



Starts 9:20pm



An evening of classic reality bending films in Northcliffe's beanbag cinema.
Come to one or both FREE screenings. Popcorn available.

DARK down under DOUBLE feature

Wed 19 May @ Northcliffe's cinema 7:00pm-11:30pm

Dark City is a 1998 film by Australian Director Alex Proyas, starring Rufus Sewell, Kiefer Sutherland, Jennifer Connelly, Richard O'Brien and William Hurt. It prepared audiences perfectly for the release of *The Matrix* in 1999, filmed in the streets of Sydney and starring Keanu Reeves. *Dark City* and *The Matrix* swept award categories and all-time favourites lists. Along with the prescient *Truman Show*, these films dramatise 'the simulation hypothesis' in novel ways.

ANCIENT ILLUSIONS

Plato's Cave Allegory

Socrates describes a group of people who have lived chained in a cave all their lives, facing a blank wall. The people watch shadows projected on the wall from objects passing in front of a fire behind them and give names to these shadows. The shadows are the prisoners' reality. Socrates explains how the philosopher is like a prisoner who is freed from the cave and comes to understand that the shadows on the wall are actually not reality at all.

The Butterfly Dream...

Chuang Tzu was a philosopher in ancient China, who, one night went to sleep and dreamed that he was a butterfly. When he awoke he realised that he had just been dreaming. But then Chuang Tzu asked himself the following question: "was I Chuang Tzu dreaming I was a butterfly or am I now really a butterfly dreaming that I am Chuang Tzu?"

THE ENLIGHTENMENT—Descarte's Deceiving Demon

In Plato's cave we aren't asked to think about who chained up who.

The cave is quite abstract. Almost 2000 years later, in the 17th Century Descarte added a new character to the story:

What if an all powerful demon controlled all our perceptions and decided to deceive us about everything? Perhaps the table you're looking at is really a cat. How would you tell? You could try petting it and see if it purrs. However the deceiving demon is all powerful and has control of your hearing and your sense of touch, so you can't trust the results of this test. Because such an all powerful demon is at least possible, Descarte says the only thing I can know for certain is "I am" or "I exist". Otherwise who is being deceived? This argument later because the famous 'I think therefore I am'.

The Simulation Hypothesis—Nick Bostrom and Others

Lurching forward to the computer age, various 'simulated' reality arguments have gained a lot of traction. Have you used a computer virtual reality headset? If these headsets become very advanced, how will you know if you are wearing one or not? What if a headset was placed on you at birth? If advanced civilisations decide to create virtual realities then many, many, people could end up living in these simulations. Perhaps more people than are living in real worlds. So goes the argument which *The Matrix* movie popularised.

DARK CITY (1998) and THE MATRIX (1999)

Suspicion of reality is nothing new. However these millennial films are brimming with paranoia, fear and fascinations which seems to match our times. Demons are haunting our Enlightenment project.

Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday 10am to 5pm • Thursday, Friday 10 am to 6pm