

How to live safely in a science fictional universe

Literature



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How to Live Safely in a Science Fictional Universe is a metaphorical science fiction piece that documents the physical and mental journey of a protagonist, as he sets out to find his lost father and save the universe one time machine repairing at a time. In the novel, author, Charles Yu, uses many technical/literary devices and metaphors to address a diverse plethora of societal and common personal problems. The book is complete with many literary element that give it a really allegorical and thought provoking feel.

According to author of this book, the story is metaphorical and informative. As in many writings in the world, the use of great metaphors helps a writer express themselves. However, Charles Yu uses the time machine as a metaphor to represent how people revisit their past and analyse their history. Even the basic description of the machine has a metaphorical tone, “ features an applied temporal linguistics architecture allowing for free-form navigation within a rendered environment, such as, for instance, a story space and, in particular, a science fictional universe (Yu 5)”. While it seems like this is a metaphor for the physics of the machine, it actually is a metaphor for how people think about the past and the future. Its a metaphor, for how people quickly change their perspective, thinking of the past, future and present interchangeably. To go along with this the book opens in the “ Present-Indefinite” time. This means that the story is not set in any set time or place, instead being set between worlds. However, other than being a rather difficult setting, its can be seen as a rather clever metaphor for the way an person sometimes feels stuck in their present state. How they can't progress to something above their current state or go back to a even worse state. The time machine in this novel is set in a way that it only moves

forward and rarely backwards, as many people would have chosen. In reality, this is a sign that the future is difficult to foresee, but the past can easily be revisited. Most of the time people take time to examine their past. Some past history are worth cherishing, while others are meant to be forgotten, Like in the story, Charles the protagonist persistently uses the time machine to revisit his childhood home. In the modern society, many people are trapped like Yu; they spend most of their time going back into the past, trying to reexamine their path, what they achieved, and their failures (Yu 56). In the story, the main character is overwhelmingly intrigued with the past, and uses the time machine to prolong that he forgets about his present. Many people in today's society are always immersed on their past to the point that they cannot shape their future by making the most out of their present life.

The time loop is an important representation in the book, through it Charles Yu introduces the readers to other aspects of his creation, regrets, and obsession. The protagonist finds himself in states of obsession and regrets. At first, he regrets his life because he does not understand his cause of failure. He even thinks that lack of faith in what his father was doing caused him to fail as well. From the story, lead character did not believe in what his father was doing, making the time machine. Most of the current youth believe that their old men are incapable of making it through in their endeavors. Many young people do not trust the efforts of their parents, no matter what they do. For this reason, the world is going berserk with plenty of illicit lifestyles and immorality. Ideally, in-depth analysis of Charles Yu's work would reveal that the sci-fi work he did in this book targets the youth of

the contemporary society who disregard the wisdom of their parents.

According to the book, Charles wonders if his failure was a cultural problem. For this reason, his self-doubt leads him into temporal free-fall bringing him into the present for a few moments (Yu 100). In many cases, people come to recognize where they are when they realize the mistakes they did in the past. The problem is not with the protagonist alone because many people in the world, young, and old also go through the same problem in the society today.

Charles Yu brought the world imminent to the truth about the present, the past, and the future. The time machine he uses in his novel is a great symbol of the societal problems today. Many readers say that the books makes them lose gravity for a moment and it then pulls them back to the earth. In this book, Charles is trying to cover up for the bad legacy his father who was also a great scientist left before he went missing. The book states that Charles spent most of his time in the time machine looking for his mad scientific father. The book is great and effective even as it happens in a make believe universe out of the earth. In the beginning of the book, the writer explains that he was stuck in the machine, the time loop he created by himself (Yu 67). When analyzing this time loop, the readers can clearly see that it is not a typical machine as some people see it, but it is the mind of the protagonist. As the reader ponders over this, Yu introduces them to his past working as a mechanic for a time machine with colleagues who act more humane than the protagonist himself does.

Aside from all this metaphor and time machine talk, this book is heavily driven with a lot of emotion. The appeal to pathos is very eminent in the <https://assignbuster.com/how-to-live-safely-in-a-science-fictional-universe/>

book. As the protagonist is going on with his spiritual journey, he makes sure to saturate his journey with lots of emotional anecdotes. As he realizes his fault, he says, " I was headed for an entire life spent alone, pitying myself for not being more, ignoring all those people who actually ask me to be more, because they see it in me.(Yu 135)". The protagonist realizes that he has put himself on a path of loneliness and breaks into sadness. He really makes the reader have some sort of sympathy for him and a hope that he picks up his life. Another big emotional subject is the subject of his parents. As he is trying to find his disappeared father, he also has to deal with a mother who has become despondent and broken down. His thoughts and revelations about his parents bring many emotional scenes in the story. One such quote is " She says that is exactly what she's crying about. That everything is all right. That the world isn't ending. That we'll never tell each other how we really feel because everything is okay.(Yu 147)" The protagonist mother feels a sense of despondence, as both of the men in her life have left her, alone in a time loop. She makes a good statement that has real world value. The fact that we can't just settle for just okay in life, we must be constantly improving our relationships with others and the world. Also this quote comes in a long block of an emotional spiel, that really gives the reader a sense of how much grief this woman has and the reader starts to feel very empathetic for her and hope that she and her family can reunite.

This book's use of metaphors and emotional appeal makes it stand out as a great science fiction novel, as many books fail to accurately use metaphors in their work. The purpose of the metaphors and other literary devices in the book is to portray and address real world problems through the books

narratives. The book touches on many real world subjects, that we can relate to, to make the narrative rather strong.