doctor Bashir aboard the Space Station *Deep Space Nine* being genetically enhanced, and the Doctor aboard the Starship *Voyager* being a perfectly engineered medical computer program. Beverly Crusher is purely, plainly and significantly human.<sup>84</sup>

While Captain Janeway shares the more obvious noble characteristics of the empowered Federation woman, a notable facet of Crusher's identity is less apparent but still significantly present within Janeway: maternal nature. Captain Picard and Captain Kirk were both characters that led their crew with a strong sense of individual morality and a reverence to the Starfleet directive of diplomacy and exploration – Kirk's diplomatic methodology being questionable at best. In both cases of the depictions of the Starship *Enterprise*, in *TOS* and in *TNG*, the goal of the Starfleet crew is exploration and inquisition. However, in *Voy*, the Starship *Voyager* is far removed from the Federation and holds only one goal: returning home. Janeway, as Dove-Viebahn effectively notes, is a "housemaker", who needs to forge a healthy and safe home-

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<sup>83</sup> "All Good Things" (1994). *Star Trek: The Next Generation*, Season 7, Episode 26. Directed by Winrich Kolbe. Written by Brannon Braga & Ronald D. Moore. First broadcast: May 23, 1994. Los Angeles: Paramount Domestic Television.

<sup>84</sup> Grech, V. 2020. Doctors in *Star Trek*: Dr Beverly Crusher in *Star Trek: The Next Generation*. *Early Human Development*, 144. Amsterdam: Elsevier.

society on her ship while they travel through the uncharted Delta Quadrant.<sup>85</sup> To her crew, Janeway is the mother which promises to support the shared goal and dreams of her crew to return home and does all in her might to facilitate the completion of this goal. The Janeway heterotopia, a character that under consideration is obviously contradicting the hero-role of *Star Trek*, and her *Voyager* family-crew's unique mission effectively lives up to the *Star Trek* maxim "to boldly go where no one has gone before". In truth, it is the odyssey of the Starship *Voyager* which fulfils the Federation's utopian assertion – a diverse crew, culturally, ethnically, and ideologically, adversaries brought together under a single noble goal, actively undergoing cultural exchanges throughout unexplored territory, and without intent to colonise and conquer, but to inquire.<sup>86</sup> As her journey continues, Janeway adopts even more diverse crew members for her house – a Talaxian chef who cooks homemade meals for the crew with enthusiasm (as opposed to the clinical replicators), an Ocampan woman in training to be a medical carer, and a liberated Borg-human woman whom Janeway takes in as an apprentice to reorientate her back into humanhood.

Through her breakdown of her militaristic leadership-role and subsequent adoption of motherhood, Captain Janeway commands an underlying sense of authority and evokes a strong loyalty among her crew. The Janeway maternal figure is also a natural foil to the *Star Trek* narrative – a strong male lead moves its crew toward the unknown, but the kind womanhood in captaincy promises a safety and comfort from the threatening unknown, and a homecoming. In either case, the role of captain is undeniable – a figure without whom the journey could not be conducted, a necessity that needs to be respected for the directives and goals of each of the crewmembers to be realised. It is apt to note, however, that Janeway is not far-removed from the masculine version of the captain, a shrewd tactician, strong and unafraid in battle, rule-bound, and devoted to scientific endeavour.<sup>87</sup> She is also, throughout *Voy*, completely unsexualised, breaking down the stereotypical femininity that plagued even her feminist

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<sup>85</sup> Dove-Viebahn, A. 2007. Embodying Hybridity, (En)gendering Community: Captain Janeway and the Enactment of a Feminist Heterotopia on *Star Trek: Voyager*. *Woman's Studies*, 36(8):598. Oxfordshire: Routledge

<sup>86</sup> Dove-Viebahn, A. 2007. Embodying Hybridity, (En)gendering Community: Captain Janeway and the Enactment of a Feminist Heterotopia on *Star Trek: Voyager*. *Woman's Studies*, 36(8):597-599. Oxfordshire: Routledge

<sup>87</sup> Dove-Viebahn, A. 2007. Embodying Hybridity, (En)gendering Community: Captain Janeway and the Enactment of a Feminist Heterotopia on *Star Trek: Voyager*. *Woman's Studies*, 36(8):603-604. Oxfordshire: Routledge

predecessor, Dr Crusher (*TNG*'s premiere bible took care to note that Dr Crusher is a “beautiful woman [with a] very female form”<sup>88</sup>).<sup>89</sup>

This dichotomy, the maternal/paternal Janeway, forms a large part of her heterotopian identity. She is not the “ideal” (stereotypical) woman, but the liberation from the conservative, overtly feminine image is what endorses her role as the utopian human, genderless and strong.

Janeway reveres human ingenuity and makes note of the significance of human prowess and success throughout the series. In the episode *The 37's*<sup>90</sup>, when referring to a human civilisation that was stranded in the Delta Quadrant for centuries, discovered by the Starship *Voyager*, which also worked its way past the impurities of 20<sup>th</sup> century Earth – poverty and war – she notes that it was inevitable that these humans would “create a world they could be proud of”.<sup>91</sup> While this is an inspiring line at face value, it is to the onlooker increasingly obvious that this is an allusion to the inherent arrogance of the humans of the Federation – the notion that the natural evolution of human society is always destined to be free of adversity and exemplary in its outcome.<sup>92</sup>

The human hubris is exposed in a later episode, *Blink of an Eye*, where the Starship *Voyager* comes across a planet where each second on *Voyager* is a year on the planet. First officer Commander Chakotay and ship engineer B'Elanna Torres actively inspect the evolution of the planet's civilisation, from what is comparable to prehistoric Earth. Chakotay sees this as a major anthropological study, and even when finding out that *Voyager*'s orbit is causing geological instability on the planet, they choose to continue the study regardless of its consequences. The denizens of this planet follow an evolutionary path that is directly influenced by *Voyager*'s presence, as they, in their technological advancement, realise that their geological turmoil is caused by a foreign celestial body which they ultimately decide should be eradicated. What is inferred as innocent observations on the side of Chakotay, displays an obvious and therefore elective ignorance of the Prime Directive of the Federation, and their

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<sup>88</sup> Grech, V. 2020. Doctors in *Star Trek: Dr Beverly Crusher in Star Trek: The Next Generation. Early Human Development*, 144. Amsterdam: Elsevier.

<sup>89</sup> Dove-Viebahn, A. 2007. Embodying Hybridity, (En)generating Community: Captain Janeway and the Enactment of a Feminist Heterotopia on *Star Trek: Voyager. Woman's Studies*, 36(8):604. Oxfordshire: Routledge.

<sup>90</sup> “The 37's” (1995). *Star Trek: Voyager*. Season 2, Episode 1. Directed by James L. Conway. Written by Jeri Taylor & Brannon Braga. First broadcast: August 28, 1995. Los Angeles: Paramount Domestic Television.

<sup>91</sup> “The 37's” (1995) *Star Trek: Voyager*, Season 2, Episode 1. Directed by James L. Conway. Written by Jeri Taylor & Brannon Braga. First broadcast August 28, 1995. Los Angeles: The United Paramount Network.

<sup>92</sup> Andren, E. 2024. The Dark Past of Our Bright Future: Concurrent Histories of *Star Trek: Voyager*, in Hennessey, J. L. *History and Speculative Fiction*:176. Cham: Palgrave Macmillan.

destructive presence is anything but noble – an arrogance governs the choice of Chakotay to actively endanger the lives of probably trillions over centuries in the name of science, and Torres’ dismissive nature and tolerance is the embodiment of the general ignorant complex of humanity as an objectively noble people. This is furthered in the inferred notion that, had it not been for the presence of *Voyager* and the destruction it had caused, this planet would have followed a developmental path comparable to Earth’s, human evolution being then the apparent galactic norm. The human-centricity is cleverly brought out in this episode’s writing.<sup>93 94</sup>

Andrén recounts various instances throughout the series where the crew of the Starship *Voyager* are situated in metaphoric impasses with their humanness. The crew encounter numerous species during their journey across the Delta Quadrant, some of which they admittedly find problematic and despicable. The first such encounter Andrén notes is with the Ferengi, a species from the Alpha Quadrant and well-acquainted with the Federation. In the episode *False Profits*<sup>95</sup>, the Starship *Voyager* comes across two Ferengi stranded on a pre-industrialised inhabited planet in the Delta Quadrant. On this planet, the Ferengi “co-opted” mythology of the planet’s people to deify themselves and acquire a lavish lifestyle, at the expense of the planet’s inhabitants. This is not surprising to the crew of the Starship *Voyager*, as such is the way of the Ferengi throughout the *Star Trek* franchise – greedy and inconsiderate. These two Ferengi males only conversed with males and used females solely for erotic gratification – also in line with the Ferengi way as elaborated on in *Star Trek: Deep Space Nine* – and the objectifying of women and greedy misuse of the planet’s people leaves a bitter taste in the mouths of Commander Chakotay and Tuvok, and they are vocal about their disgust at the matter, and at the Ferengi way. However, such misogynistic, capitalist practices are not foreign to humans, and what the two *Voyager* officers find abhorrent is in fact traits that defined much of human history. Throughout the franchise, the Ferengi caricature is depicted as humorous as it is despicable, always as an Other, when it really is a mirror that exposes the hypocritical human narrative in *Star Trek*, another cleverly veiled parallel from the show’s writing.<sup>96</sup> Similarly, the Starship *Voyager* has come across other adversaries and displeasing species. The

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<sup>93</sup> “Blink of an Eye” (2000). *Star Trek: Voyager*, Season 6, Episode 12. Directed by Gabrielle Beaumont. Written by Joe Menosky, Michael Taylor & Scott Miller. First broadcast: January 19, 2000. Los Angeles: The United Paramount Network.

<sup>94</sup> Andrén, E. 2024. The Dark Past of Our Bright Future: Concurrent Histories of *Star Trek: Voyager*, in Hennessey, J. L. *History and Speculative Fiction*:176-178. Cham: Palgrave Macmillan.

<sup>95</sup> “False Profits” (1996) *Star Trek: Voyager*, Season 3, Episode 5. Directed by Cliff Bole. Written by Joe Menosky. First broadcast October 2, 1996. Los Angeles: The United Paramount Network.

<sup>96</sup> Andrén, E. 2024. The Dark Past of Our Bright Future: Concurrent Histories of *Star Trek: Voyager*, in Hennessey, J. L. *History and Speculative Fiction*:178-180. Cham: Palgrave Macmillan.

Malon was a spacefaring people who used a region of space void of stars and celestial bodies to dump their toxic waste, aware of the negative effect on the inhabitants of the region and the threat of extinction they faced. In aid of the dying inhabitants, *Voyager*, in *Night* (Season 5, Episode 1, “Night”, *Star Trek: Voyager*), introduced the Malon to technology which would purify their waste, which the Malon “garbage-man” denied, on the basis that that technology would have put him out of business. So, in a final attempt to keep the Malon from dumping their waste in the void, *Voyager* closes off their access point, thereby saving the day.<sup>97</sup> It was Chakotay, again, who was vocal about their despicable behaviour. However – the capitalist and ecologically inconsiderate Malon reflect the industrialised human, who negated the wellbeing of their environment and its inhabitants.<sup>98</sup> *Voyager*’s encounter with the Hirogen serves the viewer another parallel. The Hirogen, a nomadic and technologically unevolved species which is depicted as primitive, bloodthirsty hunters, were regularly at an impasse with the Starship *Voyager*. In Andrén’s writing, she once again quotes Chakotay’s distaste for the Hirogen way, the first officer noting that they are animalistic, like wolves.<sup>99</sup> <sup>100</sup> *Voyager*’s attempt at addressing the Ferengi, Malon, and Hirogen, and persecuting their behaviour, is simply them looking in the mirror and reprimanding their reflection.

*Star Trek* is built upon a multifaceted definition of utopianism – the *Star Trek* setting is, theoretically, an embodiment of More’s ancient definition of idealistic Utopia, to the clinical and hyperrational moulds of utilitarian architects like Le Corbusier and Cerdà, which inform the modernist vision of a utopian society.

The *Star Trek* narrative occupies a reality that is heterotopian at best, with its “dystopian” counterparts often a reflection of the brokenness of the Federation, its ignorance and hubris. Despite this, there is a truth to the assertion that *Star Trek* is a future to strive toward, and, more so, a future that can be accepted as probable – inquisition beyond our hinterland, colonisation, and the contesting of adversaries in the name of ethics, are all characteristics ingrained in the Western-centric world’s history, and in a future that is based on a Western idealism, it is natural that these characteristics are continued.

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<sup>97</sup> “Night” (1998) *Star Trek: Voyager*, Season 5, Episode 1. Directed by David Livingston. Written by Brannon Braga & Joe Menosky. First broadcast October 14, 1998. Los Angeles: The United Paramount Network.

<sup>98</sup> Andrén, E. 2024. The Dark Past of Our Bright Future: Concurrent Histories of *Star Trek: Voyager*, in Hennessey, J. L. *History and Speculative Fiction*:181-182. Cham: Palgrave Macmillan.

<sup>99</sup> “Prey” (1998) *Star Trek: Voyager*, Season 4, Episode 15. Directed by Allan Eastman. Written by Brannon Braga. First broadcast February 18, 1998. Los Angeles: The United Paramount Network.

<sup>100</sup> Andrén, E. 2024. The Dark Past of Our Bright Future: Concurrent Histories of *Star Trek: Voyager*, in Hennessey, J. L. *History and Speculative Fiction*:182-183. Cham: Palgrave Macmillan.

In the musical language of the franchise, diegetic and non-diegetic, the multitudinous conflict of the *Star Trek* utopia, is conveyed throughout – the conflict within the storyline, between the Federation’s upstanding nature and its lesser-than adversaries; the conflict between these adversaries’ displeasing qualities presented, and the truth that their societal qualities and social structures are all presented and critiqued through a Western gaze; the conflict between the theory of utopianism and its duplicitous reality; and, ultimately, the conflict between the Federation’s ostensible heroism and its typically human hubris.

The entrance of the Borg onto the *Star Trek* stage best posits this dichotomy. ‘A race of beings that unquestioningly colonise and usurp cultural ideals to evolve themselves’ is a definition that can be imposed on both the Borg and the human. This is, in fact, the Borg Queen’s verbalisation of their motives<sup>101</sup>. She notes that assimilation is their way of bringing together various identities to work toward perfecting themselves, which is, as Mirzoeff writes, a concision with the human narrative that highlights the *Star Trek* narrative that asks to “differentiate the Federation’s benign neocolonialism from the aggressive imperialism of the Borg [...] Which group is more evolved[?]”. Ultimately, the question is easily reduced to asking what the hierarchal organisation of social facets is, putting nature against culture.<sup>102</sup>

The *Star Trek* narrative is not at all times critical, however, and quite often, the viewer is reminded of the almost naïve whimsy of the idyllic post-capitalist Federation. The Galactic Republic of *Star Wars* has its societal shortfalls – the dangerous and poverty-stricken underground city beneath the glistening and seemingly perfect capital city-planet Coruscant; the highly industrialised and polluted factory-planets like Corellia; junk planets like Bracca, where the galaxy’s waste is dumped; and labour camps just outside the Republic’s border on the planet Kessel. Conversely, *Star Trek* treats its colonies and vassal states to financial investment and development (albeit much like the colonial powers in Earth’s history). As far as the borders of the Federation stretch, its citizens are protected by treaties and policies that promote diplomacy and equality, and although diplomacy falls short in cases like the Bajoran Occupation, the United Federation of Planets always commands respect.

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<sup>101</sup> Balinisteanu, T. 2007. The Cyborg Goddess: Social Myths of Women as Goddesses of Technologized Otherworlds. *Feminist Studies* 33(2), Summer:398-400. Feminist Studies, Inc., United States of America.

<sup>102</sup> Balinisteanu, T. 2007. The Cyborg Goddess: Social Myths of Women as Goddesses of Technologized Otherworlds. *Feminist Studies* 33(2), Summer:398-400. Feminist Studies, Inc., United States of America.

## CHAPTER 3 – METHODOLOGY

This dissertation deploys an artistic research approach based on a qualitative mixed methodology<sup>103</sup> approach focusing on cue analysis. This interdisciplinary study synergises the research approaches of Chrisitan Metz and Mieczyslaw Tomaszewski. The overarching analytical area these researchers represent are rooted in semiology. As explained further in this chapter, Metz approaches film music on an axis, constituted of various constituents, and equated with the other characteristics of the visual media; Tomaszewski approaches music analysis from a viewpoint that considers music as multilayered and expresses the necessity to unfurl these layers to attain and convey an understanding of music. Abstract notions of Denis Smalley and his approach of spectromorphology are also considered – Smalley’s methodology, when removed from its technological practice, asserts that there is significant value in analysing music by means of the sound experience, removed from practices of music theory and standardised Western analysis, like pitch-based analyses and Schenkerian analysis. Together with these semiotic approaches, the methodology of this study is intrinsically a cue analysis, which considers the on-paper and in-practice elements of the musical cues extracted from the instalment. This is where the mixed methodology comes into play, where standard cue analysis approaches like that of other film music studies meets the semiotic approaches explained hereafter. Each topic, under which the cues are organised, enlists a varying methodological approach, and the manner of each of the semioticians are appropriated in the respective topics and subsequent cues.

### - Semiology & Linguistics

Semiotics is the study of signs. This is the agreed-upon definition that permeates through academia, and it is accepted that semiosis is intrinsically linguistic.

[... It] is easy to imagine that the study of signs, **semiotics**, in spite of a long lineage, [...] is somehow a matter of analysing language and discovering how various artefacts and processes of human culture are analogous to it.<sup>104</sup>

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<sup>103</sup> Methodology designated ‘qualitative’ as to distinguish this from the standard mixed methodology that intersects qualitative and quantitative research.

<sup>104</sup> Cobley, P. 2001. Introduction, in Cobley, P. (ed.). *The Routledge Companion to Semiotics and Linguistics*:3. London: Routledge.

Cobley continues, noting that semiosis is not a product of linguistics, but rather that the greater concept of linguistics is a subject enshrined in semiosis.<sup>105</sup> Roberta Kevelson posits that semiotics is an area of study that encapsulates all thought born from the other disciplines of the sciences, a “method of methods”, as she quotes Peirce. It is reductive, however, to assume that all words are signs. The structure of signs also determines their semiotic weight, and it is necessary to distinguish that semiotic consideration is, by Kevelson’s definition, only worthy in the presence of a large standalone figure as a singular sign which exists as a concordance of various constituent signs. Researchers that apply the methodology of semiosis outside of the realms of linguistics are tasked with substantiating how semiotics are interrelated to their study.<sup>106</sup> In this light, one must substantiate how music, for example, harbours linguistic characteristics or could be analysed in a manner similar to linguistic analysis. The adjacent study of film (or, rather, visual media) is effective in underscoring a music/semiotic study’s viability.

#### - Semiotics Beyond Standard Linguistics: Film and Music Analysis

Christian Metz draws a distinction between ‘film’ and ‘cinema’, where film is a narrative singularity that bears its own identity, and cinema is a coming-together of films, a corpus that encapsulates a multitude of identities. As an intrinsic part of the film/cinema dichotomy, each of the two adhere to Kevelson’s semiotic-format – the film-identity is the standalone sign-figure that holds its varying constituents, a microcosm within the cinema-macrocosm, a greater sign-figure which is an amalgamation of its own film-constituents.<sup>107</sup> Within the film-identity is situated a multitudinous set of ‘languages’ that exist within a single dimension concurrently and without mutual exclusion, on what Metz would call a single axis. This axis holds visual, nonverbal, verbal, metaphoric, environmental, ambient, and musical languages, all extant as interrelated signs that conjunctively constitute the larger whole; these languages exist together as one linguistic system, a code. It is therefore erroneous to remove the musical language from the greater narrative or code and assert that it holds the same value as it does as a linguistic

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<sup>105</sup> Cobley, P. 2001. Introduction, in Cobley, P. (ed.). *The Routledge Companion to Semiotics and Linguistics*:4. London: Routledge.

<sup>106</sup> Kevelson, R. 1986. Semiotics in the United States, in Sebeok, T. A. & Umiker-Sebeok, J. (eds.). *The Semiotic Sphere*:520. New York: Plenum Press.

<sup>107</sup> Metz, C. 1974. Language and Cinema, in Sebeok, T. A. (ed.). *Approaches to Semiotics*:22-23. The Hague: Mouton & Co. N. V. Publishers.

element within the film, because the *soundtrack* of a visual medium is a definer of and is defined by the code that it is situated in.<sup>108</sup>

Commonly, the constituents of codes have responsibilities to be signifiers of affective elements in the narrative. Affective (or, emotive) signifiers have the proclivity to isolate themselves from the linguistic unit, highlighting its mode of use singularly rather than its linguistic veracity as part of the larger unit. Emotive signifiers are also able to successfully convey over the scope of nonverbal expressions of codes, and their ability to act nonverbally/extraverbally makes emotive signs an exemplary figure of semiotic study. Emotivity, in linguistics proper and in musicology, is contentious, and analysts and researchers are either avoidant of assigning concrete emotion to signs or are expected to do so with extensive substantiation; this lies in the presumption that observations of emotion in text and music are commonly stunted by subjectivity. The result is an apprehension to the semiotic study of emotive signs.<sup>109</sup>

The methodological apprehension is noted by semiologist Theo van Leeuwen, who writes that analyses of music based on linguistic methodological practices largely regard music as a two-fold tonal-temporal figure, without the dimension of discernible meaning. The meaning within the music that these analyses would admit to are the concrete contexts readily offered verbally or situationally. Music's affective nature does, though, complicate deriving analytic value, as each listener's adjective may vary. Van Leeuwen reminds that music is, by his regard, inherently "nonemotional", and any ensuing experienced emotions that follow, exist as resultant of the consumer's experiential background; drawing the line at affective meaning, and not considering the presence of other, "nonemotional" meanings, complexified by the context and environment in which the music is born and situated, is the common mistake.<sup>110</sup>

It is bestowed upon the analyst, which is the "interpreter", conveyor and mediator, the ability to grant consumers an understanding of music that informs their own interpretation; the interpreter contextualises and situates the music within its narrative. By Tomaszewski's view, the nonemotional sentiment is moot, and all music could be translated into emotive evocation as all music holds such meaning. Admittedly, though, an interpreter's projection of music onto

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<sup>108</sup> Metz, C. 1974. Language and Cinema, in Sebeok, T. A. (ed.). *Approaches to Semiotics*:25, 27-29. The Hague: Mouton & Co. N. V. Publishers.

<sup>109</sup> Stankiewicz, E. 1964. Problems in Emotive Language, in Sebeok, T. A., Hayes, A. S. & Bateson, M. C. (eds.). *Approaches to Semiotics*:239-241. The Hague: Mouton & Co. N. V. Publishers.

<sup>110</sup> Van Leeuwen, T. 1998. Music and Ideology: Notes toward a sociosemiotics of mass media music. *Popular Music and Society*, 22(4):25-27.

a consumer is oftentimes mired by the situational variables both interpreter and receiver are in. Tomaszewski's mitigation of this is to perceive a piece of interpreted music as a multi-faceted whole, initially viewed as an elementary figure with a singular unit interpreted without any analytic procedure, constituted of numerous constituent parts. In this elementary viewing, the interpreter is acquainted with the greater anatomy and its parts; the pinnacle of such elementary interpretation is beauty, which is in conjunction with its parallel attribute, truth. These elements of interpretation are in tandem with the elements expression and fantasy (so far the elementary being a layered Imagination-Fancy figure, a concept discussed further in this text)<sup>111</sup>; the interpretation of "beauty" is not incorrigible and while the most easily-identifiable elementary feature, its meaning is situational, varying by interpreter.

After considering the large-bodied topic of the work, the interpreter in this methodology considers secondary qualities that are dictated by the *nature* of the music – structural, phonic, expressive, and semantic, by Tomaszewski's standards. A prevalence of one of these qualities dictates genre: an overpopulation of expressive qualities within music purportedly propagates genre-styles like nocturnes or serenades, while textual or programmatic works, rife with semantics, is therefore of a semantic style, like overtures and symphonic poems. While these qualities define genre, it is so that all music designed is constituted of these qualities, existing on a single axis, as Metz would put it. This is the second deconstruction. The final layer of "considerative" deconstruction is on the contextual level, considering the music's immediate environment and the variables that inform the music and its creation. This contextual consideration is based on the context of the composer, the context of time-and-place, culture, and the context of creative impetus and intertextuality.

Intrinsically, these analytic layers are in conjunction with the triadic *function, genre* and *style*. *Function* denotes the ideal context in which the music would be situated, including the time-and-place aspect of musical characteristics. Musical identity is determined by its function, and these functional identities are either expressive, appellative, phatic, referential, or poetic.<sup>112</sup> This is the most notable and semiotically loaded facet of this three-pronged level of analysis. Tomaszewski's *genres* are relegated to genre-areas, categorised in the areas of epic, dramatic,

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<sup>111</sup> Tomaszewski, M. 2015. Reading a Work of Music from the Perspective of Integral Interpretation, in Maeder, C. & Reybrouck, M. (eds.). *Music Analysis Experience: New Perspectives in Musical Semiotics*:61-62. Leuven: Leuven University Press.

<sup>112</sup> Tomaszewski, M. 2015. Reading a Work of Music from the Perspective of Integral Interpretation, in Maeder, C. & Reybrouck, M. (eds.). *Music Analysis Experience: New Perspectives in Musical Semiotics*:65-72. Leuven: Leuven University Press.

and lyrical. These classifications are derived from antique literary divisions, and music is allotted based on its genre (its practical use). Genres are distinguished by commonalities of certain signs in genre repertoires. Style is resultant of either the traditions in time-and-place surrounding the composition, or the individual stylistic tendencies of the composer, and resultant of the effect of time-and-place on the composer's style.<sup>113</sup> The identification of the function, genre, and style of a work is the core result of Tomaszewski's multilayered approach to a semiotic analysis. In conclusively considering this final identity-layer of analysis does the interpreter have the ability to encapsulate the work in semantics.

- Sound Objects and Morphology

Music analyst Pierre Schaeffer centres his discussion on morphological analysis around "listening". He writes that, most centrally, musical and nonmusical sound are wholes that are amalgamates of fragments of somethings, each which loses its greater value but retains, or exposes, its meaning when extracted. The sound objects, deconstructions of larger sonic figures, carry both prosaic and moot meaning, the former being central figures to the topics which they situate themselves in, and the latter being subordinate figures that only prove their subordinance to the topic which they serve. Here is posited a compositional prose, the core of the musical practice built on linguistic nature and whose investigative consideration denotes morphology. Schaeffer's methodology of extrapolating analytic value from music was significant due to the way it eschews notated music in favour of a sonic experience; such an analysis, admitted by him, was not the primary intention, not ideal, and difficult to navigate without any musical criteria to guide the considerations. A distancing from music theory and the practices of traditional analysis implored Schaeffer and similar analysts to consider music as large-bodied-descriptors that are dictated by audible signs within.<sup>114</sup>

Morphology and typology, in the case of listening-analysis, exist in conjunction, and they work to describe the matter and presence of sound, respectively.<sup>115</sup> It is through typology that a sound object, a sign, is made apparent, and it is through morphology that the sign is described. The results of the morphology are substantiated by or concluded though the act of perceiving sound far-removed from the traditional references of musical evaluation. The methodology identifies

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<sup>113</sup> Tomaszewski, M. 2015. Reading a Work of Music from the Perspective of Integral Interpretation, in Maeder, C. & Reybrouck, M. (eds.). *Music Analysis Experience: New Perspectives in Musical Semiotics*:65-72. Leuven: Leuven University Press.

<sup>114</sup> Schaeffer, P. 2017. *Treatise on Musical Objects*:310-312. Oakland: University of California Press.

<sup>115</sup> Schaeffer, P. 2017. *Treatise on Musical Objects*:315. Oakland: University of California Press.

sound objects and actively deconstructs them during the act of listening, and comparatively evaluates the extracted sound objects concurrently. Both evaluator and sound-creator are, however, flawed, as it is intrinsic to the musical experience that listener and creator are biased. This subjectivity of analysis differentiates the morphological methodology from the other methodologies of music analysis, which base arguments on rigorous historical and systematic elements, which, despite bias, follow cemented frameworks.<sup>116</sup>

Schaeffer says of the *perception* of music in special regard to film music:

The music of a film, to which, completely absorbed by the dramatic events, I had paid not the slightest attention, will, when I hear it on the radio, reawaken the emotions the film had aroused, even before I have properly identified it.<sup>117</sup>

Schaeffer expands on this notion, noting that the listening-perception analysis is reflective, and to properly assess the quality or nature of the sound object, the sound object must already be over – put otherwise, unlike the analysis of static music on paper and in writing, the listening analysis requires the listener to be an active participant in the perception-process. Schaeffer's analogy is that of listening within a conversation, wherein a moment of tension followed by pointed silence is required to be noted and recognised before the silence attains a full-bodied meaning within the conversation.<sup>118</sup>

#### - Spectromorphology and Digitised Linguistics

Spectromorphology is an analytical trend that approaches music analysis based on the sonic experience. Central to this methodology is the consideration of temporality and how sound-shapes fill a temporal space. The methodology's designer, Denis Smalley, insists that spectromorphology does not run parallel with compositional methodology, but is an interpretation of the listener's perception and is a way of extrapolating musical meaning and semantic value by separating music from its crafted basis. Furthermore, the resulting spectromorphological observations can benefit ensuing compositional practices by informing the composer of the semantics surrounding the methodology. These semantics define music's

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<sup>116</sup> Schaeffer, P. 2017. *Treatise on Musical Objects*:315-317. Oakland: University of California Press.

<sup>117</sup> Schaeffer, P. 2017. *Treatise on Musical Objects*:315-317. Oakland: University of California Press.

<sup>118</sup> Schaeffer, P. 2017. *Treatise on Musical Objects*:75. Oakland: University of California Press.

experiential outcome and understanding the linguistics behind musical experience can enrich the compositional practice.<sup>119</sup>

The surge of electroacoustic music creation from the mid-century onward laid the groundwork for spectral analysis; from its conception, electroacoustic research and analysis rooted itself in extracting meaning by considering the experience of sound and reflecting on it (Thoresen states that spectromorphology considers “the actual *life world* experience of sound as its primary object of research”). Core to Schaeffer’s morphological analytic process is the tenet of “listening”<sup>120</sup> (and the primary practice of this methodology bears similarity to Tomaszewski’s primary interpretive analytic practice). The ensuing processes of spectromorphological analysis continue to express similarities with other models of semiotic analysis, legitimising the claim that spectromorphology is a rendition of semiosis. Schaeffer’s analysis builds methodology around the viewing of sound objects or musical objects, which are, defined reductively, the constituents of structure, existing also independently from musical structures. Sound objects form from within typological discourse in analysis and are the effective functional figures within a sonic environment. One such typological-analytic discourse employs division between the inert methodologies, the distinguished areas of classification being “energy articulation”, “sonic substance”, and “duration [of tone]”. This mode of spectromorphological analysis, alongside its other modes, realises their methodologies in graphic form and quantitated graphic figures.<sup>121</sup>

#### - Spectromorphology and the Analysis

Pierre Schaeffer is the progenitor of the creation, propagation, and analysis of sound – in the Western sphere – outside of traditional parameters. Notions of pitch and harmony, among other, are nullified, and the consideration of written, oral, and performed practices as the only methods of propagating understanding of music was challenged by Schaeffer’s *Concert de Bruits* in 1948. The *Concert* was the broadcasting of five etudes by the composer which were all consisted of ‘sound worlds’ rather than traditional, conventional performance (that which could be recreated on stage by conventional means). This nature of the *Bruits* etudes meant that it could only exist in recording, thereby both immortalising the music and making any true

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<sup>119</sup> Smalley, D. 1997. Spectromorphology: explaining sound-shapes. *Organised Sound*, 12(2):107.

<sup>120</sup> Thoresen, L. 1997. Spectromorphological analysis of sound objects: an adaptation of Pierre Schaeffer’s typomorphology. *Organised Sound*, 12(2):129.

<sup>121</sup> Thoresen, L. 1997. Spectromorphological analysis of sound objects: an adaptation of Pierre Schaeffer’s typomorphology. *Organised Sound*, 12(2):130-131.

recreation invalid. So, as was Schaeffer's intention, the understanding of the music relied wholly on the sonic interpretation.<sup>122</sup>

Michael Clarke admits to the value of electroacoustic analysis as methodology beyond scored music, noting the writings of Smalley, among other. Like with Schaeffer's original intention, Clarke isolates the need of considering music past its traditional and conventional attributes. Simply, electroacoustic analysis is applied, in great regard, to music that cannot be easily transcribed or traditionally encapsulated. He writes of traditional Western notated music and its analysis as "centred on the score [...] which provides the analyst with [...] a two-dimensional lattice of data: pitch and rhythm (or possibly three-dimensional if one includes the somewhat limited reference to timbre). [...] [E]xact data about a set of discrete events are for the most part unambiguously available on paper."<sup>123</sup>

The works that stand as antitheses to this, which in Western context is primarily electroacoustic and unscored, often become notated and graphically recorded after performance, for both the purpose of study and the purpose of recording.<sup>124</sup> Such is the case with film score analysis, which is often unrecorded on paper; analysts endeavouring the consideration of film music at times utilise the electroacoustic resources for study. This is especially the case with abstract film music which falls out of the standard parameters of the Western lattice. This is in reference to instrumentation, context, and theoretical attributes. Pitch and rhythm, as Clarke reminds, can possibly be secondary to natures of the music that are determined by the sonic performance or its context.<sup>125</sup> Music may be determined by frequency and sonic timbre; and sound textures, sonic events, environmental impetuses, and frequential nature – and the augmentation and metamorphoses that they may undergo in performance (what composer Jonathan Harvey refers to as "spectral modulation") – are uniquely approached using extended analytic methodologies that consider variables that are otherwise overlooked in standardised Western theory (to a large extent, that is).<sup>126</sup>

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<sup>122</sup> Camilleri, L. 2010. Shaping sounds, shaping spaces. *Popular Music*, 29(2):199-200.

<sup>123</sup> Clarke, M. 2012. Analysing Electroacoustic Music: an Interactive Aural Approach. *Music Analysis*, 31(3):347-348.

<sup>124</sup> Clarke, M. 2012. Analysing Electroacoustic Music: an Interactive Aural Approach. *Music Analysis*, 31(3):349.

<sup>125</sup> Clarke, M. 2012. Analysing Electroacoustic Music: an Interactive Aural Approach. *Music Analysis*, 31(3):349.

<sup>126</sup> Clarke, M. 2012. Analysing Electroacoustic Music: an Interactive Aural Approach. *Music Analysis*, 31(3):350-351.

The notation of electroacoustic music is notoriously complex – graphic scores, sonograms, and linguistic record are the most notable and common ways to put music to paper to analyse it.<sup>127</sup> Each is popular among electroacoustic analysts in their own contexts. Like Clarke notes, the latter option – language – is both valuable and rife with risk.<sup>128</sup> As electroacoustic analysis is less cemented than conventional Western analysis, vocabulary is not standardised, meaning that analysts, with their unique approaches to their subject matters, design distinct ways of approaching music that are not utilised by other analysts or are not applicable to other subject matters. While this can distinguish analyses and contextualise them greater, it bears the risk of being overtly subjective and nonsensical to a third-party reader.

Another methodology posited for the analysis of computer music in conjunction with video and video gaming – albeit dated – mentions the subjectivity of electronic data analysis. Jøran Rudi’s writing on this matter mentions the cross-disciplinary nature of electroacoustic analysis in video game composition, and how music exists interactively and dependent on action within space – the scenography.<sup>129</sup> Rudi notes that video game music, like film music, is dependent on numerous disjunct elements that each have distinct contextual meanings within a regular sonic framework. These individualities within the music are incomprehensible standing alone and make the regular whole incomprehensible with it removed. It is with the realisation of these elements’ presence in the soundtrack that a listener can find a momentum whereby they continue to perceive the music. The listener, when challenged with the incessant stretch of time in a soundtrack, is tasked with making their own meaning from the music rather than relying on an intention of a composer.<sup>130</sup> Rudi utilises various forms of aged computer-based electroacoustic analyses – cutting edge for the turn of the century: sonography, raytracing, et cetera. He approaches it in a novel method by reconstructing the analyses as three-dimensional imagery which are videographic depictions of sonic performance, augmenting the visualisation of the spectral outcomes to create literal sonic ‘landscapes’, like planets, crags, and other imagery.

Thus, with these references, two distinct methodologies for analysis for this study under a single framework can be identified. Firstly, a spectromorphological analysis using technology

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<sup>127</sup> Clarke, M. 2012. Analysing Electroacoustic Music: an Interactive Aural Approach. *Music Analysis*, 31(3):351-355.

<sup>128</sup> Clarke, M. 2012. Analysing Electroacoustic Music: an Interactive Aural Approach. *Music Analysis*, 31(3):355.

<sup>129</sup> Rudi, J. 2005. Computer Music Video: A Composer’s Perspective. *Computer Music Journal*, 29(4):36, 39.

<sup>130</sup> Rudi, J. 2005. Computer Music Video: A Composer’s Perspective. *Computer Music Journal*, 29(4):39.

and resources to isolate the elements of the unscored, recorded music could prove to be valuable in this analysis on *Disc*. Secondly, a semantic analysis of the initially unscored work (with the possibility of being scored for the sake of analysis as Clarke proves to be functional) is valuable in conducting a study not reliant on technological intervention. This semantic analysis grants the opportunity to conduct creative and perceptive discussion on the subject matter, in lieu of the resources used to execute a spectromorphological analysis.

It is unfortunate that access to applicable technologies is not readily available to the analyst at the time of this study. As already noted, the novel analysis of ‘television’ series soundtrack using sonography or other adjacent methodologies – as well as the inference that these methodologies are novel subsections of semiotics – could be valuable and considerably effective, while also providing an approach to considering this niche of music that is otherwise unattempted. However, the technological limitations have proven to make such an endeavour difficult. Furthermore, an application of a semantic form of analysis holds true to the standard method and theories of semiosis, grounding the work in a single thought-world, especially given that the lexical size of the study already limited. Therefore, using an approach that employs language and subjective vocabulary is ideal and already intrinsically present in the posited methodology.

- Possible Standard Methodological Applications: Schenkerian and Pitch Class Analysis

Within this study, more situated in a quasi-semiotic approach, other standardised theoretical methodological approaches could have possibly been utilised. Such include the post-tonal pitch class analysis, the more rigorous Schenkerian analysis, and the malleable motivic analysis. Each example here has its significant values and drawbacks and is decidedly not utilised in the study based on the nature of the works analysed, their style, the elements that are addressed, and the overarching argument that is approached.

A pitch class analysis can be useful in addressing music that does not conform to regular tonal structures. In *Disc*’s soundtrack, much of the music follows tonality, albeit loosely at times, as proven in the excerpts in Chapter 4. The initial title cue of *TOS*, which traverses through numerous tonicisations, can be more suited to an overarching post-tonal analysis. Identifying prime structures within the harmonic oscillations, which in themselves are considerably complexified through extensions and modal references, are applicable. A as p.c.0 bases numerous melodic shifts to p.c.7 and harmonic tonicisations of p.c.4 in its opening line (as

shown in Figure 2, Chapter 4); in the *Beguine* section, melodic and harmonic shifts to p.c.3 and p.c.2 are in the opening line. Thereafter, shifts to p.c.8 and p.c.4 are at separate heights of its contour, signifying structural significance. The *TNG*'s title cue has greater tonicisations to areas like pitch classes p.c.4 in its opening line's second half. Tonal centres reference Mixolydian modalities, as well as mediant and tritonal shifts.

In *Disc*'s theme (regarding its appearance in Figure 3, Chapter 4), a common tonicisation revolves around mediant movement; with D as p.c.0, harmonic sets move from {0-4-7} to movements down to {8-0-3} and then upward {11-3-6}, a set of mediant progressions. This is displayed in Figure 3 in Chapter 4. This figure ends with a harmonic movement of the pitch sets {5-10-3-6}, a bichord, and {10-3-5}, signifying an implied resolution to p.c.0 from the pitch point p.c.10. These pitch class sets outline harmony and are not stacked according to melodic practice. This excerpt has no melodic component and is an introductory section consisted of harmonic progressions.

Schenkerian Analysis is more difficult when, firstly, access to scoring is limited, and, secondly, where the music's harmonic movement is atypical of standard classical practice. In the given Figure, the harmonic movement is  $D_{min}-B\flat-D\flat-G^{sus\flat 9}-C^{sus}$ , or rather  $i-VI-bI-IV/iii-VII^{sus}$ . What can be seen here, dividing these movements into bars, is a consistent mediant movement down,  $bI$  a passing chord in this argument. The  $IV$  acts as a secondary dominant to the final  $VII$ , which acts in a dominant function.

Both these analyses, if more music were available to consider, could prove useful in dissecting this soundtrack; however, given the subject matter and the nature of the thesis presented, structuring an approach based on semantic analysis proves to be most applicable. This non-standard approach falls in line with the topical study presented, and extrapolations based on Schenkerian and pitch class theory results would risk overcomplicating the research.

## CHAPTER 4 – APPLICATION OF ANALYSIS

This chapter will employ a simple and refined methodological approach to analyse five cues from *Disc*. These cues are grouped by topic, which is a generalised category that includes music based on its contextual use. The two topics considered are Heroism and Romance, which are both posited to be constituent characteristics of Utopianism. The goal of this section is to analyse the music using the employed methodology not with the intention of having a conclusion on *Star Trek* be the outcome, but rather to prove a notion posited that the compositional approaches are significantly effective in enhancing the narrative. Conclusively, the notion is that there is value in compositional choice and that individual choices have the express ability to further the storyline by filling in narrative roles, conveying storytelling in a nonverbal or extraverbal manner (resultant of textual and extratextual elements), or by becoming an anthropomorphised character in the story.

In this analysis, the use of strings is the central point of consideration, and it is posited that, in *Disc*, strings fill a unique narrative role that, firstly, is novel in use compared to the earlier instalments of the franchise, and, secondly, the use of strings contains meaning throughout the instalment, in both instances of Heroism and Romance. Ultimately, it is posited that the string section of the orchestra is a vehicle used to convey *Disc*'s notions of feminism and marginalised empowerment by means that will be discussed.

The anticipated result is the conclusion that there is not only value in using the methodological approach utilised here when analysing visual media music and soundtracks, but that composers can also learn how to write more effectively for visual media music, specifically 'short-form' (episodic) visual media or syndicated media, as *Discovery* is part of a greater slew of streaming platform releases. More composers are needed for the increasing number of streamed media that is released, and with this increase comes the necessity for distinguishable quality soundtracks. This analysis aims to help inform artists of methods of approaching soundtracks in an effective and unique sense.

Hereafter follows a brief description of each of the topical considerations. Both these considerations are manifestations of utopianism:

- **Heroism & Conflict** – the depiction of a utopian person or environment, commonly related to the Federation, embodying an admirable identity oftentimes in line with the values and ethos of the Federation; conflict is

required for heroism to be realised, existing in various forms, from stellar skirmishes to hand-to-hand combat.

- **Romance** –romance is a theme embedded in the *Star Trek* narrative as a topic that is inherent to the identity of the utopian being. Historically, romance had been connoted with femininity and deception, especially in *TOS*, where the valiant heroes were oftentimes led astray by womanly enticement.

## THE CONSIDERED CUES AND ANALYTIC OBSERVATIONS

Generally, no more than four cues from each topic within *Disc* is analysed; alongside this, individual instances from cues in the earlier instalments of *TOS* and *TNG* are referenced, sparsely. Analysis draws inspiration from semiotics, approaching the music much like the analyses and writings of semioticians in music and film studies – many of the analysts mentioned in the previous chapter. *Id est*, the music will be deconstructed as quasi-linguistic units and elements of the music will be considered as equal to signs and symbols in semiotics.

(Note that the researcher of this dissertation did not receive any access to the original scores, manuscripts, official transcriptions, or published orchestral or conductor scores of these cues. Therefore, a transcriber was employed transcribe the cues with the greatest attempt toward accuracy. Correspondence with music distributors and publishers was attempted, unsuccessfully.)

## THE ANALYSIS

It is compelling to preface this subchapter with a spoiler warning. Often narrative points are discussed that might reveal much of the storyline.

Metz and (primarily) Tomaszewski's approaches to musical analysis are followed in this section, where Metz's verbal-nonverbal axis (on which music finds itself parallel to textual and visual elements), and Tomaszewski's affective approach (that deconstructs music based on generalised affective elements denoted by constituent parts) are the central figures in the mode of analysis. Here, music is subdivided into symbols labelled [x], constituent pieces found within the larger whole of time-stamps (t.s.). Where applicable, allusions to the visual incidents that occur with the musical cues are referred to, per Metz's axial approach.

What the analysis aims to point out is that there is a golden thread throughout the soundtrack, in both the topics of heroism/conflict and romance – the strings gain a character value that, throughout, harkens toward both topics, but, more importantly, how the use distinguishes itself from previous instalments by considering its relationship with the identities within *Disc*. Strings are adjacent to Michael Burnham and her feminist heroic tale, as much as they are adjacent to the expression of romance in especially a queer sense.

The methodology dissects the cues, looking toward cues as codes that consist of various constituent parts, which all contribute to the study's narrative. Constituent pieces are intermingled and offers a clear thoroughfare for the analyst to further the argument. These constituents are lettered on the scores, denoting their role in the level of *musical nature*, and are used to express their *considerative* application.

Preceding the analysis of the content of *Disc*, brief texts on observations of the key topical music from *TOS* are discussed. These observational writings are intended to give the assertions and analytic conclusions in the observations on *Disc* veracity and a historical backing. Much of the analysed content refers back to the music of *TOS*, and it is a safe assumption that the *Original Series* lay the foundation of all creative and narrative choices in *Star Trek*.

#### *Star Trek: The Original Series*

*TOS* introduced *Star Trek's* notion of the utopian hero, and the values displayed through the men on the forefront of virtuous morality like Captain Kirk, become realised through a distinct backdrop of sound, which heralds the prevalence of the good. In instances, the good is not just signified and exemplified by the leading man, but also by the vessel which carries the heroes from celestial shore to shore, a symbol of the united harbingers of righteousness and goodwill. For both the man and his vessel, thematic leitmotifs are assigned to say: here comes the valiant to uphold the utopian ethos.

Following this are brief observations of key cues within *TOS*, which are here to supplement the arguments posited in the analysis of *Disc*. None of these observations were done by score study, but simply by a methodology that falls just short of the Denis Smalley spectromorphological discourse, by discussing what is heard as a listened analysis.

A. Heroism and Conflict: The Classical Allusions of the 23<sup>rd</sup> Century and the Modern  
Eroica

Two examples from the topic of heroism are highlighted here, to underline the consequential characteristics of the topics as they appear in their natal form in the primordial *TOS*.

*TOS*'s heroism is intrinsically masculine, and the moral enforcers rarely include their female crewmates in their upstanding efforts. Brass adulations and primal percussion extends the hero beyond the realm of mere man, but the brash straightforwardness and traditionalist patriotism, yearning for the hinterland and being easily swayed by human vices like 'women' and 'wine' breaks down the deity and makes him man.

1. The *Fanfare* and The *Beguine*: a 23<sup>rd</sup> Century Episteme and Doxa in the Title Cue  
"Main Title"

This is the title cue of the instalment. The offset of this overture heralds what is soon established to be the most notable musical unit within the franchise. Getman refers to this leitmotif as the Fanfare, alluding to Copland's *Fanfare for the Common Man*, an iconic American tone poem that it shares considerable commonalities with, thematically, structurally and instrumentally. This figure builds implicitly onto the American icon, emulating the timelessness that both encapsulates the American identity and the concept of space.<sup>131</sup> This relationship between the two identities of milieu is driven home by Kirk's opening statement: "Space, the final frontier", alluding to both the great journey into the sparse nothingness of space and the journeys of the pioneers 'discovering' the western realms of the continental North America as they trekked from their European colonial settlements into the uncharted. This notion is mentioned in a greater regard in this dissertation's introduction.

The *Fanfare* is an allusion to the various facets of the American narrative – its allusion to the great Copland tone poem that embodied the idyllic American identity paired with its militaristic elements evokes a sense of patriotic resolve. Through this, it tells of the episteme of the heroic. The opening monologue by the clear-voiced and unmistakably American Man, Captain Kirk, exposes the ethos of *Star Trek* as a tale of valiant frontier explorers.

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<sup>131</sup> Getman, J. L. 2015. Music, Race and Gender in the Original Series of *Star Trek* (1966-1969):93. Unpublished doctoral dissertation. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan.

Comparing the *Fanfare*'s first entry, played by the horns, with the *First Call*, a musical signal used by the US Military to sound the call for assembly at the break of day, yields further relations between the *TOS* theme and American patriotism and militarism. It is notable that these units both herald an opening of a day's duty, and the *First Call* is a popular symbol of American patriotism and uniformity. It is notable that in the *Fanfare*, the opening unit encompasses a movement of a seventh upward through two perfect fourths stacked. Comparatively, the *First Call*'s opening encompasses an octave movement upward by use of a triadic movement that also initiates on a perfect fourth. The triplet within the *Fanfare*'s melody alludes to the triple metre of the *First Call*, and both have an upward resolution at the close of the melodies. Intrinsicly, both resolve to a tonic, but the *Fanfare*'s resolution is a tonicisation of a new tonal area and, in relation to the initial melody, is a mediant resolution toward the seventh of the tonal centre.

As a counterpart to the *Fanfare*, the *Beguine* section that follows, is the doxa. It is more closely related to jazz and accompanies visuals of a Starship Enterprise speeding through the expanses of space at a speed faster than that which we see throughout the series; this implores the viewer to suspend the episteme to experience the voyages of the Enterprise as a fable of unbridled and unequivocal heroism. The two themes, that of the *Fanfare* and the *Beguine* share notable commonalities, uniting the notion of the heroic. The entry is an upward jump of a minor seventh, matching the interval of the *Fanfare*'s entry. In a similar rhythmic scheme, both move downward toward a triplet after a suspension of the initial call. The distinction is the triplet's movement – here on a stepwise movement downward toward a non-diatonic tone, as opposed to the upward jumps of consecutive fourths to the dominant. The consistent return to non-diatonic tones contributes to the chord extensions that distinguishes this jazz-oriented section from its martial counterpart. A consistency within the harmonic language of the *Beguine* is mediant substitutions and paired chord extensions that contribute to an overarching modal mixture.

Instrumentation in the two sections exemplify the separate roles of Platonic binary that each embodies. The *Fanfare*'s horn and trumpet heralds are clear definers of traditional, militaristic heroism; contrasting this is the *Beguine* melody's orchestration, a mix of woodwinds, organ, and, notably, soprano voice. This female voice of the *Beguine* immediately juxtaposes this section to the masculine Kirkian monologue that underlines the *Fanfare*'s herald.

There is possibly something to be said about the implicit reason behind the juxtaposing *Beguine* – it is like a jazz standard with effeminate and seductive qualities, and is in a style that was, in the contemporary 1960s of *TOS*, popular. Not only does this *Beguine* offer an enjoyable relatability to the offset of every episode, but it also solidifies the notion that *TOS* is a relatable and accessible sci-fi allegory. Seduction here elicits intrigue and initial entertainment and moves the narrative out of a niche that would otherwise only be interpreted and enjoyed by intellectuals in media consumption and, what is referred to by many in a brutish sense, “nerds”. The *Beguine* is the composer Alexander Courage’s way of displaying the binary identity of *TOS* as being both this and a Copelandian heroic Fanfare-story of the heroic Common (American) Man.

This *Beguine* would go on to dictate the structures of the title cues of the main instalments to come, *TNG* and *Disc*: the lauding *Fanfare* and the converse second part, an exposition of the character of the series.

## 2. Copland’s Enterprise: American-/Heroism’s Identity in the *Starship* cue “Starship” and “Kirk’s Philosophy”

The *Starship* cue accompanies the entrance of the Starship Enterprise. The entry shares distinct commonalities, and discrepancies, with the *Fanfare*, introducing a new facet to the familiar musical depiction of heroism. The three notable commonalities are the high pedal point on an octave, an arpeggiated line in an upper register, and the horn melody that enters after the offset of these first two elements. Discrepancies include the absence of woodwinds and organ in this passage, where the woodwind/organ pedal tone is played by the violin; what was in the *Fanfare* the cascading figure is now an upward arpeggio, a fifth stacked atop a fourth to span an octave, by a glockenspiel instead of a woodwind-percussion ensemble; and the horn motif is now slow-moving and matches the glockenspiel’s movement of intervals. The horn theme’s second entry displays an upward movement that mimics the *Fanfare*’s theme by intervals, using the initial fifth to pivot downward to the first of the two fourths within the heroic motif. At its conclusion, the woodwinds herald the entrance of the *Fanfare*’s theme in full, momentarily, and concludes. This is the preamble to the second entrance of the heroic theme, in a *bravura* tone that sounds more prominently through a combination of instruments around the clear horn and cello.

At the conclusion of this entrance, the theme is reduced, horns handing over to cello, handing over to the flutes in a new melodic passage that alludes to the *Fanfare* theme as well as the

movement and contour of the *Starship* cue's final horn melody. This flute unit signifies the opening of a new section within the cue. Throughout all of this, the organ sustains harmonic chords on a soft mixture register (possibly in the swell).

Both the *Starship* cue's horn melody and the flute unit in the second section of the cue bear similarities to melodic content in Copland's ballet *Appalachian Spring*, an idyllic tone-poem that is an iconic embodiment of the American identity in music. Notable is the arpeggiated melodic movement to a diatonic tone within the tonic triad. This correlates with the arpeggio-melodies of *Appalachian Spring* and *Fanfare for the Common Man*; however, Copland's *Appalachian Spring* arpeggio differs. Further allusions to this motif from *Appalachian Spring* returns in a brief cello ostinato passage that lays out a quartad that, save for the added second, matches Copland's. Notable too is instrumentation – the flute-strings pairing is a central element of the entrance of *Appalachian Spring*, and in this tone poem it exposes the developed second melody much like the *Starship* cue, and similarly hands over to a horn motif. Both the instances revolve their musical material around the building of chords in an upward movement.

The distinction is in the succeeding material within *Starship/Kirk's Philosophy*. The initial entry of *Appalachian Spring* dies down to subtly give way to the ensuing section, an abrupt and lively amelodic passage; *Starship* builds on the momentum that is generated through the cello ostinato by moving into a new entry of the *Fanfare* melody, greater in sound and played by an increasingly larger ensemble. The final entry of the *Fanfare* melody concludes in an unresolved and tense chord.

Considering the narrative of *Star Trek* and the already-established relationship it has with the stories of the great migration of the pioneers, *Appalachian Spring*'s storyline further contextualises this continued allusion to the 'exemplified American exposition' voyage. *Appalachian Spring* is a fable of an east-coast groom and bride that pioneer toward the Appalachian Mountains, the frontier, vying to settle down in the vast unknown during the American exploratory era and times of Civil War. Elements of wartime, traditionalism, and the idyllic American civil life permeate through the narrative. The ballet's narrative master and choreographer Martha Graham crafted a painting of the deified 'simple' American lifestyle, the idyll-story of settling amid exploration, and of a matrimony uniting a household of a dutiful woman and an explorative man. In the storyline, the idyll is challenged by staunch and backward traditionalists that contest the wholesome lovingness of the household, and the

husband and wife are to persevere against the pressures of their backwardly and uninformed adversaries.<sup>132</sup>

However not a tale of defiance in attempt to protect a matrimonial unit (even though, as is shown by *Voyager*, the starship is an implicit family unit), *Star Trek* is strikingly similar – travellers to the frontier from the distant civilisation, tasked with upholding their civil unit that is continuously challenged by otherworldly forces that are commonly depicted as backwardly and staunch, foils to the Federation’s ethos. This *Appalachian Spring* narrative permeates through the franchise, from strong opinions on Klingon tribalism to the Starship Voyager’s skirmishes with the ‘untouched’ civilisations of the distant realms. The Federation’s heroes within the *Star Trek* narrative are always tasked with upholding Earth’s idyll and each central starship within the instalments is bound by duty to protect its home base.

It is through this all apparent that the motif of heroism hinges on an allusion to, firstly, the *Fanfare* theme, and, notably, the American idyllic sound popular in the mid-century, thereby relating *Star Trek* heroism to the American identity. The influence of Copland, intentional or not, exposes a characteristic within the *Star Trek* identity that makes its way through *TOS*’s musical depictions of heroism, and this research introduces the first evidence toward the argument of a utopian image as being intrinsically Americanised. Kirk and McCoy’s laments to return to their hinterlands in the pastoral US remind the viewer that these heroes are intrinsically men of the American backbone, in their identity dutiful soldiers of the idyll rather than heroes of a developed and modernised future.

#### B. Love: Angels and Strings

Two examples are called upon here, which are arguably the most recognisable love themes from *TOS*. It is posited that these cues both underline the character of romance as it appears in its original form.

Love is a topic that consistently bears relation to femininity in *TOS*; so, too, is love a topic that is interrelated with deception and temptation. In either case, the woman is a symbol of desire, necessity, and distraction. The *Star Trek* narrative does not fail to remind the viewer of the dichotomy of femininity, but through this also exposes how love is unitedly the only greater

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<sup>132</sup> Bodensteiner, K. 2019. Martha Graham + Appalachian Spring: Meet the master artist through one of her most important works [online]. Available: <https://www.kennedy-center.org/education/resources-for-educators/classroom-resources/media-and-interactives/media/dance/martha-graham--appalachian-spring/>

desire to man than heroism, and the fulfilment of the utopian value is either empowered by or mired by romantic endeavour. The woman might therefore hold greater power over man than his virtue.

### 3. Femininity Set in Sound

#### “Ruth”

Possibly one of the most known and notable cues from *TOS*, *Ruth* is the theme of Captain Kirk and his old love Ruth, whom he encounters as a syndissertationed apparition born from the longing within the recesses of his mind. This cue is of central significance because it underpins the first time the heroic lead, Kirk, displays a vulnerable care and the relatable human feeling of love and longing. Being first used early in the instalment, this cue, like many other, was reused in later seasons as original episodic soundtracks diminished.

The beginning is a tender flute melody, downwardly cascading and upwardly retracting twice, with a string ensemble and low woodwind accompanying it. As with many memorable melodies, it is singable and rolls off the tongue in a natural manner, because of its small scalar movements and uniform contour. The harmonies in the lush accompaniment are slow-moving and fill a wide range. The strings are the driving force behind the cue’s opening movement. The second half of this melodic section inverts the contour. The harmonies move in a faster pace here, the chords changing every second beat, underlined by a double bass pizzicato. The harmonies move in a scalar movement downward before reaching an unresolved cadence in the relative minor. A final codetta closes off the section with warm subdominant air, the flute melody concluding with a final cascade. Throughout the second half of the section, the violin is increasingly given the forefront, whose countermelody sings by the end of the phrase carries the chord change. The strings return as a full backing section at the codetta.

The second section, hereafter, is a *pathétique* section played by the strings. It is situated in the higher registers of all the string instruments involved, with the melody played in the violin’s highest clarion register. Here, too, the structure is a repetition of the melody that gives way to a second part. In both parts, the emotive violin soars above the other strings, all accompanying in a harmonic progression that alternates between two chords. The second part, a repetition of the first, is a third higher; the third part of this section sees a new harmonic world, as well as new melodic characteristic. Previously, the melody had been straight crotchets, but in the new part, the melody is a dotted rhythm that precedes each note of the contour with a leading note rising to the melodic note. Here, generally, the melody in this minor part moves downward in major thirds until it stagnates. The strings pair with a horn and flute each playing the melody respectively, before giving way to the return of the first section.

The most integral part of this instrumentation, throughout, is the string section. While the melody is in the flute and the appearance of the horn draws attention away from the strings, this orchestral section sets the tone and backdrop of this piece. At the offset, the texture is underpinned by the lush and full strings and in the contrasting middle section, the strings are the central figures of melody and movement. Ultimately, it is the string section that makes this cue's character alive, whether by subtle movements at the ends of phrases at the first section, or the gnawing tenderness of the high strings in the middle section.

### *Star Trek: Discovery*

*Disc* succeeds the ground-breaking *Voy* and *DS9*, featuring a lead that embodies that which was ground-breaking in each of the leads of these two series from the 1990s, being a female and being black. *Disc*'s Michael Burnham represents both these disenfranchised communities which, especially in science fiction, go underrepresented and eschewed by writers and fans alike. Nichelle Nichols, LeVar Burton, Michael Dorn, Avery Brooks, Tim Russ, and Anthony Montgomery are the African American faces of *Star Trek*, and Sonequa Martin-Green, playing *Disc*'s leading woman Michael Burnham, is added to this, some might argue disconcertingly, short list of POC cast members active in the *Star Trek* franchise, which spanned over fifty years at the release of *Disc*. While the franchise was known for progressive inclinations, the induction of Michael Burnham was especially striking, introducing a queer-coded black female lead.

Throughout the instalment, Burnham fights allegations of treason, acts of moral quarrel and heroism, is a valiant subordinate to, and leader within, the Federation, and grapples with challenges of identity and loss at the hands of her own and others. She is the first complexified *Star Trek* lead that both negates the hero-archetype and restructures it to be more than a vehicle of obedience to the ethos, paving the way for the ensuing instalment *Star Trek: Picard* to introduce viewers to an aged Admiral Picard that defies the Federation he once unquestioningly served for a moral heroism that surpasses the Federation's ethos. *Disc* further restructures the notions of *Star Trek*'s utopian individual by introducing not only this flawed hero-figure, but also characters alongside her that are alien, queer, transgender, non-binary, marginalised, displaced, and mentally ill, all part of her crew or constructed kinship.

*Disc* is a Pioneer of the 21<sup>st</sup> century Western Frontier, set narratively well before *TOS* and *TNG*, but introducing characteristics of a universe that the other instalments never expressed – a new utopia where the human ideal is not only empowered, but where gender, sexuality, and race

(and species by extent) are empowered, too, and put on the same footing as the until-then archetypal utopian experience. *Disc* lets the viewer know that, in the Federation's perfected utopian society, a heroic lead and an upstanding individual is much more than the Kirkian and his peers. The Starship *Voyager's* diverse and complex crew is a definite precursor to *Disc*, which released in the previous century and bridled by the social and sociopolitical disposition of the time.

The various facets of the nature of *Disc* within its music is explored, to back the ultimate statement that this instalment is an evolution of the *Star Trek* story that came before it and that there are characters within the instrumentation that not only highlight this divergence, but also contributes to a uniform musical narrative throughout certain topics. As it is with this study's form of methodology, figures within the music harbour narrative meaning and instrumentation holds character, and in *Disc*, bowed string instruments are an amalgamate that become its own character, one that is on the scene to tell the tale of femininity and queerness and further *Disc's* narrative of identity empowerment.

#### A. Heroism & Conflict: Militarism, American Patriotism, and Femininity

Strings are a central figure to the *Disc* narrative, and the orchestra's string section is an independent character which tells the story of heroism, love, and loss.

Indeed, however, there is a clear characteristic of the heroic string – Michael Burnham. The heroism of Burnham is lauded by the assertive and potently present strings and the heroic string is a theme of Burnham more than any melodic material, especially in moments where her strength and complexity in character are explored. To ground this argument, one refers back to the orchestration of *Ruth*, which utilises tender string ensemble and woodwinds to display soft femininity, and the orchestration of the cues of heroism in *TOS*, which utilises themes of patriotism and militarism to evoke senses of valiant strength.

This exposed music for strings in times of battle and heroism distinguishes *Disc's* soundtrack from the earlier instalments, just as much as the unique lead does. There is an argument for the feminisation of strings, being the embodiment of the feminine strength, the ideal around which *Disc* is built. Michael is the signifier of the new voice in *Star Trek*, one that represents the rapid movement of liberation of gender and identity equality in *Disc's* real-world contemporary, as *Star Trek* has continuously done in the past. As established later in this subchapter, for example,

the strings, in particular the cello, are the voice of not only young love, but the love between a non-binary character and a transgender character. This will be discussed later.

The following figures are the transcriptions of Lizé Briel, as commissioned by the analyst.

1. The Daring and Demure, a Utopian Dichotomy  
“Main Title”

Discovery, Heroism, Main Title  
t.s.1 [0'00" - 0'24"]

♩ = c.72

**pp** Pad, glock attack

[A]

+ Glock (8va)

**p**

Horn **mf**

[B]

Red.

Pad

**pp**

Slurs indicating sustain.

The image shows a musical score for the first eight bars of the 'Discovery, Heroism, Main Title'. The score is in 4/4 time with a tempo of approximately 72 beats per minute. It features three staves: a top staff for a Glockenspiel (8va), a middle staff for Horn (mf), and a bottom staff for Pad (pp). The piano part (piano) is marked with 'pp' and 'p'. The horn part is marked with 'mf'. The pad part is marked with 'pp'. There are slurs under the pad part indicating sustain. Two red boxes highlight specific motifs: [A] is a glockenspiel line in the first four bars, and [B] is a horn motif in the fifth and sixth bars. The score is labeled 'Red.' on the left side.

Figure 1: First eight bars of Star Trek: Discovery's Main Title

Constituents:

[A] is a glockenspiel line referencing the opening of *TOS*'s Main Title;

[B] is a horn motif that is an allusion to the well-known *Star Trek* theme

The Original Series, Heroism, Main Title  
[0'00" - 0'32"]

The image displays a musical score for the opening of the title cue for 'The Original Series, Heroism, Main Title' (0'00" - 0'32"). The score is divided into two systems. The first system includes three staves: Mel. (Melody), Organ, and Red. (Reduced). The Mel. staff features a horn motif starting with a triplet of eighth notes (G4, A4, B4) in 2/4 time, marked *mf*. The Organ staff provides a harmonic accompaniment with sustained chords, marked *p*. The Red. staff, labeled 'Vibraphone, Woodwinds', also provides a harmonic accompaniment with sustained chords, marked *p*. The second system includes three staves: Mel. (Melody), Trumpets, and Red. (Reduced). The Mel. staff features a trumpet motif starting with a triplet of eighth notes (G4, A4, B4) in 2/4 time, marked *mp*. The Trumpets staff provides a harmonic accompaniment with sustained chords. The Red. staff provides a harmonic accompaniment with sustained chords.

Figure 2: The opening of TOS's title cue

The first moments of *Disc*, t.s.1, is a paraphrase of the opening of *TOS*, with the glockenspiel attacks on a drawn out, semibreve melody [A]. The reference continues with the introduction of a horn motif playing in fourths [B], reminiscent of the entrance of the well-known horn-melody of *TOS*, which would become the leitmotif of the *Star Trek* franchise. Here, in *Disc*'s Main Title, the leitmotif is however cut short, only referencing the first interval of the theme, the fourth, twice, before diverging. This fourth interval is enough through to call forth the spectre of the theme of the original series, which is displayed in Figure 2.

Comparing [A] to *TOS*'s title cue highlights the notable parallel of the vibraphone entrance as displayed in Figure 2. Heroism is intrinsically embedded in *TOS*'s Main Title, and the interrelation between these two themes superimposes that characteristic onto *Disc*'s Main Title,

making this the instalment's heroic introduction. By Tomaszewski's regard, the glockenspiel and horns are the capsules for the intrinsic constituencies – in the case of both, the allusion to the heroism of the original is defined by not simply the instrumentation but also the musical material they emboss, the contours by which the musical line moves, and the rhythmic language and intervals that constitute the music, elements which are applicable all around. By Tomaszewski's regard, thus, the musical *nature* is the determiners of the *considerative* heroism. The allusion goes further than reference and is the harbinger of the now warped *Star Trek* vision.

Discovery, Heroism, Main Title  
t.s.2 [0'32" - 0'44"]

♩ = c.72

Red. Vln. + Vla. *mp*

Red. Vc. + DB. *mp* pizz.

Red. [C] *mf* Vc. solo

Figure 3: Entrance of the strings in the Main Title  
Constituents:  
[C] refers to the cello melody.

Discovery, Heroism, Main Title  
t.s.3 [0'46" - 0'59"]

♩ = c.72

Mel. [D] *mf* Strings + Tpt. + Horn

Figure 4: Entrance of the final melody of the title cue  
Constituents:  
[D] is the melody carried by the trumpets and strings.

Figure 3 is t.s.2, the introduction of the strings. This section, which lasts from 0'32" to 1'17", taking up the majority of the Main Title, solidifies strings as not only a central figure, but also

equated with heroism: in its earlier counterparts, the title cues of the other two major instalments were also sectioned into two parts, creating structural constituents to the title cue as a code, starting with the fanfare and then leading to a second part whose character varied depending on the instalment. However, in both *TOS* and *TNG*, this second part is a lively and energetic counterpart, *TOS* having the jazzy *Beguine* and *TNG* having an exuberant continuation on the fanfare with noble trumpet melody and celebratory ring. What is noteworthy is the role each of these second sections played – in *TOS*, the narrative was a mid-century tale of valiant heroism at the hand of attractive, exemplified, and relatable heroes, and the music depicted the nature of both the series and the time in which it was released; in *TNG*, the narrative followed a crew of unwavering heroes that adhered to a code and ethos that promised to protect the righteous and good, and the music depicted these exuberant laudations as reverence to the keepers of morality and warriors of peace. *Disc* eschews the bravado of the energetic second sections in favour of a section dominated by strings in a simple minimalist style that shares no true optimism in the same sense as *TOS* and *TNG*. Given the historical tendency to display the instalment's character in the second constituent part of the title cue, it is probable that this structural code is followed, and that this string section is an exhibition of what is now a more pensive characteristic – and knowing that *Disc* is in part an exploration of marginalised identities in a way that is postmodernist to the *Star Trek* narrative, the introspective nature of the opening sequence is an embodiment of the inwardness that the non-conforming characters experience as part of their narrative journeys. The non-conforming identities are also legitimised as part of the utopian narrative by already solidifying their presence in the title cue, and the previously implied notions that marginalisation and discrimination in the utopian allegory are non-existent are now made true by the simple presence of the strings.

What is considerably notable is the role the cello plays, carrying the melodic content for much of the first part of this second section [C]. The cello is a key character, a uniform sign, throughout the instalment's narrative and its significance is already clear here. It is a constituent part that, in *Disc*, carries as great a weight as the horn does within earlier instances in the franchise. The theme in this section, displayed at Figure 4 as t.s.3, is reminiscent of the horn-motif in the first few bars, now inverted as a fifth downward and with multiple registers played by the trumpets and the string section [D], and later harmonised by horns and choir; this is the point of culmination in this heroic overture and this slow melody not only distinguishes this title cue further from the previous instalments, but solidifies the novel slow-burn that is the

*Disc* hero. Ultimately, what establishes the string as a symbol of heroism is the horn harmonisation mentioned before, the strings superimposing themselves onto and dominating what is historically *Star Trek*'s symbol of heroism and the valiant. These two characters, the strings and the horn, are though not at odds, but are companions in sharing the story of what the hero sounds like.

The image shows a musical score for 'Discovery, Heroism, Main Title' at t.s.4 [01'17" - 01'30"]. The tempo is marked as ♩ = c.72. The score is in 4/4 time and features two staves: 'Red.' (Reduction) and 'Bass, Perc.' (Bass and Percussion). The Red. staff includes parts for 'Low Brass' and '+ Tpt. (8va)'. The Bass, Perc. staff includes parts for 'B. Drum' and 'Cymbal'. The score is marked with dynamics *f* and *ff*. Two specific annotations are highlighted with red boxes: [E] is an elongated first bar of the *Star Trek* theme, and [F] is a displacement and partial shortening of the middle part of the theme's phrase. The score also includes a triplet of eighth notes and various articulation marks like accents and slurs.

Figure 5: Reference to the original *Star Trek* theme from TOS

Constituents:

[E] is the elongated first bar of the *Star Trek* theme;

[F] is the displacement and partial shortening of the middle part of the theme's phrase.

Following the valiant string section is a paraphrase of the *Star Trek* theme from TOS which, as stated before, is the overarching theme of the franchise and the ne plus ultra of heroic themes in *Star Trek*. Figure 5 shows t.s.4, the reworked version of the theme as present in *Disc*'s Main Title. Alterations include [E] and [F], where the former is an elongation of the original theme, and the latter shifts the melody metrically and shortens the figure. The implication continues that no *Star Trek* narrative is free of the *Star Trek* vision that enshrines the story of utopian heroism. *Discovery*, through its divergent Main Title gives the listener a glimpse of a new and adapted heroic narrative, grounded in the continued sense that *Star Trek* embodies what is posited to be good, fair, right, just, and utopian.

## 2. The military violin

### “Michael to the Rescue”

The synergistic intersection between the heroic and the feminine is aptly encapsulated in *Michael to the Rescue*. This cue, by name alone, places the onus of heroism onto Burnham. This cue is selected because it represents *Disc*'s sense of dual heroism – martial strength and strong femininity.

The Main Title cue already solidifies strings as a signifier of heroism as much as brass laudations have been in previous instalments. Now, with this cue focused on the valiant protagonist, the young woman Michael Burnham, what accompanies her is not only sharp brass and martial percussion, but also a string ostinato, initially cello and thereafter paired with upper strings, that beats rhythmically and leads into a slower section with strings taking hold.

**Discovery, Heroism, Michael to the Rescue**  
t.s.1 [0'00" - 0'23"]

♩ = c.88

The score is divided into two systems. The first system is in 4/4 time with a tempo of approximately 88 bpm. The Red. part includes Horn and Trombone (15mb) staves. The Bass, Perc. part includes Violin (Vn.), Violoncello and Double Bass (Vc. + DB), Cymbal, Snare, and Bass Drum (B. Drum) staves. Section [A] highlights a fast arpeggiated violin melody in the Red. part. Section [B] highlights the percussion accompaniment in the Bass, Perc. part. The second system is in 2/2 time with a tempo of approximately 112 bpm. The Red. part includes Violin (Vn.) and Viola (8va) staves. The Bass, Perc. part includes Low Brass, Snare (hit + brush), Cymbal, and Triangle staves. Section [C] highlights a fast-paced mediant ostinato in the cello part of the Red. section.

Figure 6: An excerpt from the first bars of Michael to the Rescue

Constituents:

[A] refers to the violin melody in fast arpeggiated movement;

[B] is the percussion sounding like that of a military band;

[C] is the fast-paced mediant ostinato in the cello part.

Figure 6 is the cue's entrance. Multiple musical symbols are presented here. The first noteworthy element is the dominant string section, in special regard the melody [A]. The violin is the character that sings the melody at the start, this melody being a semi-arpeggiated, manic semiquaver motif, with lower strings pulsing in single beats below. Along this is the second

noteworthy element, the percussion part [B], slower, rattling, and utilising instrumentation that is reminiscent of military bands – snare drums, bass drums and cymbals for the most part, which are the standard percussive instruments for bands. As in the first five bars, the instruments are struck in ways that make the percussive sound snappy (note: ‘on rim’, ‘muted cymbal hit’, ‘snare hit’ at [B]) alongside the standard playing methods. These, which for a lack of better terms are described as ‘snappy’, soundings are present throughout and articulate the percussion section over the dominating strings. The pulsating lower strings are signifiers of an *alla marcia* in  $4_4$ , and along with the percussion, drives the military allusion home. It is, what is described as manic, violins that are the most significant, in special regard the interval around which the melodic movement is based – a third, the constituent that becomes the point of melodic momentum going forward and expressing a meaning of battle-ready anxiousness, as it is paired with the militant.

This central figure of [A], the mediant movement, is extracted and utilised as a melodic ostinato [C] by the cello part in the ensuing section, from Bar 5 (0’11”). The celli adopt this interval, using it in quavers on every beat (in  $2_2$ ) and sounding four repeated notes on the arrived tone before returning to the previous tone in mediant distance. Violins speak overhead with loose, articulated repetitions, on beat. It aligns with the percussion’s metric placement, furthering the violin’s percussive nature. The central instrument here is the cello, carrying the notion of plight and heroism within the narrative, inheriting the characteristic of tense battle-readiness. [A] and [C] proposes that the mediant ostinato is the driving force behind the heroic ideal, and the percussion drives home the notion that this transpires on a militant backdrop – the militant aspect indicating that the hero is in service to a greater purpose. The final point of note is the drawn-out horn in the opening section, the traditional instrument of the hero, smothered by the manic strings.

Discovery, Heroism, Michael to the Rescue  
t.s.2 [0'29" - 0'40"]

$\text{♩} = c. 112$

Red. Vln.  $p$   $mf$  + Vln. (8va)

Red. Low brass + Horns (8va)  $f$   $f$

Bass, Perc. Snare  $f$  B. Drum  $mp$

Cymbal audible from previous part

Red.  $ff$

Bass, Perc.  $f$

Figure 7: Timestamp 0'29"-0'40" of Michael to the Rescue  
Constituents:

- [D] denotes reminiscent violin ostinato;
- [E] is the overtaking of the brass;
- [F] is the militaristic *alla marcia* percussion.

The first section of the cue comes to a culmination of elements here in Figure 7 – [D], a violin-motif reminiscent of [A] and [C], has the low brass taking charge [E], with the heroic horns shining through in a piercing *forte* and accented to assert its dominance. Below this, the percussion takes on a new figure [F], a loose stomping-motif on beat in  $2_2$  with the first beat on bass drum and the second beat on snare, each of the second beats accentuated with a quick preceding upbeat and each fourth bar's snare played with a tremolo. This is indicative of a military march – specifically the double metre march, placing the strong beat on the second of the metre. John Philip Sousa, an American composer from the nineteenth century known for his patriotic repertory, wrote numerous military marches, and two of his most notable marches,

the *Washington Post* and *Semper Fidelis* have a rhythmic scheme similar to *Michael to the Rescue*. Note this in Figures 8a and 8b.

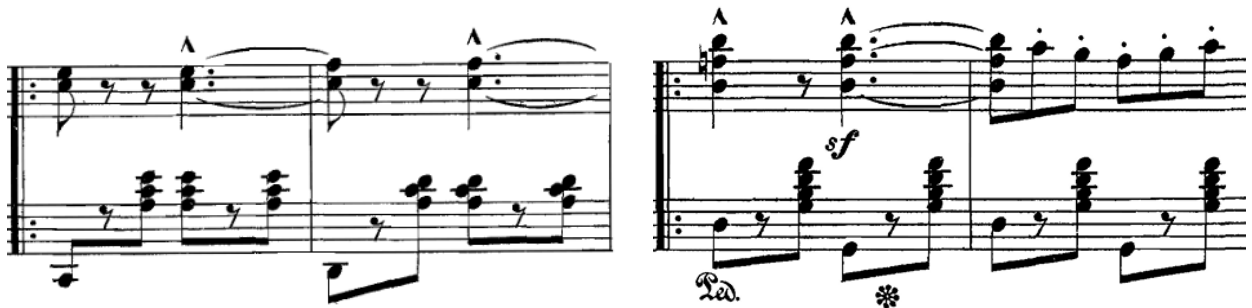


Figure 8a and 8b: The openings of the melodic sections of *The Washington Post* and *Semper Fidelis*, respectively

In this final figure, Figure 9, at the conclusion of this cue and what is surely the encapsulating moments of *Michael to the Rescue*'s character, it is the violins that have hold of the melody, doubled an octave lower by the horns [G]. In these final bars, an ostinato in the violas and cello [H] (and later added violin in [H-1], and a double bass pizzicato beat, is an underpainting to the strokes of the violin's melody. This is the coming-together of the cue's bravura, free of the military percussion and giving way to a full string ensemble, painting the portrait of the heroic Michael Burnham in vivid violins and bravado horns. The symbol of traditional heroism meets the novel notion of femininity as defined by the characters the instruments embody.

It is with this cue that the crux of the *Discovery* narrative is exemplified within the instalment, outside of the Main Title. A viewer is reminded of the notion that the *Star Trek* hero is a

challenged ideal, no longer confined to the lauding brass-motif that followed Captain Kirk wherever he went.

Discovery, Heroism, Michael to the Rescue  
t.s.4 [01'16" - 01'35"]

$\text{♩} = c.72$  [G]

Red. Vln. Horns *mf cresc.*

Vla. + Vc. DB pizz. *mp cresc.*

[H] Tam Tam l.v.

Bass, Perc. *mf*

Red. *f*

+ Vln. (8va) [H-1] *f*

Bass, Perc. l.v.

Figure 9: The final bars of Michael to the Rescue

Constituents:

[G] is the melodic passage;

[H] & [H-1] is the ostinato pattern of the lower strings, and later violin.

3. Brash and Brazen  
 “Michael’s Win”

Discovery, Heroism, Michael's Win  
 t.s.1 [0'06" - 0'20"]

$\text{♩} = c.140$

The score consists of two systems. The first system includes parts for Red. (Violin, Viola, Cello, Double Bass), Bass, and Percussion. The second system includes parts for Red. (Violin, Viola, Cello, Double Bass) and Bass, Percussion. Red boxes highlight specific motifs: [A] in the cello part, [B] in the trumpet part, [C] in the cello part, [D] in the snare part, [E] in the violin part, [F] in the horn part, and [G] in the horn part.

Figure 10: A portion of the entrance of Michael's Win  
 Constituents:

- [A] the typical on-beat stomping march motif;
- [B] the triplet motif in the trumpet;
- [C] the dotted motif in the cello;
- [D] tremolo on the snare;
- [E] violin tremolo;
- [F] dotted rhythm, now elongated and played by the horns and cellos;
- [G] is the triplet motif of the horns, on a second interval.

Undeniably, *Michael's Win* calls to the defining elements of the previous cues – the stomping, militaristic motif in the lower instruments, the use of the military trumpet, and the dominating use of strings and percussion are the central facets of this cue.

Signs [A] to [D] are all stark allusions to the military. The *alla marcia* of [A] is the *forte* element that dominates the entry of this cue. What is meant by ‘*alla marcia*’ is the evocation of march music through bass repetition on beat in an even metre. Generally, as discussed, military marches are in double metre,  $2_4$  or  $2_2$  most commonly, but outside of the strict realms of military

use, any repeated pattern on-beat in even metre that is grouped in two or four beats is a viable march, of course following stylistic patterns. [A] is played by the celli and double bases throughout, as well as a pulse on the drum's rim, contributing to the march cutting through.

[B] is the introduction of a triplet-motif that accompanies the dotted motif of [C]. This triplet is always an upper-brass figure, either trumpet or horn. These two instruments are proposed to be references to the military bugle used in opening calls or calls of battle. Alongside this, the dotted rhythm of [C] in the cello is a further allusion to the style of military music. Triplets and dotted rhythms are typical melodic elements or embellishments in march music, as in *Semper Fidelis*, as well as American patriotic music, like the entry call of *Battle Hymn of the Republic*. *Semper Fidelis* is also an apt example of the use of snare drum in military music, and the snare is a common motif in *Disc*'s music of heroism. Such is at instance [D]. Later, at [I], the snare returns as a key figure in the music. Jumping ahead, [G] is a triplet motif in the horn that harkens back to [B], contributing to significant tension through the major second interval's dissonance, cutting through the cue's texture, and it referenced again at [K].

It is apparent that [E], the violin tremolo, is an embellishment which contributes to the tension. Similarly, [F] is an elongated version of the dotted material of [C], now in the horns and celli. Going forward, the violin tremolo, the dotted rhythm, the triplets in the trumpet, and the stomping bass motif in the lower strings continue past the isolated t.s. Continuously, though, the central instrumental unit stays the strings, lower strings underpinning the march, and upper strings contributing to the tension. All these elements continue to the end of this section of the cue, at 0'49".

**Discovery, Heroism, Michael's Win**  
t.s.2 [01'24" - 01'39"]

$\text{♩} = c.94$

The score is for a 2/4 time signature with a tempo of approximately 94 beats per minute. It features five staves: Melody (Mel.), Reducible (Red.), Bass, Percussion (Bass, Perc.), and a combined Bass/Percussion staff. The Melody staff has a horn part starting with a *fp* dynamic. The Reducible staff includes Viola and Cello (Vla. + Vc.) with a semiquaver ostinato and intermittent jumps, and Low brass with double bass pizzicato. The Bass/Percussion staff includes Rain stick, B. Drum, and a Percussion part with Toms, Snare (on rim), and Cymbal. The score is annotated with red boxes and labels: [H] for the horn melody, [K] for a trumpet triplet, [L] for a violin motif, and [M] for the return of the semiquaver ostinato in higher registers.

Figure 11: An excerpt from the middle section of *Michael to the Rescue*

Constituents:

[H] Viola and Cello semiquaver ostinato with intermittent mediant jumps on every second beat;

[I] The slow-moving horn melody;

[J] The militaristic percussion part with snare drum being the central figure;

[K] The returning trumpet triplet motif as in [B];

[L] A rapid dotted motif in the violins;

[M] Return of the semiquaver ostinato of the start of the t.s., now with high registers added.

Figure 12 is the start of the third section of the cue. While the viola and violincello have an ostinato that enhances the metre, paired with low brass and, a signature element in the selected cues, a low double bass pizzicato, [H], it is the melody in the horns at [H] that holds the central focus in this section. The *alla marcia* that this cue starts off with is in this t.s. eschewed by shifting the weight of the bar to the second (and final) beat of the bar. This is achieved by breaking the viola and cello semiquaver ostinato with a single mediant jump upward at the start of every second beat that jumps down to the initial D. This third jump is significant, because the ostinato is otherwise placed on the tonic, D, and the jump to F not only breaks from the lull

of a repeated tonic, but also situates the section in the D minor tonal area and draws attention to it by filling the significant role.

[I] is the central melody. The French Horn is applied here to evoke the traditional heroism that this instrument throughout *Star Trek* history has heralded. Much like in the horn melody of the previous cue (like at [G] of *Michael to the Rescue* t.s.4, among others), the melody here is drawn out and the melody progresses every third bar, with a leading note in the previous bar breaking the long notes of the melody. Here, the tonal centre shifts from a G minor/D Phrygian to a clean D natural minor, which the horn officiates with the E $\flat$  in its third bar and C $\sharp$  in its final two bars in this excerpt. The rising contour of the horn melody implies a narrative height as much as [G] in *Michael to the Rescue*'s contour indicates a narrative climax. Both that [G] and this [I] are the final moments of their respective sections, both following a rising contour, and both having crescendos leading up to the final moments of the excerpts. In this sign [I], there is a significant smaller constituent sign – the articulations and dynamics. At every new note in the melody (save for the leading notes) an *fp* followed by a growing crescendo to the next melodic note places equal weights onto each of the notes of the melody. The melody thus stays equally heavy throughout, and the *fp* assures that the melodic notes are accented and cut through the converse orchestral material (note also the accent markings at every melodic note).

[J] is where the militarism of the typical *Disc* heroic shines through. This is the percussion part, which is a snare drum line that continues until the end of the section. This instrumentation is vital in conveying this militaristic nature, but the rhythmic language is also significant: a quaver followed by two semiquavers, where the quaver is on the drum and semiquavers tapped on the rim. This rhythmic pattern is typical in military and patriotic music, including in works like Sousa's *Liberty Bell March*.

At [K], the triplet motif of [G] simply returns, in dissonant trumpet and subdued beneath the surrounding material. Similarly, at [L], the dotted motif returns, in high violin and in rapid pace. Ultimately, at [M], the full string section and trumpets take hold of the semiquaver ostinato pattern, the violins and trumpets in a high register harmonically a fifth above the tonic ostinato. Low brass and double bass play repeated crotchets on a droning D2, a reference to the marching bass at the start of the cue. The violins and trumpets hasten their pattern with semiquaver triplets, increasing the momentum and growth toward the final note. This is the climax of the section after which the cue pivots to the final third of the music.

**Discovery, Heroism, Michael's Win**  
t.s.3 [01'56" - 02'23"]

Figure 12: The concluding bars of Michael's Win  
Constituents:

- [N] The slow-paced melody in the violins and horns in the upper register and cellos and trombones in the lower;
- [O] The violin and harp accompaniment;
- [P] Tonicisation of Db in the upper voices;
- [Q] Tonicisation of Db in the lower voices and the elongates close of the melody in the cello and trombone;
- [R] Bass drum beats;
- [S] Final C major tonicisation.

The conclusion brings together the two instrumental constituents that have throughout been signs of heroism, the horns and the cello, in [N]. Doubling each is the violin and the trombone, respectively. The dual sign here outlines a slow-moving melody (in  $\text{♩} = 44$ ): semibreve to dotted minim, crotchet upbeat toward a minim that moves to a dotted crotchet, concluding the phrase with a quaver upbeat to the concluding bars. Note here that the note values shorten by the second part of the phrase, reiterating the contour of the melody now with halved note lengths. The path toward the end becomes hastened as the heroic “win” reaches its musical ultimate, especially as the cello and trombone line at the end of the melodic phrase, at [Q], adds quaver afterthoughts to the final note of the phrase before, along with the horn-violin melody [P] (and the accompanying second violin and harp) resolve to a sudden C (implied) major [S], a semitone below the then-established tonic, Db Lydian. Db itself is a sudden tonicisation in the penultimate bar, breaking from the D minor/Phrygian tonal world the cue generally finds itself in. The minor (at times Phrygian) to major (or Lydian) shift is an exuberant finish to a cue that signifies Michael’s struggle and success.

The final two undiscussed signs in this code are [O] and [R], and they each fill simple roles. [O] is a demure harp-violin passage that exists underneath the greater melodic material at the forefront, supplying texture, while [R] is a repeated beat of the bass drum on slow crotchets, on a soft *p*, like a low and camouflaged homage to the crotchet ostinato of [A], unifying the cue’s onset and offset.

## B. Love: The Cello’s Lull

*TOS* had already solidified strings’ vital role in conveying romance, vulnerability and femininity. *Ruth* is a cue heavily reliant on the backdrop and might of strings throughout, and when turning to *Disc*, the use of strings to convey tenderness is a clear evolution of the vulnerability felt in the romantic cues of *TOS*. In *Disc* the cello is a prominent instrument employed in many regards, but in the topic of romance, it is a considerably active sign within the code. Artistic choices here highlight the double-sidedness of the strings as both harbingers of heroism and love, possibly implying that these two topics are one in the same.

### 1. Queerness as Told through the Cello

“Gray and Adira’s Melody/Discovery Lullaby”

Discovery, Love, Gray and Adira's Melody  
 t.s.1,2 [0'00" - 0'38"]

♩ = c.52 *rubato*

Mel. *Cello solo*  
*mf*

Figure 133: The main theme of Gray and Adira's Melody

Here, in *Gray and Adira’s Melody*, the code is the cue, and the constituent is no more than the instrumentation. The context behind this cue is what gives significance – this is a cello serenade played by the young Adira with their lover, Gray. It is a diegetic entrance that flows into the non-diegetic soundtrack of the scene. This memorable cue is also titled *Discovery Lullaby* and is a defining melody in *Disc*. In the context of the instalment, Gray Tal is a transgender boy part of the Trill Symbiont, and Adira Tal is a non-binary human that had

joined the Symbiont and inherited Tal. These two characters share a deep connection rooted in Adira housing Tal’s identity. (The Trill Symbiont and inheritance of identities within the Trill society are not relevant to the study but are mentioned to contextualise these two characters’ relationship within the narrative).

What gives this cue significance relevant to this research is the context of the lovers Gray and Adira – this is the first overt instance of queer love in *Star Trek*, and this novel love is embodied by this solo-duet. The cello piece becomes a theme of queer identity and romance.

Technically, the cue is a simple melodic line that gets embellished in its second part, and while simple, it is as much recognisable and distinctive as *Ruth* for precisely this reason – simplicity, repetition, and singability. Its instrumentation gives the deeper meaning – love unconditional in the utopian narrative.

## 2. Maternal Love and the Cradling Cello “Fireflies”

Discovery, Love, Fireflies  
t.s.1 [0'00" - 0'17"]

♩ = c.44 [A]

Mel. Cello *mf*

Red. Double Bass *p* [B]

Figure 14: The first two bars of Fireflies, introducing the cue's melody

Constituents:

[A] The slow-moving cello melody;

[B] Denotes the double bass drone.

*Fireflies* occurs at a narrative peak in the third season, appearing in a scene that is not of a moment of romantic love, but rather the display of the love and affection of a maternal figure, Georgiou, toward Burnham, whom she had raised and mentored from a young age. The topic Love here transcends its archetypal romantic root and is manifested through a care between kin.

At the entrance of the cue, the first notable constituent is the cello, at [A], the recurring character in the topic of Love. The cello solo is backed by a single double bass drone, labelled [B]. Here

at the offset the cello assumes the role as it does in *Gray and Adira's Melody*, centralising it as the sign that embodies the scene. With the development of the scene, more strings are introduced to populate the cue. The cello melody is a stepwise movement upward starting on the tonic D, moving to a suspended B $\flat$  that resolves to the dominant note, A, followed by a figure surrounding G. This ultimately resolves back to D.

The image shows a musical score for the piece "Discovery, Love, Fireflies" (t.s.2,3 [0'24" - 01'10"]). The score is in 4/4 time with a tempo of c.44. It features several instruments: Violin, Cello, Harp, B drum, Horn, and Strings. The score is divided into two systems. The first system includes the Violin (Mel.) and Cello (Red.) parts. The second system includes the Harp (Red.), Horn (Mel.), and Strings (Red.) parts. Red boxes highlight specific sections of the score, labeled [C] through [I].

- [C]: Violin preface, marked *mp*.
- [D]: Harp accompaniment, marked *mf*.
- [E]: Flute-like violin melody, marked *pp*.
- [F]: Cello line, marked *mf*.
- [G]: Final entrance of the melody in the violin, marked *mf*.
- [H]: Contrasting horn melody, marked *mf*.
- [I]: Strings accompaniment, marked *p*.

Figure 15: The ensuing bars after the entrance of the cello

Constituents:

- [C] is the mimicking violin preface;
- [D] denotes the new violin melody, a rendition of the cello's;
- [E] is a harp accompaniment;
- [F] is the return of the cello line;
- [G] is the final entrance of the melody in the violin;
- [H] is a contrasting horn melody;
- [I] the strings accompaniment.

The violins take the foreground at the start of this excerpt, entering at [C] with a melodic figure that seemingly imitates the cello's opening melody, and thereafter inverting the melodic movement before introducing the violin's melodic figure, [E], which is vaguely similar to the melodic movement and contour of the cello melody. Here, at [E], the violin melody prefaces a scalar movement similar to the cello melody with a D-A-D (or I-V-I) prefix before entering the scalar line displaced by a quaver. Like the cello's melody, hereafter follows a drop to the B $\flat$

suspension that goes on to encircle the V before resolving to it. While ending on the V, this melody is resolved through the re-entrance of the cello line, [F] in the initial melody, now following the same melodic contour as [E], however resolving to the tonic at its conclusion; this gives way to the final entrance of the shared melody, at [G], the violin now playing its prefixed rendition and augmenting the melody thereafter to a quicker resolution to the tonic.

A new melody is introduced in the horn, at [H], playing against the final violin entrance and an accompanying string line [I]. This melody is a scalar movement downward, from A to the tonic D. After this, in the scene, a short coda between the violin and horn follows.

[D] is noted here for being a new accompanying figure to the melodic material – a delicate harp-line that sounds the tonic and mediant, D and F.

What can be extrapolated here already is the dichotomy of violin and cello. These two contrasting figures are significant in this scene, where Georgiou is speaking to an incapacitated Burnham, sharing a heartfelt childhood story of Burnham. The cello follows Georgiou on her soliloquy expressing her love, while the opposing Michael is quiet and unresponsive, as is the violin at a quieter volume (technically, at *mp* against the cello's *mf*). Love here is the cello's enchanting song.

The image shows a musical score for the scene 'Discovery, Love, Fireflies' (t.s.4 [01'23" - 01'40"]). It features two staves: 'Mel.' (Melody) and 'Red.' (Reduction). The 'Mel.' staff is for Cello, marked with a tempo of ♩ = c 44 and dynamics of *mf*. The 'Red.' staff includes Violin+Pads (marked *mp*), Flute-like tones, and Chimes (marked *mp*). Annotations [J], [K], [L], and [M] are placed in red boxes over specific musical phrases in the Cello and Violin parts.

Figure 16: A brief strings passage at the end of the previous material

Constituents:

- [J] is a cello melody;
- [K] is the contrasting violin harmonisation;
- [L] is the cello's conclusion;
- [M] is the violin's conclusion.

Following t.s.3 is a slow cello melody [J], accompanied by violin harmonies [K]. Throughout, the melody and accompaniment is in a D aeolian modal area. Significant is the ending of both the cello line and the violin harmonies, [L] and [M] respectively, contradicting signs that

follow the same contour, but tell a different story. The cello recalls the Bb suspension that releases to a final A, while the violins imply a plagal cadence that lands on a D major, tonicising the major counterpart of the material up to this point. In the narrative, Georgiou reveals a sentimental gift, a jar of fireflies, and expresses a heartfelt promise to the incapacitated Burnham – “If you trust me, I will bring all the fireflies to you, daughter”. This, in the larger context, is the moment where Georgiou, this ‘alternate reality’ version of her initially an antagonising and brash individual, solidifies her immense character development, fulfilling the archetypal heroic and loving Georgiou the viewer meets and loses two seasons earlier. Her character’s resolution is embodied by the major resolution in the strings.

**Discovery, Love, Fireflies**  
t.s.5 [01'43" - 01'53"]

♩ = c.44  
Cello


Mel. 

Figure 17: Georgiou's love melody's final instance

T.s.5 is the final instance of the initial cello melody, left unresolved. This is played as Georgiou leaves Burnham in her cell, solidifying not only that this melody is connoted with Georgiou, but also with her expression of love toward her adopted daughter, whom she leaves behind.

**Discovery, Love, Fireflies**  
t.s.6 [02'34" - 02'40"]

♩ = c.44

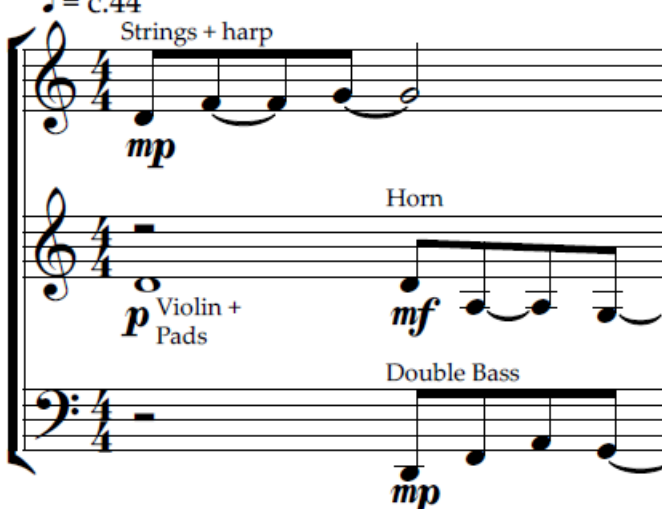
Mel. 

Figure 18: The violin line after Georgiou's departure.

**Discovery, Love, Fireflies**  
t.s.7 [02'47" - 03'02"]

♩ = c.44  
Strings + harp

Mel.

*mp*

*pp*  
Harp

String Pads

Red.

Horn

*mp*

Lower Strings

*p*

The image shows a musical score for the final bars of the cue 'Discovery, Love, Fireflies' (t.s.7 [02'47" - 03'02"]). The score is divided into two systems: 'Mel.' (Melody) and 'Red.' (Reduction). The 'Mel.' system includes a vocal line (Mel.) and a harp part. The 'Red.' system includes parts for String Pads, Horn, and Lower Strings. The tempo is marked as ♩ = c.44. The key signature has one flat (B-flat). The score shows a melodic line in the vocal part, a harp part with a *pp* dynamic, and a reduction part with *mp* dynamics. The reduction part includes a horn and lower strings. The score ends with a double bar line.

Figure 19: The final bars of Fireflies

T.s.6 and t.s.7 is after Burnham's awakening. In her solitude, there is no cello pairing with her in the soundtrack, simply violins, harps, and accompanying instrumentation, finally resolving to an open D chord. Melodically (and harmonically, although the harmonic language in the cue stays fairly stable), there is no correlation between these two time-stamps and the melodic material of the previous excerpts, and instrumentally, the only significant change is the loss of the cello.

### Concluding Remarks

By Tomaszewski's standards, there is a clear thoroughfare through the constitutive levels of the soundtrack – firstly, of course, the cue as it is, thereafter the level of musical nature, which is then whittled away to find the considerative elements of the music, following Tomaszewski's framework. In the case of heroism, the cue's nature was often littered with instrumental and compositional choices that pointed toward the expressive and (subsequently) stylistic topics of militarism and feminism. Heroism's considerative level of course contextualised this militaristic and feministic style within the narrative as being music taken from scenes of heroic displays and battle, specifically regarding Michael Burnham. Both the levels of context and nature come together to share the extratextual narrative of heroism.

As the model goes, Love's nature gets determined by its context, and choices of instrumentation, in this case the cello, enshrine the contexts in which they find themselves. As with heroism, context here is largely based on character rather than milieu and storyline, and the characters that populate the narrative at the given point are determinants of when the cello

says what. The cello becomes an instrument of not only love, but also narratively nonconventional love, between queer individuals, or between an adoptive mother and daughter. Elements of Tomaszewski’s second level are less thorough in this topic – where Heroism displayed expressive elements that pointed toward styles and genres of militarism and American nationalism, Love is stylistically amorphous and the expressive qualities it holds are uniformly idiosyncratic.

The results of the research are presented here in table form, to encapsulate the research’s narrative and outcome. Each lettered observation from every cue is listed here. Every appearance of an observation on the use of string instruments is marked in blue, each reference to brass instruments is marked in orange, percussion in red, and each instance of military allusion is marked in green. The purple text is recurring motifs, the yellow text is any auxiliary instruments, and the pink text is any observations related to harmony and modality.

| <i>Instance</i>       | <i>Constituents</i> | <i>Observations</i>  |   |
|-----------------------|---------------------|--|---|
| <i>Cue 1</i><br>t.s.1 | [A]                 | A glockenspiel line <b>referencing the opening of TOS’s Main Title</b> .   |   |
|                       | [B]                 | A <b>horn motif</b> that is an <b>allusion to the well-known original Star Trek theme</b> .  |   |
|                       | t.s.2               | [C] Points out the <b>cello melody</b> in the title cue, which strengthens the assertion that the cello is a central instrumental figure within the soundtrack.  |   |
|                       | t.s.3               | [D] Synergism of <b>brass</b> and <b>strings</b> symbolises the coming-together of the <i>Star Trek</i> narrative ideals of yore and the new identity of utopian <i>Star Trek</i> .  |   |
|                       | t.s.4               | [E]  | An <b>elongation</b> of the first few bars of the <b>classic Star Trek theme</b> .  |
|                       |                     | [F]  | A proposedly intentional <b>warping of the Star Trek theme</b> , partially shortening the middle part of the phrase and displacing its material.      |
| <i>Cue 2</i><br>t.s.1 | [A]                 | The first instance of the <b>melody</b> played in the <b>violins</b> – a <b>quick, semi-arpeggiated melody in which the melody’s notes are twice played</b> consecutively in the melodic line and moves in mediant. The melody continuously repeats. |   |
|                       | [B]                 | The <b>percussion part</b> here is seemingly reminiscent of that of a <b>military band</b> .   |   |
|                       |                     | [C] The <b>melodic line</b> is passed to the <b>cello</b> part.  |   |
|                       | t.s.2               | [D]  | A part that proposedly <b>references the original melody of the violin</b> in its interval use, now an accompanying ostinato still in <b>violin</b> . |
|                       |                     | [E]  | The brass here takes charge with a slow, loud melody.   |
|                       |                     | [F]  | The <b>percussion part</b> is seemingly in the style of a <b>marziale alla marcia</b> .   |
|                       | t.s.3               |  | Omitted by researcher for purposes of relevance.  |
|                       |                     | FIG.8A & B   | Extracts from Sousa’s <b>military marches</b> to substantiate the statement.  |
|                       | t.s.4               | [G]  | The melodic pattern here is present in the <b>horns</b> and <b>violin</b>   |
|                       |                     | [H] / [H-1]  | An ostinato pattern here takes place, in the <b>lower strings</b> , with the addition of the <b>violin</b> later in the pattern                       |
| <i>Cue 3</i><br>t.s.1 | [A]                 | A “stomping” on-beat figure similar to <b>march-like motifs</b>  |   |
|                       | [B]                 | The entrance of a <b>triplet motif</b> in the <b>trumpet</b> that permeates through the cue.   |   |

|                |          |  |
|----------------|----------|--|
|                | [C]      | A dotted quaver-semiquaver motif (“dotted motif”) in the cello is introduced.  |
|                | [D]      | A tremolo on the snare drum channels militaristic character,   |
|                | [E]      | A tremolo in the violin’s mid-high register that is there to contribute to tension.  |
|                | [F]      | The return of the dotted motif in cellos and horns.  |
|                | [G]      | A similar triplet motif in the horns on a second interval.   |
| t.s.2          | [H]      | A semiquaver ostinato pattern in the violas and cellos with intermittent mediant jumps on every second beat.   |
|                | [I]      | A slow horn melody that has a significant nature in its dynamics – a continuous <i>fp</i> that crescendos to <i>fp</i> on each melodic note, keeping the weight of the melody constant but moving.   |
|                | [J]      | Here, the snare drum is the central figure in a militaristic percussion part.  |
|                | [K]      | [B]’s triplet motif returns.   |
|                | [L]      | The dotted motif returns in high violins, now at rapid pace.   |
|                | [M]      | A return of a rapid semiquaver ostinato that earlier took place at the start of t.s.2.   |
| t.s.3          | [N]      | A slow melody is presented in upper violins and horns and the lower trombones and cellos.  |
|                | [O]      | An accompaniment figure in the violins and harp.   |
|                | [P]      | <b>Db is tonicised</b> here in the upper voices.   |
|                | [Q]      | <b>Db is tonicised</b> here in the lower voices and melody’s close is elongated in the cello and trombone.   |
|                | [R]      | Finalising beats in the bass drum  |
|                | [S]      | A final <b>C Major Tonicisation</b> .  |
| Cue 4          |          | This time-stamp is an extract from the cue titled <i>Gray and Adira’s Melody</i> , and what is noted here is the continuous use of solo cello to convey the narrative of love between the two characters; as discussed, the individuals Gray and Adira share a characteristic discrepancies with the earlier versions of <i>Star Trek</i> love by portraying that between young queer individuals. |
| Cue 5<br>t.s.1 | [A]      | Here is the first entrance of the cello melody which permeates throughout the cue, denoting the heartfelt maternal love of Georgiou to her adoptive daughter Burnham.  |
|                | [B]      | A double bass drone on the low D tonic.  |
| t.s.2, 3       | [C]      | The violin partially mimics the cello melody of [A] in a preface.  |
|                | [D]      | The entrance of a new violin melody, whose material is adaptations on the initial cello melody.  |
|                | [E]      | Harp accompaniment.  |
|                | [F]      | The cello reintroduces its initial [A] melody.   |
|                | [G]      | The violin’s melody of [D] enters for a final time.  |
|                | [H]      | A new, contrasting horn melody, as the portion of the cue rounds off to its close  |
|                | [I]      | A string accompaniment to the new horn line.   |
| t.s.4          | [J]      | A falling cello melody that is an inverted allusion to the original melody of [A].   |
|                | [K]      | Contrasting violin harmonisations.   |
|                | [L], [M] | The conclusions of the cello and violin, respectively, indicating the departure of Georgiou.   |
| t.s.5          |          | The final entrance of the cello melody, left unresolved as Georgiou exits the scene.   |
| t.s.6&7        |          | The moments of Burnham’s awakening is left without her mother figure, just as the scene is left without the previously pivotal cello.  |

## CHAPTER 5 – CONCLUSION TO STUDY

The conclusion circles back to the initial remark – that this is not a study on *Star Trek*, but a case study of *Star Trek* proving that (A) there is a considerably effective practice of composition in the franchise that could be exemplary to future visual media composers, and (B) that there is a methodological approach toward visual media music analysis that is effective in conveying this effective practice, so to inspire other analysts to approach visual media music and other composers to rethink their compositional practices.

*Star Trek* has seen a great deal of attention in popular culture and, to some extent, the spheres of social study, but its music is especially notable and especially underappreciated; there is a craft behind writing for *Star Trek*, and were this dissertation longer, it would delve into the exemplary practices of *TOS*, *TNG*, *Voy*, and *Star Trek: Picard*, all which have soundtracks and intertwined narratives that are notable and compelling. But, by and large, *Disc*, for as young as it is, has one of the most cohesively and thoroughly crafted soundtracks in the franchise. What is especially notable is that this soundtrack is written for a series made for streaming platforms. Most episodic visual media releases today are released on streaming platforms like Netflix, Paramount+, Amazon Prime, and Apple TV, all of which distribute the most recent *Star Trek* releases. The necessity for original soundtracks is now greater than what it has been in the past, and having a guide in understanding how to be an effective ‘TV’ series (for a lack of better words) composer is crucial, especially with the new and unique variables and limitations that come with streamed music, like cellular phone dissemination, et cetera. Like *Disc*, many of these series deal with nuances and narratives that are complexified and multifaceted, and an effective soundtrack can elevate the narrative by assuming an effective narrative role. This is done by the considerations *Discovery*’s composer Jeff Russo thoroughly applied, and the elements like anthropomorphising instruments or allusions to historic styles and genres are done through being informed of how to compose effectively.

The methodological approaches of Tomaszewski and Metz make understanding the effective compositional practices simple. Tomaszewski’s nesting doll approach helps understand that there is significance in the various constituents upon constituents of a soundtrack, looking at how music reveals nature, reveals context, and how context and nature are determinants of one another. Tomaszewski’s approach also reveals further meanings within each of the contexts: utopianism. Metz posits axial vision, equating visual with text with score, and an understanding of scenes like that between Adira Tal and Gray Tal, or between Phillipa Georgiou and Michael

Burnham can only be fully acquired once an equal appreciation is awarded to the music that plays alongside the narrative.

The pluralistic mixed method design of this dissertation lends to a novel argument that considers music composition in not just a technical sense, but so too considers the narrative nature of music on a topical sense – how music is the harbinger of a utopian story and its various facets. *Star Trek* is the allegory of the utopian and upstanding, through its heroism and conflict, love and loss, the Platonic design of societal pinnacle. *Star Trek*'s soundtrack anthropomorphises the good and beautiful of the *Star Trek* story, each instrument a defined and complexified character just like the people they narrate.

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This study potentially opens doors to analytic conversations and further research on short form episodic visual media music – or, to say it as it is, streaming series music – which addresses projections of vocational regard surrounding the professional thought-field, aesthetic trend, and the market for growth in compositional skillset. Streaming services, while new, are the biggest disseminators of episodic visual media, and the rate at which new series are released begs for new, adept and unique composers to contribute to this massive and ever-growing area of modern media. But, not only is the necessity there to garner composers for this medium, there is also a necessity to offer vocational validity to these artists and their field of art.

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