

Table of Contents

Acknowledgements | 7

Introduction: Images of Technoscience in the New Millennium | 11
Structure and Methodology: A Road Map | 17

The Conquest of Cool:

From American Counterculture to Global Dominance | 23

“We know it when we see it”: The (Nearly) Impossible Task of
Defining Cool | 24

Made in the USA? Cultural Origins of Cool | 27

Contemporary Cool: Directions, Trajectories, and Dead Ends | 31

What is Cool? A Summary | 34

The Formula for Cool: Technoscience, Information Aesthetics,
and the Rise of the Nerds | 41

**The American Information Society and
the Crisis of Scientific Legitimation** | 45

The Knowledge/ Information/ Post-Industrial/ Network Society:
A Critical Overview | 47

Science in the Information Society | 55

The Crisis of Scientific Legitimation | 62

Cool Science: (De-)Legitimizing Science in Popular Culture | 69

Nerd Alert: Science and the Popular | 73

Cultural Studies of Science | 74

Scientific Popularization, Popular Science, and Science in Public | 80

Science and/ in/ as Popular Culture: The Cool Approach | 85

**Cool Forensics and the Spectacle of Technoscience in
CSI: Crime Scene Investigation, *CSI: Miami*, and *CSI: NY*** | 91

Welcome to Las Vegas/ Miami/ New York: The *CSI* Formula | 93

Conservation vs. Innovation: Cool as Strategic Juxtaposition | 97

Cool S.ex.y I.ntelligent: *CSI*'s Scientist-Detectives | 102

The Spectacle of Science | 113

Lab Work: Cool and the Aporia of Information | 118

Recapitulating the Lab | 126

**Geek Cool and the Comedy of Science
in *The Big Bang Theory* | 129**

“It All Started With A Big Bang”: The Comedy of Science

in *The Big Bang Theory* | 131

Laughing At Science or Laughing With Science? Some Preliminary Remarks
on the Subversive Potential of (Situation) Comedy | 134

“...a working knowledge of the universe and everything it contains”:

Science, Geek Culture, and the Other | 141

Geek Cool: Nonconformity and the Revenge of the Nerds | 148

“Wanna See Something Cool?”: A Close Reading of the Geek in Action | 159

The Legacy of the Geek | 168

**Only The Cool Survive: The Science of Disaster
in Roland Emmerich’s *The Day After Tomorrow* | 171**

Disaster for the Masses: *The Day After Tomorrow* and Generic Tradition | 173

Preserving America and the Rest: Nation, Masculinity, and Science

in the American Disaster Movie | 183

Straddling the Ultimate Frontier: The Scientist as Hero

in the Post-2000 Disaster Movie | 195

When the Planet Cools Down: Sublime Disaster and

Technoscientific Salvation | 209

Conclusion, or: Scientia Ex Machina | 220

**From Nerds to iCons: Consumer Cool and the Rise of
the Scientist-Entrepreneur in *The Social Network* and *Jobs* | 223**

Personalities That Move the Age: Conventions and Innovations

in the Biopic Genre | 225

Technoscience, Entrepreneurship, and the American Dream:

The Cool Charm of the Self-Made Man | 243

No Respect for the Status Quo: The Cool Rebellion of the

Biopic Subject | 256

“How does somebody know what they want if they’ve never even seen it?”

Cool Capitalism and the Scientist-Entrepreneur | 263

A Tool for the Heart: The Legacy of Cool Consumer Technology | 279

Beyond the Formula: A Conclusion | 283

Context and Desiderata | 290

References | 297

Index | 333