

Jura Gentium Cinema.

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Introduction

 by *Agustín Berti and Andrea Torrano*

According to the most extended idea, a cyborg is defined by its hybrid condition: a combination of biological and technological components. The history of cinema has depicted cyborgs in many ways and in many genres, especially science fiction and horror, and, due to their constitutive ambiguity, frequently mixing them with aliens, mutants, androids, clones, homunculi, robots and monsters.

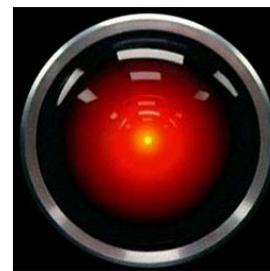


Contemporary reflection on these beings and their limits, and how we could all be cyborgs today, as biologist Donna Haraway suggests in her "Cyborg Manifesto", has found its way to the screen and has opened up a debate that goes well beyond science fiction and mainstream cinema. Cyborgs have become a metaphor for discussions on ethics, biopolitics, gender, migration, medicalisation and digitalisation as well as the classic discussions on the nature-culture opposition and the limits of humanness. This dossier presents different, and sometimes controversial, characterisations of cyborgs in the screen and their implications. In this sense, the cyborg issue goes well beyond science fiction, and also looks into class B comedies and documentaries.

Offering a wide scope of cyborg depictions, *Anatomy of the Posthuman Body* by Marty Roth focuses on the cyborg body and the distinction between male and female body in different films such as **The Fly**, **Blade Runner** and the **Terminator**. Bianca Westermann's paper, *Dear Cyborg, what's next?*, is based on the assumption of a decline of the cyborg era and comments on the reformulation of the cyborg concept in two films: **I'm a cyborg but that's okay** and **Cyborg She**. *Seeing Double: Cyborg Law* by James Brown focuses on the vision of the cyborg and its proximity with law and death in the films **Terminator**, **Robocop** and **Gladiator**. It also offers an innovative relation between cyborgs and other archetypal

cinema types such as the gladiator and the western gunslingers. The clone as a cyborg is discussed in *Duncan Jones' Moon: Do clones dream of uncopyrighted sheep?* by Agustín Berti and Andrea Torrano. The use of biotechnology for labour exploitation by capitalism is discussed in this article along with the relation between different kinds of exploited technical beings and the possibility of rebellion against its corporate masters. *Cyborg Gazing* by Janessa Daniels reveals the cyborgisation of the colored woman body, specifically the black woman body, through violence and power, a process that racialises and genders the figure of the cyborg. The role black women occupy, work, live, and play is discussed in **The Fifth Element**. Leaving aside the sci-fi scenarios "*Algún día el mundo será nuestro*". *Fantasías cyborg y artificios sexo-genéricos en Miss Tacuarembó* by Juan Francisco Marguch extends the concept of cyborg to sexuality and gender issues as seen from the pop performative repetitions that constitute identities. Finally, *Cyborg, Scientist, or Simulacrum? Cinematic Re-visionings of Stephen Hawking* by Kristine Larsen compares different representations of Hawkings' life in documentaries and films. This essay provides a thorough discussion on the division between mind and body, and the constitution of the scientist as a cyborg.

This dossier aims at questioning established ideas on the cinema representations of cyborgs but also acknowledging its rich history on the screen. Therefore we strived to combine some "classic" perspectives on the subject but also to open up to new scholarly discussions on the problem. In order to achieve this we have selected essays produced by academics from Argentina, Canada, England, Germany and the US hoping it will generate a fruitful exchange on the cyborg as seen from very different traditions and theoretical perspectives. If we might all be cyborgs, as Donna Haraway posess, then we should very well start looking at them as if they were us.

Dossier
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