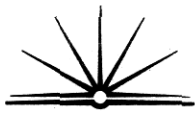


# NEW WORLDS, SAME OLD HUMANITY.

• In a time where worlds are progressing dramatically, both ~~both~~ technologically and physically, a change is imposed on individuals providing them with new obstacles to overcome. Jane Smith explores the effects of our changing world on us as humans. ■

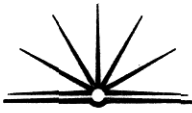
• Despite these advancements and immense changes in physical worlds, some aspects of humanity and nature remain remarkably the same. This oxymora of life is central in the written texts, "Ender's Game" and "The Glory Days" and also in the visual texts, "The Dance of Life" and the fractals website. The composer of these texts explore the process of change through physically altered situations.

"Ender's Game" by Orson Scott Card, depicts a possible future scenario of earth, where



Earth's existence is under threat from an alien race, and the most powerful military organisation has chosen young children to combat them in an intergalactic war. Despite the enormous physical and technological changes in the novel, the novel has its roots in human history. As Card explores and exploits the possibilities of science fiction, there are striking similarities between the imaginative future and recurring aspects of human behaviour; personal, national and ~~into~~ international.

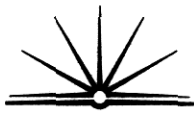
The leaders of futuristic Earth in Card's fictional world retain the titles of ancient Greek leaders, such as Strategos the army leader and Hegemon the supreme ruler, which shows a cyclic reversion to past human affairs. This is also apparent in the political tension between the USA and Russia, which exists today and in our known history. In quotes like, "You know Russia? The second world war?" and "Have you read about the world wars?"



Card cites countries and conflicts familiar to us, yet he also creates some very possible conflicts for our future. <sup>A</sup> further historical allusion is the one to Locke (political theorist) and Demosthenes (orator and strategist), which is employed to present the political influences that Peter and Valentine hope to achieve. Peter's theory that the right words can change the world cause Card to align himself with famous historical figures, "Bismarck, Lenin", who were known for their ruthlessness as they shared this same theory.

Card ~~explores~~ <sup>uses a</sup> physically altered situation to explore the <sup>concept of the</sup> changelessness of human affairs, in respect to international and national human behaviours.

The persistence of war has a particular fundamental sameness in the novel. They, in the future, not unlike us, immediately resort to killing when their existence is being threatened. They know nothing about the dangers, yet they are



already "the most enemy, ugly and murderous, and loathsome". The cumulation of negative adjectives here is a product of social conditioning by the HF.

The word changes dramatically but Ende grows up quickly and is exposed to humanity's ugliest features, explored mainly through the relationships he has with people around him. The bond between parents and children is, as perceived in today's world, a very strong bond, particularly between Ende and his mother. This is manifested in Ende's reminiscence of the past, "She had prayed for him. He had kept it as a memory of how his mother loved him."

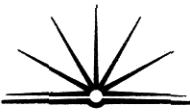
In the world of Battle School, Ende has an exceptional military intelligence and perception, albeit remaining unsuspectingly sweet and innocent. He is thus subjected to many changes, all with dramatic social and psychological ramifications. His struggles with bullies, losing his family and losing control



of his life, is reflected in the Giant's drink game, which alludes to a romantic fairytale with a hero, a giant and magical lands. Card portrays this through visual imagery, "He will entertain with grass and vines... and look up to castle" which reminds the responder that Ende is still a child, regardless of how gifted and in what life threatening situation.

The game mimics the lack of psychological respect that Ende is allowed for his times of anguish. This can be seen in the nonchalant wolf children, "They circled around him and pointed and laughed before they went back to their play", who are metaphorical reflections of the bullies that teased Ende for his intelligence. These children are also symbolic as their annihilation foreshadows the xenocide of the buggers.

By winning the snake in the game, Ende discovers self acceptance wrought from a position of despair, which signifies over self and even date side as he most testify



object that an individual must face, despite altered physical realms. Ende, upon embracing his own doom, only first self-realisation in the positive side of himself. The biblical allusion in, "it unrolled and twisted under him as he ground it deeper into the floor", reveals Ende's determination in violence, ironically depicted in a snake, but also positions him as a saviour.

By focusing on Ende's transition through life in a physically and technologically advanced universe, Card can explore the aspect of changing worlds that allows humans to remain remarkably the same.

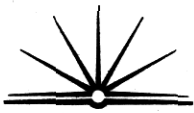
Although Edvard Munch's oil painting was created in 1899, it too pursues this same idea of unchanging human experience, made possible by an intense self-exploration of himself and his personal world.

picture of  
Edvard  
Munch's  
painting

Just as *Ende* explores himself through a computer game, Munch explores himself through his paintings, in particular through the different vignettes of the various stages of love in a woman's life. He suggests that through our ~~own~~ transitions of physical ageing and despite our different personas in changing worlds, we all ultimately experience the inevitable, love, anguish and death.

Munch utilises the picture space well, presenting the stages of love in chronological order, from left to right and back to foreground, as one woman looks back on her life. The 'dance' metaphor of life ~~is set on a~~ <sup>is set on a</sup> bright summer night, its beginning represented by the phallic reflection of the moonlight on water, suggesting the problems of sexuality that accompany love.

The background shows a young inexperienced woman, deciding on an appropriate suitor from a number of faceless men, as she searches for love.



The foreground however depicts the powerful image of human passions as an implicit narrative images of love, awakening, loss, only and withering. To the far left is the adolescent woman, without a man, the semantics of her white dress and the use of soft, rounded brush strokes indicative of her innocence in a virginal world. She gazes past the salient couple in search for pure love.

The salient couple is positioned in the centre by the vectors and colour symbolism of the painting. The search for love has become a situation where the woman's world is governed by total loss, with all love lost, as signified by her hair colour which is now a vibrant red, suggesting sexuality. Her dress coils enticingly and sensually around the man's feet, yet the loss of their spiritual & emotional connection is emphasised in his longing gaze not being met by hers.

The far right of the picture indicates the woman

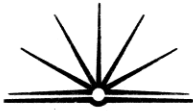




At her current stage, aged so much her face is barely visible under dark shading and angular brush strokes, her hands clenched together suggesting the loss of love and happiness. This is foreshadowed by the grey sky behind her slumping, sad gaze back at the central couple, as she yearns for youth's affection and her lost love.

Murel suggests that despite our transitions through life and ~~the~~ <sup>our</sup> physical worlds that influence our maturity and growth, we will experience the inevitable, love, death and anguish.

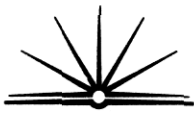
Isobel Carmody also represents this idea of our unchanging behaviour and ever-present manner of operating, in the short narrative, "The Glory Days". This is a future prediction of Earth, where Earth is no longer divided by countries, but by small civilisations. Earth is threatened now by the emergence of a new civilisation, and a child, Puan, much like



Enslaved has been selected to combat the threat ~~of~~ ~~what~~ ~~trained~~ ~~professional~~ ~~adults~~ ~~could~~ ~~do~~ ~~in~~ ~~an~~ ~~emergency~~ not do, to save humanity in a futuristic milieu.

The idea of human behaviour remaining unchanged is evident in the novel being deeply rooted in present religion, culture and behaviours. For example, instead of expanding geographically, Earth has transformed back into small "autonomous, self-regulating cities" like ancient tribes. This concept of changelessness in humanity is also apparent in the way humans are blinded by superficial things, such as beauty, which is palpable in Rian's reaction to the angel, "It felt as if someone had licked the breath out of me. The angel was beautiful."

The new civilisation, "Colony" is itself an example of unchanging humanity. It is based largely on a religion, "The High Path", which is a spin off Christianity, with worship falling upon a central figure, "Sorrow the angel",

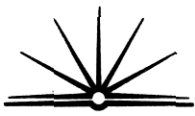


who is "a real person with the power of life and death over his followers". By basing the new religion on one that is most prominent in today's society, Carmody suggests that we as humans, often search for answers in spirituality and religion.

Rita, despite her young age and the advanced physical world she lives in, remains an archetypal hero, doing all in her power to save humanity despite its cost to herself. Through her journey she learns more about humanity, and her discoveries are direct reflections of current society, "I will survive - it is what we humans do - we will do anything, starve, hunger, claw."

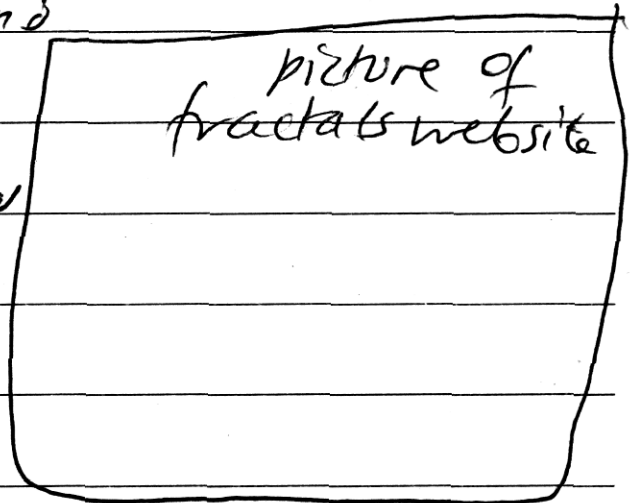
Carmody explores the concept of unchanging human emotions through physically altered situations.

Whilst the 1976 Encounter - Fractals website embraces the dang'up world of technology, it also follows the natural



resistance to change in our natural world, not particularly regarding humanity. It suggests that changes in our natural world may not be changes at all, and contrasts this with the technology required to create a website.

The topic of discussion is a complex, newly developed mathematical concept called 'Fractals', which are defined as self-repeating units, in



particles, regardless of the level of magnification. This key characteristic of "infinite complexity" is ironic in the sense that it suggests a natural resistance to change whilst the physical state of the text encourages change.

The simple understanding of the <sup>complex topic</sup> text is gained through the physical state of the text. The large interactive visuals are responder controlled videos that expand information for

Website perception. There are a number of different search options which allow easy self-navigating of the text, while the drop-down indicators and familiar icons also facilitate use of the multimedia composition. This concept of constructionism i.e. - responsibility for learning, is a technique commonly used in multimedia compositions.

The website, with its mathematical jargon, suggests that even in nature, despite all the physical changes taking place around us, things remain unceasingly the same.

These few texts ~~and~~ have allowed their composers to explore the concept of changelessness in humanity and nature despite dramatic changes to our physical societies, whether it be through a new form of earth, as in "Euler's Game" and "The Glory Pays", various personas through stages of love in "The Dance of Life" and also through complex mathematical concepts.