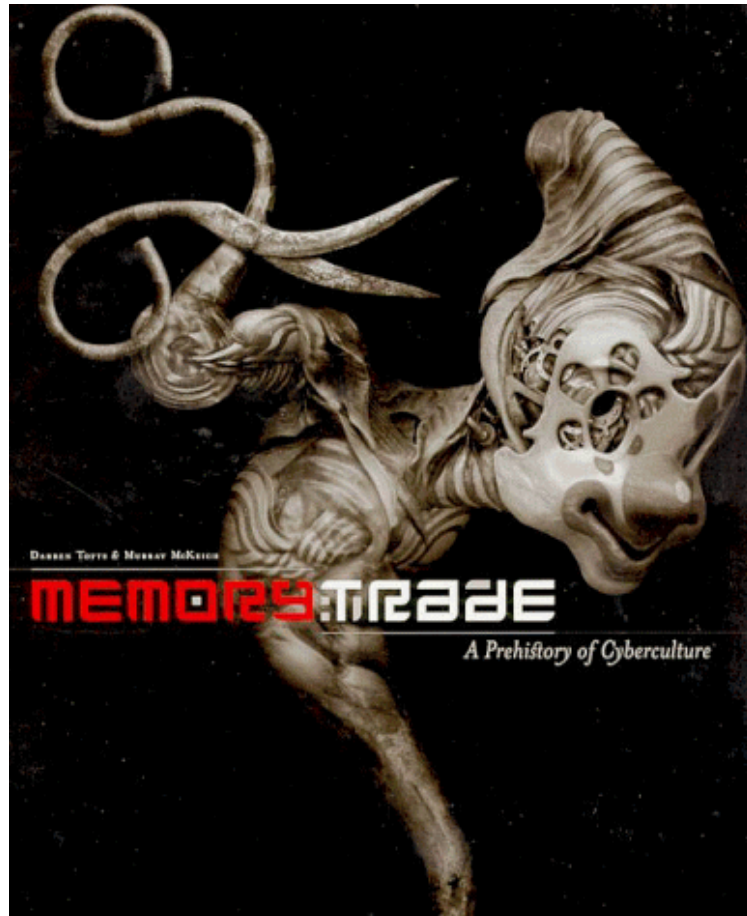


Memory Trade

Darren Tofts, Murray McKeich
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Darren Tofts, Murray McKeich : Memory Trade before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Memory Trade:

1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. Rise of the Pheonix
By Ashley Crawford
Memory Trade is a pulsating romp through the pre-life of our digitized age. It is a hybrid stitch-up of text and image going mano-o-mano page by page. It is hyper-caffeinated scholarly musing with a touch of lysergic acid. It is a world where Samuel Beckett and Roland Barthes trade cigars with Jorge Luis Borges, Philip K. Dick and Giles Deleuze while William Gibson and James Joyce talk emailia and cyberspace. First published in 1998 in analog form, Memory Trade was conceived by Darren Tofts and Murray McKeich as a manic dialogue of thought and image. Like Greil Marcus' Lipstick Traces, it is an `imaginary' history of often unlikely, but all too accurate linkages. Memory Trade is an exploration, in text and image, of the unconscious of cyberculture, its silent, secret prehistory. From Plato's Cave to Borges' literary labyrinths, Freud's Mystic Writing-Pad, and Joyce's bairdboard bombardment, Memory Trade is an hallucinogenic palimpsest of contemporary culture. Memory Trade rapidly sold-out and has been much sought after

ever since. Fourteen years after it first appeared *Memory Trade* refuses to age or become irrelevant, thus *21C* magazine has re-published it in digital form, phoenix-like, as an e-book that is as sumptuous as the original. 1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. Excellent for students of lit and cyberculture. By C. Middleton

The legendary writer of the Beat Generation, Jack Kerouac, when writing his experimental work, *Mexico City Blues*, attempted to achieve a synthesis between his prose and the jazz sounds of the mythical saxophonist, Charlie Parker. In a letter to William Burroughs, he describes at length, sitting in the subterranean world of the San Francisco bar scene, a bourbon clinched in one hand and a pen in the other, lost in a fit of Dionysian abandon, recording the notes and improvisational screams of the music, pushing the boundaries of received notions of art beyond the imposed limits of the bourgeoisie - this was indeed a new art form in the making. In a collaboration between writer and artist, Tofts and McKeitch have produced a work that beautifully intergrates prose and image. *Memory Trade* explores the antecedents of a much over used and abused term: Cyberculture. This word, (which was originally coined by the Canadian science fiction writer, William Gibson in 1980) has become so much a part of popular culture, that we flipantly assume we understand what it means. Nothing can be further from the truth. *Memory Trade* brilliantly removes the 'Spice Girls factor' from the term, and takes the reader on a kind of archeological expedition to a time before the birth of Christ, uncovering the secrets of cyberculture's very beginnings. This book is not your standard history text that conservatively presents the reader with a chronological format of time, place form and event. As Tofts states, *Memory Trade* is "not trying to present a genealogy of concatenation, of neatly linked motivations and actions, but rather to construct a narrative of syncopation, of shifting emphases and digressions in word and image." In other words, the insights gained in this text concerning the prehistory of cyberculture, have come about, surfaced, as a result of abductive thinking, as opposed to typical, deductive methods of reasoning. More to the point, *Memory Trade* is an investigation into cybercultures's unconscious; a quest towards unexplored realms; a hunt for the unexpected - "an examination of technologizing the world". This is not to say, of course, that the book reads like a postmodern text, jumping in some non-sequential, non-linear format. *Memory Trade* is exhaustively well researched and argues its subject matter in an elegant, persuasive manner. In many 'academic' texts, for example, the prose, in an effort to appear erudite, are couched in specialized terms that actually hide more than they reveal. This book, on the other hand, enlightens, because it is written in a well organized 'user friendly' manner. In fact, for those of you who have only a casual interest in cyberculture, this book should educate as well as entertain. I should also stress that McKeitch is not simply the 'illustrator' of the book. These extraordinary images that he has produced carry as much weight and significance as the words. More precisely, the book is a multi-timed text, that, to a great extent, should be read in a milieu of both image and text, as the book achieves a synthesis of both word and picture. Look for this book and read it. It will be well worth the trouble.

5 of 5 people found the following review helpful. Insightful Historical Reading By Alex Burns (alex.burns@disinfo.net)

In this tightly written volume, Australian author and academic Darren Tofts (internationally known for his essays with the fine science/cyberculture journal *21.C*) surveys cyberculture's hidden legacy in literary theory, surrealism, and semiotics. Tofts takes great care to critically reference his material, and the lavish artwork vividly conveys the book's high production values. Necessary reading to track the pre-World War II aesthetics and artistic culture that would give rise to Eisenhower's military-industrial complex, showing how artistic movements mutated as 'life conditions' (mass psycho-social, memetic, and economic baselines) changed into radically new forms. 'Memory Trade' is extremely useful for an academic or university-level audience, particularly for students undertaking media studies, literary criticism, cultural studies, and art history.

...a humanistic and archeological approach to the way technology, cyberspace in particular, has transformed our culture...explores the ancient origins of the relationships between humans technology, creativity artifice.