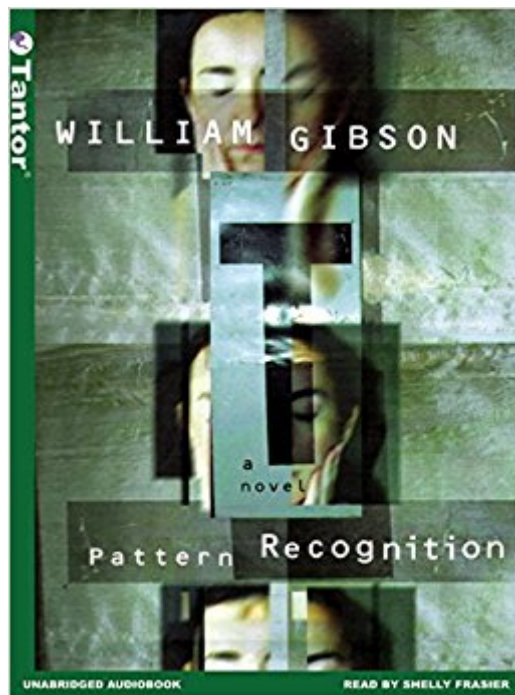


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Pattern Recognition



Synopsis

Cayce Pollard is a new kind of prophet - a world renowned "coolhunter" who predicts the hottest trends. While in London to evaluate the redesign of a famous corporate logo, she's offered a different assignment: find the creator of the obscure, enigmatic video clips being uploaded on the Internet - footage that is generating massive underground buzz worldwide. Still haunted by the memory of her missing father - a Cold War security guru who disappeared in downtown Manhattan on the morning of September 11, 2001 - Cayce is soon traveling through parallel universes of marketing, globalization, and terror, heading always for the still point where the three converge. From London to Tokyo to Moscow, she follows the implications of a secret as disturbing - and compelling - as the twenty-first century promises to be ... "Elegant, entrancing ... [Cayce's] globe-trotting gives Pattern Recognition its exultant, James Bond-ish edge..." ~The New York Times "Gibson's usual themes are still intact - globalism, constant surveillance, paranoia, and pattern recognition - only with the added presence of real-world elements..." ~Booklist

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

The first of William Gibson's usually futuristic novels to be set in the present, Pattern Recognition is a masterful snapshot of modern consumer culture and hipster esoterica. Set in London, Tokyo, and Moscow, Pattern Recognition takes the reader on a tour of a global village inhabited by power-hungry marketeers, industrial saboteurs, high-end hackers, Russian mob bosses, Internet fan-boys, techno archeologists, washed-out spies, cultural documentarians, and our heroine Cayce Pollard--a soothsaying "cool hunter" with an allergy to brand names. Pollard is among a cult-like

group of Internet obsessives that strives to find meaning and patterns within a mysterious collection of video moments, merely called "the footage," let loose onto the Internet by an unknown source. Her hobby and work collide when a megalomaniac client hires her to track down whoever is behind the footage. Cayce's quest will take her in and out of harm's way in a high-stakes game that ultimately coincides with her desire to reconcile her father's disappearance during the September 11 attacks in New York. Although he forgoes his usual future-think tactics, this is very much a William Gibson novel, more so for fans who realize that Gibson's brilliance lies not in constructing new futures but in using astute observations of present-day cultural flotsam to create those futures. With *Pattern Recognition*, Gibson skips the extrapolation and focuses his acumen on our confusing contemporary world, using the precocious Pollard to personify and humanize the uncertain anxiety, optimistic hope, and downright fear many feel when looking to the future. The novel is filled with Gibson's lyric descriptions and astute observations of modern life, making it worth the read for both cool hunters and their prey. --Jeremy Pugh --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

Gibson, known as the "patron saint of cyberpunk lit," has made his reputation with futuristic tales. Though his new novel is set in the present, baroque descriptions of everyday articles and menacing anthropomorphic treatment of the Internet and sister technology give it a sci-fi feel. Cayce Pollard, a market researcher with razor-sharp intuition, makes big bucks by evaluating potential products and advertising campaigns. In London, she stays in the trendy digs of documentary filmmaker friend Damien (away on assignment), whom she e-mails frequently. When Cayce brusquely rejects the new logo of advertising mogul Hubertus Bigend, she earns his respect and a big check but makes an enemy of his graphic designer, vindictive Dorotea Benedetti. Hubertus later hires Cayce to ferret out the origin of a series of sensual film clips appearing guerrilla style on computers all over the world and attracting a growing cult following. Cayce treats this as a standard job until somebody breaks into Damien's flat and hacks into her computer. Suddenly every casual encounter carries undertones of danger. Her investigative trail takes her to Tokyo and Russia and through a rogue's gallery of iconoclastic Web-heads. Casting a further shadow is the memory of her father, Win, a security expert (probably CIA) missing and presumed dead in the World Trade Center disaster of exactly a year earlier. For complicated reasons even she doesn't understand, she connects her current dilemma with her father's tragedy and follows the trail with the fervor of a personal vendetta. Gibson's brisk, kinetic style and incisive observations should keep the reader entertained even when Cayce's quest begins to lose urgency. Gibson's best book since *Mona Lisa Overdrive* should

satisfy his hardcore fans while winning plenty of new ones. Copyright 2003 Reed Business Information, Inc. --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

... Wait, no, maybe I'm wrong. How could this be better than Count Zero? Maybe not. Better than *Neromancer*? Could that be? So his work is really hard to rate or compare, but *Pattern Recognition*, in what seems to be a trilogy of sorts, is stupendous and wonderful. Characters are deliciously drawn. The mystery unravels at a pace that is pitch perfect. The sadness and strange subtle shift of America after 9/11 is captured in a way that other authors haven't touched, which is interesting considering that the novel takes us from London to Tokyo, and Moscow, to Paris. I love this world. I can't wait to read the book or the books that are going to connect his most recent texts - those set in our present - back to those that are set in the near future, and the still far future of his earlier work. Maestro, thanks.

Coming off of two previous dystopian future/bio tech laden Gibson novels, I guess I expected this to follow suit. Not the case. I purchased it off title alone and didn't read a synopsis before diving right in. Totally loved it. Multi faceted mystery novel. Gibson's writing style for this is a bit jarring at first, but once I adjusted it flowed quite nicely. The main character's inner monologue I found to be very similar to my own so her character became very real to me. Also being from New York and living in Manhattan during 9/11 it was easy to put myself in the settings being described surrounding the event. Also love his attention to the details. Helps paint a very clear picture. Would recommend to fans of his and those interested in mysteries and globetrotting.

I have been a Gibson fan for many years, having cut my teeth on *Neuromancer*, following with the *Bridge Trilogy* and *Burning Chrome*. Gibson is a writer with a fascinatingly clean method of conveying his visions of the future, and for that reason I actually avoided *Pattern Recognition* for a long time because I didn't believe he could translate that sense into the present. As often happens to me, I made the wrong call. I decided to break in my Kindle with *Pattern Rec*, and what a great way to test the readability of the device. I burned through the book in about 3 days. What made this novel so compatible to my needs as a writer are as much accidental as intentional. I have a fierce streak of OCD, not to the extent of washing my hands all day but still a cut above the average person. I'm also a bit of a cinephile, so the subject matter driving the protagonist here was a very natural hook to myself as reader, and the need to discover the origin of the footage for Cayce became my need as a reader as well. The essence of the story, just for people new to the book, is that the main

character has a severe allergic reaction to well known marketing icons, most notably the Michelin Man. Even so, she is exceptionally good at forecasting whether a logo will hit big in the advertising world. Privately, she is a member of a forum that is dedicated to analyzing mysterious film segments that are being posted on the internet, from an unknown creator and for unknown reasons. Her career profession ends up interacting with her private obsession when one of her frequent employers charges her with finding the maker of the footage. This is basically a good old detective yarn, imbued with that signature Gibson style. It's drastic change of setting from his previous works makes no difference in quality, as he expertly draws the reader in to the life of Cayce and her notably unusual life. His ability to convey a different view of a common thing, in many cases clothing and brands, is a thing to behold. Bottom line, if you dug Gibson before and were on the fence about the new stuff, dive in. It's classic Gibson in modern context. A fantastic read.

I'm a fanatical fan of the Neuromancer trilogy, and disliked Pattern Recognition the first time I read it. I didn't understand the slow pace, the "interiority" (sorry, what I mean is the focus on tiny variations of internal experience) and I didn't care about the mystery at its core. So I was REALLY surprised to find that a lot of the book's images, metaphors, and experiences stayed with me, tugging at my memory over time. About a year after the first reading, I went back and was stunned by how much I loved the book. As he matures, Gibson has gotten away from his youthful pyrotechnics and become more interested in things like how power is wielded in society and how marketing creates our sense of culture. You have to slow down to get this book, and savor it like a good meal – but once you've accepted that no one is going to get shot, turn themselves into a cyborg, or rob a bank on a broken leg, I think you'll find Gibson's social and moral matrix as satisfying as the virtual one.

I don't think this book is for everyone, least of all those who prefer Gibson's cyberpunk works. But if the Sprawl trilogy was an origin, you can see the way the Bridge trilogy led to this book. A shift to more subtle science fiction, a focus on the essential weirdness of the present. It's a wonderful book.

Doing a reread of Gibson's work. The Sprawl trilogy stands the test of time quite well, and the Bridge threesome is a superb reading by my standards but with Pattern Recognition, Gibson enters new territory, a mature, fully formed Gibson that dazzles and entertains in equal measure. I've read Pattern Recognition more times than I can remember and when I hit a slow patch of interesting new work I read it again. His use of language is poetic in the sense that it feels beautiful rolling thru my

mind as I read leaving a sense of pleasure. Highly recommended.

Just not for me. Believe me, I hate to say anything negative about the great writing of William Gibson. However, I just could not get into this book through the first three-quarters. I thought it ended well, but had a hard time getting there.

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