

SOURCES & ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

Everything here is built on real research, and most of it is free. If a claim sparks a question, go to the source and check it yourself. That is the whole idea. One caveat for this title: the book is recent enough that some of the science below is still moving, so expect a few findings to be superseded.

START HERE

Smirnova, Lena, et al. "Organoid Intelligence (OI): The New Frontier in Biocomputing and Intelligence-in-a-Dish." *Frontiers in Science*, vol. 1, 2023, <https://doi.org/10.3389/fsci.2023.1017235>.

Free. Why you would build a thinking machine partly out of living tissue. The answer is energy.

Kagan, Brett J., et al. "In Vitro Neurons Learn and Exhibit Sentience When Embodied in a Simulated Game-World." *Neuron*, vol. 110, no. 23, 2022, pp. 3952-69, <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.neuron.2022.09.001>.

DishBrain: 800,000 neurons in a dish, learning to play Pong. The closest thing built to a SecUnit's organic half.

BUILDING THINGS THAT ARE PARTLY ALIVE

FinalSpark. "Neuroplatform." *FinalSpark*, finalspark.com/neuroplatform/.

Living human brain organoids, rented over the internet since 2024. The efficiency figures come from the company selling access.

Woepfel, Kevin, et al. "Explant Analysis of Utah Electrode Arrays Implanted in Human Cortex for Brain-Computer-Interfaces." *Frontiers in Bioengineering and Biotechnology*, vol. 9, 2021, <https://doi.org/10.3389/fbioe.2021.759711>.

Free. What happens where metal meets living neural tissue, in arrays removed from patients. The photographs make the point.

Rouwkema, Jeroen, and Ali Khademhosseini. "Vascularization and Angiogenesis in Tissue Engineering: Beyond Creating Static Networks." *Trends in Biotechnology*, vol. 34, no. 9, 2016, pp. 733-45.

Why engineered tissue cannot be made thicker, and why Murderbot's repair rates do not hold up.

CONTEXT AND RECEPTION

"Martha Wells." *Science Fiction Awards Database*, Locus Science Fiction Foundation, sfadb.com.

Free. Every award and nomination by year, including this novella's four.

Kantor, Jodi, and David Streitfeld. "Inside Amazon: Wrestling Big Ideas in a Bruising Workplace." *The New York Times*, 15 Aug. 2015.

How a major employer treated its workers, argued nationally two years before this novella.

Anderson, R. S. "'I Don't Want to Be Human': The Neurodivergent Reader Response to Martha Wells' Murderbot Diaries Series." *Ought: The Journal of Autistic Culture*, vol. 5, 2024, <https://doi.org/10.9707/2833-1508.1149>.

Free. How autistic readers claimed this character. The clearest case of the book changing a real conversation.



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