

Moreover, mythological and technological discourses figure the body in analogous ways, their most salient similarity consisting of the simultaneous employment of strategies of magnification and strategies of minimization. Both mythological and technological bodies are inflated and attenuated, enhanced and otherized, at one and the same time. Mythology and fantasy have, since time immemorial, figured the body by recourse to these strategies. In one scenario, mythical and fantastic bodies are larger than life: they are idealized and amplified in the forms of mighty deities, giants, heroes and supermen. In the other scenario, mythical and fantastic bodies are smaller than life: they are dwarfed and rarefied in the guises of ghosts, phantoms, pixies and sprites. These two modalities are not binarily opposed, for the preternatural body may be at once powerful and invisible, decorporealized and overwhelming. Technology ideates the body according to analogous mechanisms of enhancement and reduction: it simultaneously empowers the physical being and curtails its materiality, consolidates its boundaries and opens it to alien incursions. Besides, mythology and technology are brought

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together by their common fascination with the image of the body as an aggregate of disparate – and by no means organically harmonized – elements. Mythology teems with figures fashioned precisely on the basis of a body's ability to merge with, invade or metamorphose into, other bodies. The contemporary part-body fostered by technology could be read as a descendant of the ancient shaman, the Dionysian reveller, the vampire, the werewolf. It thus bears traces, for all its novelty, of remote and ritual identities.

Cavallaro, D. (1970) *Dani Cavallaro, Cyberpunk and cyberculture: Science Fiction and the work of William Gibson, PhilPapers*. Available at: <https://philpapers.org/rec/CAVCMC> (Accessed: 03 March 2025).

The difference between cyborg and human

Cescartes dualism

Whether the body is the subject or the object, whether we can judge the difference between human and bionic life from the body structure

How to define human nature

What makes us unique is our memories or our voluntary responses to the outside world

Method 1: Speech test

Method 2: Structure drives machinery to respond to situations, and the difference between human and machinery is that the mind drives the body, rather than assembling organ modules in advance to respond to the task. Just like the tonsils, wisdom teeth do not play a critical role in general situation, and do not participate in the processing of events, while all mechanical settings are optimized or tratable.

Philip K. Dick, author of the famous novel "Do Androids Dream of Electric Sheep", asks that if memories can be implanted, is it still memories that make people unique?

On the most basic level, computers in my books are simply a metaphor for human memory. I'm interested in the how's and why's of memory, the ways it defines who and what we are, in how easily it's subject to revision. (Landon, 1992:156)

This is a major concern in Philip K. Dick's 'We Can Remember It For You Wholesale', and in *Total Recall*, the film based upon it. If we are anything, Dick seems to suggest, **we are our memories, but if these can be implanted what guarantee is there of our identity? Or, more existentially perhaps, always assuming identity and existence are separate phenomena, what guarantee is there of our existence?** The question returns us to Descartes. In *Total Recall*, despite the mutant Quarto's claim to the protagonist that 'a man is defined by his actions, not by his memories', there is a strong suggestion that human beings are not so easily persuaded of this. It is worth noting that the mutant is also, by definition, not human, and although he can therefore be viewed as a source of greater than ordinary wisdom, he might also be seen as necessarily lacking a *true* understanding of what it is to be human.

Dick, Philip K. (1972) *Do Androids Dream of Electric Sheep?* London: Granada.

Descartes writes:

if there were machines bearing images of our bodies, and capable of imitating our actions as far as it is morally possible, there would still remain two most certain tests whereby to know that they were not therefore really men. (1975:44)

2.The structure drives the machinery to respond to external conditions

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Source of the article Descartes, René (1975) *A Discourse on Method*. London: Dent.

McCarron, K. (1995) 'Corpses, animals, machines and mannequins: The body and cyberpunk', *Cyberspace/Cyberbodies/Cyberpunk: Cultures of Technological Embodiment*, pp. 261 - 274. doi:10.4135/9781446250198.n15.

Body and Mind

Blade Runner

In *Blade Runner* movies, the protagonist as an android and implanted memories that do not belong to him, but under the guidance of the plot, he actually thinks that he may be a real person

Maria pointed out that the meaning of people is shaped by their own behaviors, attitudes and choices based on the current concepts and environment, and she emphasized the circular triad. This theory seems to advocate individual choices and experience to shape individual behavior patterns.

Behavior, habit, Attitude (circular triad):
Behavior repetition leads to habits, and habits turn to attitudes

Westworld

However, in the TV series "Westworld", the androids will judge and react to various situations based on the program, for example, there is a scene where the maintenance man tells Maeve that she is an androids, at first Maeve does not believe it, and then the maintenance man takes the tablet and uses the code to calculate all the words Maeve will say, and when he and Maeve say the same words at the same time, Maeve is shocked.

There is also a scene in which the main character Dolores and Teddy try to escape from the park, and when they escape to the beach, all the audience think that they really become self-conscious. The engineer suddenly turned on the light to stop their actions, so I think the Behavior, habit, Attitude (circular triad) is not the meaning of human mind, because the behavior habits and attitudes can be trained through the iteration of data and code, just as the current AI has a rich training library to train their behavior habits and attitudes as well as the ability to cope with the environment and accumulate experience.

I think the uniqueness of human mind lies in randomness and subjectivity. The randomness of people with creativity and unpredictability. Under the same conditions, the same person may make different choices, although their own conditions, habits and experience will affect the probability, but the observation result will not be unique, and androids or AI although there is a certain randomness, for example, the protagonist in Westworld, her movement trajectory in the park may change with a small probability, but this is all programmed. It's not his subjective control, but I think she was able to solve the maze because the designer left a back door. Therefore, I believe that human mind is superior to mechanical thinking, because the uncertainty of thinking allows people to react to the outside world independently. The mind is outside the framework of data manufacturing.

McCarron also argues that in the cyberpunk world, humans are superior to machines and in a better position. Because maybe a mechanical or bionic man might have a mind, but a man is the mind itself.

Maria mentioned that the concept of life has been reshaped, and the modification and creation of life is no longer natural, but artificial.

This way of shaping life through science and technology has reshaped the concept of life, and people are excited, anxious and afraid of the power beyond nature and human relations.

Will the Mind be affected by the body?

According to Maria Goicoechea, the cyborg symbolizes the corrupt of human beings, and the spirit will be affected by the body, because the transformation of the body by technology will cause the spirit to be banished or controlled by a larger neural network.

She believes that cyborgs or pure robots are the products of posthumans, because the changes in the body have broken through the limitations of the original body and the body has been colonized by technology.

JENNY TURNER also point out the correlation between cyborg and post humanists in Travels in cyber-reality (page 6).

She mentioned that medical technology has replaced some human organs and joints. Human beings are not pure natural life bodies. Human boundaries like appearance and gender can be reshaped through surgery and technology.

Body revolution

empowerment

Body colonization

disempowerment

Projecting self (subculture)

The savage aesthetics of voluntarism

Break the body barrier

Commodification of the body, capital

Irreversible transformation

In Neuromancer, the author mentions body modification as a form of empowerment, creating self (female characters), and retrieving self (male characters).

Projecting self (subculture)
The savage aesthetics of voluntarism
Break the body barrier

In Gibson's book Johnny Mnemonic, there is a 15-year-old who had his face altered, had his canine teeth implanted in his mouth, and had colorful scars tattooed on his face. Maybe it's a way of expressing personality, exercising control over body. However, when his mind is immature, it is easy to cause irreversible damage to himself.

Maria's assessment of this is a kind of voluntary barbaric aesthetics, to express the spirit of rebellion and resistance.

Subcultures are related to cyberpunk culture: Maria states that the subculture and cyberpunk culture have a lot in common, both overcoming the barriers of the original body.

Barriers and boundaries are significant element that's been explored repeatedly in cyberpunk works, and there're all about the body, the mind. For example, in the animated Cyberpunk: Edgerunners, the main character and other modifieds face the risk of developing cyberpsychosis due to excessive body modifications. Within this worldview, they struggle on the edge of sobriety and collapse.

Maria point out a deeper spiritual aspect of cyborg: **impurity and excessive purity**

Frankenstein - impure

Schismatrix Plus(1996) - Bruce Sterling: The Body Modification of the prostitute
Power and capital modify the body only to commercialize people for entertainment, and this excessive purity of the body is a mockery of the institutional and spiritual degradation. It reflects the disempowerment of ordinary people

Terrence Whalen also comments on this in The Future of a Commodity: Notes Toward a Critique of Cyberpunk and the Information Age, stating that this is an era in which humans are turned into commodities.

Goicoechea, M. (2008) 'The posthuman ethos in cyberpunk science fiction', *CLCWeb: Comparative Literature and Culture*, 10(4). doi:10.7771/1481-4374.1398.

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the mechanical. In the 'face' of increasing mechanization, cyberpunk's Cartesian privileging of mind allows its readers to reassert their supremacy over the machine. While Turner argues that human beings both have bodies and are bodies, cyberpunk narratives suggest that machines may have minds, but human beings are minds.

Excepting Piency's work, cyberpunk's relationship to the body is hostile, twice over. Philosophically, the body is trivialized in order to privilege mind and, culturally, the Corporation is subject to a series of raids accomplished by individuals or hastily assembled gangs of criminals. Despite cyberpunk's reliance on and fascination with technology, the genre is deeply conservative and, anti-technology, implacably hostile to any further erosion between the human and

McCarron argues that Cardier's theory demonstrates the superiority of man over machine.

McCarron, K. (1995) 'Corpses, animals, machines and mannequins: The body and cyberpunk', *Cyberspace/Cyberbodies/Cyberpunk: Cultures of Technological Embodiment*, pp. 261 - 274. doi:10.4135/9781446250198.n15.

Goicoechea, M. (2008) 'The posthuman ethos in cyberpunk science fiction', *CLCWeb: Comparative Literature and Culture*, 10(4). doi:10.7771/1481-4374.1398.

and all-powerful artificial intelligences. Facing this image of omnipotence, **the cyborg also symbolizes the degradation of the human, man turned into semi-robot by man, the image of bondage with neither soul nor will.** The technological invasion of the body is one of the main themes of Gibson's

Goicoechea, M. (2008) 'The posthuman ethos in cyberpunk science fiction', *CLCWeb: Comparative Literature and Culture*, 10(4). doi:10.7771/1481-4374.1398.

Turner, J. (1995) 'Travels in cyber reality', *The Guardian*, 18 March, pp. 28 - 28.

The "New" Romancers

best, I think. Little, hopeless, wondering men amid vast, unknown, blind machines that started three million years before—and just never know how to stop. They are dead—and can't die and be still. (Silverberg, 60–61).

While "Twilight" cannot be dismissed as naively optimistic, it does conclude with a solution to the problem of species burnout: Earth will be inherited by a new entity, a "curious machine." So ultimately, John Campbell's story does—like other hard science fiction—emphasize technology's instrumentality, for good or ill, to change the world.

Gibson's cyberpunk fiction, by contrast, turns from technology's impact on human destiny to examine at closer range its power to gratify human desire. In *Neuromancer*, technology supplies dysphoric Case with his needed highs—his drugs, his euphoric contacts with the matrix. Gibson emphasizes drug-heightened consciousness, surgical transformation, prosthetic devices—technological interventions that palliate or conceal some perceived or real defect in the self or in the soul. For a price, and with minimal inconvenience and risk, Gibson's characters can easily replace that diseased pancreas, that mutilated arm. They can and do change the shape and color of their eyes. Gibson's female characters often use high technology to create a new image or an alternative self (the lens implants of Molly Millions and Rikki Wildside; the AI afterlife that Marie-France Tessier-Ashpool fashions for herself). Gibson's men often use technology to recover parts of a lost self: Case's psychological dependence on union with the matrix in *Neuromancer*; Automatic Jack's myoelectric arm in "Burning Chrome."

Jack's prosthesis is emphasized in "Burning Chrome" as the visible sign of the wounded humanity also revealed by his inarticulate but generous concern for Rikki. The muted but distinct undercurrent of elegy in Gibson's treatment of prosthetic body parts is unlike the treatment of prostheses by the earlier hard SF writers Gibson seems to be self-consciously revising here. Manny O'Kelly's prosthetic forearm in Heinlein's *The Moon Is a Harsh Mistress* (1966), for instance, implies nothing about some inner mutilation or vulnerability; it is emphasized only as tangible evidence of Manny's bloodied-but-unbowed survivorship. Indeed, in *Futurological Congress* (1971) medically trained Stanislaw Lem parodies the casual introduction of plucky prosthesis wearers into so many hard science fiction plot lines. Lem's time-traveling satiric

Slusser, G.E. and Shippey, T. (1995) *Fiction 2000: Cyberpunk and the future of narrative*. Athens, Georgia: The University of Georgia Press.

https://books.google.co.uk/books?hl=zh-CN&lr=&id=JOa_XhDNLMC&oi=fnd&pg=PA1971&dq=cyberpunk+academic+pape&ots=SY2-KdJeH&sig=OVd2cTyeNV9mu3TRY6lciJSYUqM#v=onepage&q=cyberpunk%20academic%20paper&f=false

ogy") in "Johnny Mnemonic": "He regarded us with his one eye and slowly extruded a thick length of grayish tongue, licking huge canines. I wondered how they wrote off tooth-bud transplants from Dobermans as low technology. Immunosuppressives don't exactly grow on trees. ... He might have been fifteen, but the fangs and a bright mosaic of scars combined with the gaping socket to present a mask of total bestiality. It had taken time and a certain kind of creativity to assemble that face, and his posture told me he enjoyed living behind it" (Gibson, "Johnny Mnemonic" 118).

Goicoechea, M. (2008) 'The posthuman ethos in cyberpunk science fiction', *CLCWeb: Comparative Literature and Culture*, 10(4). doi:10.7771/1481-4374.1398.

turned into a fetish, a lethal weapon. **The cyborg is that character that every one makes to measure, in this vision of the future that is already the present, in which the body no longer is a physical barrier to be respected, but one out of the many that are daily crossed and manipulated, by oneself or others. That is why other body modifications (tattoos, scarification, piercings) are so intimately connected to cyberculture.**

Goicoechea, M. (2008) 'The posthuman ethos in cyberpunk science fiction', *CLCWeb: Comparative Literature and Culture*, 10(4). doi:10.7771/1481-4374.1398.

At the thematic level as well, Gibson's information-driven future arises less from the wild imaginings of the post-industrialists than from the harsher tendencies and contradictions of contemporary life. These tendencies also play a part in Fred Jameson's work on postmodernism, which is characterized not only by an appreciation of the many manifestations of a new cultural logic, but also by its grasp of the contemporary mode of production as theorized in Ernest Mandel's *Late Capitalism*. In this regard, however, it is important to understand the difference between the cultural logic of postmodernism and the economic logic of late capitalism. According to Mandel,

"The logic of late capitalism is...necessarily to convert idle capital into service capital and simultaneously to replace service capital with productive capital, in other words, services with commodities: transportation services with private cars; theatre and film services with private television sets; tomorrow, television programmes and educational instruction with video-cassettes" (406; italics in original). In our case this logic suggests that intellectual labor will be increasingly alienated and that information production, storage, and distribution will be increasingly rationalized, with profound consequences on the type and availability of social knowledge in general. Given these distasteful prospects for the future, it is easier to understand why *Neuromancer's* ostensibly post-industrial characters remain under the spell of a multinational consumerism heralded by an endless array of gadgets. From designer drugs to biomedical implants to amnesic prostitutes called meat puppets, this is a world which relentlessly turns people into things.

The fact that information fails to become an object of direct consumption leads to a more important problem concerning the precise utility or use-value of information to society as a whole. In his preface to *Mirrorshades*, Bruce Sterling offers "the street finds its own uses for things" as a sort of slogan for the subversive power of cyberpunk (xii). The line, taken from

Whalen, T. (1992) *The future of a commodity. notes toward a critique of cyberpunk and the information age*. Oakland, California: University of California Press.