



# distractions

**Cyberpunk Handbook [The Real Cyberpunk Fakebook]**  
 St. Jude, R.U. Sirius and Bart Nagel  
 Random House

by Matt Roherty



Cyberpunk Handbook falls into the category of books to be read when you have a little time to kill and a mind in desperate need of diversion.

Written with tongue-in-cheek by self-proclaimed "cyberpunks" St. Jude, R.U. Sirius and Bart Nagel, the handbook portrays a paranoid, techno-oriented sect obsessed with stock-piling information and encrypting what they've accumulated, so that only they can read it. Not that they'll ever use it.

The Cyberpunk Handbook defines the cyberpunk as "1. A citizen of cyberspace. 2. A citizen of cyberspace who wears mirrorshades indoors, at night."

If you think this is the wave of the future, are into leather clothing and have a penchant for techno-gadgets, this book would be a good starting point.

This short read would provide some hours of light entertainment for travellers of the information highway, but contributes little or nothing to the

life of the reader.

Among other things, the Cyberpunk Handbook provides decor tips such as, "If you're trying for deep geekhood, make it look like you're a working hacker by arranging stacks of manuals, old hardware, eviscerated PCs and reams of printouts. Don't throw out your old Jolt cans--use them as decorator accents!"

A chapter on advice to "newbies" expands on "hoor" trivia available in the quick-reference chapter, "Building Your Cyber Word Power." So beware newbies who think that smileys --- :) --- in email are cool: Cyberpunk authors say "Use a smiley, go to jail." :( (Ed note: yes, I know that using smiley's in print is even less cool. Byte me.)



April 29 - 30, 1995

by Marcus Peddle

Dear Mary,

One night passed in Daegu (another spelling of Taegu). I learned that yesterday there was a gas explosion in a subway here, killing over one hundred people. I'm off to a good start.

My apartment is not very large, but it is fine. It's an older building but lots of things in this apartment are new. This morning I was woken up by a street vendor, who has a recorded message playing over and over from a loudspeaker in his truck. He was selling watermelons and apples.

Last night I was met by a member of the institute who brought me to my apartment. It was not so easy bringing my two heavy bags up here. We were met by two more people from the institute and we had pizza after my room-mate showed up. After the institute people showed up, my room-mate, Chris, and I, went over to the female instructor's apartment until 3 in the morning. I won't give you my impression of them yet, until it has formed better.

I've arrived just in time for a week, off! I'm going up to Seoul with the other three instructors (plus a guy I met last night who teaches at another school) to visit some shops and register with the Canadian Embassy.

Your fig Newtons are serving as my breakfast this morning, because I obviously haven't had any time to buy anything. The other instructors eat out a lot. In fact, my roommate has nothing to eat in the apartment.

Hello again!

I've gotten my first taste of life here in Korea. I went to a bar last night with some foreign teachers (i.e. North Americans) and some Korean teachers. It was a bar called Extra. It played Western music and its decorations were Western movie and music posters. It is a nice place - not too loud and there are tables to sit at. Before that, we went to Burger King, of all places. I saw a Kentucky Fried Chicken, too. Yesterday for lunch I bought some omu raisu. It's a spicy rice (but not too spicy) wrapped in an omelette and covered with a red sauce. It's good and only costs about 2500 won (about \$4).

Drivers here in Taegu are crazy. On the streets at night there are many drunk drivers and there are a lot of people and cars crowding the smaller, one way streets. I almost got nipped between two cars on the way home. I went home with my two Korean friends, so I was okay.

I saw two or three guys kicking another guy while his girlfriend tried to stop them. This goes on everywhere, I guess, in big cities (Taegu has about 3 million people), but I'm not used to it anywhere.

Both girls and guys hold hands and put their arms around members of the same sex here. Guys also dance together.

There is footage of the subway explosion on television right now. 130 people died, I believe, including 30 schoolchildren. Pretty crazy. The subway is under construction and there was a gas explosion.

## Ask Apricot

Dear Apricot,

I live on Windsor Street and the University has put a huge boulder in my back driveway. I think UNB is limiting access to the university, and I feel very unloved. What do you think?  
 Signed, Frustrated Frank

Dear Frank,

Let me get this straight — you need help getting your rocks off?

If you had been displaying your Venture Campaign Accessibility window decal, this never would have happened. But take heart, I am sure you can surmount this obstacle. Walk to class: it's more environmentally friendly and you can't afford a parking permit in any case.

Dear Apricot,

What is the fastest drying method?  
 Signed, Fresh Peaches

Dear Peaches,

You must be an Arts student. But not to fear, Apricot loves these existential questions.

For clothes, I prefer the old-fashioned laundry-line method. For bodies, I find the heat of friction enjoyable, though many conservatives recommend the accepted and largely effective towel approach.

Dear Apricot,

I'm becoming attracted to someone I work with. What should I do?  
 Signed, Lovestruck

Dear Lovestruck,

Honey, I know you; you work at CHSR. Get therapy.

Apricot wants your letters, kids. Let's get this straight: Apricot is professionally trained (almost), and is offering FREE unconditional positive regard, so cough up some questions. Strict confidentiality will be maintained; you don't need to leave your name; however, names and phone numbers of single men will be gratefully accepted by Apricot. And remember: there is no such thing as a stupid question, only stupid people.

DETECTIVE BALONEY by GARRY SIMPSS

