

## ABSTRACT

**THESIS:**

A Dramatistic Approach to the Singularity Movement

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The Singularity is a hypothetical moment in the not-so-distant future when machine intelligence will supplant human intelligence as the dominant force in the world. There is a growing movement of scientists, authors, and advocates who believe the Singularity is not just possible, but inevitable. There is maybe no more eloquent or influential argument for the Singularity than futurist Ray Kurzweil's 2005 book, *The Singularity is Near: When Humans Transcend Biology*. Kurzweil predicts a utopian future of advanced human/machine hybrid intelligence and radically extended life by the year 2045. This thesis applies Kenneth Burke's system of dramatism, specifically the pentad, to *The Singularity is Near* as well as a sample of technology articles from *The New York Times* and *The Wall Street Journal* to examine Kurzweil's motives and the way Singularity discourse "chains out" through other media. I will also draw on movement theory to examine the discourse of Singularity advocates to determine if Singularity discourse qualifies as a rhetorical movement.