



Escape Velocity: Cyberculture at the End of the Century

By Mark Dery

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An Unforgettable Journey into the Dark Heart of the Information Age

In *Escape Velocity* Mark Dery takes us on an electrifying tour of the high-tech subcultures that both celebrate and critique our wired world: would-be cyborgs who believe the body is obsolete and dream of downloading their minds into computers, cyber-hippies who boost their brainpower with smart drugs and mind machines, on-line swingers seeking cybersex on electronic bulletin boards, techno-primitives who sport "biomechanical" tattoos of computer circuitry; and cyberpunk roboticists whose Mad Max contraptions duel to the death before howling crowds.

Timely, trenchant, and provocative, *Escape Velocity* is the first truly critical inquiry into cyberculture-essential reading for everyone interested in computer culture and the shape of things to come.

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Editorial Review

Amazon.com Review

A high-speed tour through the high-tech underground and its denizens. Dery introduces us to those who embrace computer technology, figuratively and literally -- cyberpunks, cyberhippies, cybersexers, and would-be cyborgs who believe the body is mere meat, and await the day when man-machine union is much more than mere science fiction. Dery draws heavily on academic theorists such as Bataille, Foucault, Baudrillard and McLuhan, yet his writing style makes for a highly accessible book.

From Publishers Weekly

Freelance cultural critic Dery takes readers on a strange, unsettling, often provocative tour through fringe computer subcultures. We meet cyber-hippies and "technopagans" who use the personal computer in New Age mystical rituals via echomail, a technology that links discussion groups into a communal conference. California roboticist Mark Pauline stages spectacles in which robots and humans are menaced by heavy machinery or remote-controlled weaponry, while Chico MacMurtrie's puppet-like robot musicians, acrobats and warriors enact ecotopian dramas. Australian cybernetic body artist Stelarc, plastered with electrodes and trailing wires, embodies the human/machine hybrid all of us are metaphorically becoming. Dery also profiles online swingers hooked on virtual sex, cyberpunk rockers, cyberpunk novelist William Gibson and D.A. Therrien's performance ensemble Comfort/ Control, which dramatizes popular anxieties over the autonomy of intelligent machines and the nightmare of humanity's obsolescence. Dery closes this adventurous inquiry with an appraisal of the "posthumanist" visions of novelist William Burroughs, techno-mystical SF author Vernor Vinge and Carnegie-Mellon roboticist Hans Moravec. Illustrated.

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From [Booklist](#)

"Escape velocity" refers to the speed a body must achieve to escape the gravitational pull of Earth. Dery contends that cyberculture--an underground world of high-tech performance artists and philosophers, cyberpunk authors and musicians, and technosex aficionados--is reaching its own escape velocity and will eventually free itself of the gravitational pull of history, tradition, and perhaps even evolution. Drawing his raw material from a wide variety of sources, Dery has produced an exhaustive and exhilarating book. Cyberculture, he demonstrates, threatens to forge a whole new meaning not only for technology but for what it means to be human: he discusses the kinds of music, art, and literature created through computer programs, and he relates experiments in life extension as well as plans to store human consciousness on CD-ROM. Some of this material is not for the squeamish, especially the treatment of "cybernetic body art," which includes putatively artistic self-mutilation, body piercing, and tattooing. Still, for librarians struggling to understand how the Internet will affect their reference departments, this book will be a mind-expanding voyage. For the initiated, it will be a handy travel guide. *George Needham*

Users Review

From reader reviews:

John Townsend:

The book Escape Velocity: Cyberculture at the End of the Century has a lot of information on it. So when you read this book you can get a lot of profit. The book was authored by the very famous author. The writer

makes some research before write this book. That book very easy to read you will get the point easily after perusing this book.

Janet Roldan:

The book untitled Escape Velocity: Cyberculture at the End of the Century contain a lot of information on that. The writer explains your ex idea with easy approach. The language is very clear and understandable all the people, so do not necessarily worry, you can easy to read it. The book was authored by famous author. The author will take you in the new period of literary works. It is possible to read this book because you can read on your smart phone, or model, so you can read the book inside anywhere and anytime. If you want to buy the e-book, you can available their official web-site and also order it. Have a nice examine.

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