

Do androids dream of electric sheep

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**ASSIGN
BUSTER**

Is science fiction novel by American writer Philip K. Dick first published in 1968. The main plot follows Rick Deckard, a bounty hunter of androids, while the secondary plot follows John Isidore, a man of sub-normal intelligence who befriends some of the androids. The novel is set in a post-apocalyptic near future, where the Earth and its populations have been damaged greatly by Nuclear War during World War Terminus. Most types of animals are endangered or extinct due to extreme radiation poisoning from the war. To own an animal is a sign of status, but what is emphasized more is the empathic emotions humans experience towards an animal.

Deckard is faced with "retiring" six escaped Nexus-6 model androids, the latest and most advanced model. Because of this task, the novel explores the issue of what it is to be human. Unlike humans, the androids possess no empathic sense. In essence, Deckard probes the existence of defining qualities that separate humans from androids. The book's plot served as the primary basis for the 1982 film Blade Runner. Setting *Do Androids Dream of Electric Sheep?* takes place in 1992 (2021 in later editions), years after the radioactive fallout of World War Terminus destroyed most of Earth.

The U. N. encourages emigration to off-world colonies, in hope of preserving the human race from the terminal effects of the fallout. One emigration incentive is giving each emigrant an "andy" — a servant android. The remaining populace live in cluttered, decaying cities wherein radiation poisoning sickens them and damages their genes. Animals are rare and people are expected to keep them and help preserve them. But many people turn towards the much cheaper synthetic, or electric, animals to keep up the

pretense. Rick Deckard owned a sheep, but it died of tetanus, and he replaced it with a synthetic sheep.

The main Earth religion is Mercerism, in which Empathy Boxes link simultaneous users into a collective consciousness based on the suffering of Wilbur Mercer, largely an endless walk up a mountain in which stones are thrown at Mercer, the pain of which the users share. The television appearances of Buster Friendly and his Friendly Friends, broadcast twenty-three hours a day, represent a second religion, designed to undermine Mercerism and allow androids to partake in a kind of consumerist spirituality.

It is revealed that neither Mercer nor Friendly are actual humans despite popular belief. edit]Androids Androids are used only in the Martian colonies, yet many escape to Earth, fleeing the psychological isolation and chattel slavery. Although made of biological materials and physically all but indistinguishable from humans, they are considered to be pieces of machinery. Police bounty hunters, such as Rick Deckard, hunt and retire (kill) fugitive androids passing for human. Often, Deckard's police department will collect and analyze the corpses of suspected "andys" to confirm that they are, in fact, artificial. Earlier androids were easier to detect because of their limited intelligence.

As android technology improved, bounty hunters had to apply an empathy test — the Voigt-Kampff — to distinguish humans from androids, by measuring empathetic responses, or lack thereof, from questions designed to evoke an emotional response, often including animal subjects and

themes. Because androids are not sympathetic, their responses are either absent or feigned, and measurably slower than a human's. The simpler Bonelli Test, used by another police department in San Francisco, measures the reflex-arc velocity in the spinal column's upper ganglia, but is very painful to the subject, as well as the results taking longer to produce.

Plot summary The novel follows bounty hunter Rick Deckard through one day of his life, as he tracks down renegade androids who have assumed human identities. The novel begins with Deckard feeling alienated from his wife who, he feels, is misusing her mood organ by choosing inappropriate moods, like depression. Deckard meets Rachel Rosen when travelling to Rosen Industries to test the validity of an empathy test on the new android type: the Nexus 6. Rachael is an attractive female android Deckard initially believes to be human.

Rachael believes herself to be human as she has memories implanted from the niece of her manufacturer. She attempts to turn Deckard away from bounty hunting. Deckard becomes confused about humanity, morality and empathy. He is arrested after attempting to retire the second android and taken to what appears to be a fully functional and publicly accessible police station—but it is not a police station Deckard knows about. Deckard escapes with fellow bounty hunter Phil Resch after deducing that the station is staffed by androids.

His moral quandary deepens after working briefly with Phil Resch, who Deckard learns is a particularly callous fellow bounty hunter. Deckard's story

is interwoven with that of J. R. Isidore, a driver for an animal repair shop who cannot qualify to leave Earth due to his low IQ. Isidore lives alone in a nearly entirely empty apartment building with little outside contact other than his Empathy Box. Pris Stratton, an android identical in appearance to Rachel, moves into the building and the lonely Isidore attempts to befriend her.

Pris and her friends get Isidore to help them trap Deckard as he comes to retire them. Once Deckard realizes the size of the challenge ahead, he enlists Rachel to help him, and they proceed to have sex. By Deckard's having sex with her, Rachel hoped to stop him from bounty hunting, but he will not and drops her off. Deckard nevertheless succeeds in killing the androids, causing Isidore to break down from the loss of his only friends, and earning him a citation for the record number of kills in one day.

He returns home and his wife reports having seen Rachael Rosen kill his real pet goat. He understands that Rachael was taking revenge and is thankful that the loss is only financial; the android could instead have killed his wife. He travels to an isolated desert to meditate and has an epiphany. He also finds a toad, thought to be extinct and considered to be Mercer's favorite animal. Deckard brings it home, where his wife discovers that the toad is in fact synthetic. Deckard is not glad but "prefers" to know the toad is artificial.