

C:\CYBERPUNK/filez

It occurred to me while I was lurking about the forums of two popular Cyberpunk websites, I say popular but that's hardly the case, let's face it, Cyberpunk is subculture and the discussion forums are even less and I'm going to tell you why.

This is what occurred to me: There are no Cyberpunks, it's only a state of mind and it loosely clings to that level of existence so it's barely a state of mind. It exists only in fiction. There aren't any Cyberpunks walking this planet any more than there are Vampires or Vampire Hunters.

First, there is a broad range of what Cyberpunk is. To some it's an aesthetic, to others it's what you do on a computer or what you eat and how you speak. It was written about in Fiction and now people want to cosplay the concept.

I think it was said best by one person's entry onto a discussion board that was asking where does one find Cyberpunks in culture. Many people felt that Cyberpunks would be found where the aesthetic existed. Hong Kong, Japan, all that neon light and red paper lanterns. Well, one person quipped "I spent four years in Hong Kong and two in Japan and I never saw a Cyberpunk".

But they certainly saw lots of neon and red paper lanterns strewn about. So what is Cyberpunk then? It's a notion, an idea, even an aspiration but it doesn't exist and never will. It's the proverbial carrot being dangled in front of those who desire to leave the boredom of their world and become something

interesting. No different than a person who wears a rabbit suit and calls themselves a Furry, or applies white makeup, dresses in black and identifies as a Goth.

Cyberpunk is running in the background, it's the distant hum you hear in a large city. You can't point to any one thing and say that's the sole cause of the noise. It's many parts, many people and it exists within their minds and rarely expressed outwardly.

If you've made it this far with my diatribe let me qualify everything I just wrote by saying that I consider myself to be a cyberpunk enthusiast. Oh hell yeah, I eat noodles with hot sauce that I wash down with cheap Japanese beer. Ok, that works. I dabble with my computer, I've even hacked and cracked a bit in years past (Many years past) but I've been there. I've hung out on internet chats and made friends with people that caused the motion picture industry to create movies about people like them and those are the people you wish you were when you watch those movies!

Ever seen the movie Hackers? Well, in order to get some information for their movie, the producers observed and interviewed real life Hackers of which the characters are broadly based upon. I know those people in real life and they're nothing like Hollywood wants you to believe. Real life is boring and routine. Even the l337 Hackers the movie is based upon would sit around in online forums and hope to be something they were not. We all do that, so why not with Cyberpunk as well?

So be Cyberpunk, live it, enjoy it. If you want to dress in a white shirt with black tie and work in a cubicle entering data into spreadsheets all the while feeling like a Cyberpunk, then do it. No one has the right to tell you otherwise. If you want to dress like a bum and crawl around in the grease and sand as you work on your car out in the desert and all the while you're feeling Cyberpunk about it, yes that works too.

As for me I feel my most Cyberpunk as the late afternoon transitions into evening and then into night. I've just had my noodles with hot sauce as I sit at my computer surfing the internet in search of the next great catch-phrase.