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Kubrick's Space Odyssey as a Phenomenological Thought Experiment

The Incongruity between the Human Condition and the Exploration of Outer Space

This study examines Stanley Kubrick's '2001: A Space Odyssey', exploring its insights into humanity's relationship with technology, architecture, and the environment in space exploration. It begins with Kubrick's portrayal of human evolution intertwined with technological advancements, highlighting the tension between human reliance on technology and alienation from our terrestrial roots. Through a multidisciplinary lens, the research emphasizes designing non-terrestrial environments that support human needs and sensibilities.

The paper explores the human-turn-to-machine concept, emphasizing the ethical and environmental consequences of space colonization. It underscores the importance of sustainable practices and responsible stewardship in space exploration, drawing on insights from environmental ethics and Hannah Arendt's writings on alienation. Arendt's perspectives on the existential challenges posed by technology provide a framework for understanding the interplay between humanity, technology, and the environment.

The architectural dimension is pivotal, addressing the challenges of creating habitable spaces in hostile outer space conditions. The design of spacecraft and habitats must evoke psychological comfort for astronauts, mitigating the alienation experienced in microgravity. The exhibition 'Moving to Mars', showcases how architectural innovation can simulate earthly conditions, fostering social interaction and emotional well-being in extraterrestrial environments.

Reyner Banham's work on the architecture of the well-tempered environment offers a critical perspective on creating artificial habitats that balance technological functionality with human comfort. Kubrick's depiction of the spacecraft in '2001', from ergonomic designs to climate control, exemplifies the symbiotic relationship between humans and their built environment. The film's exploration of artificial environments as mediators between humans and the cosmos resonates with

contemporary architectural efforts to create sustainable and humane space habitats.

The research emphasizes the need for protective architectural designs that envelop humans in a comforting atmosphere. The conclusion advocates for a harmonious relationship between technology and the human condition, reflecting Kubrick's optimistic vision of controlled technological integration. This synthesis calls for interdisciplinary collaboration to guide humanity's cosmic aspirations toward a sustainable and empathetic future.



Figure 1 - Carmen-Theodora Noretu, The Incongruity between the Human Condition and the Exploration of Outer Space