



Marvelous - more than a thousand years in the future

Susan Cunningham, 2024

The Planet of the Apes TV series takes place when Colonel Alan Virton and Major Pete Burke land in California in 3085 AD. It is set apart from the classic movies by books, dogs and nuclear war.



Introduction

The Planet of the Apes TV series takes place when Colonel Alan Viridon and Major Pete Burke land in 3085 AD. It has no confirmed history, dogs are present, humans are verbal and sentient, and there is no evidence of a nuclear war or even a war with conventional weapons. A book is seen, purporting to show New York City in 2503 AD. The TV series is set in a feudal bureaucratic political system. For these reasons it is set apart from the classic movies and flies in the face of the movie canon.

Social distinction between apes and humans was minor in the TV series. Some humans achieved higher social standing (eg Tolar) and some had trades and skills that the apes valued (eg Martin), while some apes were little better than humans (eg Polar and his family).

In contrast, in Taylor's timeline (first 2 movies) in 3085 AD apes were only one third of the way from primitive barbarism to their 3978 AD development and the humans were feral and mute. The book seen in the TV series could not exist in Taylor's timeline. New York City had been destroyed before recorded history by a nuclear war and the political system was theocratic.

Also the TV series can't be in Caesar's timeline (1973 onwards) because Viridon and Burke (who launched in 1980) knew nothing about sentient verbal apes when they landed. Ape ascendancy had been initiated by the viral extinction of dogs. The book seen in the TV series could not exist in Caesar's timeline (last 3 movies). New York City had been destroyed in recorded history by a nuclear war and the political system was theocratic.

| | Caesar's timeline | TV series timeline | Taylor's timeline |
|-------------------------|---|---|--|
| Important dates | 1973 - 2003 | Launch 1980, land 3085AD | Launch 1972, land 3978AD |
| Nuclear war | Between 1991 to 2003 AD Forbidden City | San Fran was not nuked and is safe to inhabit. No Forbidden City. Forbidden Zone is inland/arid land. | About 2000 AD Forbidden City |
| Location | Los Angeles for Escape, prob NYC area for Conquest and Battle Isolated, no other towns. Compact location (3 days walking) | California coast. Location is expansive (10 -15 days riding). Heliograph network for long distance communications. Garrisons and multiple towns. Mining areas (Liberator and Tyrant). | NYC area, isolated by Forbidden Zone and no other towns Compact location (2 days riding) |
| Political system | Theocracy at the end | Feudal bureaucracy | Theocracy at the end |
| Religion | Lawgiver | Vague mention of 'gods of the sea'. | Lawgiver and Sacred Scrolls |
| Society | Simple, Apes and humans supposedly equal | Complex, apes dominant, with domesticated humans. Apes are stratified eg poor apes are tenant farmers, no riding horses. | Simple, Humans are viewed as wild animals. |
| Humans | Humans can talk, low level technology, farming. | Humans can talk and farm. Humans retain trades. | Mute and feral. |
| Ape technology | Low level technology, basic farming. | Low to mid. Apes do have basic surgery. Don't have the compass, windmill, pulley, knowledge of erosion. | Mid level technology such as blood transfusions, photography. |
| Weapons | Armoury is controlled. | Plenty of guns. | Plenty of guns and battle weapons. |
| Other | Dogs and cats extinct | Dogs still present Expansionist with new farming areas, mining settlements. | Dogs and cats extinct |

Table 1: Comparison of the three timelines, with similar pairs greyed for ease of identification.

Decision rules

Canon is that which was filmed, or can be credibly inferred from what was filmed.

Authorised novels are secondary canon where they do not contradict the filmed events.

Pre production and draft scripts are tertiary canon where they do not contradict the filmed events or the authorised novels.

All interpretations/conclusions re the TV series have to exist WITHIN the canon of the TV series, and either meet the canon or explain all deviations from the canon of the five classic movies.

- Planet of the Apes (1968)
- Beneath the Planet of the Apes (1970)
- Escape from the Planet of the Apes (1971)
- Conquest of the Planet of the Apes (1972)
- Battle for the Planet of the Apes (1973)

Simplifying assumptions

1. On board Chronometers are assumed correct for time of landing dates of 21 March 3085 for TV series and 25 November 3978 for the 1968 *Planet of the Apes* movie.

A technical malfunction on Brent's spaceship in *Beneath* led to a false Chronometer reading, stating the year was 3955. Year of the movie events is assumed to be 3978 / 3979 AD.

Events of the last three movies are assumed to have taken place *Escape 1973, Conquest 1991, and Battle 2003*, with the LawGiver prologue and epilogue in 2670 AD.

2. Spaceship commanded by Colonel Viridon is assumed to be equipped with a Faster Than Light (FTL) warp drive as per details here: <https://www.goingfaster.com/icarus/qviridonwarp.htm>

The reasons for this are threefold:

- The technical details of the spaceship, living facilities and the only access point as per the Going Faster page are convincing.
- At The Speed Of Light (ATSOL) space travel would require a 9 year round trip to travel to Alpha Centauri. This is at odds with what we know of Alan Viridon, who would not leave his wife and son for an extended period of time.
- Launched eight years after Taylor, Alan Viridon's spaceship is a far more advanced form than Taylor's. In the opening sequences of the TV series, we see that the Earth-time and spacecraft-time are the exact same. So Alan Viridon's ship left Earth on August 19, 1980 and arrived at or near Alpha Centauri on the very same day. That is a distance of over four light years in the space of a few hours.

3. In *Planet of the Apes* Cornelius told of his archaeological findings in the sea cave:

"It was at this level that I discovered traces of an early ape creature. A stage of primitive barbarism really, dating back some 1,300 years roughly.

It was at this level I discovered cutting tools and arrowheads of quartz and the fossilized bones of carnivorous gorillas.

But the artefacts lying here were found at this level, and date back 700 years earlier. That's the paradox. For the more ancient culture is the more advanced. Now, admittedly, many of these objects are unidentified. But clearly they were fashioned by beings with a knowledge of metallurgy. Indeed, the fact that many of these tools are unknown to us suggests a culture which in certain ways equals our own."

However in his testimony to the Commission of Inquiry in *Escape from the Planet of the Apes* Cornelius recited the story of ape ascendancy from the writings of ape history:

"It has been the language of our ancestors for nearly 2,000 years. As to its origins, who can be sure? The gorillas and orangutans of our community... believe that God created the ape in his own image.

Well, it began, uh, in our prehistory... with the plague that fell upon dogs. And cats. Hundreds and thousands of them died... and hundreds and thousands of them had to be destroyed... in order to prevent the spread of infection. - There were dog bonfires. - Yes. And by the time the plague was contained... man was without pets. Oh. Of course, for man, this was intolerable.

So humans took primitive apes as pets. Primitive and dumb... but still 20 times more intelligent than dogs or cats. Hmm. Correct. See, they were quartered in cages... but they lived and moved freely in human homes. They became responsive to human speech... and, in the course of less than two centuries... they progressed from performing mere tricks... to performing services. Nothing more or less than a well-trained sheepdog could do. Look, could a sheepdog cook or clean the house... or do the marketing for the groceries with a list from its mistress... or wait on tables?

Or, after three more centuries, turn the tables on their owners? How? They-They became alert to the concept of slavery. Mmm. And as their numbers grew, to slavery's antidote... which, of course, is unity. Well, at first, they began assembling in small groups. They learned the art of corporate and militant action. They learned to refuse. Oh, at first, they just, uh, grunted their refusal. But then, on an historic day which is commemorated by my species... and fully documented in the sacred scrolls there came Aldo. He did not grunt. He articulated. He spoke a word which had been spoken to him... oh, time without number by humans. He said... "No. "So that's how it all started."

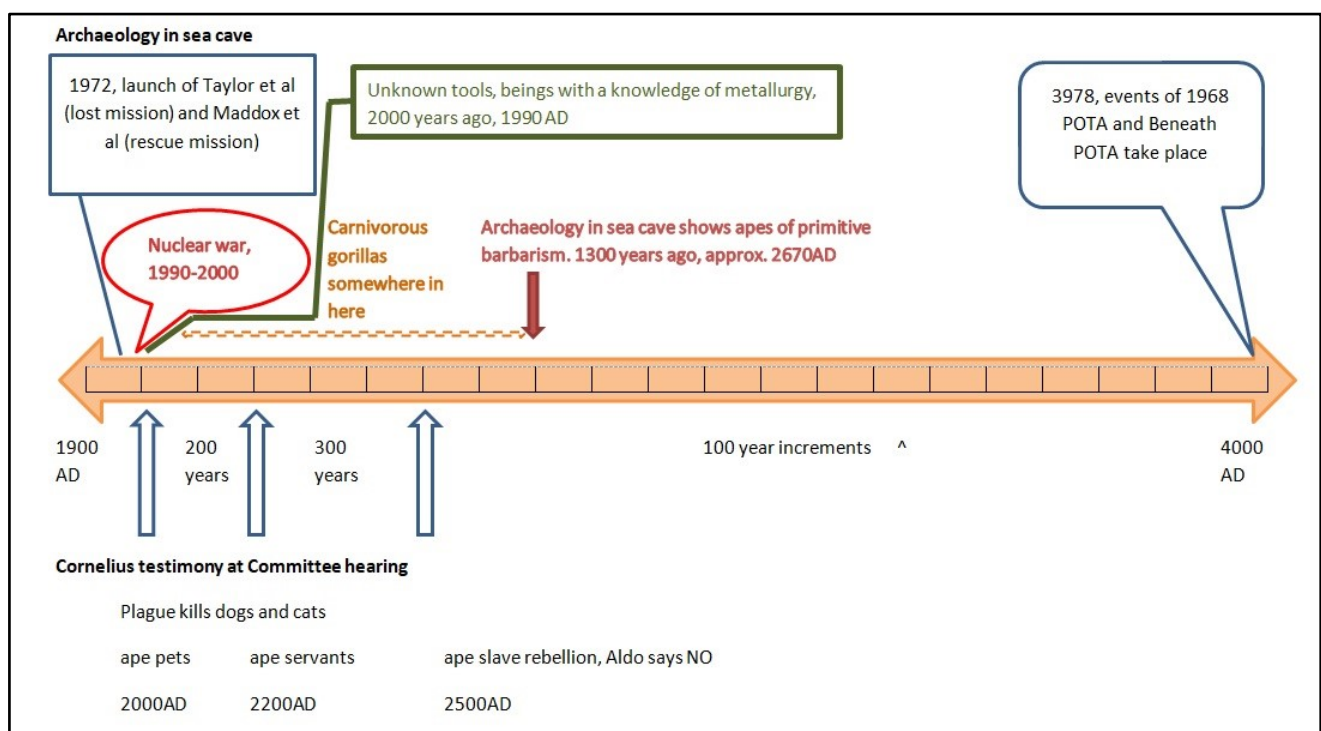


Diagram 1: Timeline comparison of the archaeological records from the sea cave with the written history of the ape ascendancy, 1900 AD to 4000 AD.

Since the two stories are mutually exclusive, one has to be wrong. Since the sea cave archaeology is supported by the evidence of the second movie, the sea cave archaeology is assumed to be correct.

The writings of ape history are likely to be retellings of slave histories from previous human civilisations. These would likely be preferred by the theocratic ape society as they imply divine assent for ape superiority (*"believe that God created the ape in his own image"*), and conceal brute force as the determining factor.

4. "New York" is assumed to mean New York City.

Background/knowledge base

Existing timelines

TV series

Virdon, Burke and Jones launched in August 1980 and landed in 3085 AD; Jones died in the landing. They were shocked by the presence of verbal sentient apes, hence launched from a pre-apes time.

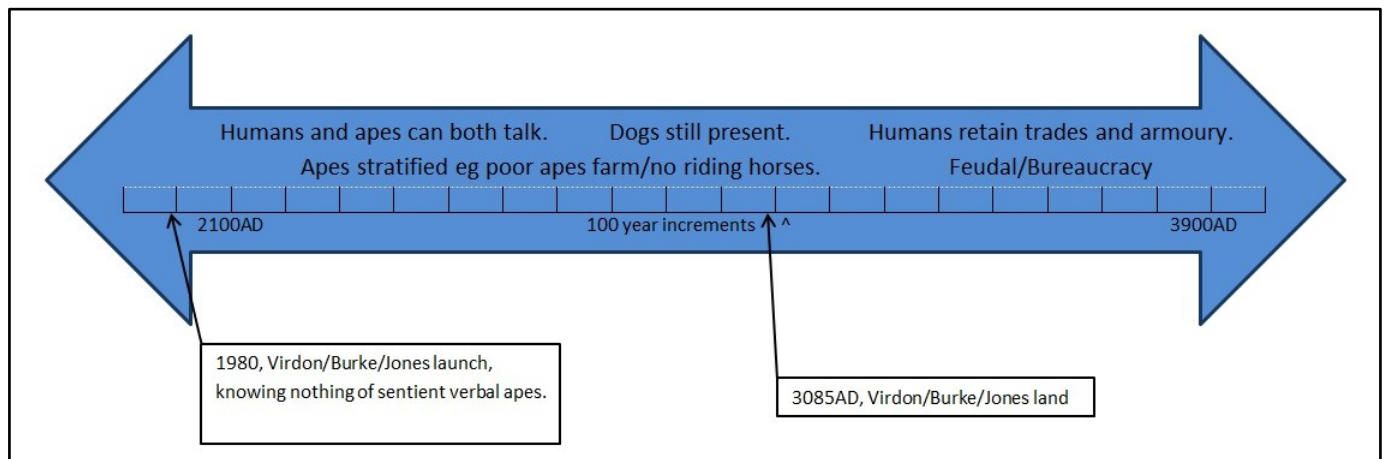


Diagram 2: Details of the timeline of the TV series, 1900 AD to 4000 AD. The society they find does not reflect the same history as the movies.

Movie series

As per the 1968 movie, Taylor et al launched in 14 January 1972.

About the year 2000 AD a nuclear war on Earth killed most of the human population and left the small number of surviving humans with stone-age technology. A small number of apes also survived, often in research facilities where the strong cages and secure confinement protected them from the blast, which serendipitously also helped release them from captivity. In the region around New York City this led to about 700 years of co-existence between humans living a stone-age life and wild apes. In this era, and with limited vegetation being available, the herbivorous gorillas resorted to carnivore diets where necessary. This has precedence as other obligate herbivores have resorted to carnivory in times of dietary distress.^{1,2}

About 2700 AD, apes of primitive barbarism³ emerged and began building the society that would exist in 3978 AD. In the process of building that society, a LawGiver office was created which laid out the Sacred Scrolls as principles for social order.

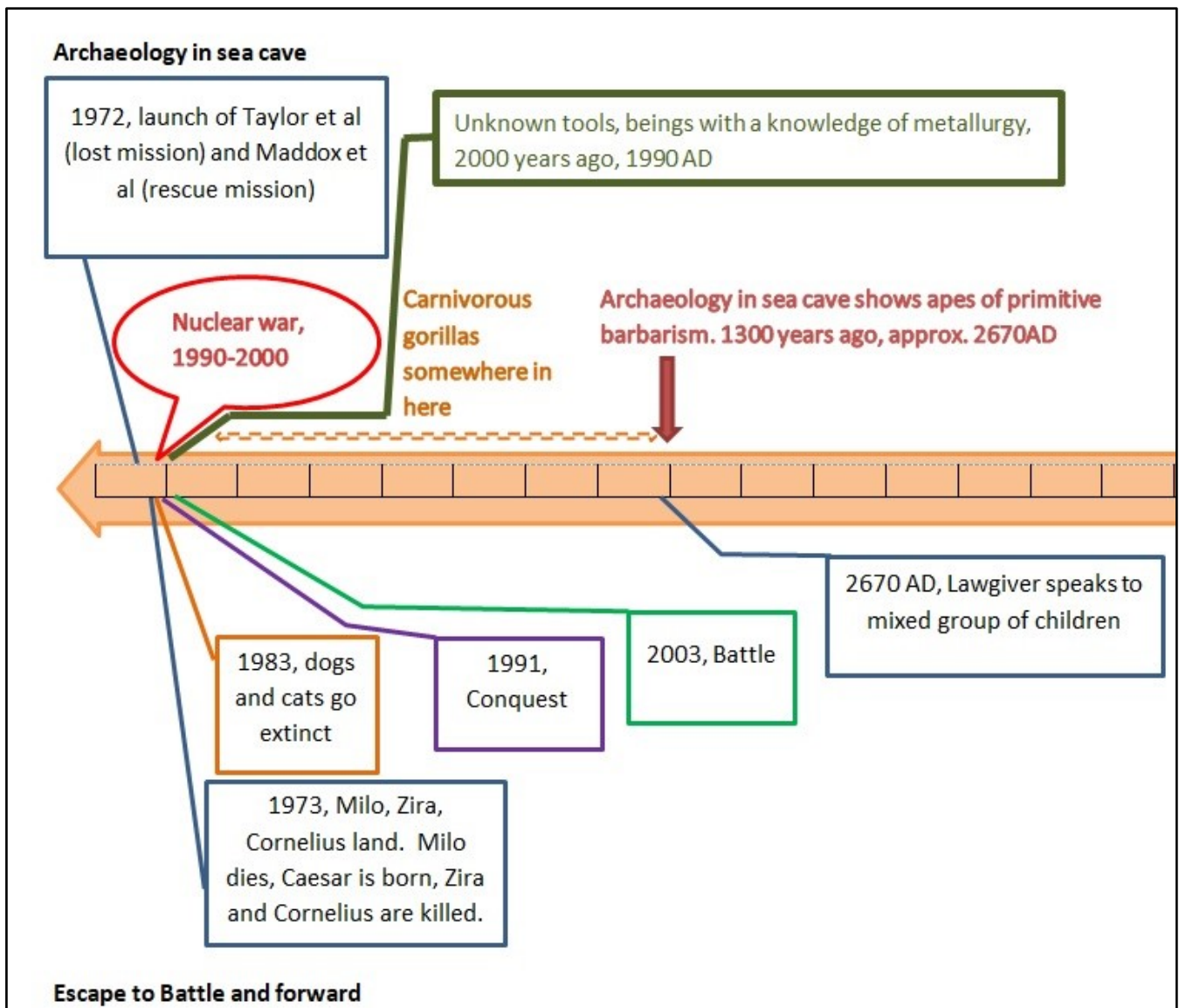
In 3978 and 3979 AD the events of the movies *Planet of the Apes* and *Beneath the Planet of the Apes* took place. This was a theocracy.

Milo, Zira and Cornelius travelled backward in time to 1973 where the events of *Escape from the Planet of the Apes* took place, including the birth of Caesar. In the following decades the events of *Conquest of the Planet of the Apes* and *Battle for the Planet of the Apes* took place. A LawGiver office was created which laid out the Sacred Scrolls and thus society became a theocracy.

¹ <https://thehorseaholic.com/the-forgotten-story-of-meat-eating-horses/>

² https://equipepper.com/2019/05/16/horses-on-the-hunt-do-horses-eat-meat/#google_vignette

³ without civilizing influences; uncivilized; primitive, without ceremony or ritual



People are subjected to collapsing buildings or to pieces of glass hurtling through the air at hundreds of miles per hour or to having themselves hurled into concrete walls — all of which are direct consequences of a blast wave's overpressure. Blast effects therefore cause a great many fatalities. Blast effects depend in part on where a weapon is detonated.

The most widespread damage to buildings occurs in an **air burst**, a detonation thousands of feet above the target. The blast wave from an air burst reflects off the ground, which enhances its destructive power. A **ground burst**, in contrast, digs a huge crater and pulverizes everything in the immediate vicinity, but its blast effects don't extend as far. Nuclear attacks on cities would probably employ air bursts, whereas ground bursts would be used on hardened military targets such as underground missile silos.

Destructive radii of 100-kiloton, 1-megaton, and 10-megaton weapons superimposed on a map of the New York City area. The destructive radius is defined as the distance within which blast overpressure exceeds 5 pounds per square inch, and it measures 2 miles, 4.4 miles, and 9.4 miles for the weapon yields shown. These values assume air-burst explosions at optimum altitudes over Central Park. (U.S. Office of Technology Assessment, The Effects of Nuclear War)

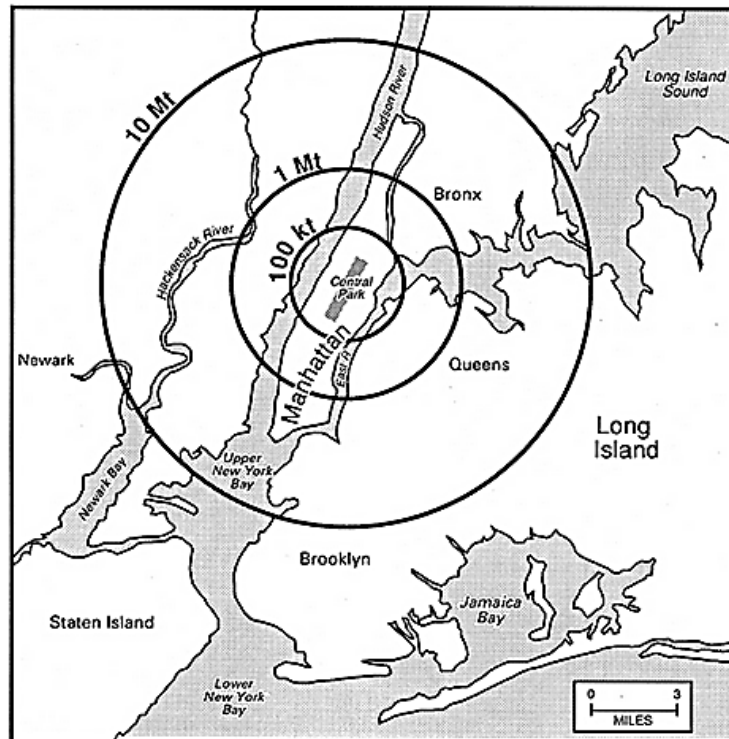


Illustration source: <https://thereader.mitpress.mit.edu/devastating-effects-of-nuclear-weapons-war/>

The blast wave is over in a minute or so, but the immediate destruction may not be. Fires started by the thermal flash or by blast effects still rage, and under some circumstances they may coalesce into a single gigantic blaze called a **firestorm** that can develop its own winds and thus cause the fire to spread. Hot gases rise from the firestorm, replaced by air rushing inward along the surface at hundreds of miles per hour. Winds and fire compound the blast damage, and the fire consumes enough oxygen to suffocate any remaining survivors.

The question of firestorms is important not only to the residents of a target area: Firestorms might also have significant long-term effects on the global climate. A large-scale nuclear war would pump huge quantities of chemicals and dust into the upper atmosphere. Soot from the fires of burning cities after a nuclear exchange would be injected high into the atmosphere. A 1983 study suggested that even a modest nuclear exchange — as few as 100 warheads — could trigger drastic global cooling as airborne soot blocked incoming sunlight. In its most extreme form, this **nuclear winter** hypothesis raised the possibility of extinction of the human species. In the world's "breadbasket" agricultural regions, the temperature could

remain below freezing for a year or more, and precipitation would drop by 90 percent. The effect on the world's food supply would be devastating.”⁴

In both *Beneath* and *Battle*, the city is clearly war damaged, whether by nuclear or conventional bombs. In *Beneath*, it has a deep crater and mounds of uplifted substrate, as well as impacted skyscrapers.



New York City as portrayed in *Beneath the Planet of the Apes*.

In *Battle* the buildings are shown as ‘melted’. The online novel *Beneath the Planet of the Apes* specifies⁵ on page 4:

“Virgil was solemn. “It looks like a storm at sea.” he murmured. “But solidified.””

“They clambered over surfaces that had been liquid for one brief but endless moment and then had become solid again. The city had not been blown apart—it had been melted, like a candle left out in the sun, but a sun a million times hotter and a million times closer.”

“Glass, masonry, steel—all had been dissolved by the incredible temperature at the center of the bomb. Everything seemed to have a smooth surface; everything seemed fused together. The buildings and structures had crumpled and flowed into one another; the city was a single piece of undifferentiated slag, a mountain of glass with cars, buses, and other objects too melted to identify, sticking out of it, a glacier of savagery and hatred.”



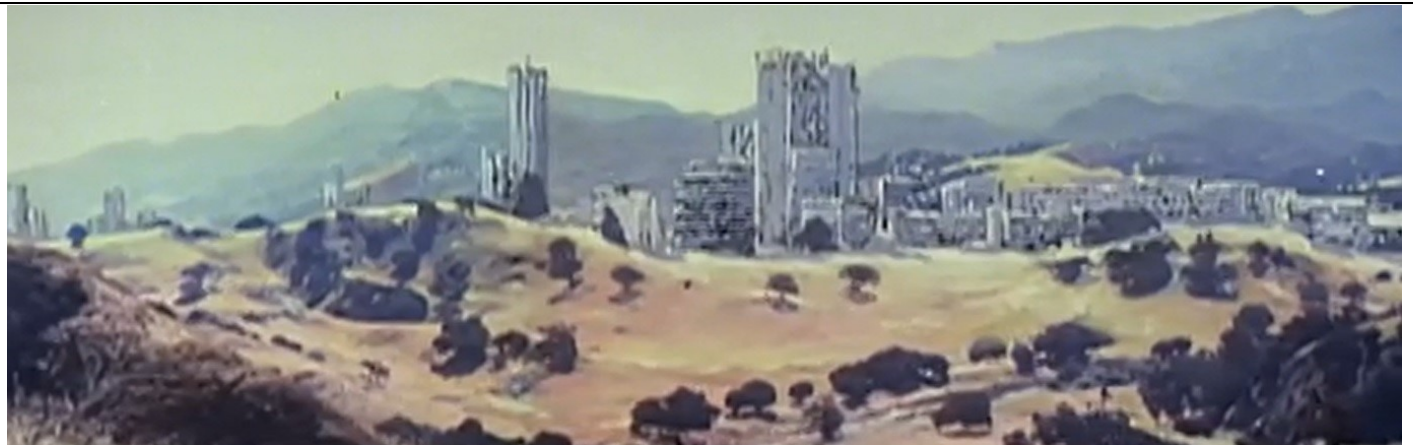
Approach to Forbidden City/New York City as portrayed in *Battle for the Planet of the Apes*.

⁴ <https://thereader.mitpress.mit.edu/devastating-effects-of-nuclear-weapons-war/>

⁵ <https://bookreadfree.com/530855/13034566>

Oakland and San Francisco in the TV series episodes *The Legacy* and *The Trap* respectively showed none of the signs of nuclear war or even a war with conventional weapons. Panes of glass are still visible in windows, skyscrapers are still standing, timber has not been burnt and even the typical ‘melted’ look of buildings shown in *Beneath* and *Battle* is not visible. There’s not even the appearance of a conventional war – no craters visible and the buildings at ground level still being mostly undamaged. The piles of rubble in the street indicate a slow deterioration due to neglect and collapse of upper stories.

The distant view of the greater San Francisco area in *The Legacy* does not have buildings with the typical ‘melted’ appearance. Indeed those buildings are still multi-storied with straight sides.



Greater San Francisco area seen from a distance, *The Legacy* TV episode.

New York City

Planet of the Apes and *Beneath the Planet of the Apes* established that the region around New York City had been destroyed by a nuclear war as per the sea cave archaeology. So in Taylor’s timeline New York City was destroyed by a nuclear war in about 2000 AD.

Escape from the Planet of the Apes took place on the west coast. At the end of that movie Armando took the orphaned baby with him to Florida.

The events of *Conquest of the Planet of the Apes* and *Battle for the Planet of the Apes* took place at a location which was never identified in the movies other than “North America”. While much of the footage was filmed on the west coast, there was nothing filmed (primary canon) to identify the events as having taken place on the west coast.

Referring to the Decision Rules above, a review of the secondary canon does not provide any clarity (<https://archive.org/details/planet-of-the-apes-paperbacks-movies/>, authorised novel adaptations of the movies).

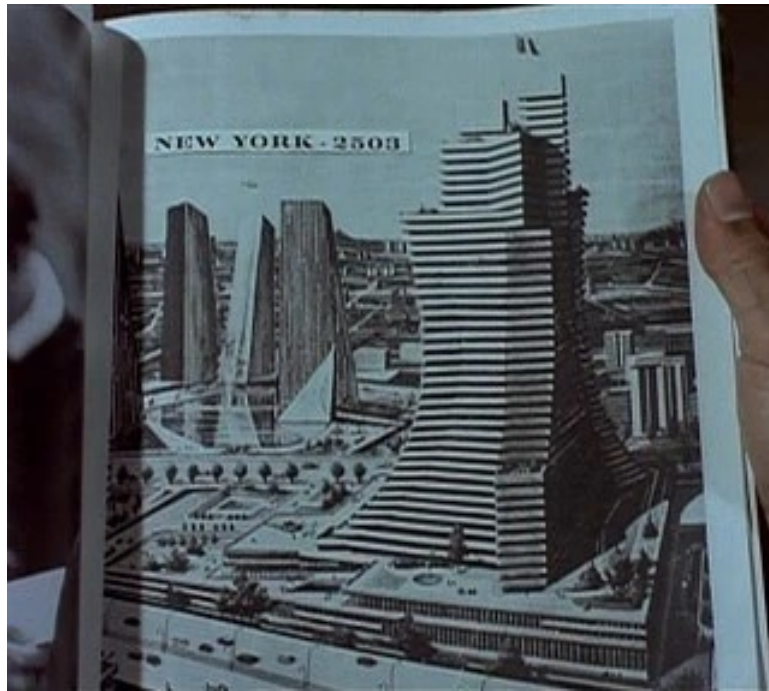
The first draft outline for *Battle POTA* (https://pota.goatley.com/scripts/pota_epic_treatment.pdf, tertiary canon) includes the following sentence:

Ape City is the same primitive community which developes into the more advanced city culture Taylor discovers. However, at this

So in Caesar’s timeline New York City had already been destroyed in a nuclear war before 2003.

Book

This one image in the pilot episode *Escape From Tomorrow* of the TV series shows, or claims to show, New York City in 2503AD in an old book. Is it a photo or an artist's prediction?



Judging by the reaction of the two astronauts who actually held the book in their hands, it was a photo. Virndon said

"This picture was taken 500 years after we left".

But the astronauts might also have not been thinking clearly: possibly concussed after the crash landing, and recently shot at by horse mounted gorillas.

Taylor's timeline included a nuclear war in about 2000 (Cornelius' archaeological evidence from the sea cave) which put all humans back to the stone-age (and rendered them mute as well). So it can't have been NYC 2503 in that timeline. Caesar's timeline also included a nuclear war pre-2003 which left NYC a wasteland, so it can't have been NYC 2503 in that timeline.

SO IT CAN NOT HAVE BEEN A PHOTO OF NYC 2503 IN EITHER OF THE MOVIE TIMELINES.

If it's an artist's rendition of a future scene from an earlier time, why would they choose the year 2503 AD? Why not caption it 2500?

2503 might be chosen if it were a significant anniversary year. Perhaps it was a 2003 publication, looking back at the past 500 years and looking forward to the next 500 years? The other photos shown in the book are certainly pre-2003. See two screen shots from *Escape From Tomorrow* on the following page.

1503 AD is an interesting year because it is the year that Seville was awarded exclusive rights to trade with the New World⁶ and sixteen million kilograms of silver and 185,000 kilograms of gold entered the port of Seville between 1503 and 1660. So it was an important date for trade between Old and New Worlds.

⁶ <https://www.historytoday.com/archive/casa-de-contratacion-established-seville>

1503 was undoubtedly an important year for New York City which is one of the most important centres of international trade in the world, home of the first Chamber of Commerce in the United States and home of the New York Stock Exchange, the largest stock exchange in the world.



Hence the book could easily be a New York City quincentenary publication in 2003, looking back at the previous 500 years and projecting forward to the next 500 years.

BUT THE BOOK CAN NOT HAVE BEEN PUBLISHED IN 2003 IN EITHER OF THE MOVIE TIMELINES.

Taylor's timeline included a nuclear war in about 2000 and Caesar's timeline also included a nuclear war pre-2003.

Regardless of whether it is a photo or an artist's rendition, the book cannot exist in the movie timelines.

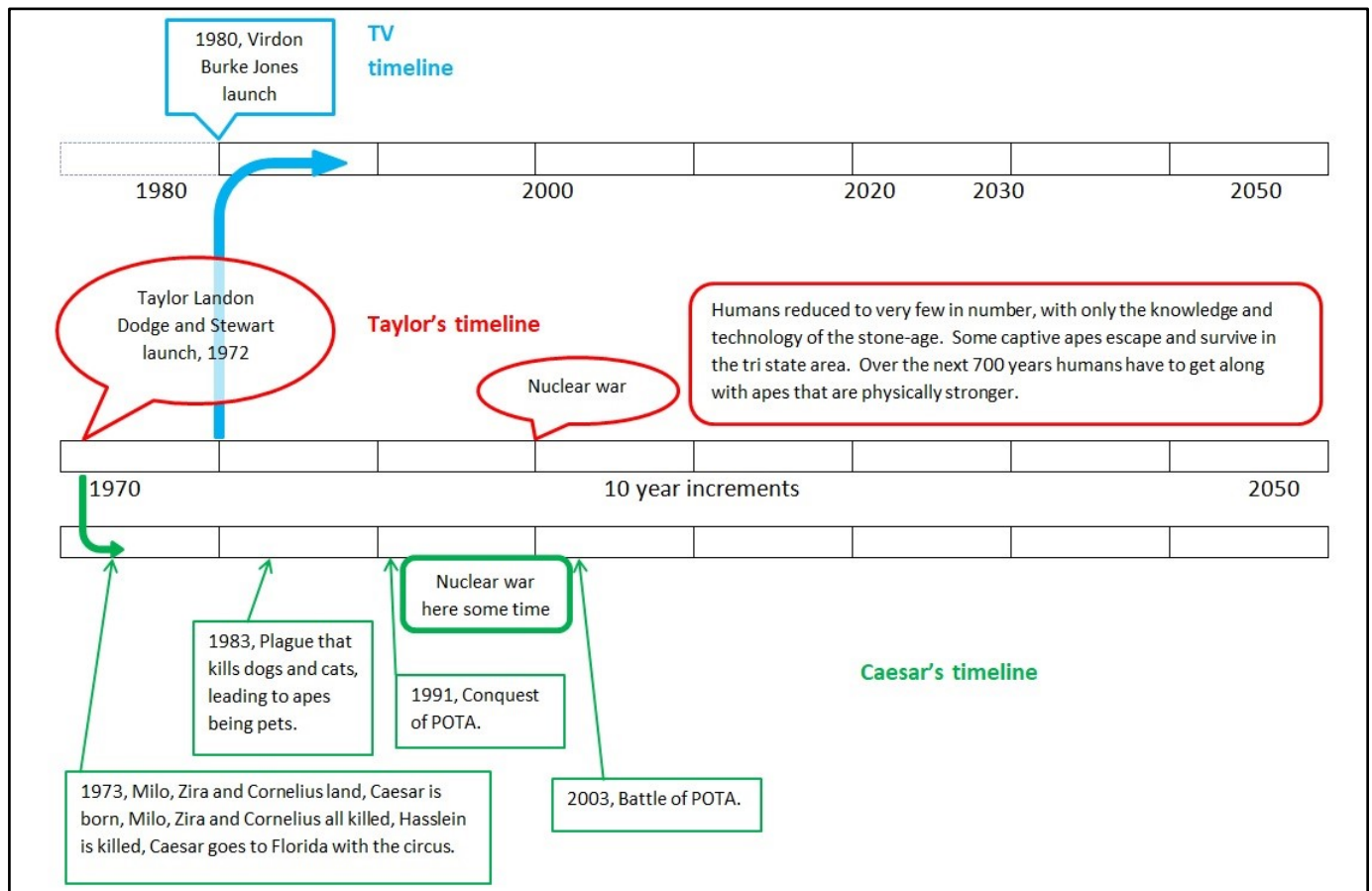


Diagram 4: Comparison of the early stages of all three timelines, 1970 AD to 2050 AD.

AUTHOR'S NOTE: In fact the image is architect Jean Faugeron's (1915-1983) rendition from 1966 of a 180 meter skyscraper planned to house the Ministry of National Education in Paris in 1975. This was brought to our attention on the FaceBook page <https://www.facebook.com/groups/potatvseriesfans> by Philippe Gindre on 5 April 2024. The plan was abandoned so the skyscraper was not built.

Philippe said "The production found this image somewhere, probably in the French magazine Paris Match, and decided that it would make a suitable prop for the scene, and it does. Back then, US productions recycled this way a lot of European material, as they knew it wouldn't be familiar to their audience. Note that the three massive buildings on the left were added along with the caption."



Jean Faugeron's (1915-1983) rendition from 1966 of a 180 meter skyscraper planned to house the Ministry of National Education in Paris in 1975.

Extinction of dogs and cats, and mammal reproduction rates

It is canon in Caesar's timeline, that in 1983 a virus wiped out all dogs and cats. This led to the uptake of monkeys and apes as pets which in turn lead to apes as slaves.

Dogs have a much greater reproductive rate than apes. Dogs reach breeding age much faster than apes and have more progeny than apes. Female dogs reach puberty between 6 months and two years of age, and can have 2 litters per year of about 6 pups in each. Female dogs can have up to 10 litters in their lifetime, a total of potentially 60 pups in 6 years. Female chimps reach puberty in their early teens and can have 1 young every 3-4 years, a total of 9 over her lifetime of about 40 years.

The presence of dogs, even in low numbers, in the TV series proves dogs were not wiped out by a virus. Hence the series does not take place in Caesar's timeline.

AUTHOR'S NOTE: The presence of dogs in low numbers, in contrast to the much higher numbers of apes, means that the dog reproductive rate is suppressed, which may indicate a virus.

Conclusions

Based on the canon of the TV series, the simplifying assumptions and the decision rules, it's apparent the TV series takes place in a different timeline from the five classic movies.

The primary reasons are

1. the presence of a book that cannot exist in either Taylor's or Caesar's timelines,
2. the presence of dogs which were extinct in Caesar's timeline and
3. the total lack of evidence of a nuclear war, which occurred in both Taylor's and Caesar's timelines.

Not only is there no evidence of a nuclear war, but the continuing skills base of the human population proves that humans were not reduced to the stone-age. Farming and fishing continued to be practiced as did traditional skills such as blacksmithing, horse handling, saddlery, carriage and harness making, and carpentry.

Humans did not become mute, even as apes were becoming verbal.

Other features of the TV series that separate it from the five classic movies are the lack of a distinct theocratic political system and the absence of any details of the history of human fall or ape ascendancy.

It's not clear if this is a timeline that branched off the original timeline after Taylor launched, or if the timeline branched off before Taylor launched. There is no mention of the missing earlier space missions (Taylor and Maddox) in the series which might be expected upon mention of astronauts from "ten years ago".

(ends)