

Drugs in Neuromancer

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It's interesting to me that one of the main aspects of Gibson's world is drug use. While still technically illegal, drugs seem as common and socially acceptable as alcohol, and maybe as coffee. Widespread drug use in the future doesn't seem to me to be an unlikelihood, but what makes Gibson's portrayal of it so stunning is the feeling of sheer quantity and variety which he creates. Pills and derms of all kinds litter themselves through *Neuromancer*, and there is even room for old fashioned needles for people with a sense of class.

What I can't figure out, however, is Gibson's stance on the whole thing. At times he seems to demonify drug use, to show the nasty effects it can have (Case's paranoia in the early "chase" scene), while at others he seems to glorify it (Riviera, with the holographic scorpion), while at still other times it seems to be a big joke (Case's "unnatural state" on Betaphenethylamine). Perhaps Gibson is taking an ambivalent attitude toward it, an attitude in which all views are embraced, but none are chosen.