Thirty-six years after William Gibson published *Neuromancer* and Gardner Dozois sealed the label in place in his now-famous piece for the *Washington Post* ("Science Fiction in the Eighties," 30 Dec. 1984), not only is cyberpunk still with us—arguably, it has become us. Or we have become it. The acknowledgement of this reality, that the world we now inhabit has become a doppelganger of the neon-lit, arcologized futures prefigured in classic cyberpunk fiction, has become a basic requirement for any meaningful discussion of anything cyberpunk—basic enough that the editors of *The Routledge Companion to Cyberpunk Culture* made it into the foundation of the critical edifice they have erected in this book. "Cyberpunk is *everywhere*" (1), they state in their brief introductory essay, and, indeed, this acknowledgement becomes the operating principle behind the "Cyberpunk Culture" part of the title. Channeling Thomas Foster's 2005 book *Souls of Cyberfolk*, they write: "Cyberpunk, a term first used as a literary concept to name a narrow branch of SF, has become 'a cultural formation [which is] a historical articulation of textual practices" (xv) that now shapes the way we see our place in the world, and this *Companion* aims to track cyberpunk's diversity and far-reaching influence. (2)

Those readers who, upon reading the above, feel apprehensive that this book might give short shrift to the writers and texts of the original Movement, need not fear; there's something for everyone in this *Companion*. There's a lot, in fact. Subdivided into three interconnected sections, the book features a total of 49 articles (50 if we include the introductory essay), which cover a vast range of topics: role-playing games, fashion, and photography, for example; close textual readings of several cyberpunk/post-cyberpunk texts in multiple media and platforms; numerous fields of literary theory; and the experience of cyberpunk in a number of non-English speaking countries.

The first section, *Cultural Texts*, is also the largest, comprising 29 essays. Taken together, they constitute a sustained effort to trace out the origins, emergence, zenith, and legacy of the original cyberpunk impulse and of the Movement initiated by the "*Mirrorshades* Collective," as Graham Murphy's essay calls the group of writers that Bruce Sterling assembled for the eponymous 1986 collection. Nor are the tributaries of cyberpunk ignored: there are essays on steampunk, bio-punk, and non-sf cyberpunk. And because the texts that influenced the writers of the Movement continued to express that influence throughout cyberpunk's flashpoint years and beyond, "Cultural Texts" does a thorough job of exploring the life of cyberpunk in all platforms, media, and art forms—comics, film and anime, television, video games, tabletop role-playing games, music, and so on. Thus, the long and fruitful story of the Movement reaches out of the 1980s and into the 1990s before moving into the twenty-first century, all the way to the latter-day post-cyberpunk cultural milieu we inhabit in our present.

Interspersed at regular intervals with the essays are a number of case studies, each presenting a close reading of an important cyberpunk text. The choice of texts is a welcome one: the editors chose to avoid returning to the classic stories of cyberpunk, rightly trusting that the ample reservoir of previous critical writing will provide plenty of context and analysis for such mainstays as *Neuromancer*, *Islands in the Net*, *Blade Runner*, and *Transmetropolitan*. Instead, they focused their writers' attention on less thoroughly explored but nevertheless important texts: among others, Sterling's *Schismatrix Plus*, Howard Chaykin's *American Flagg*, Pat Cadigan's *Synners*, Kathryn Bigelow's *Strange Days*, and Janelle Monáe's *Dirty Computer*. These case studies are enlightening: they expand the envelope of cyberpunk's significance at the same time as they provide fresh new perspectives on a history often worn threadbare by repeated focus on the same texts. Also, their positioning within the book is designed to dovetail with the progress of the whole section, so as to clarify and deepen the analysis in the general-purpose essays. For example, Rich Calvin's case study on *Synners* immediately follows Lisa Yaszek's essay on feminist cyberpunk, expanding in the close reading the study of Cadigan's place in the Movement that Yaszek had begun in the overview. Furthermore, because Yaszek's piece culminates the handful of essays that discuss the original Movement, contextualizing the import of feminist cyberpunk during and beyond the early days, the case study on *Synners* also caps the whole mini-section, using Cadigan's novel as an exemplar and milestone of first-wave cyberpunk (tellingly, the essay immediately following the case study is Christopher Kilgore's "Post-Cyberpunk"). A similar relationship obtains between other case studies and their companion essays.

The second—and second largest—section, *Cultural Theory*, is precisely what the title indicates: an overview of theoretical approaches toward cyberpunk, with particular emphasis placed on those approaches that problematize its legacy. Using as a starting point the "centrality of identity in this human-to-posthuman movement" (2), the editors have championed essays analyzing

> the adoption and subversion of cyberpunk by groups interrogating the future of identity from feminist, queer, Indigenous, and Afrofuturist perspectives, as well as broader cultural interrogations of (sur)veillance and cultural activism, all of which are explored here alongside the political interventions made by cyberpunk media into academic debates surrounding class, ecology, and empire. (2)

All such perspectives are indeed explored in this section, which alternates pieces on more standard cyberpunk theory—simulations and simulacra, for example, or Gothicism—with essays that approach the field at steeper angles: besides those already mentioned, we find essays on animality, cyborg feminism, surveillance society, and more. For this reviewer, who doesn't specialize in cultural and critical theory, the impact of this *Cultural Theory* section has been considerable; it has provided unimagined, often startling insights into the significance of cyberpunk in the sociopolitical life of the industrialized west.

It's not only the life of the industrialized west, however, and not even of the west's English-speaking parts alone. In keeping with the boundary-free futures it adumbrated, Cyberpunk has spread further than the culture and language of its creators, and has impacted more lives than we might have imagined only a few years ago. This is the reason for the existence of *Cultural Locales*, the third section of this *Companion*. CL takes us on a tour of six countries/regions: Latin America, Cuba, India, France and Quebec, Japan, and Germany. All but one of these essays are guides into the cyberpunk experience of their specific country/region, and all are full of information that, unless one is directly conversant with the specific milieus, will provide a wealth of insights, probably plenty of surprises, and much food for thought. This writer found the pieces on Cuba and India particularly fascinating. The one essay that doesn't exactly take us to an actual place is Brian Ruh's "Japan as Cyberpunk Exoticism"; as the title indicates, Ruh walks us not through Japan as it is or as it writes cyberpunk, but through Japan as cyberpunk writes it: the Chiba City gestalt turned into the thumbnail image of a nation entire, a hypertechnological Gothic folly inhabited by the fantasies of the west, dreamlike or nightmarish as they might prove to be in the event. It is, once again, a fascinating, compelling read.

In one respect, books like this have to fight a losing battle: by their very nature, they have to aim for both thoroughness *and* detail, and those are hard—if not impossible—goals to achieve. Inevitably, readers will find some lacunae in the coverage, or some perspective they wish had been studied. However, even if one were inclined toward glass-half-empty reviews, focused more on what a book like this had to leave out than on what it did include, still it would take a special effort of will to declare oneself dissatisfied in this instance. *The Routledge Companion to Cyberpunk Culture* is as thorough and careful a study of worldwide cyberpunk as we could have hoped it would be. The writing and the bibliographical apparatus are both of high quality, and the enthusiasm of the writers for their topics matches their professionalism. Most importantly, this is a book one can *argue with*. This reviewer found himself disagreeing with a number of theses in the book, sometimes out loud, and that's exactly how it should be. Every companion volume is as much a spur toward conversation and argument as it is a compass reading in the field it tackles, and in that respect as in many others, this *Companion* represents a remarkable achievement. The print version of the book, an elegant hardcover, comes in at a hefty $245, but it should be noted that the eBook version is far more affordable at $46.76.

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