

Revisiting the Kanamits in *The Twilight Zone*: Humanity's Reluctance to Confront Misinformation

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The Twilight Zone is widely regarded as one of the greatest shows of all time. Written by Rod Serling, *The Twilight Zone* contained themes of racism, war and society situating them within a broader science fiction framework. *The Twilight Zone* spawned three remakes: one running between 1985-1989, one running between 2002-2003 and finally one running between 2019-2020. While each of these reboots has its own merits, each can also be viewed as a continuation of the series. Viewing these episodes today illuminates the anxieties of their time as well as the still-prevalent contemporary issues of the modern world. It is telling that, although Serling did not explicitly explore information literacy in the series, several episodes address misinformation and its consequences. Here, I focus on two episodes: "To Serve Man" and "You Might Also Like." Both episodes have much in common. Specifically, they share a downfall: semantic misinformation. I begin by providing a summary of each episode. I then discuss their similarities and differences in order to emphasize how both episodes depict misinformation as a crucial misstep of a society's willingness to take a statement at face value. This, in turn, signals the importance of information literacy.

The History of *The Twilight Zone* and Justification for a Reboot

Critics, audiences, and researchers alike view *The Twilight Zone* as one of the greatest science fiction series of all time. *The Twilight Zone*'s episodes transcend their genre, as they "are brilliantly produced works of science fiction, but they are also powerful pieces of political fiction" (Spencer 11). *The Twilight Zone* is an example of the contemporary myth (Hill 111). Researchers identify themes of sex,

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race, and war in *The Twilight Zone* (Cummings). Guzman explains that “through the ambiguous messages of *The Twilight Zone* and using Los Angeles as a backdrop to the Cold War era, common themes such as norms and issues of race emerge” (Guzman 23). While current analysis of *The Twilight Zone* acknowledges Serling’s contributions, his contemporaries also appreciated *The Twilight Zone*. Tildsley and Waldron argue that Serling’s win of a Unity award showed that others understood the impact of the show: “although Serling was unsuccessful in illustrating the social ills [...] in his early work for television, his Science Fiction series was recognized as attempting to better society, an achievement Serling was proud to obtain” (Tildsley 25). Other researchers argue that Rod Serling used *The Twilight Zone* to discuss the evils of war. Specifically, the Cold War, and anti-nuclear anxieties informed *The Twilight Zone* (Worland 104; Mortenson 55)., Rod Serling wanted to focus on the ills of society and how they could cause division. Due to the tensions of the time, he preferred to present this in a science fiction format. While researchers identify *The Twilight Zone* as an allegorical television show, there is still limited exploration into its connection between its 1983, 2001 and 2019 reboots’ use of allegory.

After *The Twilight Zone* finished airing, CBS syndicated the show. After Rod Serling’s death, *The Twilight Zone*’s first remake, aired in 1985. While this series used a combination of new episodes, and unused scripts from the original *The Twilight Zone*, it was met with mixed reviews both by critics and audiences. The 1985 *Twilight Zone* revival included remakes of popular episodes such as “The After Hours”, “A Game of Pool”, and “Night of the Meek.” Each remade episode used the same plot as its corresponding original and were criticized due to a lack of ingenuity (Zicree 443). The remake was cancelled after two seasons, though a third series was produced and run through syndication (St. James). In 1991, Disney announced their intentions to create a ride based on *The Twilight Zone*. *The Twilight Zone* Tower of Terror is widely beloved (Nirenberg). *The Twilight Zone*’s second remake, *The Twilight Zone*, aired in 2002. It remade two classic *The Twilight Zone* episodes, “Eye of the Beholder,” and “The Monsters are Due on Maple Street.” The remade episodes were negatively received, and the series was cancelled after one season (Vasquez). Finally, in 2019, Jordan Peele, announced a new remake in 2019.

Remakes may either progressively transform their original story, reflecting current attitudes and values, or regressively regurgitate the original content (Lukas and Marmysz 16; Hantke 144). Scott Lukas and John Marmysz explore the remake as both nihilistic and transformative, stating that “we can gain greater and greater

degrees of self-knowledge through our repeated attempts to bridge the gap between the past and the present” (Lukas 16). By viewing an old story through a new lens, audiences may understand the past in another light. One relatively new concept of remake is a reimagining: tales told within the universe of an intellectual property that introduce new characters (Proctor 224). One such example is the 2016 *Ghostbusters* movie (Isenbletter 18). In the case of *The Twilight Zone* 2019 reboot, its position as an anthology series lends itself to a reimagining. The stories, while still science fiction-based, reflect our contemporary anxieties. One major concern of reboots is that of regression, specifically that of female characters. In the case of *Star Trek* character Carol Marcus, Dodds argued that the reboot’s version was a demotion: rather than actively solving problems, the woman was now a passive love interest. Understanding and undertaking a remake is a highly risky venture, as many researchers have explained.

Since *The Twilight Zone* is an anthology series with episodes set during the Civil War, the 1960s and the future, progressive attitudes must be expressed through storytelling and ideas. When approaching *the Twilight Zone* 2019 reboot, people were optimistic: Joanna Isaacson explains that “With the rise of Jordan Peele’s *Twilight Zone* (2019-20) and Misha Green’s *Lovecraft Country* (2020), we are hopefully entering a golden age of Black horror TV, following decades in which the genre was marked by a lack of diversity.” Although *The Twilight Zone* concluded after two seasons, the show had critical and commercial success. Furthermore, its conclusion was not due to channel complaints (Miska). Much like its predecessor, *The Twilight Zone* 2019 reboot contained a diverse cast. Critics also praised the 2019 reboot for its spiritual continuation of using science fiction to discuss contemporary issues (Nelson). *The Twilight Zone* 2019 reboot remains the most recent and most successful *The Twilight Zone* reboot. Exploring “To Serve Man” and “You Might Also Like” through a lens of semantic misinformation elucidates how a reboot addresses and updates its original inspirations; such an exploration can help audiences understand how past and current tensions affect the depiction of misinformation.

Defining Semantic Relativism, Misinformation and Semantic Misinformation

Semantic relativism states that “the truth-value of some propositions is sensitive to a judge parameter, facilitating cases whereby a proposition can be true relative to

one judge, but false relative to another” (Berskyte, 1). Semantic relativism explores the idea that the truth of a statement is relative. According to Marques: “Semantic relativism is motivated by intuitions that are presumed to raise problems for traditional or contextualist semantics in contested domains of discourse” (Marques 1). As a theory, semantic relativism has often been used in the linguistic sphere.

I chose to use the Oxford Languages definition of misinformation as “false or inaccurate information, especially that which is deliberately intended to deceive” (Oxford Languages). Since misinformation is false, oftentimes believing it can result in underestimating a potential threat. In the case of “To Serve Man,” the misinformation spread is that the Kanamits are benevolent, while in the case of “You Might Also Like,” the misinformation spread is that the Egg will benefit humanity. However, this misinformation is not conveyed through outright lies. Instead, they are spread through seemingly positive statements. For this research, I define semantic misinformation as misinformation used and spread through a deliberately incorrect interpretation of a statement. This is by no means a complete definition; in this case, it serves its purpose when analyzing these two episodes.

To Serve Man. “To Serve Man” is a Twilight Zone episode that aired on March 2, 1962. In “To Serve Man”, a group of aliens known as the Kanamits visit Earth. Although the United Nations are initially concerned about the Kanamits’ sudden arrival, they hesitantly welcome the emissary. Proclaiming that their only goals for this encounter are peace and prosperity, they bestow humanity with a number of gifts that will benefit the world: tools that end famine, heart disease and war. During a polygraph test, they insist that all they ask is that humanity trust them: helping the Earth is their reward. However, some people, specifically the protagonist Mr. Chambers, remain skeptical and work to crack the Kanamits’ language. They eventually determine that the title of a dropped book is “To Serve Man.” The cryptographers’ concerns are alleviated due to their interpretation of “To Serve Man” as a positive, potentially altruistic phrase. As the Kanamits keep helping humanity, they open an exchange program: humans are placed on ships to visit their planet. Humanity is willing to visit the Kanamit home planet. Finally, just as Chambers is about to board the ship, one cryptographer, Pat can translate the rest of the book and realizes the horrifying truth: it is a cookbook. The Kanamits have been fattening humans up and bringing them to the Kanamit planet to be slaughtered and consumed. Humanity has let them in, without any concern or skepticism, eventually to their doom.

Three specific scenes exist that show the Kanamits' duplicity while simultaneously contributing to the semantic misinformation spread by the Kanamits and misunderstood by the humans in "To Serve Man." The first is when the Kanamit ambassador encounters the United Nations. He offers a series of gifts that will make arid soil arable and solve border crises. When asked what his motives are, he explains that "there is nothing ulterior in our motives. Nothing at all...we ask only that you trust us" (10:08). With the terms of accepting these gifts laid out, humanity trusts and accepts these gifts. The second scene that furthers this semantic misinformation takes place when the Kanamit takes a lie detector test as a show of good faith. In fact, he explains that "our mission upon this planet is simply this - to bring to you the peace and plenty which we ourselves enjoy...When your world has no more hunger, no more war, no more needless suffering, that will be our reward!" (16:43). The citizens of Earth watch this polygraph test and are reassured, albeit incorrectly, of the Kanamits' intentions. This initial interview tricks people of the Kanamits' intentions. However, on some level, this is the fault of the Earthlings: they should consider the alternative meanings of the words. Similarly, the Kanamits leave behind their book "To Serve Man." They assume that the people of Earth will take their words at face value without exploring the meaning behind them. Perhaps they underestimate the mental capacity of the people of Earth—they have good reason to. The Kanamits have explained that their centuries of existence and travels across the galaxy have expanded their minds and made their intentions hard to understand and explain. However, they assume that even if the cryptographers have the book, they will be unable to determine the title's true, insidious meaning.

You Might Also Like. "You Might Also Like" was released on June 25, 2020, on CBS All Access. "You Might Also Like" uses a much smaller scale for its story. Instead of exploring the world of the United Nations, it details a housewife's day, interspersed with commercials for the Egg, an item that "will make everything okay again. And this time it will be okay forever" (00:53). This statement is a seemingly positive phrase. The episode revolves around a housewife, Janet, and her blackouts. Janet often blacks out, waking up in her bed, no matter where she faints. Janet is concerned about receiving her Egg: she is unsure of why no one knows what the Egg looks like, or what it can do that will make everything OK. When calling a representative to ask about the Egg and what it does, Janet finally tries to cancel her Egg's delivery. She tries to refuse the Egg. Finally, after blacking out and waking in a tree, Janet encounters the Kanamits. They take her to their leader, who

is a female Kanamit. Whilst there, Janet explains her own pain. The Kanamits explain that they have been watching and monitoring humanity since the 1940s, via radio waves. Once learning how to conquer humanity, after studying television commercials, they decided to “sell” the Egg to humanity. These Eggs are actually Kanamit eggs, and when hatched produced bloodthirsty Kanamits. The twist of the statement hinges on humanity’s doom: the extinction of humanity will result in “everything being OK again”-for the Kanamits. The Kanamits let Janet return to Earth, where she plans to pick up her Egg in the now devastation of Earth. As she wakes up, explosions, ambulances and gunshots can be heard in the distance, a result of the Eggs beginning to hatch. Even so, one of her friends insists that the Egg will truly fix everything-not only for Janet, but everyone. The episode ends with Janet running toward the building to receive her egg as UFOs hover above the building.

Here, the major element of the Kanamits’ duplicity hinges once again on its semantics. All people are told of this Egg is that “The Egg will make everything OK again. And this time, everything will be OK forever” (00:53). People do not know what the Egg looks like, or even what it is (based on its name, it can be assumed that it is an egg). Janet is concerned that all she knows about the Egg is that everyone must have one. When she asks her friends about the Egg, they ignore her questions, often reiterating how excited they are to receive the Egg, citing the idea that things will be OK forever. Conversely, people have different opinions about what “OK forever” means: Janet’s neighbor thinks it will fix her family’s problems, while her husband’s secretary thinks it will fix the planet. Because humanity needs many things, the Kanamits chose to manufacture a vague product and create demand for it. When people finally receive the Egg, they often do not unwrap it until arriving home, and once there, it hatches. We never actually see the Egg. Instead, the idea that everything will be OK forever is no doubt enticing, and overrides humanity’s logic.

Analysis of the Kanamits. Understanding “To Serve Man” and “You Might Also Like” means analyzing the episodes as products of their time. For example, in “To Serve Man,” the Kanamits identify the anxieties of the age as food or resource scarcity, border squabbles and illness. They then cure these anxieties with their advanced technology. These are very physical issues and problems. These are also very 1960s issues: in 1962, the year that Serling released “To Serve Man,” the United States had decided to embargo against Cuba because of Cuba and the Soviet Union’s trade pact. Avalanches and mine explosions had also claimed the lives of

thousands. Meanwhile, the Great Chinese Famine, having taken place between 1959-1961, was still news for many. None of these events are referenced by name; rather, they are mentioned as vague concerns, and by the problems rather than the titles of the events. Similarly, the methods in which the Kanamits approach these problems are physical and global. They can set up fences and provide food.

Conversely, “You Might Also Like” chooses instead to focus on humanity’s inconsistency. Therefore, any solution offered would need to be broad enough to encompass all of humanity’s desires simultaneously. “You Might Also Like” comments on 21st-century consumption and the anxiety on missing out on a new product. The Kanamits use consumer anxiety and vague language to generate interest in their product: the title alone is a play on Netflix and Amazon’s language when persuading people to purchase something based on current purchasing trends. Neither Netflix nor Amazon existed in the 1960s, current consumerism and the fear of missing out is a 21st-century concern. Therefore, the use of consumerism as a plot point is a natural evolution.

“You Might Also Like” identifies human inconsistency as another means by which the Kanamits choose to manipulate the humans. The Kanamit leader explains that because humans often change their minds, and are unpredictable, the Kanamits struggled with determining how to conquer them: instead, they simply chose to eliminate humans. They determine humanity’s value sets by viewing commercials and determine that the easiest way to convince humans of the Egg’s necessity is with a vague sentiment: the promise that everything will be “OK.” This implies that currently everything is “not OK,” and therefore the Egg will fix whatever the recipient believes it will fix. In this case, supporting characters explain what should be fixed: Mrs. Jones states that the Egg will help Janet’s family, and Meghan explains that the Egg will fix the planet. However, these concerns are 21st-century worries. The contemporary climate crises are products of global warming. Similarly, mental health is a present concern for most people. This vague solution is a definite cure through peace of mind. Specifically, the solution that the Kanamits use is vague, presented as something that will fix everything and help everyone. In both episodes, current concerns are discussed explicitly, and then “fixed” by the Kanamit technology.

The Use of the Remake

The Twilight Zone 2019 reboot used its status as a reboot to implement references to the original *The Twilight Zone* in each episode: one episode, retitled “Nightmare at 30,000 Feet” uses a similar title to the original’s “Nightmare at 20,000 Feet,” and another episode, “A Traveler” features a Talky Tina doll from “Living Doll” (O’Keefe). The return of the Kanamits is a major reference to the original *The Twilight Zone* series. In Peele’s *The Twilight Zone* 2019 reboot, the Kanamits are the only returning aliens. Each episode exists independent of one another. The remake clearly shows different priorities of the time: while the humans in “To Serve Man” are plagued by border tension and nuclear threats, the humans in “You Might Also Like” struggle with their own unhappiness. However, the remake uses the same method of deception. This is a telling choice, and shows that while humanity’s problems may have evolved, humanity itself still trusts blindly. The remake’s reliance on semantic misinformation clearly demonstrates how salient and effective this misinformation is. Specifically, humanity’s timeless willingness to accept a statement at face value and receive any gifts offered is a timeless and dangerous flaw. The remake’s similarities to the original episode clearly demonstrate the current concern of humanity’s gullibility and trusting nature.

Gender in The Twilight Zone. Although the main similarity between the episodes is its wordplay, there are several similarities that are important to discuss. One notable similarity between the two episodes is their use of women as the level-headed thinkers. In “To Serve Man,” Pat is the only cryptographer who continues to translate the Kanamit book, while many of her male colleagues accept the Kanamits and their perceived intentions. She is the one who remains skeptical, determines that the book left is a cookbook and finally rushes to the ship to save Mr. Chambers. Although in the original “To Serve Man” story, Pat was male, Serling notably changed the character’s gender to female. While skeptical throughout, she is the one who is correct in questioning the Kanamits. Similarly, in “You Might Also Like,” the protagonist of the episode is a mother; the leader of the Kanamits is also female-coded. Both women are skeptical throughout: Janet in “You Might Also Like” wishes that the people distributing the Egg would tell her what it is or allow her to see it before she visits the fulfillment center. While this is a perfectly reasonable question, many treat her as if she is unstable. Janet also identifies that the Egg is a perfect product for greedy humans: because the Kanamits have stated that it will make everything all right again, people think it will fix their individual problems. Unlike Dodds’ criticism of females in the remake of *Star Trek*,

Peele's *The Twilight Zone* places a female in the center of "You Might Also Like," and uses her gender as an essential narrative element.

Tension in The Twilight Zone. Another similarity in both episodes is tension with others. In "To Serve Man," the delegate from the Soviet Union asks the Kanamits if they plan on helping everyone, and if they are purely altruistic. Later, when the United States conducts a polygraph test on the Kanamits, the Soviet delegate is automatically suspicious of the United States' intentions in promoting this test. However, he eventually follows the Kanamits as well: he is on the same flight as Mr. Chambers to the Kanamit planet. Meanwhile, Janet's relationship to her husband and friend is contentious: they often dismiss her concerns. Her friend continuously focuses on Janet's furniture and decorations.

Another valuable similarity is that of the tension of existence: in "To Serve Man", Mr. Chambers references the dangers of the world and the tensions building between nations. "To Serve Man" opens with an explanation of humanity's movement as a "tentative tip toeing alongside a precipice of crisis". Meanwhile, in "You Might Also Like," Janet is recovering from her daughter's still birth. However, no one mentions her pain, focusing instead on her family. Instead, Janet's neighbors and friends regard her with a cool detachment, as if her problems themselves are too alien for anyone to relate. This detachment further isolates and alienates Janet. When she is on the Kanamit ship, it is the first time in the episode where she has been treated with any semblance of respect. Although she is surrounded by aliens who know nothing of her miscarriage and everyday life, they speak frankly with her, and even appear moved by her pain and sadness. When she returns for her final moments on Earth, she is no longer alone: receiving her Egg and her death solve this tension with others. In both episodes, release from tension is key to the Kanamit success.

The Kanamits and Consumption. One major similarity between the Kanamits in both "To Serve Man" and "You Might Also Like" is how they obtain power. In both episodes, the Kanamits use consumption to obtain their goals. In "To Serve Man," this consumption is literal-by providing humans with food and sustenance, the Kanamits are fattening people up to eat them. Another allusion to consumption occurs when characters comment on the different items found in the Kanamit world. Peele's reboot extends the idea of consumption by using present-day consumerism. Phrases such as "fulfillment center" and "you might also like" hearken to online store fronts such as Amazon and eBay (Hitchens; Birenbaum). In "You Might Also Like," the Kanamits use consumer culture to spread their message. By arguing that

the egg is necessary and using advertisements to spread their message, the Kanamits use humanity's interest in products and consumer culture to infiltrate their homes. In both instances, humanity accepts these gifts with open arms, and believes that these gifts will improve their lives. A lack of critical thinking and skepticism results in the Kanamit methods proving effective in both the 20th and 21st century.

The Kanamits' Surface Transparency. One major similarity between the episodes is the Kanamits, and their transparency: showing humanity basic kindness and encouraging humans to trust them. While the Kanamits are upfront about their desires, they rely on vagueness to achieve their goals. This semantic misinformation allows them to spread their message and inspire trust in the Kanamits. In fact, in both episodes, the Kanamits are more than willing to help Earth: in "To Serve Man", they make soil fertile, and in "You Might Also Like", they are similarly motivated to heal the Earth by removing humans. They are seemingly accommodating. In "To Serve Man", the Kanamit submits to a lie detector test, discussing their journey and their superiority while "You Might Also Like" shows the Kanamits seemingly allowing Janet to cancel her family's Egg. In both episodes, these shows of support are very much simply smoke and mirrors: demonstrations of false compliance when the aliens are actually explaining their motives to an unwitting audience. The Kanamits are also more than willing to demonstrate their superiority verbally, and their altruistic motives. In both episodes, they ask that humanity believe that they only wish to help-to trust them blindly.

Humanity's Trust in The Kanamits. The main commonality, however, is the willingness of humanity to understand something at face value. Specifically, there is no mention in either episode about the potential of an alternative meaning: to serve man must refer to the act of servitude toward men. Indeed, the aliens do little to encourage this semantic exploration. Although the Kanamit submits to a polygraph test, and answers all questions honestly, he does so specifically to obtain humanity's trust. In fact, when he proclaims that "when your world has no more hunger, no more war, no more needless suffering, that will be our reward," he confirms his intentions: the "that" he alludes to is in fact, the amount of living people who the Kanamits will then consume("To Serve Man" 17:11). The Kanamits' help means that people will not be dying unnecessarily. Unfortunately, his honesty reveals the Kanamits' ulterior motives. No one chooses to question this. The humans' basic tools confirm what they already implicitly wish to hear: that if they trust the aliens, they will get what they want. Therefore, people largely trust the Kanamits after this confirmation, ignoring any potential other reasons for the

Kanamits' benevolence. The lack of information literacy is concerning enough. This is discussed in "To Serve Man," specifically when Chambers decides not to continue his work, he argues that he feels that: "we're looking a gift horse in the mouth" ("To Serve Man" 12:56). Later, Pat, the translator who eventually cracks the Kanamit code, indignantly argues that "maybe we should have looked this gift horse in the mouth!" By focusing on gaining humanity's trust, they can lull the people into a false sense of security. In "You Might Also Like," Janet keeps questioning why people need the Egg, even asking the distributors of the Egg what exactly the Egg does. No one knows what the Egg is, or how it will make everything OK again-instead, this idea that something exists that will fix everything is seemingly enough. In both instances, the citizens of Earth are willing to simply believe what they are told. This allows the Kanamits to further deceive the humans.

Specifically, Serling pulls a focus on the Kanamits' deliberate decisions to deceive the humans. Originally, in "To Serve Man", a friend of the narrator's begins working at the Embassy and steals a Kanamit book (Knight). In his television adaptation, Serling eschews this thievery, in favor of the Kanamit deliberately leaving the book at the U.N. building. Both these episodes utilize trust as a commodity. The Kanamits specifically utilize trust by telling the humans to trust them. The humans are willing, even going so far as to open our planet to the Kanamits and participating in exchange programs with them. Meanwhile, the 2020 iteration of the Kanamits prefers to dupe the human consumers through commercials on both the television and radio. Interestingly, the Kanamits do not give humanity anything physically to assure them of their motives: simply the verbal promise of "everything will be OK again" is sufficient for people to desire their Egg and wait outside their fulfillment center for it. Using the commercials, and the implicit trust that this media creates, the Kanamits in "You Might Also Like" are able to insidiously infiltrate the consumer industry. The humans are willing, even excited to obtain their Egg. Even when they receive their Eggs, they are protective: Janet's neighbor will not even let her touch the Egg. The Kanamits also lie to Janet, using human language to evade any potential confrontation. When Janet asks if her Egg has been canceled, she is told that her request is being processed. Later, when she asks the Kanamit leader if they were going to cancel her Egg, the leader states that they would not. Instead, she is duped into believing that the Egg is canceled. This initial response is frustrating: although she is told that her request is processing, she is willing to believe that her request has been heard.

While information literacy is an imperfect solution to the problem of misinformation, in both cases, it could have prevented the Kanamits' spread and eventual control of humanity. Using information literacy to question the Kanamits' motives, language use and methods would have allowed humanity to avoid their fates. If the cryptographers and the rest of humanity had continued to question the Kanamits' intentions in "To Serve Man," they would have avoided being eaten or, at the very least, forced more transparency in the process. If the protagonists had realized the Kanamits' true motives and goals sooner, they would have avoided the Kanamit ships and eventual consumption. Likewise, any further scrutiny of the Egg and its benefits, or even an analysis of its ingredients or properties before acceptance, would have served humanity in "You Might Also Like." While Janet tries to return her Egg, questioning its necessity before ordering it would have further served her well. Information literacy would have prevented complacency and eventual death in "To Serve Man" and "You Might Also Like."

Conclusion

Science fiction allows us to participate in fiction while realizing our own contemporary anxieties. When we examine *The Twilight Zone*, we can draw parallels between the past and current concerns. In the case of "To Serve Man," humanity trusts the Kanamits, eventually leading to their downfall. Almost sixty years later, "You Might Also Like" revisits the Kanamits, and shows their own evolution of deception. While they approach humanity in a different method, the ending is far too similar: the fall of humanity. However, we must understand the very real threat of information illiteracy. Although aliens have not arrived, there are very real impacts of information illiteracy. Although Serling does not explicitly argue for information literacy in either episode, his implicit argument is evident in *The Twilight Zone*. Information literacy is the key to avoid misleading, pretty mistruths. Further research into both the semantics of these arguments, specifically in the semantic neurology of seemingly benign statements, as well as the unwillingness to question any concerns, is necessary. We must act fast lest we learn the meaning of the words far too late.

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