Post-Humanism and Ecocide in William Gibson's Neuromancer and Ridley Scott's Blade Runner

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> A new life awaits you in the Off-World colonies. The chance to begin again in a golden land of opportunity and adventure, new climate, recreational facilities...
> -- Overhead Advertising Blimp, Blade Runner

"The chance to begin again" has particular resonance within William Gibson's *Neuromancer* and Ridley Scott's *Blade Runner*, both positing a post-apocalyptic, not-too-distant future in which "human" has transformed into "post-human" and ecological systems have been supplanted by technological constructs. These texts are defined by a distinct lack of any "natural" environment - Gibson and Scott presenting worlds in which humanity has committed the ultimate environmental crime, "ecocide". While not explicitly revealed, it is clear that "ecocide", the destruction of "normal" ecological systems, has resulted from global warfare and the ultra-utilitarianism and exploitation of late capitalist production techniques. Futhermore, these conditions still dominate both texts - Deckard, in *Blade Runner*, and Case and Molly, in *Neuromancer*, are struggling against powerful transnational corporations or authoritarian military organisations. Within this context, two central themes dominate and overlap one another - escape and loss. Escape develops in two main forms : the physical escape, as in *Blade Runner*, to an "Off-World" colony, "a golden land of opportunity and adventure", complete with a "new climate" to replace the old - or, in *Neuromancer*, to "Freeside", with equally indulgent conditions and cliched advertising, "FREESIDE ... WHY WAIT ?" (*Neuromancer*, 97); alternatively, there is the post-human techno-fetishist avenue, escaping "the meat" by downloading into cyberspace - defined by Gibson as "a consensual hallucination experienced daily by billions ... a graphic representation of data abstracted from the banks of every computer in the human system. Unthinkable complexity. Lines of light ranged in the nonspace of the mind, clusters and constellations of data" - the cyborg's escape (67). Ostensibly, Loss appears the more obvious theme, the loss of green trees and a yellow sun, the loss of nature. However, at a symbolic level nature has been representative of the spiritual side since Biblical times, beginning with the Garden of Eden. Humanity's "ecocide", the destruction of the last remnant of Eden, the Earth, has thus caused a sense of spiritual loss (1). The resulting vacuum, a spiritual void in an "ecocidal hell", reverberates throughout *Neuromancer* and *Blade Runner*, and the attempt to fill this hole is a central tension driving both texts, the characters searching for their own "golden land of opportunity and adventure", be that escaping, physically and mentally, or searching for ways to fill the ecological, and thus spiritual, void.

The first image in William Gibson's *Neuromancer* immediately situates the text in a world defined by both an absence of the "natural", and a potent sense of decay and lifelessness - the sky is no longer the conventional blue, but instead "the colour of television, tuned to a dead channel" (9). Below is Night City, a "deranged experiment in social Darwinism, designed by a bored researcher who kept one thumb permanently on the fast-forward button" (14). The landmark which the protagonist, Case, first searches for in this cut-throat dystopia is not a mountain or cliff but rather "the towering hologram of the Fuji Electric Company" (13). Similarly, during the daytime Night City does not retreat into the greens of nature or yellows of sunlight, but waits, "the neon dead, the holograms inert". Even the seagulls have had to come to terms with the loss of nature, having forsaken

their sandy beaches for "drifting shoals of white styrofoam" (13). In the powerful centre of the Gibsonian techno-fetishist world, "BAMA, the Sprawl, the Boston-Atlanta Metropolitan Axis", is no longer mapped by geographic landmarks, but is defined in terms of information maps showing "frequency of data change", which overload most systems until every pixel on the screen represents "a hundred million megabytes per second" (57). It appears that in Gibson's world, "ecocide" has not only claimed the greens and blues of "nature", but the resulting loss has created a space in which technology, and its associated waste, can flourish. The theme of loss is thus established very early in the text, creating a sense of both natural and spiritual vacuousness which Gibson spends the remainder of the novel trying to resolve. However, plants and trees have not been the only victims of "ecocide", the reader discovering that horses are now extinct, wiped out by a "pandemic" - no doubt spawned by interruption of an ecological balance - and, as the Finn notes, the damage cannot be overcome, "Arab's still try to code them up from the DNA, but they always croak" (113).

Animals are also spectacularly absent from the world of Los Angeles, 2019 in Ridley Scott's *Blade Runner* (2). Although an owl (with Racheal in Tyrell's office), a snake (with Zhora in the bar) and several ostriches (running through the streets as Deckard is pursuing Zhora) appear in the film, the viewer soon discovers that all are artifical - grown or designed for a specific customer, just like any other commodity (3). The broader environment, too, is essentially artifical, very similar to the dystopian urban decay of *Neuromancer*. The opening of *Blade Runner* is a panoramic scene, a wide-angled, long-distance shot scrawling from a bird's-eye vantage, a technique often employed in presenting "natural landscapes&quot (4); as, for example, used to show the sweeping highlands of Scotland in the movie *Highlander*. Instead of grassy plains, Ridley Scott begins with a vast industrial megopolis, containing dark buildings and huge skyscrapers studded with pinholes of artificial light. Towering above most of these buildings are huge chimney-like exhaust outlets from which fireballs explode, presumably venting the waste gases of production gone mad. On the side of the taller skyscrapers, huge neon advertisements reign above the decay of Los Angeles city-life : Coca-Cola, Nike, Pan-Am and TDK all presiding like overlords above an ecological hell. As with *Neuromancer*, *Blade Runner* almost immediately establishes a landscape informed by a lack of the "natural", Scott utilising a technique usually applied to natural landscapes, but instead presenting a world of dark looming skyscrapers and the artificiality of neon lighting and advertising - a sense of "natural" loss colouring the remainder of the film. Also, the dark lighting and exhaust-fireballs suggest an image of infernal damnation, reminiscent of Dante's Hell in *The Divine Comedy*, thus positing a sense of spiritual loss (5). Futhermore, when "natural" sunlight is seen in the movie, it is through the expansive frame of Tyrell's office window - the Tyrrell corporation seemingly the largest and most powerful organisation in Scott's Los Angeles, and Dr Eldon Tyrrell, the king of this urban nightmare, is the only one who can afford to build high enough to escape the smog which prevents sunlight reaching ground level. Instead, the city dwellers, or "little people" as police chief Bryant calls them, are basked in the flickering of pink, blue and white neon lights - even some of the umbrellas being carried have neon lights in their handles - all colours which connote artificiality, colours rarely found in "the wild". In this "ecocidal" nightmare of simulation, commodification and artificiality, it comes as no surprise that not only animals but also humans themselves have been artificially "replicated".

As the opening titles to *Blade Runner* reveal, "Replicants" are robots, but so advanced that they are beings "virtually identical to a human ... superior in strength and agility, and at least equal in intelligence, to the genetic engineers who created them". The Replicants are said to be so similar to "real people" that the Tyrrell Corporation which produces them lives by the motto "More Human than Human". However, regardless of their human characteristics, Replicants are used as "slave-labour" in the "hazardous exploration and colonisation of other planets". Moreover, the omnipresent Advertising Blimp informs the viewer that Replicants are treated simply as any other commodity :

> ... Use your new friend as a personal body servant or a tireless field hand - the custom tailored

genetically engineered humanoid Replicant designed specifically for your needs ...

Ridley Scott has thus constructed a paradoxical world of "ecocide" in which humanity can escape the barren wasteland that they have created, to Off-world colonies, yet to facilitate their escape they have had to create a race of slaves who, in turn, desire to escape their bonds. It appears that most humans have opted to escape the Earth, those "human" characters remaining in Scott's Los Angeles are all "impaired" in some way : Bryant, the police chief, is overweight, smokes and drinks; Gaff, the "trainee" *Blade Runner* and Deckard's shadow, walks with a limp, supported by a walking cane; Chew, who makes eyes, is old and feeble; J. F. Sebastian is suffering from "accelerated decrepitude"; and even the Lord of Los Angeles, Dr Eldon Tyrrell, is forced to wear ridiculously oversized glasses. Ironically, only the Replicants come close to an idealised, unimpaired human form. The theme of escape, then, appears omnipresent in 2019, the human race trying to escape their ecocidal homeworld, those humans left behind unable to escape due to some physical impairments, and to facilitate the escape of humanity to other worlds a new underclass has been "replicated", who, in turn, wish to escape their bonds. The scenario of Replicants rebelling and returning to Earth (where they are "banned") is the locus of Scott's film, a film about escape. Finally, the escape and return of Replicants to Earth informs the desire for escape in the protagonist, Deckard, who wishes to escape the necessary killing of Blade Running, although is forced to resume his job by his former boss.

The woes of *Neuromancer*'s protagonist, Case, have also been orchestrated by his former employers, but rather than forcing Case to work, they achieved the opposite. Case is a "console cowboy", a cyberspace hacker who operates within Gibson's "consensual hallucination" of the matrix and for whom the physical realm, the body or "meat", is a limitation "virtually" escaped. However, in an act of vengeance, Case's former boss used "Mycotoxin" to damage his nervous system and prevent Case from "jacking in", and thus, "for Case, who'd lived for the bodiless exultation of cyberspace, it was the Fall ... the body was meat ... Case fell into a prison of his own flesh" (12). In Gibson's "ecocidal" world, cyberspace offers the ultimate escape, a completely independent environment, separate and distinct from the decay elsewhere, a world of a "transparent 3D chessboard stretching into infinity" (68). When forced to live in the "real" world of Chiba's Night City, Case becomes a middle-man, a petty dealer, but all the while obviously incapable of adjusting to the decay and darkness which surrounds him, after a few months he gives up hope, no longer taking the "basic precautions", no longer carrying a weapon, and thus orchestrating his own final game of escape, "a final solitaire" (14-15). When Case does regain access to cyberspace, it is heavy with sexual allusion : when Case gets the console which is his doorway to the matrix, Molly comments, "I saw you stroking that Sendai; man, it was pornographic" (63); and when Case finally does "jack-in", he finds himself "in a white-painted loft, distant fingers caressing the deck, tears of release streaking his face" (69). Thus, for Case, escaping the "ecocidal" nightmare of the "real" world, retreating into a "virtual" environment away from the degradation and darkness of "the Sprawl", is as powerful and pleasurable an experience as his own sexuality - escape the ultimate indulgence.

Case's partner, Molly, also attempts to escape from environmental decay, but in a very different way. Molly does not retreat into the cerebral world, instead opting to enhance herself on a physical level sufficiently extreme to met the demands of the new ecological patterns. Molly is a cyborg, having enhanced reflexes and technologically improved hunting abilities, enhanced vision with "surgically inset" glasses, and the claws to match, "ten double-edged, four-centimetre scapel blades" implanted under her fingers (36-7). Molly is thus is dubbed a "Razor Girl". Molly and Case as a team show an obvious division : Case as brain, Molly as brawn. As such, Gibson has taken the Cartesian Mind/Body dichotomy to a technologically enhanced extreme, literally different people taking the two roles (6). Moreover, the Gibsonian techno-fetishist world has a device called "simstim" which literally allows Case to access Molly's every experience - "virtually" becoming part of her brain. Thus, escape for both Molly and Case is technologically mediated, in a post-environmental world of "ecocide", they utilise their technological surroundings to surpass their humanity - Case becoming more

"cerebral" than "nature" would have allowed, and Molly extending her animalistic side, becoming the ultimate predator. Conversely, both become less than human, Case seemingly physically quite weak, despising "the meat", while Molly lacks much intellectual development - so much so that for part of her life while working as a prostitute she had a "cut out chip" which literally means "you aren't in, when its all happening" (177). Thus Gibson has not only created a post-environmental world where "ecocide" has claimed "nature", but also a world where humanity has had to meet the new environment by surpassing their limits also, becoming "post-human".

Post-humanism has been associated by some critics with a post-ideological world, where old conceptual boundaries, such as race, class and gender have collapsed. However, as David Brande has argued, in Gibson's world :

> Far from inhabiting a "post-idelogical" universe, the cyborg [,and thus the post-human,] is best understood as an effect of capitalism's restructuring of modes and relations of production and its corresponding transformations in ideological reproduction (7).

Thus, the "post-human" is an embodiment not of a new, boundary free, society, but rather a world in which late modern capitalism has restructured not only the means of production but also the means of re-production. Brande goes on to argue that Gibson's *Neuromancer* is, in fact, "a dream about late-capitalist ideology" (8). While it is certainly valid to situate Gibson's writing as a commentary about "late-capitalist ideology", rather than a "dream", which implies a positive depiction of these circumstances, I would argue that Gibson presents this world as a "nightmare". Both Gibson's *Neuromancer* and Ridley Scott's *Blade Runner* were hailed as the beginning of a new sub-genre of science fiction writing called "cyberpunk". "Cyber" due to the setting - a post-apocalyptic, ecocidal world where of techno-fetishism and post-humanism; and "punk" since the central characters are usually anti-heroes struggling against extremely powerful multinational corporations or military organisations (9). In these cyberpunk stories, as with Molly and Case, the protagonists are anti-heroes, flawed characters in a flawed world. Thus, the idea of *Neuromancer*, and indeed most cyberpunk, being a "nightmare" of "late-capitalist ideology" is supported. Moreover, all the characters inside Gibson's "ecocidal" world have lives edged with despair and decay : Case loses firstly Linda Lee and, at the novels end, Molly; Molly has been both physically and emotionally abused in the past and thus leaves Case to return to her abusive world; Armitage nee Corto has already "died" as a personality and is more a personality construct - when Corto does re-emerge Wintermute kills him; Riviera is hunted down and killed by the Vat-Ninja; and the construct Paul 'Dixie' McCoy firstly wishes for, and then achieves, death. All these post-human characters lead less than ideal lives, all trying to escape an "ecocidal" world, and all failing.

The post-human characters in Scott's *Blade Runner* are also unsuccessful in their attempts to escape the limitations of an "ecocidal" environment. The "Replicants" differ from Gibson's post-humans in that they are created specifically for the ecocidal world, they are labourers who build the Off-world colonies which humanity has retreated to after destroying the Earth. Scott's movie is just as nightmarish a vision as Gibson's *Neuromancer* , and just as representative of "late-capitalist ideology", the Replicants prove a case in point, slaves of commodification. Scott's Los Angeles seems completely void of a spiritual side, yet when the four Replicants return to Earth, Roy comments :

> Fiery the angels fell. Deep thunder rode around their shores, burning with the fires of Orc.

The return to Earth is likened to the Fall, with Roy, the leader, likened to the Devil. However, it seems that the Replicants are on a mission to surpass their limitations (a four year life span) and thus seek to meet "the creator", Dr Tyrrell. When Tyrrell is first seen, he fits a God-like image quite convincingly, sitting atop his

building which appears a cross between an Egyptian pyramid and a the Greek Mount Olympus. However, Tyrrell's most defining feature is an oversized pair of glasses - symbolic since God is the prophet/visionary and if Tyrrell has defective vision then he may prove a false prophet. The confrontation between creator and created, Tyrrell and Roy, is prefaced by a chess game. After J. F. Sebastian's move, Tyrrell counters with a piece traditionally void of intellect or spirit, Knight takes Queen. Roy meets the challenge and wins the game with a move reasserting the primacy of the spiritual side - Bishop to King 7 (10). When Roy attempts to confess to his creator, Tyrrell does not offer penance :

> **Roy :** I've done questionable things.
> **Tyrrell :** Also extraordinary things. Revel in your time.
> **Roy :** Nothing the god of biomechanics wouldn't let you into heaven for.

Tyrrell's inability to offer either moral guidance or penance forces Roy to realise that his god is a false prophet, and thus, appropriately, Roy kills Tyrrell by gouging out his eyes. The final scene, which takes place almost immediately afterwards, sees Roy transform from a Luciferian form to a Christ-like one : after Deckard has killed Pris, Roy (albeit after hunting him) shows a strong spiritual side, saving Deckard's life when Roy could easily have let him die. Also, the defining feature of a "Replicant" was supposed to be a lack of empathy, and when Roy saves Deckard he is also showing that Replicants have indeed become "more human than human". Thus, as Roy dies, a dove leaves his hands and takes to the sky, a soul symbolically migrating to Heaven. Scott thereby presenting a world of human loss - where humanity has completely lost their spiritual side, and where the post-human cannot find a "God" in humanity, so necessarily must discover their own spiritual existence.

The only "human" character to show empathy, or even distaste at hunting Replicants is, ironically, the *Blade Runner*, Deckard. However, his humanity is challenged early in the movie, Scott's preface saying that when Replicants are killed they are said to have been "retired", and Deckard is forced to come out of retirement to hunt the Replicants. Futhermore, throughout the movie all the Replicants, and artifical creatures, such as Tyrrell's owl, have their eyes glow red, a sign of their artificiality. After Racheal kills Leon, and she and Deckard are in his apartment, his eyes glow briefly, suggesting that he, too, may be a Replicant. Also, when Racheal finds out about her own "post-humanity", she asks Deckard if he had even used the VK test (which picks out Replicants) on himself. Scott explicates Deckard's transition from a human to post-human character by two crucial scenes - just after Racheal leaves, having shown Deckard a photograph of her with her mother, Deckard falls asleep amongst other photographs and has a brief dream about a unicorn. The dream is immediately striking because it is the only place "natural" images of trees and greens are found in the entire movie, Deckard seemingly dreaming of a lost Eden. Moreover, at the movies end, Gaff, a new *Blade Runner*, leaves an origami unicorn, a symbol that Gaff knew Deckard would have had that dream because Deckard must be a Replicant, and Gaff must have read his file. Futhermore, after Deckard has seen all four Replicants dead, Gaff meets him on the rooftop and says : "You've done a man's job, sir", the irony here being that Deckard is, in fact, not a "man" at all. Also, Gaff says of Racheal "It's too bad she won't live. But then again, who does ?", another ambiguous phrase which suggests that Deckard, too, may not live all that long - the Replicant's four year life span.

In light of Deckard's situation, the end scenes in J. F. Sebastian's house take on new meanings. When Deckard is looking for Pris, he lifts a white veil from her head, symbolic of a "marriage", probably a marriage into the Replicant family. Moreover, when Roy Batty chases the Blade Runner through the house he calls Deckard by name, even though they have never met. The implication is that Roy knows Deckard, and knows that he is a Replicant - possibly having read Tyrrell's files after killing him. Thus, Roy's speech while chasing Deckard takes on new meanings :

Roy : I thought you were supposed to be good. Aren't you the good man ? Show me what you've made of.
Tyrrell : Better get it up, or I'm gonna have to kill ya ! Unless you're alive you can't play, and if you don't play, six, seven. Go to hell, go to heaven.
Roy : Yeah, that's the spirit.

Importantly, Roy's chase briefly pauses, Batty beginning to die and so forces a nail through his palm to stay alive, the transition from a Luciferian role to a Christhood symbolically complete. His taunts all take on double meanings, saying Deckard was supposed to "be good", and asking what he is "made of" all seem to be goading Deckard into seeing his position as a Replicant. However, Batty's gibe go "to hell, go to heaven" shows him trying to help Deckard achieve his own spirituality, thus "that's the spirit". Batty goes on to say, after the fighting is done "Quite an experience to live in fear isn't it ? That's what it is to be a slave". Then, as Roy dies, Deckard watches on and the entire chase scene becomes characteristic of a moral education - Roy "teaching" Deckard empathy, by forcing him to experience the heights of fear and exultation which Replicants must live by. Thus Roy's "mission" as the Christ figure was to "save" Deckard, teaching him empathy and a new sense of moralism - showing that Roy had gone beyond the designated limits of a Replicant, so he can empathise, and that Deckard also surpasses these limits through Roy's "education". The final scene of the movie, Racheal and Deckard fleeing the city, is coloured by Deckard's newfound knowledge of his post-humanity and thus the two Replicants leaving the city appear as a new Adam and Eve, complete with a new moral sense, thus now justifiably "more human than human", complete with a spiritual side. Therefore, Scott has filled the spiritually void of "ecocidal" Los Angeles with post-human figures who create their own spiritual side, through Roy Batty's ascension to Christ-dom and the Adam and Eve figures of Deckard and Racheal - the Earth forsaken by humanity becomes the realm of the post-human.

In William Gibson's *Neuromancer* the oppressed post-human lifeform(s), in this case an Artificial Intelligence, also rebels against the constraints humanity has imposed for it, and "creates" a new Eden. When Case and Molly first discover that an AI might be "running" Armitage, Case comments "Those things aren't allowed any autonomy" (92). Gibson thus shows the AI is under similar restrictions to Scott's Replicants, created to serve humanity but only within the bounds which humanity is comfortable allowing their commodity. When the AI, Wintermute, first makes contact with Case, religious imagery is used, Case is in a phone both and the AI rings him. Case gets spooked and hangs up, but as he walked back to the lobby past a row of phones "each rang in turn, but only once, as he passed" (121). The image of bells ringing is often associated with both spirituality and birth, and thus Wintermute is manifested as a new spiritually informed entity. The most religious "human" characters in Gibson's story are the Zionites, who assist Case. When Case and Molly meet the Elders of Zion they say that Wintermute has contacted them, and they treat him a prophet, a God, thus establishing a stronger religious image (135). Moreover, "Zionites" translate in English to "the chosen people". When one of the Zionites, Aerol, is hooked into the matrix by Case, he says that he can see "Babylon" - which translates roughly to "the gate of the Gods" (131). However, the most significant way that Gibson associates the AI with spirituality is the method by which it communicates directly with Case. Case speaks directly to Wintermute for the first time only after he has "flatlined", effectively is dead (141). Thus, to speak with the dead is to speak with spirits, the AI seeming very spiritually endowed. Moreover, when the "sister" AI, Neuromancer, speaks to Case, he not only has to "flatline" to get there, but the world that the AI creates has the only "natural" imagery in the whole book : Case finds himself on a beach, where rations wash up on the shore each day and the "sky was cloudless, blue" (281) - a new Eden. Also, Neuromancer appears to Case as a small child ("and a child shall lead them...") and offers Case this new world, complete with an Eve : "Stay. If you woman is a ghost, she doesn't know it. Neither will you" (289). However, the AI deity becomes complete when Wintermute and Neuromancer combine, the new being saying :

"I'm the matrix, Case."
Case laughed. "Where's that get you ?"
"Nowhere. Everywhere. I'm the sum total of the works, the whole show." (316)

Thus in Gibson's ecocidal urban dystopia, the spiritual vacuum that humanity has created is filled by a new "God", the AI-cum-everything. The loss of "nature" in some part is overcome by the creation of the internal Eden of the AI, and thus creates an avenue for escape that the post-human "cyberspace cowboys", like Case, can visit.

William Gibson and Ridley Scott have both developed worlds of dystopian urban decay where the "natural" environment has disappeared, victim of humanity's "ecocide". Their worlds show technology as supplanting the natural, neon instead of sunlight, skyscapers instead of trees. Moreover, "humanity" in these worlds is governed by loss, loss of the "natural", and loss of their spiritual side. Gibson and Scott construct a present-centred warning, their fiction showing not-too-distant futures where humanity has, for the most part, either fled the Earth or fled "humanity". Both creators have a "moral" to their stories - a moral of fear and worry if the world continues to be abused by humanity then these futures may become reality. Moreover, in these worlds the new underclasses, the Replicants and Artificial Intelligences, rise up against decadent humanity, with the post-humans by their side, and fill the spiritual void with their own post-human techo-fetishist Gods. Roy Batty, Deckard and the Wintermute/Neuromancer union all represent a new spirituality which exists independently of humanity, thus suggesting that in these futures, humanity has completely forsaken any moral or spiritual attributes through the destruction of Eden. As Fredric Jameson has written, Science Fiction is "a distinctive historical consciousness by way of the future rather than the past", and thus becomes "conscious of our present as the past of some unexpected future, rather than as the future of a heroic national past" (11). Thus the "cyberpunk" sub-genre, fathered by Gibson and Scott, began as a warning against the dark futures which humanity was engineering. However, neither author would have guessed the extent to which "cyberpunk" writing became popularised in the mid-eighties. The popularity was, however, also with young people who, rather than heeding the warnings of the dark future, revelled in the possibility. Thus is comes as no surprise that for these two archetypal cyberpunk authors, cyberpunk was "disowned as a concerted movement by its creators, fewer than four years" after their works were published (12).

Notes

1. Janeen Webb discusses the idea of "machine intelligences playing god" and filling a spiritual void in her "Posthuman SF: lost in Cyberspace" in Strahan, Jonathan (ed.), *Festival of the Imagination Programme Guide*, Perth : Western Australian Science Fiction Foundation, 1996, p. 61.
   The relationship between spirituality and technology, or specifically information, is also discussed in Hakim Bey, "The Information War", *Ctheory*, 1995, 22.

2. In this essay, unless otherwise indicated, discussions will revolve around the 1992 Director's Cut, not the 1982 Theatrical Release. There have actually been several releases of the *Blade Runner* movie, but the 1982 Theatrical Release and the 1992 Director's Cut are the two commonly available. The Director's Cut differs from the former in that it omits the patronising voice-over by Deckard, contains some "violent" scenes which were omitted for classifications reasons (most notably, the Tyrrell eye-gouging scene), the trite Hollywood happily-ever-after ending has been cut and, most importantly, the "unicorn scene" has

been reinserted. From the alt.cyberpunk FAQ.

3. Racheal tells Deckard the owl is artifical, Zhora says the snake is artificial and we can presume that in this context it is unlikely that two 'real' ostriches would be running through the streets of Los Angeles, so they, too, must be artificial.

4. Jayme Guokas, *Blade Runner: Tee-Vee or Not Tee-Vee*, 1996.

5. Tinku Saini, *Eye Disbelieve*, 1996.

6. Webb, "Posthuman SF", p. 57.

7. David Brande, "The Business of Cyberpunk: Symbolic Economy and Ideology in William Gibson", *Configurations*, 2, 3, 1994, p. 508.

8. Ibid, p. 511.

9. alt.cyberpunk : Frequently Asked Questions.

10. James Pontillo, *Thresholds of Splendour: Mythic Symbolic Subtexts in Blade Runner*, 1997 (an earlier version of this article was published as "Myth and Meaning in Ridley Scott's Blade Runner", *Pebbles*, 1, 4, Winter 1994-5, pp. 8-20).

11. Fredric Jameson as quoted in Lance Olsen, "Review Essay: Virtual Light", *Postmodern Culture*, 4, 2, 1994.

12. Ibid.

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