

The Roosevelt Public Library

Television Series (Science Fiction)

by Alan Nafzger

From 2020 until 2030, it was the policy of the US government to license corporations to clone certain individuals. The corporations contracted with great minds of the decade and even collected DNA from deceased individuals and signing contracts with their estates.

The policy was changed when it became clear that the venture would fail. It turned out that none of the clones had the initiative (all they wanted to do was sit around and read) and many never developed (because of environmental factors – no hands-on mother or father-figure for example) the talent or skill of their DNA donor. Also, there was a great deal of discrimination holding the clones back, and the expense of a company minder, to accompany the clones everywhere they went, made the whole operation not economically feasible. The practice of cloning was abandoned as a failed social experiment. But, where to put the 55,009 living clones world-wide?

This is a story set in the 2080s. The global population is seriously decreased and society seems to have escaped the fate we frequently assign to it (another dark age) and everything is highly advanced. However, cloning is a technology that has fallen out of favor and the clones are warehoused.

Over 60 years into the future, the Roosevelt Hotel is converted into a public library (of sorts). It houses the clones of famous early 21st century artists, poets, writers, politicians, the smartest professors, famous Americans. It's all a "little creepy" so the government requires the clones to live in one central location (the Roosevelt) with a moderate amount of supervision. They are termed, "benevolent state property" but are allowed to pursue whatever interests/hobbies they have, so long as they are available to help patrons of the clone library. Criminals are labeled "malevolent state property."

Technologically, this has become possible. And in the story before a celebrity or famous person dies, they are cloned and or DNA is extracted from the teeth of the dead and buried. Until 2070, the clones study the experiences of their donor's lives and are quizzed and coached. However, the technology used to clone people wasn't perfect, which created imperfections - hurdles (obstacles) for the clone to overcome.

Taylor Swift
Kylie Jenner
Kanye West
Lionel Messi
Ed Sheeran
Cristiano Ronaldo
Neymar
Dr. Phil McGraw
Canelo Alvarez

Roger Federer
Howard Stern
Dwayne Johnson
Aaron Rodgers
LeBron James
Beyoncé Knowles
Ellen DeGeneres
Stephen Curry
Chris Hemsworth

Drake
Kim Kardashian West
Ryan Seacrest
Sean Combs
James Patterson
Robert Downey Jr.
Gordon Ramsay

The collective intelligence of 21st century America is housed at the Roosevelt Public Library and serves the public good, something like a public library or book store does today. People can go to the library can check out the clone of a famous person.

In the story, people will go to a library (actually something between a half-way house and a luxury hotel), and a patron can check out a celebrity like you do a book from a library today.

Each week, a Los Angelino in trouble, not necessarily at odds with the police or the government, comes to the library to gain the assistance of one of the clones. They might have personal problems... or have problems at work or with their family that need to be resolved. Checking out a person from the clone library is like renting a friend, life coach or an expert, whichever the patron needs.

I envision people checking out clones to visit their relatives in the hospital, cheering them up. Maybe they are on their deathbed and the clone comes to visit them and speak wisdom to them.

Men can use clones to persuade women, as a Cicero De Bergerac. A common of story line.

The clones can be hired out for birthday parties and celebrations.

Businessmen can use them as sounding boards, or they can be used as promotional gimmicks. There are 100s of scenarios to play out.

Sometimes, the patron (the person using the clone library) doesn't even have a problem to solve but just checks out a clone for the novelty of it. However, the clone insightfully notices a problem on the horizon and together with the patron, they move to solve the problem before it becomes too real.

Doctors can use them in tests. Lawyers can use them in mock trials. Professors also.

This TV series is for an hour time slot each week, and there can be several plots in each episode.

- A-List celebrities - the main problem some political, legal, or cultural problems.
- B-List celebrities – a subplot can center on love, art, or nostalgia.

Who would need a clone to check out and for what reason?

1. To solve a crime?
2. To stop a war?
3. To cure a disease?
4. Negotiate a business deal?
5. Pitch a film?
6. Teach a difficult/complicated lesson?

The draw (why they watch) for the audience each week can be who will appear as a guest. Business-wise, we are looking at targeting *Us Weekly* (312,089 newsstand copies sold each week). This is not counting subscriptions. *People*, 650,545. *Star Magazine* 207,138. The same consumers who purchase celebrity magazine will tune in to watch this series.

TELEVISION REFERENCES

I see this television series as a cross between *Love Boat* (1977–1987) and *Murder She Wrote* (1984–1996). Or possibly a soft version of *The Equalizer* (1985–1989).

FILM REFERENCES

Cloning is a viable idea in the audience's mind. Several profitable feature films have centered on cloning technology...

1. *Boys from Brazil* (1978)
2. *Replicas* (2018)
3. *Surrogates* (2009)
4. *Superman IV: The Quest for Peace* (1987)
5. *Impostor* (2001)
6. *Replicant* (2001)
7. *Jurassic Park* (1993)
8. *Blade Runner* (1982)

TWO "ROOSEVELT" BUILDINGS

This is 2080 and there will need to be two hotels, the old one is a public library and the other a new five-star hotel. The Roosevelt Public Library (7000 Hollywood Blvd), the building we are familiar with, has been taken over by the government to house the clones. Since 2070, it has fallen into less than glamorous circumstances.

Also, there is a new ultra-modern Roosevelt Hotel, built in 2030. Typically, the patron who checks out the clone is housed there but not always.

PRODUCTION OPTIONS

1. Hire guest actors, contemporary celebrities to portray themselves.
2. Hire look-alike actors, imitators, doublegangers, etc.
3. Use CGI to depict the historical figures. Currently, they are working on film starring James Dean.

Three Options on How the Series Handles History

- This can be a contemporary television show, depicting current personalities 60 years in the future.
- Or, we have the option of writing into the story, this was a secret CIA program from the Cold War. In that case, all the clones would have been from DNA collected from persons living in the Soviet Era. Roosevelt, Truman, even Willie Mays and Frank Robinson. Even Al Capone, Bugsy Siegel.
- Or, if the producers wanted an all of historical panorama for television. We could feature all the characters from George Washington, Thomas Edison, George S. Patton and John Kennedy.

GLOBAL ENTERPRISE

All the global markets have both celebrities and grand old hotels. There are hotels with celebrity and television appeal in every major city. Once successful, this series can be expanded to many markets. We can license this television series out to producers around the world. For example...

- New York – Waldorf Astoria
- Tokyo - Imperial Hotel
- London - The Savoy
- Berlin - Adlon Kempinski
- Moscow - Izmailovo
- Rome - Hotel de Russie
- Beijing - Wanda Vista

TWO PILOTS TO CHOSE FROM

#1 – Public Opinion

The pilot begins with a U.S. Senate candidate entering the Roosevelt Hotel in 2080. She is nervous and looking behind her; she fears that she is being followed. She needs a speechwriter. She enters... checks in at the desk.... and is given a room #. Inside the room is who? A writer, or politician. Scientist. Famous professor? It's **Barak Obama**. Demographics... This is the best way to build an audience! He will help the woman solve a murder.

#2 - Gallo Del Infierno

Three female animal rights advocates overhear a conversation in a hair salon about a famous fighting rooster named Gallo Del Infierno. They plot to rescue the rooster, but when the task proves too difficult, the women go to the library and check out the roughest clones they can find (**Steve Buscemi, Danny Trejo, and Texas Battle**). The three clones will help the woman rescue the rooster.

EACH EPISODE

Each week people go to the Roosevelt, which is in 2080, is a public library full of clones.

I believe with a successful pilot many celebrities will want to appear. How many times does an actor get to play themselves? The guests are checked out and help someone different each week. We would pitch a guest appearance on this series as a “vacation” and “a chance to portray themselves,” and “inject a bit of their real personality.”

This TV series should have a very long run; there is an endless supply of personalities to appear on the show.

The personalities (guest stars) portray clones of theirs.

Filmmakers visit the hotel looking to use the clones as actors in historical films.

A student has alienated his professors by thinking too progressively; he can't pass his doctoral examination without help and advice. He hires one of the clones to coach him.

A woman can't pay her rent, and she receives the help of a clone, Jeff Bezos.

A juvenile parole officer can use a clone, Danny Trejo, to teach wisdom to a group of rebellious kids.

A writer can't complete his novel without a muse, Meryl Streep.

Two clones, from different demographic groups, written into each story can increase the audience. For example, Barak Obama (West and East Coast) and Blake Shelton (Midwest and South) would appeal to the highest number of people. Contrasting celebrities work opposite each other. Urban and rural. Old and young. Dramatic and comedic. Appeal to everyone!!!

Life Inside the Roosevelt Library

- The clerk is an unsmiling “Russian passport inspector.” Very meticulous and methodical. She has an attention for detail. She is legalistic and the law-and-order type. The clones are all criminals... while they aren't she treats them this way.
- The concierge is an idealistic/dissident teenager, willing to break the rules and tell the bad guys to F-off! Each episode, she's portrayed as lazy, but midway through each episode, she begins to work hard only after being enlightened.
- The food is rationed and unflattering. Worse than any prison or school cafeteria food. The cafeteria ladies try, but the clones are out of fashion and the system simply doesn't provide.

- The closed and over-regulated economy inside the Roosevelt means that consumer goods from the outside are coveted by many clones. There is a healthy black market at work.
- The telephones and computers inside the Roosevelt are outdated, at least 20 years behind the technology outside.
- In the “official” shop in the library, the shelves are empty. Several *Beryozki* have sprung up in the rooms of clones. Only clones who have hard currency to spend can have cell phones, fresh fruit, and Kindles. All tolerated but illegal for clones.
- The more talented singer and musician clones’ songs are pirated on CD disks. They are not allowed, or must have special permission to distribute their art. No clone is allowed to profit from their “genetic” talents. So many of the artists perform underground inside the library. Many artists continue working clandestinely, painting, sculpting, writing, architecture, music-making, photography and filmmaking, under other non-artists names or pseudonyms.
- There is an underground theater, newspaper and even a hidden Xerox machine for *Samizdat* documents. The clones are oppressed but have an underground economy. It is very difficult, impossible, to break the creative spirit of the clones.
- The lack of consumer products inspires extraordinary resourcefulness among clones: television aerials made out of forks and coat-hangers, a bath-plug made out of a boot heel, a road sign recycled as a shovel.
- Right up to the very end of the series, we still encounter monocular “humans” non-clones from outside the library who are defenders of the library system for clones. They support what is happening at the Roosevelt, what they still believed, against all the evidence of their senses, to be a good public policy.
- There are pro-clone propaganda posters. Huge posters in the library celebrated the towering intellects of the LA mayor, CA governor and US president (the oppressors). The clones can’t vote, but are subjected to the propaganda. There are posters, and even TV commercials, pointing to the societal and individual problems they are collectively solving; and the achievements of whichever five-year circulations goals they were supposed to reach.
- Occasionally, almost randomly, the directors of the program come and award a clone with a medal. It’s invariably AOC, the first female President and the leader who took executive-action (eminent-domain) to house the clones as “public goods” and for the old hotels to be used for the public good, like libraries.
- Stationed at a desk on each floor of the library is a government employee. Always a female, she keeps an eye on clones, maintains order and is the person clones must speak to get soap, toilet paper, a bath plug, or to dial an outside phone call. Somehow, these characters are always icy to begin with and then crack to show an unexpected warmth that makes you wonder how loyal they are to the government.
- The concierge is the only driver for the clones and when a clone gets into her vehicle and they reach for the seat belt, "You don't need it" is the first thing the concierge says. She feels that it is a kind of derogatory statement about her competence as a driver to wear a seat belt.
- There are lectures on the official, in house, television channel on the “scientific” (they are all orphans and social programming hadn’t yet caught up with genetic

- technology, schools failed to educate them properly), and “unexplained” phenomena (ghost in the genes) that make clones untrustworthy. Everyone watches bootlegged programs from outside the library, but some clones document and debate the social control they are subjected too. One writer (clone) is penning something similar to Gulag Archipelago. Documents are being smuggled out.
- There is a saying among the clones, “Without papers you are nothing but a cockroach.” Friends help their friends secure trips outside the Roosevelt. Because clones are searched for contraband (anything bought without permission) when returning to “purchase” or “gift” papers are the most forged documents.
 - At least one Los Angelino has a business where clones pay him to check them out. And then the Angelino doesn’t put them to work but lets them free-lance or do what they want, unsupervised.

The Cast

While most of the attention will be on the show’s guest. There are regular supporting actors involved.

- The front desk CLERK gives each person who needs a clone, the options – who they can and can’t check out. She also foreshadows the weakness or flaw in each episode, things that will create obstacles. The clerk also outlines the profession and abilities of the clones, in case the viewer doesn’t know the guest/clone’s personality. The clerk is efficient! She’s robotic, you can even make her an android if you want; the show is set in 2080.
- The CONCIERGE is a bad employee, but each week she becomes enlightened and helps the clones in the end; she is their uber driver (however in a real jalopy), she is their research assistant (but she must borrow a computer or use her own personal phone). She symbolizes both the anger and hope of youth. The concierge is every clones sidekick and sounding board. This character’s trademark in each episode is that she curses out the bad guy. Her trademark in the show is that she always insults the antagonist. She’s “savage” and always says something without a filter. She’s at times more raw and public with her words than people are comfortable with, but this is why she’s remembered/adored by the audience.
- I would like to pay homage to the CAFETERIA LADIES everywhere and create a few jobs for character actors (sweet older ladies) in L.A. by creating a few characters. Many of us have been on some campus, or other, from the time we were in the 1st grade and even now I see professor emeritus eating in the cafeteria. The women that run the library’s cafeteria are always in a *stew* about government cutbacks. They feel for the clones and do their very best. One mature woman buys spices and other improvements with her own money. A second, older cafeteria worker brings spices from her own garden to liven up the bland meals. A third cook, some kid, is a dumpster diver or shop-lifter... but when asked where they got certain items, they respond, “Ralphs” or “Bristol Farms.” Regardless of how they find the spices, they are selfless.

- There must be a HANDLER, a Stasi-like person who keeps an eye on the clones to make certain they don't break any of the rules. This is a parole officer type, government bureaucrat, someone who was kicked off the police force. Someone who has the personality of Sue Sylvester in *Glee* or worse. This character is a Quixotic cop that needs to be a hero so badly they act foolishly. Or perhaps make the handler like Col. Klink from *Hogan's Heros*.
- The GUARD at the front door is a teddy bear of a man. He's well over seventy-years-old and lets most infractions go. He pretends to search the clones.
- The EXECUTIVE LIBRARIAN is always mentioned, but his/her office door is always shown closed. The shades are perpetually pulled closed. She/he might be dead for all we know. This person is supposed to exist but there have been cases where bureaucracies continue to function without leadership, sometimes for years. The employees of the library do what they want to. One, because the head librarian never answers the phone, and second, the employees have learned to call and fake a conversation that results in the librarian "allegedly" giving them instructions to do whatever the employee wants. In the last episode, you can open the office door and someone checks the voice mail... 829 messages. Or Cheech Marin is at the desk stoned out of his gourd.

Realism for Television

Realism for television may not be the norm for television; however, bad things happen, people aren't all created equally (clones aren't allowed to be the men and women their donors were) and so they face obstacles, both internal and external. This series can't avoid politics. Everything is political. So this series confronts health care, immigration, animal rights, income inequality, gun buybacks, workplace diversity, sports and water politics, etc. Both sides would be equally represented in theory. We live in turbulent times and TV should compliment that.

In conclusion...

Los Angeles has many problems that need solving. Some problems are societal, and some are individual. It is a comforting thought that, in the future, there might be such a public library where people can go to check out help.