

OUTLINES OF TOMORROW

A CHRONOLOGY OF THE

PLANET OF THE APES

by Jim Whitmore

Two thousand years is a hell of a long time, count it any way you want. (How many years can you expect to live? Sixty, Even seventy? Fine. Given twenty centuries you could make the rounds of life *twenty-eight times*. How much could happen in those lives?)

Two thousand years ago the Roman Empire was the diamond in the crown of human progress. Europe was a lot of barbarians being tamed by the Legions; forget them. Asia was a vast mystery to the East. The Americas, Australia, Antarctica were all totally unknown to "Civilized" man, who at best guessed at lands beyond his maps and wrote down "Here There Be Dragons." To come were the rise of Christianity, war after peace after war, the Dark Ages and the Renaissance and the beginnings of mapping the world as tiny ships sailed from port in search of new trade goods. Things speeded up, then. Countries were caught in the Industrial Revolution and world power shifted—more than once—as Man kept

struggling to balance his good and bad natures. There was this basic problem with power; it kept being misused.

More wars. Each one a little worse, as the weaponry improved and killing became more efficient, right up to today when a button somewhere could mean destruction for all of us.

All of that in a mere two thousand years. We've come a long way, but it seems at times that only the trappings have actually changed, and the same questions need answering as always. What will another two thousand years bring?

Here's one fictional answer: *the world a hungry wasteland, with events grinding down inevitably to that final line—the explosion of the Alpha-Omega Bomb.*

The end of everything.

The adventure-series format has always been a popular one with story-tellers, all the way back to Homer.

And certainly any quick glance at your neighborhood newsstand will tell you it's flourishing today! But rarely does any particular series attempt to deal with such an incredible span of time and space as did the five *Planet of the Apes* movies and subsequent TV show. (One of the advantages of science fiction over other genres. It's free to leap boundaries.)

There is one other major difference between this epic series and others with lower sights; its construction. Most series tend to be linear and strictly sequential. But not *Apes*. It begins in the future and bends back on itself like the mythical *worm ouroboros*, dipping into our world and threading forward again until it becomes its own ending and beginning all in one. A circle.

That's one of the things that makes a chronology of events from the series such an interesting prospect. It also happens to make it difficult. Such an immense amount of time is covered in the series that, of necessity, large periods are left blank. What happened in them?

Where are the linkages from episode to episode? Putting it all together is like trying to reconstruct the past from the scattered contents of a few tombs and monuments.

Naturally, there's a lot of room for argument.

Here's how I think it works out, based on a lot of careful study and thinking. (At this point I have to thank Mike Wilber, of Paulsboro, New Jersey, who sent in to Marvel his own version of *The Way It Will Be*, much of which I am indebted to.) The big problem was dealing with the explicit contradictions in some of the material. I have tried to minimize these, but for those who still aren't satisfied I've come up with a new explanation that is guaranteed to cover it all—and, at the same time, make the whole series structure even *more* complicated.

You'll find the juggling act after the chronology proper, gang. Right now let's go to the earliest of the beginnings and work our way forward. We're linear, even if the series isn't!

DR. ZAIUS, THIS IS **INEXCUSABLE!** WHY MUST KNOWLEDGE STAND **STILL?** WHAT ABOUT THE **FUTURE?**

THOUGH YOU WILL NEVER **UNDER-
STAND** IT, YOUNG LUCIUS, I MAY HAVE JUST **SAVED** THE FUTURE FOR YOU...

... FOR **ALL** OF US!

WHAT WILL TAYLOR **FIND** OUT THERE, DOCTOR ZAIUS?

HIS **DESTINY!**



1972

February: Astronauts Taylor, Dodge, Stewart and Landon are launched on the first Instellar Exploration flight.

November: Astronauts "Skipper" and Brent (and possibly two others?) are launched along same flight path as previous vessel, to probe its unexplained disappearance from detection.

1973

April: The first capsule reappears mysteriously, within nearby space. It lands off the California coast, slightly

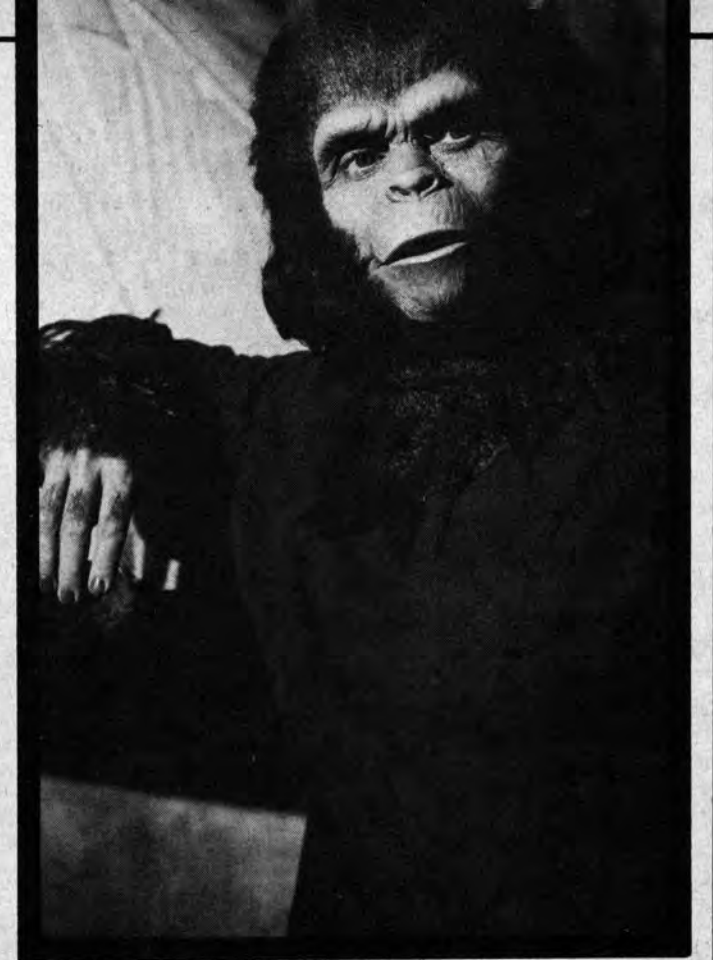
north of San Clemente, and is met by mobilized US Navy Spaceflight Recovery crew. Capsule is found to be piloted by Drs. Cornelius, Zira, and Milo. Events of ESCAPE FROM THE PLANET OF THE APES begin.

June: Those events conclude with the birth of baby Milo and the murders of Zira and Cornelius. Milo begins his long education under Armando's care.

1973 to 1981

Eight complex years marked by contradictory development of two aspects of society. Space exploration

expands. Unmanned probes range to the stars and back (discovery of Faster-than-light drive?) and manned flights over great distances are becoming more common. At the same time, however, the governments on Earth are growing more totalitarian in order to cope with increasing economic, political, and energy pressures. All information concerning the two lost spaceships and the secrets of the future revealed by Zira and Cornelius is locked away under heavy security clearance. Few are allowed access to it. Publicly it is spread that the two talking chimpanzees were a hoax, and nothing more. "Caesar" given to Milo by Armando.



1981

November: Virdon, Burke, and Jones are launched from Earth in events that begin TV series. Their ship encounters a strange electrical storm in space soon afterwards and is thrown into the future.

Caesar, aged 8½, begins his bareback-riding acrobatics with Armando's circus. (With political repression the smaller circuses have been forced to play to dwindling country audiences, thus helping Caesar avoid dangerous publicity.)

1982

The year of the Plague From Space. Brought back to Earth by an unidentified space probe (many records were lost in the war), the Plague spreads over the planet in weeks, killing all cats and dogs. *Apparently* harmless to mankind and other animal species.

1982 to 1991

It is in this period that the repercussions of the Plague begin to be felt. Humans, to replace their lost pets, turn to keeping small primates, birds, lizards, etc. The primates are found to be the most useful and gradually become the most common household animal. Gradually larger and larger ones are taken in. In this generation of primates the Plague's genetic effects show themselves: stature increases and so does intelligence in the larger orders. The Government increases to be more and more authoritarian. A reverse migration of people from suburbs into the cities results in large towns becoming almost feudal forts surrounded by farmlands; the "provinces." Pollution in many areas brought under control. A massive air purification plant in the Rockies keeps California air perfectly clean.



However, with this increase in governmental structure a slave class is developed. The apes. Ape Management incorporated as a Semi-Public branch of the Government in 1986, with their only task rudimentary conditioning. By 1991 they are a monolith, now wholly government operated, with a wider range of responsibilities. Their training and day-to-day life with humans brings on an acceleration in the mental development of the apes.

1991

April: Armando decides that Caesar, now nearly eighteen and an accomplished performer, is old enough to see the truth of the Ape Condition. He brings the circus in to play at an unnamed city on the West Coast, very likely San Francisco (judging from interior data.) Events of CONQUEST OF THE PLANET OF THE APES begin.

June: Eighteen years after his birth Caesar comes of age at the head of the Ape Rebellion.

June, 1991 to late 1992

Caesar leads his people from the city into the "Provinces." In this case, the San Francisco peninsula. Here Caesar attempts to build a home for his people with the aid of a few human advisors. Massive educational programs within the community. They face little harassment because, elsewhere in the country and perhaps the world, the ape rebellion is spreading. The government's breakdown has begun and it cannot police itself as in the past. Tensions grow, until...

December 1992

NUCLEAR WAR. The work of a single madman? International political pressure? Some country taking advantage of the US governmental paralysis? Unknown. It is swift and effective. Laser defense ABM systems prevent war from utterly destroying life. Major cities bombed but surrounding areas liveable—to a certain degree.

1992 to 2001

The human population that remains is in a state of shock. There is little or no communication over great distances, so Caesar's community, now completely isolated, accepts the survivors in its area and a new ape/human society begins to grow. Despite Caesar's wishes humans become, effectively, second-class citizens, and apes cultural divisions begin to develop. Aldo declares himself General and begins to train an "army" of gorillas. In 1995, Caesar's son by Lisa is born, and named Cornelius.

During this time residual radiation is having its effect on both humans and apes. The Plague-altered genes of the apes increase their already rapid intellectual development, in some cases (e.g., Virgil and Mandemus) incredibly so. The humans tend to be more docile, less given to action when angered. It is not clear at this time whether that is a radiation effect of just living with the evolved apes, the weakest of whom could trash the average human.

Meanwhile another branch of humanity is developing; the one that survived the war but stayed in the cities—The Mutants. Inspector Kolp has taken over in the remains of San Francisco and runs a scavenger city full of repressed hate.

2001

November: The events of BATTLE FOR THE PLANET



OF THE APES begin and conclude. The humans win a slight ideological victory and temporary equal status with the apes. Kolp, Aldo, and young Cornelius die.

2001 to 2040

This, the first Ape City, grows. Caesar rules benevolently and well but human position continues to erode, seemingly without solution. The Forbidden Zone begins to become a real danger as animal and plant mutations get out of hand. In the city of San Francisco, the mutants are splitting into factions under the leadership of Mendez and the being destined Become One of the Gestalt mind.

2038

Lisa dies.

2040

Caesar dies, at 67. Not survived by children, his rule is turned over to a council of apes and humans under the leadership of a particularly well-respected orangutan. Both he and the office are christened "Lawgiver."

2040 to 2052

Conditions between ape and human get worse. While educational programs maintain that there is no difference, humans labor under an aura of inferiority.



Voluntarily they tend to withdraw from active participation in the council and draw themselves into a community-within-the-community, separated by a river from the apes. It is only partially a ghetto. The level of culture is falling.

In the city, the mutant factions have gone into war with one another, Be-One winning out. Mendez and his loyal followers manage to escape into trans-national transport tubes and work their way towards an unknown new home. They carry with them the Alpha-Omega device, which has begun to carry an almost religious significance with it.

2052

Jason the human and Alexander the chimpanzee are born.

2052 to 2069

Gorilla named Brutus rises to a position of power in the Ape City hierarchy. Appointed Peace Officer under the second Lawgiver. Jason and Alexander become friends. Human position grows slowly but steadily worse.

2069

General Brutus' scouts encounter the Inheritors in caves near the city. Brutus investigates and becomes ally/underlying of the gestalt mind in a power-ploy aimed towards taking control of Ape City. Original scouts... persuaded... to forget what they saw.

2070

Events of Marvel's own **TERROR ON THE PLANET OF THE APES** begin. Jason, Alexander, and Lawgiver are embroiled in a conflict with the Inheritors. At the same time they begin to get a hint of what is happening in the world outside Ape City's tiny boundaries. A man/ape mute mutation has begun to live in the Forbidden Zone, some serving as slaves of the mutants. Gigantic animals roam everywhere. And many small, semi-nomadic communities of apes and humans also exist, each as isolated as the others. In certain of these a startling equity of ape and man have developed—but can it last?

2070 to 2220

A large leap of time and blank space which can only

roughly be filled in. Both ape and human cultures expand into the Forbidden zones, taming them as population needs demand. However, these cultures tend to isolate, grow bitter towards one another. Men, devolving due to the radiation, are becoming more barbaric. A sudden, fierce strain develops out of the docility in evidence just after the war. Clearly, the human and Gorilla armies are on their way to war.

In this period Mendez's mutant group have reached New York City and established themselves there. Mixture of their bloodline with local mutants begins to produce rudimentary telepathic powers.

2220

The events of Marvel's **EVOLUTION'S NIGHTMARE** take place. Gorilla and human armies slaughter one another in battle thirty to forty miles north of San Francisco. The two survivors, Solomon the Gorilla and Jovan the human, form an uneasy but necessary truce. They are healed and taught by the hermit man/ape Mordecai and meet their death in San Francisco at the hand of animalistic ape and human mutants.

This is like a balancing point in the series. It is where the human development balances ape evolution most neatly. It is also the last gasp of human aggressiveness.

2220 to 2750

Humans are defeated and become, primarily, a slave culture tolerated but completely unrespected by the apes. Gorillas dominate the apes now, and it is an age of exploration. Populations push out in all directions. Land is tamed and, with slave help, cultivated. New outposts are set up and contact is made with other surviving groups from the war. Not a few minor wars are caused by gorilla aggressiveness. On the whole, however, a peaceful time as energies are channeled into retaking a world.

The cultural heritage of Caesar's Ape City gains a widespread usage and regional governments are often designed after the Lawgiver/council mold.

Some bands of renegade humans to exist. They continually harass Ape outposts.

2750

One particularly daring raid into a fairly large ape population causes an outraged public cry from the apes.

Systematic destruction of the outlaw bands is instituted. The Lawgiver of the day (whether only a regional level Lawgiver or more is unknown) writes the Sacred Scrolls and their rather unflattering portrait of Humanity.

2750 to 3085

The general spread of the Sacred Scrolls proves to be a reactionary move, and its influence reinstates the earlier days of isolation. (When growth has slowed in the previous century, organutans had taken more and more of the power formerly in the hands of gorillas. Now they rule completely.) The loss of communication between population centers is slow at first but speeds when Forbidden Zones start to become unliveable again. (This time, largely, it is the result of poor conservation techniques. The radiation-blasted soil starts to give up and the deserts, as deserts, bloom.)

Humankind grows completely docile.

was Southwestern California. The events of the TV series begin. At this time the Ape government which rules over most of California is run by an orangutan faction headed by Dr. Zaius. General Burko of the Gorillas works cooperatively with him with continual "reminding" that Zaius is in charge. He chafes at the situation.

The two astronauts gain the chimpanzee, Galen, as a friend and traveling companion. Between them they leave a few traces of twentieth-century human culture—like certain agricultural techniques—that don't do much good for the humans but eventually serve to advance ape civilization.

Viridon, Burke and Galen have fates as yet untold.

3085 to 3975

The fall of humankind is complete. Approximately 3400, the combination of radiation deterioration and general demoralization succeeds in wiping the minds from



Cultural patterns in the isolated areas retain shards and snippets of others. Thus, one area might continue to have the Lawgiver office while another might operate entirely differently. (The Ape City near New York City becomes isolated in this period after its incorporation into Pan-American Ape Society in the previous growth period. It was not a colony of the first Ape City but developed independently, and therefore does not have an historical record that accurately chronicles the west coast developments.

3085

Viridon and Burke crashland but survive (unlike their fellow astronaut) in the region of the United States that

humankind. They are forced away from ape cities as unproductive and useless animals and begin to live in the forests, wild. Meanwhile the continually encroaching Forbidden Zones have brought on a complete Dark Age. Progress slows to a halt in some areas, like the New York Ape City. (There all knowledge that humans once had a major civilization is lost. It becomes a mere legend, and then almost nothing at all. Knowledge of widespread Ape Civ is lost or concealed by conservative Orangutans.) Progressive chimpanzee elements are stifled.

Late in this period humans begin to be used as experimental animals and entertaining hunting diversions for the gorillas. A certain instinctual survival pattern remains in the people but it is less than successful.



3975

September: The first-launched space capsule, containing the three surviving males and one dead female astronauts, crashlands in inland lake somewhere in the area south of what was Long Island in our time. (Land masses have shifted so that it is no longer ocean.) Events of PLANET OF THE APES (film) begin.

3975 (fall) to early 3976

Ape City is awash with political undercurrents. Zaius has succeeded in quashing the ripples caused by Taylor's appearance and abilities, but General Ursus' campaigning for war is beyond his control. Several scouts are lost near the Forbidden City not long after Taylor disappears in early 3976 and war is on. There is also a chimpanzee political undercurrent—and while pretending to go along with Zaius Cornelius and Zira have secretly been aiding the genius chimpanzee Dr. Milo in his studies of the rescued space capsule, the one Taylor had come in. He is analyzing it and attempting to ready it for flight. They

plan to use it as the kind of traumatic evidence they feel Ape City needs to escape total loss of the light of Truth.

3976

February: Brent's ship lands. "Skipper" (and other astronauts?) lost in crash. Events of BENEATH THE PLANET OF THE APES begin as Brent encounters Nova and Ape City in his search for Brent.

Brent's arrival plus two days: THE END, as the Alpha-Omega Bomb originally stored in the vaults of a San Francisco missile-complex and cherished by 26 generations of the house of Mendez is exploded while in St. Patrick's Cathedral, in New York City. The end of everything; a catalytic reaction spreads across the globe. Shockwave of blast strikes space capsule with Milo, Cornelius, and Zira just as it approaches orbit, and manages to cast it back into the past to... the beginning?

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It fits together pretty neatly as a circle, doesn't it? And still there's a world of blank spaces to fill in within those two thousand-year boundaries. Room for eternal speculation.

Why is it, then, that I feel cramped?

The answer: the blasted paradoxes in my information!

When I began the project I decided that I had to have a base date. Something to work from; a cornerstone; a single piece of info that was VALID no matter what. I finally settled on using the date for the PLANET sequence that Marvel's adaptation used, since Doug Moench was working from the original screenplay. It seemed the safest. That date was 3975 and Taylor's launch, if you can believe him, was 2003 years earlier.

But in BENEATH when Brent checks his ship

chronometer it says 3955. And when Zira is questioned as to when she came from in ESCAPE, she *also* says 3955.

But can I then decide that 3955 is a better date? No! Because in BATTLE, in the tape of Zira's voice (as printed in the novel), the date is 3950! *Aaaaarg* I gnash my teeth and foam at the mouth. Contradictions, contradictions, contradictions... how to deal with them?

There were two ways.

The chronology you just read was one. Using the base-date I'd already decided on I let things work forward from the past, interpolating and inserting to make the structure rational and coherent. I'm rather happy with it. But there was a second way to fix things, too, and for it to work you had to assume that none of those conflicting dates constituted a paradox; *that every single one of them was correct.*

There are broad hints throughout the Apes series that this latter interpretation might be the more valid one. In ESCAPE, for example, Dr. Hasslein talks at great length on the theory of Parallel Worlds. The same theme is pushed by Virgil in BATTLE, and by Caesar's desperate wish to change the future in both CONQUEST and BATTLE.

Simply put, the theory works like this: Every possible decision can go an indefinite number of ways. Say you wanted to pick up a ball—you might decide not to, after all, or you might pick it up slow, or fast, or even knock it away from yourself by accident...

If the universe is, indeed, infinite, then there exist parallel worlds in which all of those things did occur, as well as the one that you happened to experience in this worldline. Do you see? Each motion of a molecule or decision of a head of state changes the universe, but somewhere/when there is a universe where the action went the other way.

Remember, just before the Chronolgy, I promised a juggling act. This is it.

AN ALTERNATE EXPLANATION FOR THE CHRONOLOGY OF THE APES SERIES.

In one universe in which the space agency is called ANSA, a spacecraft with four astronauts is launched. It disappears and reappears, thanks to the magic of a space/time warp, in a future world—though not necessarily a future world of its own original universe. Either from its universe or one nearby (because of the similarities I must assume that) a rescue/search ship is launched, landing in the same possible future as the first. That universe holds a world that is doomed to nuclear destruction.

But when it dies, three escape and are thrown back—into a past world *not* that of the original Brent and Taylor. (Proof: Instead of ANSA the space agency is NASA. Certain dates do not gibe otherwise.) It is in this new dimensional branch that the events of ESCAPE, CONQUEST, and BATTLE all take place. Now, whether or not this world is the one that will someday die a nuclear death is not clear. But, granted those infinitely branching worldlines, surely Caesar might not be too daring to dream that he has steered his people in a path away from that war. Here we would echo Lawgiver from the final scenes of BATTLE, and take a little solace from one tiny bit in information, to wit: in ESCAPE Cornelius tells of human domination of apes, and how it lasted two hundred years before a gorilla named Aldo resisted... a rather startling contrast from what actually happened in the next two films! Now, did Cornelius come from a future that had a different past? Or did he merely, like many historians today, simply have distorted information? It's something to argue about.

(Just to boggle you more I'll add the theory that the Cornelius and Zira of ESCAPE weren't from the same world as PLANET and BENEATH, because in the first two *nothing* was known of human civilization—not even if it ever existed!)

"Curiouser and Curiouser!," to quote Lewis Carroll's famous Alice. The Apes series not as a circle in time, already a structure rare in the series format, but actually some mad, whirling, flashing spiral through forests of alternate timelines? There has to be proof, *somewhere!*

Maybe, just maybe, if I go back and read all the books carefully one more time...

