2. OPPRESSION, VIOLENT RESISTANCE OF DAVID MARTINEZ AND ITS IMPACT ON HIM AND HIS PEOPLE IN THE ANIME *CYBERPUNK: EDGERUNNERS* TOWARDS ARASAKA CORPORATION

In this chapter, I include the application of the theories while providing evidence from the text. The chapter is divided into three parts. First, the types of oppression that happened to David Martinez. I analyzed the text to prove four types of oppression that happened to David which are marginalization, violence, cultural imperialism, and powerlessness. Second, David Martinez's strategies to resist the oppression of Arasaka Corporation. I analyze the text to prove how David resists Arasaka's corporation through Fanon's theory of resistance to violence which is developing self-independence and developing the use of violence. Third, the impacts of the resistance on David Martinez and his gang members. I analyze the text to prove how the resistance results in death and rebirth of humanization.

2.1 Types of oppression that happen to David Martinez

In this part, I prove the kinds of oppression that happened to David. Based on the theory of Five Faces of Oppression by Iris Marrion Young, I find four types of oppression that can be applied to David. They are marginalization, violence, cultural imperialism, and powerlessness.

2.1.1 Marginalization on David Through Social Exclusion

As a lower-class citizen in Night City, David faces marginalization in his everyday life. David is marginalized by being discriminated against and looked down upon by the people from higher-class who try to deny David access to basic services. David's marginalization is not merely about material deprivation but also being denied opportunities for meaningful social participation. Marginalization can be dangerous because expelling an individual from useful participation in social life could subject them to severe material deprivation and even worse, extermination. This is evident when he attends Arasaka Academy, a prestigious school owned by Arasaka Corporation that is meant for the wealthy and high-class citizens where he gets marginalized by some of the students that he does not belong to study. In episode one of the anime, the school principal said this towards David after he caused a hardware malfunction

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during his class because he was using the cheap version of the hardware "I believe this is a good opportunity to reconsider David's situation. Well, David does not fit in with his classmates, a change in environment could benefit—." (Imaishi, 2022,09:45) From the quote above, it is shown that David is being marginalized on the principal's behalf. The principal is trying to deny David from participating in school activities as it is inferred from his words that David does not fit to study with other students that are high-class citizens, and the principal suggests that David should go study somewhere else. Another proof that he is being marginalized is cemented by his conversation with the son of Arasaka's president itself after school. "Drop out of the Academy. Learn to take a hint, David Martinez. Our class. You're not welcome." (Imaishi, 2022,16:00). The conversation above shows the example of David Martinez being marginalized within Arasaka Academy. By telling David to "drop out of the Academy," the classmate is actively seeking to deny David the opportunities and resources that he rightfully deserves from the school.

A marginalization doesn't only include material deprivation but it also includes social deprivation. Young argues that "Thus while marginalization definitely entails a serious issue of distributive justice,it also involves the deprivation of cultural , practical , and institutionalized conditions for exercising capacities in a context of recognition and interaction." (Young, 2004, p. 55). The attempt to push David out of the school shows how his access to quality education is kept by those in positions of privilege, showing the marginalization of David who has no privilege. Not only that, but David is denied the right to participate in a social activity which is continuing his study in the academy. Young states that "marginalization is unjust because it blocks the opportunity to exercise capacities in socially defined and recognized ways." (Young, 2004, p. 54). This is exemplified through the dialogue of David's classmate Katsuo. "Time to get gone. Just drop out, why don't ya?" said Katsuo. "Huh?" said David. "You're a misfit, an anomaly. Human but trash, and there's nothing that can change that." (Imaishi, 2022, 16:38-16:44). Katsuo is the son of an Arasaka executioner who does not want low class people such as David in his environment, therefore he is gatekeeping and marginalizing David from the social activity of school.

This marginalization happens to David because he is a lower-class citizen allowing the citizens from the high-class with power to do whatever they want to David. David is not allowed to be present in their environment thus, David is not allowed to develop his full potential as a human being because of the marginalization happening to him. From that illustration I can see

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that the effect of marginalization on David is a very dangerous form of oppression as David is expelled from useful participation in social life and subjected to severe material deprivation and even extermination.

Therefore, the marginalization that David faces at Arasaka Academy can be considered as a manifestation of the systemic oppression that permeates every aspect of life in Night City. The difference between the wealthy corporate elite and the group of lower classes is not merely a matter of individual prejudice but is deeply rooted in the system of society that Arasaka Corporation influences. The dominance of mega-corporations of Arasaka ensures that power and resources remain concentrated in the hands of a privileged few, while those at the bottom in Night City, like David, are left to scrape by in poverty.

Figure 1. Dilapidated Housing Area (Imaishi, 2022, Ep. 1, 05:41)

As seen from figure 1, *Cyberpunk: Edgerunners* show the poor living condition during episode one when David is on his way to Arasaka Academy from his dilapidated housing area (Imaishi, 2022,05:42). People that live in this area are left to rot by the society as it is shown that the scene illustrates how people that are overdosed with drugs, people doing immoral acts in public, and crimes are a common day to day occurrences. (Imaishi, 2022,05:42).

Figure 2. Household Washing Machine Does Not Work Without Money (Imaishi, 2022, Ep. 1, 16:15)

Figure 2 demonstrates how Arasaka marginalizes people based on their economic status. David's financial status determines his access to resources and technology, even for matters as basic as using the washing machine. Arasaka Corporation denies David's access to using the washing machine due to his lack of financial resources. (Imaishi, 2022, 04:12). Figure 1 and 2 from above shows how Arasaka Corporation, the mega corporation that holds the most control in the city, only nurtures people that belong to their corporate group while leaving and oppressing those that are at the bottom of the chain. The city in which Arasaka Corporation influences creates a material marginalization where people that are in a lower-class group suffer and lack access to the basic things to survive.

2.1.2 David as the Victim of Violence

Besides being marginalized, David also experiences violence. As a member of the lower-class group, David is vulnerable to two types of violences. In the text, David experiences two types of violence which are physical violence and mental violence. These forms of violence are common to be found against the lower-class group in the oppressive Night City.

a. Physical Violence

Physical violence happens when one attacks someone physically which causes pain or physical injury. Physical violence is oppressive because of the harm it causes which dehumanizes the subject affected by it. The violence that David experiences happens because he is a member

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of a low-class citizen group. Violence is systemic as it is directed at members of a group just because they are members of that group. Arasaka Corporation rule creates an unequal and unjust society marked by the contrast between lower-class and high-class citizens. It can be seen from the lack of basic rights and protections for the low-class citizens. The wealthy citizen, exemplified by the privileged students at Arasaka Academy, enjoys all the benefits that Arasaka offers from healthcare to protection, while the low-class citizen like David is left to struggle. This social context plays a significant role in perpetuating systemic violence against marginalized groups like David Martinez. Young argues that "What makes violence a phenomenon of social injustice, and not merely an individual moral wrong, is its systemic character, its existence as a social practice." (Young, 2004, p. 61). What makes violence an aspect of oppression is the social context in which these acts take place. This context not only allows but even justifies these violent actions. This is evident in episode one, David is beaten up by three of his classmates because of an accident that he had. David's classmate, Katsuo provoked David for being poor and got in a fight with David where David was heavily injured after the fight (Imaishi, 2022, 17:50).
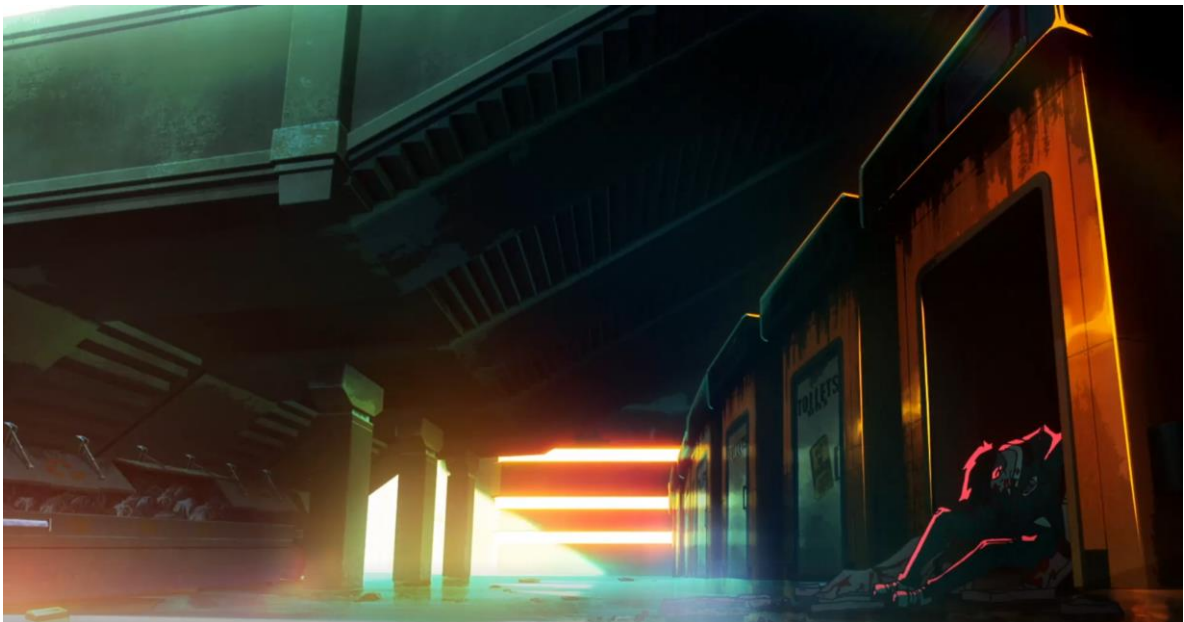

Figure 3 David Being Left Bruised (Imaishi, 2022, Ep. 1, 18:37)

In figure 3, the camera shot shows the brutality and dehumanizing nature of the violence he experiences. The fact that this violence takes place in broad daylight, in a public space, and

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goes unchallenged by any authority figures, visually reinforces the idea that such acts are condoned and even justified by the social structure of Night City. The actions of his classmates from Arasaka Academy are considered systemic violence, they prey on the weak and vulnerable people, which is a low-class citizen like David. David is unable to fight back because he is physically weaker than them. From this illustration, I can see that David is conditioned to accept violence as an inescapable reality of his existence. The fact that he is physically weaker than the privileged people further strengthens his vulnerability, as he lacks the means to defend himself against their aggression. This results in David getting heavy injuries from those who are in power. Regardless of what David does, he is prone to be subject to physical violence because he is a member of a low-class citizen.

b. Mental Violence

Mental violence refers to the behavior that aims to abuse an individual's emotional well-being, often causing stress and trauma through non-physical means. This happens to David throughout the series as he is consistently subjected to dehumanizing treatment and discrimination. The effect of this oppression takes a toll on David's emotional health. Evidence of this could be seen during episode one, when David's mother was driving David home from Arasaka Academy after his conversation with the academy's principal, they were caught amid a gang attack (Imaishi, 2022,11:51). This violent attack causes David's mother to be deceased after the paramedic team that came to the area chose to not rescue David's mother.

Figure 2. David's mother being left to die by the paramedic team (Imaishi, 2022, Ep. 1, 12:53)

In Figure 2, David witnesses her mother being left alone around the place of accident by the paramedic team as they did not have insurance for the service. David is left emotionally shattered because his mother is the only source of support and love in the unforgiving city of Night City, which causes David's mental well-being to break after the incident.

Furthermore, the oppressive social structure in Night City normalizes violence as a daily reality for those at the bottom of the hierarchy in Night City. David is not given access to safety in the city and is treated as disposable by those in power, where he becomes the target for violence. The threat of gang violence forms a terror that shapes the lives of people like David. This lack of consequences for violence against the marginalized effectively displays how the social context allows violence. When David's mother is killed in the crossfire of a gang shootout, there is no justice or accountability, showing how little societal value is placed on the lives of the oppressed. This shows that violence against them is acceptable, even inevitable. From the illustration of the social context in Night City, I can see the concept of violence as oppression by demonstrating how systemic inequalities, lack of institutional protections, and societal devaluation of marginalized lives foster an environment where violence against the oppressed is normalized and justified.

Thus, Arasaka's Corporation's way to uphold the law is considered a violence towards David's mental state. Arasaka Corporation's forces are not hesitant in the slightest to use violence as a way for them to maintain control. Another example could be seen in episode 6, during the confrontation with corporate forces, David witnesses the deaths of his crew members Dorio and Maine (Imaishi, 2022, 19:18). This scene illustrates another example of systemic violence towards the oppressed people in Night City. While David and his crew are doing their mercenary job where they attempt to escape with the kidnapped Arasaka executive Tanaka, they find themselves outgunned and overwhelmed by the ruthless corporate forces. The violence escalates when Maine, already struggling with the symptoms of *cyberpsychosis* or excessive use of cybernetic technology, loses control and inadvertently kills Dorio in the chaos. Consumed by guilt and despair, Maine then chooses to sacrifice himself by detonating a grenade, taking out several police officers in the process (Imaishi, 2022, 18:45). This moment shows the desperate measures that the oppressed are driven to in the face of overwhelming odds. While David himself is not physically harmed in this particular scene, the loss of his comrades and the

brutality of their deaths leave deep emotional scars. He is forced to watch helplessly as his friends are killed, unable to save them from the physical violence of corporate forces. This traumatic experience further highlights the constant threat of violence that hangs over the lives of those who resist the oppressive system. The constant force that is used by the corporate forces in this scene shows the lengths that Arasaka Corporation are willing to go to maintain their control over Night City. The swift and merciless response to the kidnapping of a single Arasaka executive stands in stark contrast to the lack of protection and support afforded to the countless civilians who suffer under the corporation's rule. This example shows the systemic nature of violence, which is wielded as a tool to preserve the status quo of the one in power being able to do what they want against those who do not have power.

As a consequence of using Arasaka's tool, David experiences another form of mental violence from his very own technology he uses to resist Arasaka Corporation. It is shown that the cybernetic technology that is used to enhance his physical capabilities takes a great toll on David's mental health. The concept of *cyberpsychosis* serves as a metaphor for the mental violence experienced by David Martinez as he navigates the oppressive and dehumanizing world of Night City. *Cyberpsychosis* is a condition resulting from excessive use of cybernetic augmentation, which is exemplified by a deterioration of mental health and a tendency for violent behavior. For David, the psychological strain of living under Arasaka Corporation's oppressive control, coupled with his increasing reliance on cybernetic technology, renders him vulnerable to this form of mental violence. As David becomes increasingly entangled in the web of violence and exploitation perpetuated by Arasaka Corporation, his reliance on cybernetic augmentations to survive and rebel against the system that Arasaka builds contributes to his psychological deterioration.

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Figure 5. David having a mental breakdown (Imaishi, 2022, Ep. 8, 01:19)

Figure 5 shows a scene from episode 8 where David's symptoms of *cyberpsychosis, which* is overdose of the cybernetic enhancement, becomes particularly evident to David as he begins to experience hallucinations and exhibit erratic, violent behavior (Imaishi, 2022, 01:19). David's mind is shown to deteriorate as the scene shows that David is sitting in the corner of Arasaka's facility room in the dark with his hand on his head. This scene shows that David is not able to think properly as he proceeds to kill innocent people that he sees. This paradox is in David's decision to install the cybernetic implant, which grants him superhuman speed and reflexes. While this augmentation initially appears to empower David, allowing him to challenge Arasaka Corporation forces and carve out a space for himself in Night City, it also serves as a double-edged sword causing his own mental health to decline as the effect of using this technology from Arasaka Corporation. By integrating Arasaka's technology into his body, David unwittingly becomes more deeply trapped in the company's oppressive power structure, both physically and psychologically. These symptoms serve as a powerful visual representation of the psychological toll that the oppressive system has taken on David's mental well-being. As he struggles to maintain his grip on reality, David is able to be taken advantage of by people of power in Night City.

2.1.3 David Being Culturally Dominated

David also experiences oppression in the form of domination through Araska Culture. Cultural Imperialism involves the universalization of a dominant group culture and establishes it as the norm. In David's case, he is being forced to adapt to Arasaka's culture. Cultural Imperialism involves the dominant group replacing previous culture and establishes the dominant group culture as the norm. In the case of David, he is forced to follow Arasaka's values while also abandoning any culture he has left. Young argues that "The dominant group reinforces its position by bringing the other groups under the measure of its dominant norms." (Young, 2004, p. 59). Arasaka Corporation places a high value on advanced technology, particularly in the form of cybernetic enhancements. In this society, an individual's status and agency are often determined by the quality and extent of their cybernetic augmentations. This cultural norm is pervasive, shaping everything from social interactions to job prospects and overall quality of life. David, who comes from a lower-class citizen, lacks access to expensive cybernetic enhancements that are the standard in Night City's culture. David is then oppressed as his own culture is not included and is being dominated by the one from Arasaka Corporation. Cultural imperialism happens through the universalization of Arasaka's culture as it becomes the norm in Night City. Throughout the text, Arasaka's dominant control over Night City has succeeded in establishing their technological advancement, ethics, and product as the norm of society. David comes from a low-income working-class family which struggles to make ends meet in the capitalistic society of Night City. This norm overshadows any culture that David has and forces him to adapt to the capitalist nature of the city which eventually shapes David's perspectives and experience around Arasaka Corporation. David being forced to adapt to the values and culture of Arasaka is an example of oppression in Cultural Imperialism. Arasaka's technological advancements, particularly in the realm of cybernetic enhancements, are presented as a necessity in Night City. This corporate-driven culture is so dominant that it effectively erases and replaces any alternative.

Furthermore, In Night City, having cybernetic enhancements is seen as a necessity for everyday lives and survival, in other words it has become an extension of a body. As a result, even those who cannot afford or access these enhancements, like David, are compelled to conform to this standard to gain any bit of agency or recognition in the city. This pressure to this culture is exemplified in episode two when David, desperate to escape his powerless position, undergoes a dangerous and illegal cybernetic enhancement procedure (Imaishi, 2022,00:15). David was constantly ridiculed by people in power for not having these enhancements. It can be seen later that when he alters his body, he succumbs to Arasaka's vision of the ideal citizen,

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David is basically forced to sacrifice his own identity to survive in Night City. By being forced to follow the dominant culture of Arasaka Corporation, which is cybernetic enhancement and having his own culture overshadowed by the dominant technological culture of Arasaka Corporation, David experiences oppression in the form of cultural imperialism.

2.1.4 David Being Powerless

David faces oppression in the form of powerlessness. Powerlessness is a type of oppression that controls and oppresses the inferior group, making sure they obey the one that has power. David is powerless as he always finds himself obeying orders without the authority issuing it to them, not being able to do anything or change anything about his position as the Arasaka Corporation, the one that superior group has more power. David experiences oppression in the form of powerlessness in various ways such as lack of control, decision-making and autonomy.

From his experience it can be seen, this is shown through the lack of control David has over his life. As a member of the low-class citizens in Night City, David is born into a position of powerlessness. Young argues that "The life of the nonprofessional by comparison is powerless in the sense that it lacks this orientation toward the progressive development of capacities and avenues for recognition." (Young, 2004, p. 57). This means that nonprofessionals that include low-wage workers such as David compared to others such as corporate workers from Arasaka Corporation have no clear course for advancing his life as he does not have the proper education and knowledge required to rise in status. He grows up in a society where the mega-corporation Arasaka holds almost complete control over the lives of its citizens, particularly those from without wealth. Because he is born into poverty and lacks access to resources that could help him change his situation. It is shown to be impossible to escape poverty in Night City. David as well as other people from the low-class citizens are not able to change their economic circumstances as they are not given the resources and opportunities to improve their condition. This lack of control over his material condition is one of the aspects that contributes to him being oppressed as powerless.

Because of this lack of common control, David's lack of autonomy is shown when he is in the face of corporate power. As Arasaka Corporation holds the most power in Night City, they can control every aspect of society. This means those in power are capable of doing everything that they wish, and the ones that are inferior are at the mercy of those in power's decisions and

policies. David is shown to always obey Arasaka's power even without them being present in the place. It is exemplified through the loss of his mother, who suffered from injuries sustained in a drive-by shooting. The paramedic team refuses to help David's mother because they are not subscribed to the healthcare plan. This ends with David's mother's death as she did not receive immediate help. The one in power, Arasaka deems that David's mother does not need to be saved because they have the power to do so and does not suffer any consequences.

In addition, David's being powerless is shown when he has limited options when it comes to decision-making. Ideal decision making would mean that an individual is able to freely choose their decision to prosper and nurture themselves. However, oppressed people like David are powerless to make any decision-making. Young argues that "Nonprofessionals, on the other hand, lack autonomy, and in both their working and their consumer client lives often stand under the authority of professionals." (Young, 2004, p. 57). David is often forced to make decisions based on survival rather than free choice. For example, in episode two, David is left alone and completely broke, not having any money to pay his remaining debts, David is then forced to make a desperate decision to have a stolen military-grade cybernetic enhancement implant installed in his body just to survive (Imaishi, 2022, 00:15). This choice is driven by a lack of alternatives and the need to escape his oppressive circumstances. This illustrates how powerlessness inhibits the development of one's capacities, which pushes David to do desperate measures to escape powerlessness which is implanting the stolen military-grade cybernetic enhancement implant.

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Figure 6. David Receiving Bill Options for Her Mother's Burial (Imaishi, 2022, Ep. 1, 18:52)

Figure 6 shows David holding a tablet showing the bill options for her mother's burial. David was forced to accept not being able to get the proper medical service for her mother which resulted in her death. A result which would have been different had David's mother got a job in the corporation which guarantees herself and David's safety. Below is a conversation between David and the doctor:

> "She was stable this morning but then her vitals began to nosedive really out of nowhere," said the doctor. "But you said the surgery was successful," said David. "True. But only so much we can do on the discount package. Worn down as she was, I doubt she'd have lasted much longer. Overworked, seemed to me. Anyway I'm supposed to tell you we offer some burial options. People in Night City want corpo gigs for a reason, kid" (Imaishi, 2022, 18:52-19:15).

It can be inferred from the dialogue above that the doctor could have saved David's mother as he had said that the surgery was successful, however because of the discount package that David chose, the doctor chose to not exert all efforts to save David's mother. Thus David is powerless as he is always at the mercy of someone who has more power than him and agrees with them. David is at the mercy of Arasaka's power. Since, Arasaka Corporation, as the one who holds the most control in the Night City, has more power than anyone else that lives in it. This means all the citizens are inferior compared to Arasaka Corporation, especially the lower-class

one, David has no choice but to obey the one that has more power than him, which is Arasaka by agreeing with all their policies and decisions. From the illustration, I can see that the powerless have no agency or capability because they always find themselves obeying those in power even needing those who have power to issue the order.

2.2. David Martinez's strategies to resist the oppression of Arasaka Corporation

In this part, I prove two strategies that David uses to do his resistance against Arasaka Corporation. The first part is by David developing self-independence. Fanon suggests that freedom in mental state and development of self-independence are essential for them to resist oppression. To resist this psychological colonization, the oppressed must engage in a process of self-liberation, reclaiming their own identity and agency from the structures of oppression that have shaped them. The second part is by David developing the use of violence. Fanon argues that violence is not only legitimate but also a necessary means of resistance for the oppressed, serving as a way of reclaiming their humanity and agency in the face of a system that has denied them both. Violence is not just a physical act but also a psychological and existential one, a way of breaking free from the mental chains of oppression and asserting one's right to exist and to fight back.

2.2.1 Developing Self-Independence

To resist his oppressors, David develops his self-independence. Fanon (1963) discusses the steps for decolonization:

"Decolonization is the veritable creation of new men. But this creation owes nothing of its legitimacy to any supernatural power; the 'thing' which has been colonized becomes man during the same process by which it frees itself. In decolonization, there is therefore the need of a complete calling in question of the colonial situation." (p. 36).

In this passage, Fanon argues that decolonization or in other words resistance against oppression involves the creation of "new men" who have freed themselves from the colonization. This process of liberation is not granted by any external power but is achieved through the very act of resistance itself. This means that decolonization requires the oppressed to question the colonial order, which can be interpreted as a call for the oppressed to assert their own agency and humanity.

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The colonized do not have the will to resist if their mind is shut by the colonizer, therefore it is important to develop self-independence. The first step in developing self-independence is to reject the oppressor's narrative that dehumanizes and devalues the oppressed. In David's case, he begins to question and reject the oppressor's narrative imposed by Arasaka, which views him as disposable and inferior due to his lower-class background and lack of advanced cybernetic enhancements. By rejecting this narrative, David starts to cultivate a sense of self-worth and dignity that is not dependent on the approval of his oppressors. As a member of the low-class citizen, David is dehumanized by Arasaka's oppression. This oppression is evident before he becomes an *edgerunner* which is a term for mercenary. This characterizes life for those at the bottom of Night City's social hierarchy, David accepts everything that Arasaka throws at him.

However, as David becomes increasingly aware of the injustices that are happening in his life, he begins to reject the notion that his worth and potential are lower by those in power. The visual representation of David's transformation and growing self-independence is shown throughout the anime's portrayal of his resistance against Arasaka's oppression. The turning point in David's development of self-independence occurs at the end of episode one, when he finally begins to resist the ones that oppress him. He decides to develop self-independence, as he thinks that there is no one else but him that can help him escape the oppressive nature of the city. It is most important for oppressed people like David to reclaim his identity and agency in the face of oppression. For David, this process involves embracing his own values, desires, and sense of self, rather than conforming to the expectations and norms imposed by Arasaka and Night City society. By choosing to undergo illegal cybernetic enhancements David not only seeks to gain power, autonomy but also his independence. After the operation to enhance his physical capability, David starts to be able to reliably fulfill his daily needs. Because of his enhanced physical capability, he can take advantage of moving quickly in a short time. This is when David meets Lucy, an *edgerunner* that makes ends meet by doing criminal work. In episode two, David works together with Lucy to utilize David's advantage of moving quickly to steal money from people that work for Arasaka Corporation in a train (Imaishi, 2022, 09:30). David's physical enhancements not only grant him power and autonomy but also allow him to resist the oppressive Arasaka structures that previously disrupted his way to live life freely. His newfound abilities enable him to meet his basic needs and challenge the dominant power of Arasaka Corporation, as evidenced by his collaboration with Lucy to steal from Arasaka employees. This

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act of resistance demonstrates David's refusal to be defined by Arasaka's narrative and his determination to shape his own destiny by being independent from the oppressor.

Figure 7. David Corporate Worker's Chip Containing Money in the Train (Imaishi, 2022, Ep. 2, 00:48)

It could be seen in figure 7, that in episode 2, his physical capability changed drastically. David can move quickly in a short period of time. This allows him to sustain himself financially through stealing from the corporate people. (Imaishi, 2022, 00:34). This means that David is resisting the oppressive living conditions set by Arasaka Corporation by having the will to reject the oppressor's narrative that is imposed towards him.

Ultimately, through this process of reclaiming his identity and agency, David embodies the oppressed individual's struggle to reclaim his humanity in the face of oppression. David rejects the oppressor's dehumanizing narrative and actively resists the systemic inequalities that constrain his life, by developing his mind to claim self-independence in his struggle against oppression.

2.2.2 Developing the Use of Violence

David develops the use of violence as it is a legitimate and necessary means for the oppressed to resist the dehumanizing effects of oppression and reclaim their agency. Fanon (1963) argues why the colonized chose to exert their force:

The colonized man finds his freedom in and through violence. This rule of conduct enlightens the agent because it indicates to him the means and the end. The argument the native chooses has been furnished by the settler, and by an ironic turning of the tables it is the native who now affirms that the colonialist understands nothing but force." (p. 84)

This passage highlights the idea that the oppressed individual may turn to violence as a means of resistance because it is the only language that the oppressor understands. Fanon argues that the colonized individual "finds his freedom in and through violence" because it is the tool that the colonizer has used to maintain their dominance.

David's gradual embrace of violence can be seen as his response to the systemic violence and oppression he faces in Night City. The oppressed must sometimes use the oppressor's tools to dismantle the oppressive system. David's development of violence as a form of resistance is a gradual process, beginning with his decision to undergo illegal cybernetic enhancements. By augmenting his body with powerful technology, David seeks to level the playing field against his oppressors and gains the means to fight back against the systemic violence that constrains his life. In episode five, David and his gang members accept a mercenary job to sabotage Arasaka Corporation by ambushing the CEO of Arasaka (Imaishi, 2022, 19:39). His participation in criminal activities and violent confrontations with Arasaka's CEO can be seen as a form of direct resistance against the corporation's oppressive power and a refusal to submit to the dehumanizing conditions it imposes upon him, and others like him. The visual contrast between David's enhanced physical abilities and the vulnerability of his targets serves to show the nature of his violent resistance. By turning the tools of oppression against the oppressors themselves, David is asserting his agency and rejecting the dehumanizing narratives that have been imposed upon him. The show does not shy away from showing blood for the action scenes emphasizing the horror and violent nature of Night City.

Figure 8. David developing the use of violence by pointing a gun to a target (Imaishi, 2022, Ep. 4, 17:45)

Figure 8 shows a scene where David starts to embrace his way of violence as he does not shy from using firearms to kill his target that tried to do harm to him. The close-up to David's face, set in a determined face, conveys his hardened resolve with lethal force as a means of asserting power and ensuring survival in the ruthless world he lives in. (Imaishi, 2022, 17:45). From the illustration above, I can see that violence in the context of resistance is not merely a reactionary or mindless act, but rather a deliberate and purposeful response to the violence and injustice inflicted upon the oppressed. By engaging in violent resistance, the oppressed reject their assigned status as passive victims and become active agents in their own liberation. Violence then becomes a means of reclaiming David's dignity, asserting David's rights and challenging the oppressor's dominance.

2.3 The Effects of Resistance Towards David and Others

In this part, I prove the effects of resistance towards David and his gang member, Lucy. The first part shows one of the consequences of violence resistance, which is death. The second part shows that resistance can affect others in a way that humanizes them during their dehumanizing circumstances.

2.3.1 David's Death

David Martinez's violent resistance against the oppressive forces of Arasaka Corporation ultimately leads to his tragic death. As Fanon (1963) argues that:

"The native who decides to put the program into practice, and to become its moving force, is ready for violence at all times. From birth it is clear to him that this narrow world, strewn with prohibitions, can only be called in question by absolute violence." (p. 37).

The passage above shows Fanon's argument that when one treads the path of violence means one must be ready for the presence of violence at all times which includes sacrifice or death. These are one of the potential consequences and sacrifices that come with engaging in violent struggle against oppression. Throughout the series, David's increasing involvement in the violent world of the edgerunners or mercenaries and his direct confrontations with people from Arasaka Corporation serve as a powerful form of resistance against the corporation's oppressive power. However, as he becomes more involved in the cycle of violence and the criminal underworld, David also faces the escalating risks and dangers associated with his actions. This is shown in the finale of the text, David's resistance reaches its climax when he and his members launch a direct attack on Arasaka Corporation's base to rescue Lucy and fight against the corporation (Imaishi, 2022, 15:42).

Figure 9. Adam Smasher Executes David (Imaishi, 2022, Ep. 10, 23:22)

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During this confrontation, David faces off against Arasaka's most formidable enforcer named Adam Smasher. David is ultimately outmatched by Smasher. In the final battle, David is mortally wounded, his body pushed beyond its limits as he reaches the brink of his death. From the illustration above, the path of violent resistance is full of danger and sacrifice. David who takes up arms against his oppressors faces a grave consequence in the process, which is death. David's willingness to sacrifice his life in his confrontation against Arasaka Corporation can be interpreted as he finds his freedom in violence and that David Martinez is willing to die for his cause if he is to truly reclaim their humanity. In this sense, David's death can be seen not just as a tragic loss, but also as an expression of his commitment to resistance and his refusal to submit to Arasaka's oppression.

2.3.2 Lucy's Rebirth of Humanization

David Martinez's act of resistance not only results in his own death but also leads to a rebirth of humanization for his fellow crew member, Lucy. Fanon (1963) argues how decolonization and resistance leads to humanization:

> "Decolonization never takes place unnoticed, for it influences individuals and modifies them fundamentally. It transforms spectators crushed with their inessentiality into privileged actors, with the grandiose glare of history's floodlights upon them. It brings a natural rhythm into existence, introduced by new men, and with it a new language and a new humanity." (p. 36).

This passage suggests that the process of decolonization and resistance against oppression has a transformative effect on individuals, turning the oppressed from passive into active agents of change and creating a new sense of humanity. In other words, just as decolonization is seen by Fanon as a process of reclaiming and reasserting one's humanity in the face of dehumanizing oppression, resistance can also be a way for individuals to assert their dignity, agency, and human worth.

Violent resistance against oppression can have a humanizing effect on both the individual and the collective. Lucy is portrayed as a character who has been deeply affected by the dehumanizing nature of the oppressive system in Night City. As a result of her traumatic past and the constant struggles she faces in the present, Lucy has developed a cynical outlook towards life, often prioritizing her own survival above all else. When David sacrifices his life to save Lucy and strikes a blow against Arasaka's tyrannical rule, his act of resistance becomes a catalyst for Lucy to humanize herself, reclaiming Lucy's own humanity to join David's cause

which is to resist Arasaka. Lucy begins to discover an inspiration and motivation in her life that allows her to escape the oppressive condition of Arasaka Corporation in Night City. David's commitment to fight against the oppressor, even at the risk of costing his own life, serves as an example and inspiration for Lucy. By witnessing David's selfless acts of resistance and his determination to create a better living condition, Lucy starts to question her decision to stay in the cycle of oppression and exploitation of Night City. This means that Lucy starts to resist Arasaka's oppression.

Because the process of resistance is humanizing, it allows the oppressed to assert their agency and reclaim their dignity in the face of dehumanizing oppression. The struggle of resistance for liberation is not limited to only a fight for material but also the process of psychological emancipation. Lucy's humanization is in the form of her achieving her dream that was previously suppressed by Arasaka Corporation's oppression. Having dreams is an important aspect of humanization for Lucy as it reflects her innate desire for the pursuit of growth and meaning beyond just mere survival as oppression causes Lucy to be reduced to just tools of productivity for Arasaka Corporation. Pursuing dreams becomes a powerful assertion of Lucy's humanity and self-worth as a human that refuses to be oppressed. Challenging and going against the dehumanizing narratives imposed by Arasaka Corporation means Lucy is asserting her worth as human. Achieving this dream becomes an act of resistance, as it defies the oppressive narrative by Arasaka Corporation that limits Lucy's worth and potential as a human. Lucy's humanization begins when she starts to actualize her dream after the event of David's final resistance against Arasaka. Lucy's journey to the moon is the fulfillment of a shared dream between her and David. In episode two, Lucy shared with David a virtual reality experience where they both reside on the moon and jump freely in space. (Imaishi, 2022, 19:20). From the scene above, it can be seen that Lucy has always longed for a dream for freedom in her life which is escaping from the oppressive area of Night City. The scene of Lucy showing her dream shows that she has desire as a human refusing to become just a mere tool that is limited to only surviving and being exploited by Arasaka Corporation.
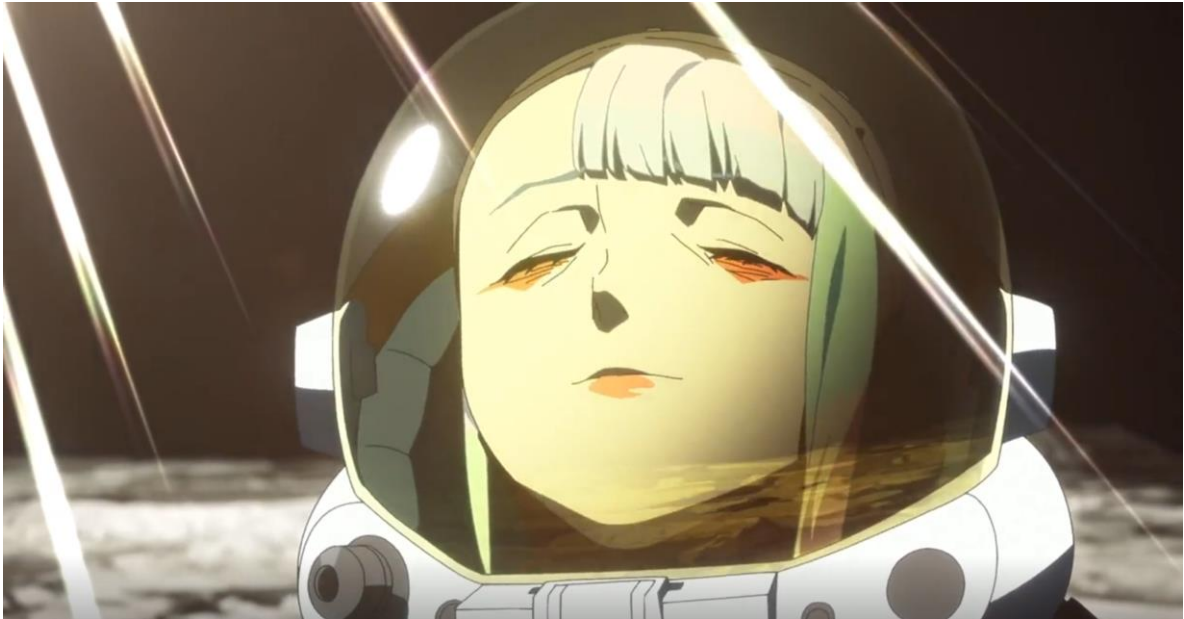
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Figure 10. Lucy's Happiness with Her New Life in The Moon (Imaishi, 2022, Ep. 10, 23:22)

Figure 10 depicts the happiness on Lucy's face as she embraces her new life on the moon. This signifies a rebirth of humanization for Lucy who has escaped Arasaka's oppressive living conditions as she is starting a new life on the moon.

Hence, the moon signifies a safe haven as Lucy is finally free from Arasaka Corporation. David can fulfill Lucy's dream, saving her from the oppressive nature of Arasaka Corporation. In the final episode, it could be seen that Lucy was standing on the surface of the moon, gazing up at the star in a moment of quiet contemplation (Imaishi, 2022, 24:18). This scene is a visual representation of Lucy's humanization, as she is finally able to experience a sense of freedom and self-determination that had been denied to her for so long as she pursues her life beyond the cage that is Night City. This shows the effects of resistance towards others, particularly Lucy. As the oppressed dare to dream and fight for the realization of their dream in the face of oppressive forces, the oppressed can reclaim their humanity. Lucy's transformation from a cynical survivor to someone who embraces her dreams to reclaim her humanity serves as an example of the effect of resistance that can affect other people. I can see by examining the impact of David's resistance on Lucy's life that acts of resistance, even those that may seem small or individual, can have great consequences. Lucy's rebirth and humanization serve as an example that resistance is not only about challenging the oppressive structures but also about reclaiming the fundamental dignity and worth of a human being.

In conclusion, David's act of resistance and sacrifice not only leads to his own tragic death but also sparks a rebirth of humanization for his fellow crew member, Lucy. As a result of

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his resistance, David inspires Lucy to break free from the oppressive forces of Arasaka that once confined her, allowing her to reclaim her own humanity by pursuing her dreams, which she could not do before. David's resistance affects others, including Lucy's liberation from the oppression of Arasaka Corporation, demonstrating the rebirth of humanization through his actions.