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"I Cannot Read This Story Without Rewriting It": Haraway, Cyborg Writing, and Burkean Form

Clancy Ratliff
University of Tennessee - Knoxville

To the Graduate Council:

I am submitting herewith a thesis written by Clancy Ratliff entitled ""I Cannot Read This Story Without Rewriting It": Haraway, Cyborg Writing, and Burkean Form." I have examined the final electronic copy of this thesis for form and content and recommend that it be accepted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Arts, with a major in English.

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We have read this thesis
and recommend its acceptance:

Dr. Misty G. Anderson

Dr. Mary Jo Reiff

<div align="right">

Accepted for the Council:

Dr. Anne Mayhew
Vice Provost and Dean of Graduate Studies

</div>

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"I Cannot Read This Story Without Rewriting It": Haraway, Cyborg Writing, and Burkean Form

**A Thesis
Presented for the
Master of Arts
Degree
The University of Tennessee, Knoxville**

**Clancy Ratliff
December 2001**

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Abstract

In this study, my overarching principle is that readers' ideologies are likely to influence the way they read texts, and that texts, in turn, often influence readers' preconceived ideologies. This thesis is an attempt to understand how to use the theories of Kenneth Burke, Donna Haraway, and rhetoric of technology scholars toward the goal of social change in favor of Haraway's cyborg political model, which stresses the need for unity within feminism, socialism, and other politically left groups. Burke argues that form in texts is the creation and fulfillment of desires in the audience. I examine several of Burke's texts to construct a genealogy of Burkean form. Burke states that desire is connected to the psychology of the audience, in which ideology plays a key role. Burke concludes that readers' ideologies are rooted in economic class.

I then look to Haraway, who gives a more accurate theory of factors that influence ideology in her notion of the informatics of domination, which include racism, patriarchy, capitalism, heterosexism, and colonialism, and rhetoric scholars who have responded to Haraway's cyborg theory. I review rhetoric scholarship that is concerned with the idea of cyborg writing, and point out ways the rhetoric community has implemented Haraway's theory well and ways they have misunderstood it. I conclude that cyborg writing has been associated too closely with hypertext, and that more focus should be given to the political content of texts. I argue that postcolonial literature, which is most often written from the perspective of marginalized groups, is a stronger and more thought-provoking example of cyborg writing, even if it is not hypertext. I also call for a renewed emphasis on Haraway's argument that academics need to be more involved in the activist community if social change in favor of the cyborg is to occur.

Table of Contents

List of Abbreviations

CM	"A Cyborg Manifesto: Science, Technology, and Socialist-Feminism in the Late Twentieth Century."
CS	Counter-Statement.
PLF	The Philosophy of Literary Form.
PM	"The Promises of Monsters: A Regenerative Politics for Inappropriate/d Others."

Chapter One.

Introduction: Burke, Haraway, and the Cyborg

Background

As early as the fifth century B.C.E., rhetoricians were trying to make connections with audiences. For centuries, the goal was composing a speech that successfully persuaded audiences through universality. Economically privileged white males in Classical, Humanist, Enlightenment, and even Modernist traditions were educated in the art of persuasion, and this persuasion consisted of appealing to an audience in universal terms. These terms were based on assumptions that concepts such as virtue, honor, and ethics had shared definitions that were common to all, despite the fact that both the speakers and audiences were property-holding men. Postmodernism, however, has emphasized plurality—plurality of audiences, and plurality of ideologies within those audiences.

Twentieth-century rhetorical theorist Kenneth Burke, in his theory of form, allows for mutability and plurality of audiences. His theory of form in literature, which he articulates in his 1931 monograph Counter-Statement, is based on audience response to works of art or literature, and he defines literature as simply words: any text at all. A work of literature or art only has form if it stimulates and satisfies desires in its audience. Burke explains that the psychology of the audience plays a crucial role in form, and what works for one audience will not necessarily work for another. He characterizes the psychology of the audience two ways: the psychology of form and the psychology of information. A work appeals to the psychology of form if it can be appreciated repeatedly

without the audience's tiring of it, and if the artist or writer temporarily frustrates the

audience's desire, for example, desire for a cathartic climax in the plot of a play. One of

the key assumptions involved in this idea of form is a sustained crescendo; Burke argues

that the use of crescendo speaks to human beings' desires. The psychology of information

is more concerned with novelty, ephemerality, and suspense; its appeal lies merely in the

fact that the audience does not know the outcome of the information (novel, movie, etc.).

Burke states that twentieth-century audiences are leaning toward the psychology of

information and ceasing to appreciate form. This is mostly due to changes in society,

such as the proliferation of capitalism and the privileging of science over the humanities.

Now, for example, "information sciences" and "information technology" are what Burke

would have called "god-terms."

Burke notes that society and the psychology of the audience are subject to change,

and by implication, so are audiences' responses to Burke's own theories. Burke is famous

for characterizing scholarship as *the conversation*. This conversation is held in a

metaphorical parlor where you arrive late, listen a while, speak a while, then leave with

the conversation still in full swing. It has been going on since human beings started using

words, but the popular ideas in the conversation change depending on changes in society

and depending on the voices involved. New voices put the old voices into different

perspectives, and this is what I intend to do in this thesis by contrasting Burke's theory of

form with Haraway's theory of the cyborg. Haraway explicitly states the embodiment of

her knowledge—that she is speaking from a white, female, middle-class body—whereas

Burke makes his own embodiment and life experience invisible; Haraway's cyborg defies

essentialisms, whereas it can be argued that Burke's theory of form is essentializing, if one looks to Burke for an account of where audience desire might originate.

Since the mid-1980s, the cyborg metaphor has had a profound effect on scholarship in many disciplines, including feminist theory, literary theory, science fiction studies, cultural studies, postmodern critical theory, intellectual history, history of consciousness, science studies, philosophy of science, and rhetoric, while sciences such as anthropology and biology have tended to dismiss it. The cyborg came to the academic forefront in 1985 with the publication of Haraway's essay "A Manifesto for Cyborgs: Science, Technology, and Socialist-Feminism in the 1980s." Due to representations of cyborgs in popular culture as unfeeling, often sinister beings, such as the Borg in several *Star Trek* series, audiences often recoil at the notion of the cyborg. However, Haraway portrays the cyborg image as a potentially positive, liberating political paradigm. Haraway defines the cyborg as a postmodern figure that defies dualistic boundaries such as human/machine and human/animal. For example, most human beings in 2001 have bodies that have been appropriated in some manner by technological tools, whether it be through surgical steel screws in hip bones, aortas from pigs, or vaccination against diseases. Going past this literal definition, though, Haraway argues that the breakdown of human/machine and human/animal dualisms facilitates the theorizing of breakdowns of other dualisms, such as male/female, rich/poor, black/white, individual/society, domination/subordination.

This argument is liberating to those who want to dissolve the hierarchy of the dichotomies, but alienating to those who currently possess power. The cyborg is an image of resistance: it resists labels, authority, and the "universality" embraced by Classical

and Humanist thought. The cyborg is comfortable with difference, and it champions the

marginalized. This "ironic political myth," as Haraway puts it, comes to us in the form of

writing, as writing is the vehicle through which all political myths are communicated, and

Haraway stresses the importance of writing to cyborgs. In response to Haraway's theory,

rhetoricians have been studying cyborg writing.

Cyborg writing, in its broadest definition, is the response of rhetoric and

composition theory to the cyborg. Rhetoric and composition scholars have defined

cyborg writing as hypertextual, collaborative, process-oriented, and sometimes without a

traditional hierarchical structure of one main point and several supporting points.

Hypertext writing has been heavily implicated in the definition of cyborg writing, and

most rhetoric and composition theorists have been eager to connect Haraway's cyborg

theory to the use of computer technology in composition pedagogy. Because the cyborg

is primarily a political metaphor, however, text written or read in a technological medium

is not cyborg writing if it is not intentionally political. The terms "technology" and

"technological media" can be ambiguous if one looks at them from an historical

perspective, but I am working from R.L. Rutsky's definition:

> [. . .] technology can quite literally no longer be seen as machinery, as
>
> hardware. Rather, technology becomes increasingly a matter of
>
> technologically reproduced information: images on a videotape, scenarios
>
> of a computer game, Web sites on the Internet [. . .] as the *form* of
>
> technology edges toward 'invisibility,' technology increasingly comes to
>
> be seen in the form of data or media. (15)

I use the term "technological media" expansively; Web pages and CD-ROMs are certainly under this umbrella term, but so are television and film. I do not use the term "technological media" to describe print media. Cyborg writing, if it is politically subversive of dominant ideologies and values, can take place in any medium, and it can be collaborative and process-oriented, and it does not have to have a hierarchical structure, but it must foreground its political commitment to marginalized groups and to subversion of power structures. If it does not, it fails to warrant the term "cyborg."

Purpose and Structure

My overall purpose in this thesis is to analyze the cyborg's role in contemporary rhetoric, specifically the definition of cyborg writing, and to look back at Burke's theory of form through a cyborg lens. The cyborg mind is passionately political, but it respects opinions and cultures different from its own and is comfortable with conflict as it strives for unities. The psychology of the cyborg audience, and its desires, are difficult to define as a result of diverse ideologies and backgrounds, and to try to do so would be an essentializing move, but it is safe to say that the cyborg is feminist, socialist, anti-colonialist, and anti-racist. Burke, while he critiques capitalism as a dominant ideology, does not critique patriarchy or colonialism, and rarely mentions racism. We live in a time different from Burke's, and we hear and speak in a new conversation with many more voices, although some continue to be silenced and marginalized. I intend to put Burke's theory of form into a new perspective: in the cyborg's terms.

My structure is similar to what Haraway has termed "cat's cradle." I am listening to many different thinkers, but primarily Burke and Haraway, and responding to their

arguments in each chapter with arguments of my own. As Allucquère Rosanne Stone puts it, "[. . .] I prefer to thread these discourses and hold them in productive tension rather than allowing them to collapse into a univocal account, and cat's cradle describes this move perfectly" (War 22). Below are summaries of each chapter and my arguments.

Chapter One, "Desire is Political: A Genealogy of Burkean Form," constructs a model for a possible genealogy of form based on Burke's arguments in Counter-Statement and several other books and articles. I attempt to account for what might determine audience desire according to Burke. The model goes as follows: Desire comes from the psychology of the audience. The psychology of the audience is influenced by the ideologies of the audience, and these ideologies are partly determined by economic class and material conditions. Desires for and ideologies that value information, ease, speed, and convenience might be determined by a capitalist culture. For example, America Online's slogan is "So easy to use, no wonder it's #1." America Online is desirable for so many people because it is easy and does not require much time to learn. In a culture where time is money, speed and ease become values because whatever is quick and easy does not require much time (money). I emphasize Burke's politics here because in a cyborg writing context, the writer's motive is to subvert dominant ideologies, particularly those which are ultra-capitalist, racist, and anti-feminist. I do not mean to portray Burke as a cyborg himself; he did not say much about race and certainly was not a feminist, but his socialist tendencies subvert the Cold War context in which he wrote. By noting Burke's negative view of capitalism, I want to highlight the fact that Burke is, to an extent, a Western revolutionary subject, which is part of Haraway's conception of the cyborg.

Chapter Two, "The Populist Cyborg: Academics Weaving with Activists," briefly reviews influences on Haraway's thought, including poststructuralism and deconstruction, and provides a detailed summary of Haraway's arguments in "A Cyborg Manifesto" and some other often-cited and widely anthologized essays. I point out that the audience who needs to understand Haraway's cyborg theory the most—scientists and people in powerful positions in society—tend to dismiss it, and that Haraway has been using a top-down approach by critiquing the people in power and the systems that give them their power. I argue for a top-down and bottom-up approach to social change through activism, both inside academe as new theories and outside academe as grassroots movements. That is to say, the cyborg is still an academic figure conceptualized by scholars in academic countercultures. Unless the cyborg and its politics become mainstream, lived experience in society will not change in favor of the cyborg.

Chapter Three, "'Fruitful Couplings': Conceptions and Near-Conceptions of Cyborg Writing," discusses cyborg writing in more detail. I first review Haraway's definition of cyborg writing and present a sketch of the characteristics of cyborg writing. Then I review the literature in the fields of rhetoric and composition theory that responds to Haraway's cyborg theory and contributes to the conversation about cyborg writing. I argue that rhetoricians and composition scholars have placed more importance on the collaborative, process-friendly, and hypertext potential of the cyborg than they have placed on the political motives in cyborg writing. Above all, cyborg writing is political. It can occur with one writer or more than one, and in any medium, but it must be liberal and subversive in its politics. I stress the difference between hypertext writing and cyborg writing in order to discourage an overassociation of cyborg writing with

hypertext, because hypertext can inculcate dominant ideologies and practices, which Haraway calls "the informatics of domination." My argument is that the cyborg cannot even be implicated in a discussion of hypertext writing, collaborative learning, or process writing without a discussion of cyborg politics. Rhetoric and composition scholars have not completely dismissed the political commitment of cyborg writing, but they have not always fully emphasized its importance. I present Jamaica Kincaid's <u>A Small Place</u>, a memoir about living in Antigua, which was a British colony until 1981, and an indictment of racist, capitalist, colonialist values, as a more accurate example of cyborg writing, even though it is not hypertext.

My afterword, "What is Form to a Cyborg?" revisits Burke's definition of form, and I revise his definition in cyborg terms. My intention in this conclusion is to show how one can use Burke's ideas of how audience desires are determined in order to make sense of the seductive appeal of medium and to characterize the political appeal of cyborg writing and the cyborg audience. No one medium necessarily subverts or guarantees the possibility of social change, but embracing medium for its own sake, without questioning the political implications of media and literacy, cannot further nonhierarchical, egalitarian political causes as effectively. After reading and commenting on Burke, Haraway, and other cyborg scholars separately, I want to bring them together here for a true conversation, one that helps us better understand ourselves as writers and audiences.

Chapter Two.

Desire Is Political: A Genealogy of Burkean Form

Kenneth Burke is well known in the fields of rhetoric and philosophy for many ideas: his notion that people approach ideas and texts through the terminology they know ("terministic screens"), his method of analyzing human motivation through the pentad of Act, Scene, Agent, Agency, and Purpose ("dramatism"), and his theory of language as action ("symbolic action"), to name a few. Here, I will be examining Burke's theory of literary form, which comes mostly from his earliest works, namely <u>Counter-Statement</u> and <u>The Philosophy of Literary Form</u>, which were published in 1931 and 1941 respectively. This theory is most simply expressed in what has become the commonplace, "The reader completes the form."

In his essay "Psychology and Form," Burke defines form as "the creation of an appetite in the mind of the auditor, and the adequate satisfying of that appetite" (<u>CS</u> 31). What he neglects to do, however, is explicitly answer the questions this definition and his terms "psychology of the audience" and "desire" invite: How did the psychology of the audience come to be the way it is? Where do our desires come from? Although Burke never explicitly answers these questions, much of his other work implicitly traces these issues and offers a possible genealogy for his conception of form. In sum, the genealogy is this: material conditions, or the economic and political climate, influence ideology, which influences the psychology of the audience and what they desire, which, in turn, influences what *form* is to a particular audience. In this chapter, I want to make connections among the terms "form," "desire," "psychology of the audience,"

"ideology," and "material conditions," and move toward conceptualizing contemporary audiences and what form might be in 2001.

I also want to suggest that our desires as contemporary audiences are complicated by the presence of multimedia. We desire certain media more than others, such as the Internet and television. Before I consider the role of medium along with a conception of our desires as audiences in postmodernity, I want to map out the theoretical model of the genealogy of form that Burke gives us only in pieces. Postmodern theory generally dismisses narratives of origin; therefore, I do not intend to point to any one determinant of audience desire, but I would like to provide a rough sketch of the web of factors influential upon desire, factors which reaffirm the commonplace that the writing and reading—and viewing, showing, listening, and speaking—subject is a product of social matrices. Burke recognizes that in social matrices, systems of domination affect audiences, and points to capitalism as a dominant ideology which has a negative effect on society and culture. For this reason, I present Burke as a proto-cyborg thinker; he is, to an extent, a Western revolutionary subject.

Before I explain this model of the genealogy of form, I must delineate the limitations of, and possible objections to, my argument. First, it might be argued that using Burke's notion of form in literature to analyze contemporary audiences' desires for information and multimedia is a misappropriation because Burke's use of the term "literature" has traditional aesthetic implications; in other words, Burke is talking about poetry, drama, and fiction. In "Lexicon Rhetoricae," though, he defines literature as "written or spoken words" (CS 123). My rationale for using Burke's term "form" to encompass media is this: To Burke, form certainly has aesthetic implications, but it is a

kind of *rhetorical* appeal. He writes, "Form, having to do with the creation and gratification of needs, is 'correct' in so far as it gratifies the needs which it creates. The appeal of the form in this sense is obvious: Form *is* the appeal" (CS 138). Burke also allows for the appeal of form to change over time: "[. . .] the conventional forms demanded by one age are as resolutely shunned by another" (CS 139). Because most audiences would rather watch the movie than read the book, and would rather go online than go to a performance of Hamlet, media must be taken into consideration in a definition of form. With medium in mind, I will use the term *text* loosely in this chapter; a text can be a film, book, play—in print or on stage, Web site, song, television show, advertisement, work of visual or performance art, or any other cultural product. Form depends completely on the audience's desires; this is the basis of my argument that form encompasses media.

Second, one could raise the question of how to apply Burke's model to Burke himself and his contemporaries. One might ask what material conditions and ideologies influenced Burke, and, for that matter, Elizabethan audiences and even ancient Greek audiences, to desire qualitative progression, the arousing of one emotion only to contrast it with another, like comic relief in a tragedy. While these questions are certainly valid, they are not my concern here. I would argue that our desire for form via multimedia is a logical outgrowth of these same material conditions and ideologies that influence Burke's definition of form. The aristocracy and bourgeoisie, because they were not worried about their means of consumption, could contemplate matters of beauty and taste, and they could write theories about desires, poetry, and the sublime; Burke is one of these. Our capitalist economy and advertising culture have perpetuated dominant values such as

ease, brevity, technological sophistication, "information at your fingertips," "the

bottom line," and "immediate gratification." With these concepts in mind, I want to

revisit Burkean form in contemporary terms, investigating its validity, all the while

maintaining the assumption that different audiences have different material conditions

and ideologies, but first, it is necessary to define the key terms of Burke's theory of form

and understand how they are connected.

Psychology of Form/Psychology of Information

Burke places the psychology of form and the psychology of information, which

are key terms in Burkean form, in a dialectic in "Psychology and Form." The psychology

of form implies an appreciation of progression, or crescendo; Burke also asserts that form

often involves frustrating the audiences' desires, only to fulfill them later in the text.

Another attribute of form is that it can withstand repetition; Burke argues that music is

the best example of pure form (CS 34):

> [. . .] music, of all the arts, is by its nature least suited to the psychology of
>
> information, and has remained closer to the psychology of form. Here
>
> form cannot atrophy. Every dissonant chord cries for its solution, and
>
> whether the musician resolves or refuses to resolve this dissonance into
>
> the chord which the human body cries for, he is dealing in human
>
> appetites.

Burke is heavily invested in his conviction that emotion and form are intertwined. This is

where the distinctions lie between the psychology of form and the psychology of

information.[1] The psychology of information privileges facts over the emotional and

the aesthetic and "cannot so much bear repetition since the aesthetic value of information

is lost once that information is imparted" (<u>CS</u> 35). The psychology of information is

about novelty, ephemerality. Burke acknowledges that twentieth-century audiences

desired information and had become desensitized to the nuances of form, reading texts as

sources of information: "The contemporary audience hears the lines of a play or novel

with the same equipment as it brings to reading the lines of its daily paper" (<u>CS</u> 37).

Because plays and novels clearly do not have content similar to daily newspapers, his

statement raises the issue of form and content—whether they are separate or not, and if

one can, or should, demarcate the two.[2]

Form and Content as Act and State of Having

Burke addresses form and content directly in <u>The Philosophy of Literary Form</u>.

He presents form as both a virtue that the text possesses and an action on the part of the

author and audience. He argues that by perceiving composition and reading as acts, we

can see the inseparability of the two: "an approach through the emphasis upon the act

promptly integrates considerations of 'form' and 'content'" (<u>PLF</u> 90). Therefore, "[a]t

any point, the content is functional—hence, statements about a poem's 'subject'

[content], as we conceive it, will be also statements about the poem's 'form'" (<u>PLF</u> 102).

Richard B. Gregg explains this integration of form and content further by going back to

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[1] Burke utilizes these terms to name different attitudes of the audience, not of the texts. In subsequent writings, Burke consubstantiates the terms and makes the point that often, audiences place their faith in forms, for example, dictionaries.
[2] For further explanation of terms Burke uses in his theory of form, see Appendix A.

the "conceptual shaping of meaning" and pointing to the structure (or form) of thought

processes such as analysis and synthesis (126):

> Basic to symbolic capacity are such processes as the fixing of similarities,
> the shaping of contrasts, the designating of attributes, and the combined
> analytic-synthesizing movement of the mind which creates 'wholeness-
> partness' understandings. [. . .] To act is to form and to form is to act; the
> principles of forming are the principles of action, and they induce and
> modify future actions as they body forth attitudes and valuings.

Gregg's reading of the genealogy of Burkean form is more phenomenological than my

own more materialistic reading, but his point helps to show the unity of form and content.

In other words, thinking of "form" as a verb rather than as a static noun helps to break

down the dichotomies of form and content, process and product. Medium is important

here because when one is working with a certain medium, such as the computer, one

must take into account the limits of what that medium can do and more than likely work

with several symbol systems in tandem—words, programming codes, images, sounds,

colors. "Forming" reemphasizes composing and reading as integrated rhetorical and

deeply social acts involving both writer and audience, acts which acknowledge and make

use of the desires of both writer and audience. If the act, embodied in the text, does not

create and fulfill desires in the audience, it does not achieve a state of having form.

Desire as Natural

Desire, for Burke, has the body and the psychology of the audience as its loci. He

situates desire partly in the body and partly in the mind, but implies that mind and body

work together in their appreciation of form. In other words, desire comes from internal

sources (the natural body) and external sources (the mind, which can be influenced and

dominated). In Counter-Statement, he discusses the concept of crescendo as central to

desire. According to Burke, because we think in crescendo, and we perceive nature as

working in patterns of crescendo, we perceive crescendo as natural and desirable. Burke

cites examples of this: "The accelerated motion of a falling body, the cycle of a storm, the

procedure of the sexual act, the ripening of crops—growth here is not merely a linear

progression, but a fruition. [. . .] the human brain has a pronounced potentiality for being

arrested, or entertained, by such an arrangement" (45). Rhythm and completion, to refer

back to Burke's music example, employ the idea of crescendo. Artists use crescendo to

appeal to their audiences, but medium complicates this notion, especially when we take

interactive media into account. The author of a Web site, for example, might arrange

pages on the site to be viewed by an ideal reader in a certain order emulating a crescendo,

but audiences differ widely, and many readers may not decide to view the text and

artwork on the site in the ideal order; the medium allows for this more so than, for

example, a book. A reader could read a chapter in the middle of a book before she reads

the first chapter, but in the case of a book, the reader might feel more obligated to follow

the beginning-to-end progression the author gives her. Despite the fact that Web sites do

not often follow a crescendo pattern, it would be difficult to argue that we are not

"arrested" and "entertained" by them. Crescendo is a key term in Burke's notion of

desire, but he also argues that the psychology of the audience plays a role, and it is here

that we see the effect of politics and ideology on desire.

Desire as Political: Psychology of the Audience

I will discuss ideology in more detail later in the chapter, but it warrants some discussion in understanding Burke's term "psychology of the audience," because the two concepts overlap considerably. The psychology of the audience and ideological influences are related, but I would argue that the conceptual distinction lies in the logical priority of ideology; as Burke puts it, ideology "makes [the] body hop around in certain ways; and that same body would have hopped around in different ways had another ideology happened to inhabit it" (LSA 6). In other words, ideology makes the psychology of the audience what it is. Burke also argues that the principles of identification and alienation are implicated in desire and the psychology of the audience; people desire to be a part of a certain group, or to reject that group in favor of another, and adopt the insignia and attitudes of those groups. Burke expresses dismay at what he considers the devolving of the psychology of the audience due to the influences of dominant ideologies (from dominant groups), some of which include capitalism, individualism, competition, and the widespread extolling of scientific progress. He reflects, "The flourishing of science has been so vigorous that we have not yet had time to make a spiritual readjustment adequate to the changes in our resources of material and knowledge" (CS 31). He claims, "we are, owing to the sudden wealth science has thrown upon us, all *nouveaux-riches* in matters of culture" (CS 32). Although Burke recognizes art as partly rhetorical and sometimes having the intent to persuade, he laments what he sees as the triumph of information and science over philosophical notions of taste, beauty, and emotion.

With this political side of desire in mind, I want to address the multiplicity and mutability of audiences. Burke argues that different subjects have different ideologies,

and hence different experiences of a text, and offers an example of a children's story written for Catholic boys. The hero in the story exhibits Catholic values: "bravery, honesty, kindness to the oppressed, gentleness to women [. . .] [and] converting Indians to Catholicism" (CS 147). A Protestant boy, Burke reasons, will not experience the form in the same way as the Catholic boy, nor would a Native American boy, because of differing cultures and ideologies. Greig Henderson shows connections between reader-response criticism and Burke, situating his theory of form in "biactive" theories of reader-response criticism, which privilege neither the reader nor the author. He writes, "Biactive theories [. . .] see the text and reader as acting together; the text sets limits and the reader responds to it within those limits and the limits of his or her own subjectivity, ideology, psychological makeup, literary competence, and so forth" (130). Seen this way, audience, text, and author become dynamic agents forming in a dynamic relationship: the psychology of the audience is at work in terms of the author's experience as an audience, the text as embodiment of the psychology of the author (as audience), and the audience reading the author's text, processing it in his or her mind and continuously responding to it, rewriting it, completing the form.

The capacity of the psychology of the audience for change is important here, too; audiences subscribe to, resist, or simultaneously subscribe to and resist the dominant ideologies of the time, and they can change their minds quickly. The psychology of the audience is not fixed, just as there is no one particular audience. I would now like to examine Burke's notion of ideology as it relates to desire and the political. I want to show further the influence of ideology on the psychology of the audience, and I also want to

show Burke's situating of ideology in economic class. Burke's own Marxist economic

ideology becomes visible, as does his status as a Western revolutionary subject.

Social and Pervasive Ideology

Ideology shapes the psychology of the audience. Omar Swartz offers an excellent

example of this: "When commenting on the aesthetic 'beauty' of a Rolls Royce, for

example, a Burkean-inspired critic would be moved to analyze the car in light of a larger

cultural dialectic, one challenging society to reconsider the aesthetic norms allowing that

society to see beauty in the wealth of a car rather than in the 'wealth' of a forest" (319).

Burke refers to this dialectic often over the course of his career; what he identifies first as

a "bourgeois-Bohemian conflict" becomes a conflict between the practical and the

aesthetic. Ideologies other than economic ones influence audiences, such as religion, but

here I am focusing on the pervasive influence of capitalism and scientific progress.

These are the ideologies that have had the most influence on the invention of new

technology, and Burke gives these ideologies the most treatment in the context of the

affecting of audiences. Marx's effect on Burke's thought will become more apparent as

Burke speaks out against the effects of capitalism and in favor of the governmental

"dole."

We see the principles of identification and alienation in ideological dialectics.

The dialectic of the practical and the aesthetic parallels that of psychology of information

and psychology of form. Burke assigns a *copia* of values to the side of the practical:

"efficiency, prosperity, material acquisition, increased consumption, 'new needs,'

expansion, higher standards of living, progressive rather than regressive evolution, in

short, ubiquitous optimism. Enthusiasm, faith, evangelizing, Christian soldiering,

power, energy, sales drives, undeviating certainties, confidence, co-operation [. . .]" (CS

111). In the era of what some call late capitalism in the United States, and with the

voting patterns of United States citizens, we can assume that these are the dominant

ideologies.

Burke then defines the aesthetic values as the negatives of the practical values:

"inefficiency, indolence, dissipation, vacillation, mockery, distrust, 'hypochondria,' non-

conformity, bad sportsmanship [. . .] experimentalism, curiosity, risk, dislike of

propaganda, dislike of certainty [. . .]" (CS 111). These values do not necessarily fall

neatly into class categories, but Burke asserts that class has a profound effect on

ideology. He claims, "Generally, the ideology of an individual is a slight variant of the

ideology distinguishing the class among which he arose" (CS 162). These two sets of

values are in constant conflict, and many people embrace aesthetic and practical values

simultaneously. This is where aesthetics and ethics intersect. If they are connected, if our

notions of the good coincide with our notions of the beautiful, then "we get a paradox

whereby the soundest adjunct to ethics, the aesthetic, threatens to uphold an unethical

condition" (PLF 321). What we have is not just a conflict of ethics, but also a conflict of

ideologies, because ideologies play a significant role in our perceptions of the good and

the beautiful, and our ideologies are deeply rooted in economic class.

Burke does not mean for this connection to imply that economic conditions are

the only factors informing the construction of ideology. However, Burke clearly sees

dominant ideologies, especially capitalism, as detrimental to society and to art. He

declares, "Capitalist propaganda is so ingrained in our speech that it is as natural as

breathing" (<u>PLF</u> 323). In "Twelve Propositions on the Relation between Economics

and Psychology," Burke gives us a rough outline of the genealogy of form that I am

explaining in more detail. "In sum, economic conditions give form to the values, and

these values, having arisen, form 'objective material' with which the artist works in

constructing symbols that appeal" (<u>PLF</u> 309). In <u>A Rhetoric of Motives</u>, Burke follows

the logic of a hypothetical "ideologist" who, in trying to separate the realm of ideas from

the real world, fails to take the ideas in their proper material contexts. This results in

"mystification" (106-7). We also see this "mystification" in those whom Burke describes

as the "practical." Trying to see ideas as "pure" results in erroneous logic. We must find

their source in the material world if we are to understand the genealogy of form. Robert

Wess charts Burke's move toward the source of ideologies, rhetoric, and aesthetics:

Burke "moves away from this aesthetic center toward the agon of history, where the

aesthetic subject was constituted in the first place" (54). The agon of history, of course, is

not simply a story—of wars, kings, conquests—it is intensely physical and material.

The Materiality of Ideology

Burke comments extensively, and disapprovingly, upon unfair economic practices

and material conditions and their effects. Marx's effect on Burke's thought is readily

apparent when he states that Marx's analysis "admonishes us to look for 'mystification'

at any point where the social divisiveness caused by property and the division of labor is

obscured by unitary terms (as the terms whereby a state, designed to protect a certain

structure of ownership, is made to seem equally representative of both propertied and

propertyless classes)" (<u>RM</u> 108). Burke argues that we cannot take ideas as "primary"

that should be understood as "derivative" of material situations (<u>RM</u> 104). Take, for

example, the ideology of the divine right of kings. We can construct a short narrative that

follows this genealogy. The class with the most property, the aristocracy, employs a

number of persons with expertise, including thinkers. These thinkers want to please the

aristocracy in order to improve their own material condition, so they write treatises

proclaiming the rightness of the aristocracy's rule in the eyes of God. If a later ideologist

reads these treatises in isolation, he commits the fallacy of "mystification."

But what are the material conditions influencing our technological, capitalist

society? Burke discusses overproduction, underconsumption, labor practices, and

omnipresent technological advancement as contributing factors in the forming of

ideologies of progress. In "Psychology and Form," he argues (<u>CS</u> 31-2),

> There are disorders of the social system which are caused solely by our
>
> undigested wealth (the basic order being, perhaps, the phenomenon of
>
> overproduction: to remedy this, instead of having all workers employed on
>
> half time, we have half working full time and the other half idle, so that
>
> whereas overproduction could be the greatest award of applied science, it
>
> has been, up to now, the most menacing condition our modern civilization
>
> has had to face. It would be absurd to suppose that such social disorders
>
> would not be paralleled by disorders of culture and taste, especially since
>
> science is so pronouncedly a spiritual factor.

Admittedly, Burke is using the word "science" to mean "knowledge," but Big

Technology is certainly implicated here, especially in the context of labor practices.

Burke is dismayed at these material conditions, especially the fact that a small ruling

class possesses most of the wealth. In his essay "Program" from <u>Counter-Statement</u>, he argues for the "dole"—government's equally distributing wealth. He dreams about a world where there is no stigma attached to receiving a stipend from the government. These economic conditions, mainly division of labor and private ownership of property, which led to the espousal of capitalism, heavily influence ideologies about money, government, and social relationships.

Burke, however, is not an economic determinist, and he stresses the fact that material conditions are not the only factors influencing ideology. Stephen Bygrave writes, "Burke is suspicious of notions that art can only be a reflection of economic relations. The relation between 'art or ideas' and the broad 'situation' is an active one [. . .] ideology too is man-made and thus, at least in some 'original' state, produced by 'free' agents. Rhetoric is split from ideology in order to rejoin it" (5-6). This emphasis on the agent is crucial because it goes back to Burke's more fundamental theories about human beings, motives, and symbolic action. Burke articulates this point in <u>A Rhetoric of Motives</u> (146):

> Ideology cannot be deduced from economic considerations alone. It also
>
> derives from man's nature as a 'symbol-using animal.' [. . .] there is the
>
> perception of generic divisiveness which, being common to all men, is a
>
> universal fact about them, prior to any divisiveness caused by social classes.
>
> Here is the basis of rhetoric. Out of these emerge the motives for linguistic
>
> persuasion. Then, *secondarily*, we get the motives peculiar to particular
>
> economic situations.

Gregg, as I mentioned, takes the more phenomenological approach, which situates economic conditions in human motivation and a tendency to form hierarchies, with which Burke would most definitely agree. He writes, "These strategies of hierarchy are the shapers of those contents of consciousness we refer to as 'theory,' 'system,' 'ideology,' 'philosophy,' and 'religion' (126). Indeed, Burke's main point about ideology is that its function is rhetorical. I agree with this, but I am taking a materialistic view of the genealogy of form because I see the greatest potential for social change, and the breaking down of hierarchies, in voicing resistant ideologies and helping to improve the material and social conditions of disadvantaged economic classes, people of color, and women.

Looking at Medium

To summarize my genealogy, Burke argues that human beings' use of symbols, combined with the tendency to arrange themselves in orders, or hierarchies, leads to the acquisition of wealth by some and not others. These material conditions give power to a ruling class, who form ideologies that justify their own social and economic practices and designate such attributes as competitiveness, scientific advancement, and wealth as virtues. These dominant Western ideologies serve as rhetorics, creating desires for material goods and speedy convenience. These desires are embodied in these relatively new and ever-present technological media—especially television and the Internet, and these media are implicated in a web of power and material conditions; for example, technological advances in the United States in the 1990s grew from US leaders' compulsion to create new products that would be desirable in the global market so that the United States could remain a global economic and political power (Selfe 47-63).

Burke gives his own thoughts on media in a refutation of Marshall McLuhan's slogan "The medium is the message." Burke argues that McLuhan privileges agency at the expense of the other terms in the pentad, and that "we are here concerned with the *contents* of the programs and the ads, and not just the nature of the *medium* [. ..]" (LSA 417). But if form and content are joined in an act, and the act is inextricably linked to a complex set of desires, ideologies, and material conditions, how can we not be concerned with both medium and contents? Perhaps cultural aesthetics suffer because our emotions are not as sustainedly enthralled with fine art and "literature" (in the aesthetic sense); maybe we do not experience form in the way Burke would want. However, we must keep in mind that the people and the messages in the new media want to unite both the practical values and the aesthetic. The key is to do it in a socially responsible way.

Burke as Proto-Cyborg Thinker

Burke's critique of dominant values makes his thinking revolutionary, if only to a modest degree. In this way, he is a proto-cyborg thinker. Even though Burke himself is not among Haraway's influences, she characterizes her thought as an outgrowth of postmodernism and Western revolutionary subjects, and the "illegitimate offspring of militarism and patriarchal capitalism" (CM 151). Janice Norton claims Burke would have endorsed the cyborg goal of effecting material and social change, even though he failed at achieving it himself: "[. . .] the tragedy of Burke's lifework should not go without note: his complete interpolation into a masculine economy finally deprived him of the explicitly intended goal of his project, something like social justice" (43). Celeste Michelle Condit argues for a post-Burke set of ideas which involves seeing the

"important differences between the context offered by the Great Depression and World War II and the present year. While Burke has addressed some of the trends that were then incipient (race and gender conflict, globalism, Big Technology, and environmental devastation), the shift from incipient trends to dominant concerns produces a qualitative shift" (273). This shift calls for a reevaluation of our assumptions regarding social relations, conceptualizations of the body, academia, politics, pedagogy, aesthetics, and desire. Haraway's cyborg theory is just such a reevaluation.

Chapter Three.

The Populist Cyborg: Academics Weaving with Activists

In the previous chapter, I argued that Burke's definition of form as the creation and fulfillment of desires has a genealogy which is apparent upon reading some of Burke's other books and essays. Genealogy implies a chain, or tree. Although Burke's ideas can be considered forward-looking given that he was writing primarily in the 1930s, 40s, and 50s, approaches to social theory and philosophy have changed since Burke. Instead of a hierarchical tree, with leaves, branches, trunk, and roots, contemporary theorists privilege a rhizomic way of thinking, a root that spreads horizontally, prolifically, without an established center.[3] I turn now to Haraway, and in doing so, I hope to show the contrast in the two thinkers and, using the tension in the differences between the thinkers, offer a *partial* redefinition of form as Burke saw it, because Haraway has persuasively argued that attempting to articulate a totalizing theory of anything, including "form," is a misguided effort.

While Burke attempts to account for differences in the ways audiences respond to texts, and challenges dominant capitalist values in the process, his theories still reinforce the invisible eye of Western objectivity and the need to provide unified, logical, all-explaining theories; for example, he theorizes that human motivation can be explained by looking at a pentad of Act, Scene, Agent, Agency, and Purpose and the "ratios" between any two of the terms. He also uses only male pronouns in his discourse to account for humankind and does not, for all his attention to terminology, consider the implications of

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[3] Deleuze and Guattari, <u>A Thousand Plateaus</u>.

using "he" to mean "he and she." He does not respond to feminist thinkers such as Wollstonecraft and Woolf in his expansive analyses; the only women whose literature warrants his criticism are Djuna Barnes and Marianne Moore. He seldom gives serious thought to race and perhaps never sexual orientation.

Emergence and Influences

Haraway's theory emerges from an array of influences decidedly different from Burke's, including feminism, poststructuralism, and deconstruction. She is quick to add, however, that her being exposed to Catholicism, post-World War II and Cold War culture, and phallogocentrism affects her work as well. Readers can perceive the ways poststructuralism has influenced her thinking in her questioning of objective signs, especially when Western white men of privilege are the ones doing the signifying. One account of lived experience claiming to be objective negates literally billions of other, just as "legitimate," accounts.

The influence of deconstruction is most manifest in Haraway's uses of the concepts "trace" and "play." "Trace" has to do with Jacques Derrida's claim that writing precedes speech. If I think of writing as composing, then I compose words in my mind before I say them. Because I have already composed the words, I have written them before I say them. Derrida takes this a step further to imagine that someone is writing, and someone or something is written upon. As a result, Haraway uses the logics of inscription and écriture, usually in the context of marked bodies, characterizing research laboratories as "inscription technology" (PM 322), pointing to discourse about AIDS as marking the bodies of gay men and IV drug users (CM 165), and characterizing cyborg

writing as cyborgs "seizing the tools to mark the world that marked them as other" (CM 175).

"Play," in the Derridean sense, means the playing of signifiers in a game that can reverse hierarchies and subvert binary oppositions. Signifiers in this context lose potency of meaning and seriousness; "plays on words" are rampant. In 1985, Haraway saw the movement toward information systems such as the Internet. She writes, "we are living through a movement from an organic, industrial society to a polymorphous, information system—from all work to all play, a deadly game" (CM 161). If "people" in postmodernity exist—or are said to exist—in this empty play of texts flying around in computer systems, their physical bodies are glossed over and dismissed in the process. Putting focus on the physical body is a rhetorical strategy, showing Michel Foucault's influence on Haraway as well, to remind those who would dismiss the body that the body is the most profound, undeniable record of injustice. The bodies of oppressed and marginalized groups testify the evils of domination: laborers whose muscles are permanently damaged from repetitive motions, women raped and killed in Kosovo, Afghanistan, and everywhere else, bodies of hate crime victims beaten and killed on grounds of race and sexual orientation. Haraway does not exaggerate, then, when she uses the word "deadly."

Haraway's theory insists not only that the body should be in the foreground, but that the perspectives of people of all genders, races, sexual orientations, and nationalities are needed in all academic fields, but especially technoscience, which she sees as a large part of the network of white capitalist patriarchal heterosexist hegemony, or "the informatics of domination." Technoscience is a term for science (social science, biology,

chemistry, engineering, et al) and technological tools. The twentieth and twenty-first

centuries have seen such a complete integration of the tools of technology, including

computers, microscopes, telescopes, etc., and the theories of science, which led Jean-

François Lyotard to coin the term technoscience in 1984. Haraway argues for "situated

knowledges" in technoscience; that is, knowledges in which the speaker foregrounds his

or her location in history and takes responsibility for it. For example, I am contained in a

female, Anglo-American, bourgeois, young adult body, born in 1974, not a flower child

but a child raised in the Protestant church in the 1980s, the Reagan years, the decade of

greed. I'm deeply influenced by postcolonialism, Marxism, and feminism, but was also

educated in a school system that privileged classical Greek and Roman thought,

Renaissance humanism, Cartesian thought, capitalism, imperialism, colonialism, and the

Enlightenment. This certainly means I have some blind spots in my analyses and

interpretations, but it does not preclude my ability to make meaningful, if partial,

connections.

Connecting with Haraway

Many scholars, particularly in the field of rhetoric and composition theory, have

responded to Haraway's cyborg metaphor, but some have misread the cyborg, not

understanding its full potential. In the next chapter, I will address these misreadings at

length. In this chapter, however, I want to provide summaries of Haraway's arguments,

touching upon some of her most widely read and anthologized works, including "A

Cyborg Manifesto: Science, Technology, and Socialist-Feminism in the Late Twentieth

Century," her preface to <u>The Cyborg Handbook</u> entitled "Cyborgs and Symbionts: Living

Together in the New World Order," and "The Promises of Monsters: A Regenerative Politics for Inappropriate/d Others." I hope that by providing this fairly detailed summary of Haraway's thought, my own not infallible but very carefully considered reading, my claim that Haraway is often misread will be evident.

I will present my own argument, which is that the cyborg has remained an academic figure, and while it has spawned some interesting offspring in the fields of cultural studies, women's studies, literary criticism, rhetoric and composition, feminist science fiction, and science studies, the cyborg has so far failed to have a large-scale impact on the audience Haraway probably hoped to target: scientists. I do not mean to argue that scholars should stop challenging scientists' fallacious "objectivity"; I opine that the cyborg metaphor and its strategies for effecting social change, border crossings, forming affinities, and weaving, should be used by activists, and academics should be the ones to bring the cyborg message to these groups and get involved in social activism. Academics and activists need to not only become familiar with the notions of crossing borders, forming affinities, and weaving, but to *call* them cyborg strategies. If liberal academics get the term "cyborg" in this special sense out into popular discourse, hopefully people will no longer react to the word "cyborg" in a knee-jerk negative fashion. Haraway knows the cyborg has a negative connotation because of some popular science fiction, and uses the term intentionally to shake readers out of their comfort zones; however, the positive social change the cyborg has the potential to bring about through its strategies is wasted if people cannot get past preconceived impressions of cyborgs.

A Guide to the Cyborg

Knowing that many people are already familiar with popular culture's depictions of cyborgs as sinister beings made of human and machine, but without "humanity," if humanity equals compassion, Haraway reintroduces us to the cyborg as an entity both alienating and liberating. Cyborgs defy and absorb the dichotomies of human and animal, organism and machine, and physical and non-physical. By extension, they defy and absorb other essentialisms in Western thought: white/nonwhite, male/female, primitive/civilized, gay/straight, self/other, nature/culture, materialism/idealism, and mind/body. This defiance of dichotomies has important implications for social life and politics; if there are no boundaries or hierarchies, we experience a radical world shift. Haraway reasons that the breakdown of literal boundaries among humans, machines, and animals, makes the breakdown of ideological boundaries possible. This is a liberating narrative for marginalized, colonized groups of people, those who have been assigned the "negative" term in the dichotomies, but alienating for those who would lose their power and ways of life if they had to give up their privileged spots in the dichotomies.

There is much more to Haraway's argument than border transgressing, however. She critiques the Western notion of "identity" by showing the limits of it. This strategy demonstrates her influences: "The acid tools of postmodern theory [for example, the questioning of the sign, awareness of the historical/political location of the body] and the constructive tools of ontological discourse about revolutionary subjects [African Americans, feminists, Marxists] might be seen as ironic allies in dissolving Western selves in the interest of survival" (CM 157). Haraway uses Catherine MacKinnon's version of radical feminism as her primary example, but her principle of identity via

exclusion can apply to many agendas and groups. According to radical feminism,

gender structure is a starting point for looking at injustice. Haraway represents it in this

accessible manner (CM 160):

> radical feminism—structure of gender // sexual appropriation //
>
> objectification
>
> sex, by analogy labour, by extension reproduction, by addition race

Marxism uses this strategy to analyze society too, but it examines the structure of labor

first. Haraway is critiquing the linear, beginning-to-end logic of these theories; it is

obvious when Haraway presents the theories this way how the thinkers implicitly tack

race onto the end of the line of reasoning, as an afterthought. She is also critiquing the

Western tendency to look "for a single ground of domination to secure our revolutionary

voice" (CM 160). This section, called "Fractured Identities," lays the foundation for the

cyborg, and points to multiple sites and means of domination, which she calls "The

Informatics of Domination" (CM 161).

In this model, the logic goes from one of "all these effects come from one source,

and this will lead to some kind of climax, either a revolution or annihilation," to logics of

systems, networks, inscription, and control associated with multinational corporations,

the military, communication technology, and biotechnology. Bodies in this logic,

including human and nonhuman, lose some of their dignity and pathos, like in television

commercials where the body is a green, three-dimensional grid on a black background,

and the pain caused by a throbbing headache or acid reflux disease is just a red or yellow

light flashing, interrupting the flow of the system.[4] Reproductive technologies (in vitro

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[4] See Appendix B for images of bodies as systems.

fertilization, fertility drugs, fetal monitors) are another example. Societies are systems too: "we see translations of racism and colonialism into languages of development and under-development, rates and constraints of modernization" (CM 162). Haraway calls this "*the translation of the world into a problem of coding*" (CM 164, emphasis in original). Haraway emphasizes the importance of a theory of socialism and feminism in this kind of world. She purposely does not define this theory except to say that we need unity in a collective, but not unity through domination or totalization. She describes her notion of the collective as a union of people, animals, plants, and technology, "actors and actants": Actants "operate at the level of function, not of character," and nonhumans can work together to create the effect of an actant (PM 359). Because her interest lies mostly in feminism and socialism, Haraway devotes much of her analysis to women's statuses in this new world.

The years 1985 and 2001 are not that far apart in their numerical relationship, but it would most likely be difficult to find a person, especially from the United States or Europe, who would say there has not been much change in those years. Haraway is writing her "Cyborg Manifesto" in the mid-80s, but she provides a vision of life in the coming years that is uncannily prescient to one reading her work in 2001. She describes a conflation of public and private life facilitated by the hypercapitalist economy and the feminization of labor (CM 166):

> To be feminized means to be made extremely vulnerable; able to be
> disassembled, reassembled, exploited as a reserve labour force; seen less
> as workers than as servers; subjected to time arrangements on and off the

paid job that make a mockery of a limited work day; leading an

existence that always borders on being obscene, out of place, and

reducible to sex.

Haraway uses Rachel Grossman's[5] image of "women in the integrated circuit" to map out

the changes she anticipated in 1985. Some of the most striking examples are these:

Women will head more households; there will be more home-based businesses; new time

arrangements in the workplace ("flexible schedules"); more integration of the corporation

and the school; and increased debate over public funding for health care (CM 170 ff.).

Indeed, it is rare for me to check my e-mail and not find a message from a company

trying to convince me to work from home. Corporations, especially computer

corporations like Dell, are "helping" colleges all over the country by providing

computing equipment at lower prices in exchange for information about the desires of the

18-49 demographic, and the integration of technology into curricula by eager teachers

and administrators is coming at the expense of focusing on the material; in other words, it

is more profitable to know Macromedia Flash® than it is to know postcolonial literature.

Health care debates continue in the wake of Bill Clinton's health care plan; a basic

Patient's Bill of Rights has yet to be approved.

　　　Even after reading much of Haraway's work, it is still difficult to cram the cyborg

into a nutshell, as it should be, because that is not the place for a cyborg, but here are

some of its salient characteristics.

- The cyborg subverts essentialisms, dichotomies, and hierarchies. This means any

  theory that attempts to make bubble-like wholes where there are none—any scientific

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[5] 1980.

or political narratives that try to reduce phenomena to one source or go from innocent origin to climactic apocalypse, because the cyborg is not innocent or guilty and has no beginning or end.

- Cyborg feminists should continue to interrogate and criticize racist, sexist, and colonialist theories and practices in the fields of technoscience, insist on "the social relations of science and technology," and re-situate technoscience in the social and political.

- Political unity without totalization is necessary for survival. We are a collective made up of "humans," "animals," "plants," and "tools," and this collective needs to function in the struggle against the informatics of domination, not one particular kind of domination. This difference in agendas will cause some conflict, but cyborgs are comfortable with conflict.

- Narratives are never objective, so we cyborgs must foreground our writing with our historical and political locations and contexts, taking responsibility for them.

- Academics cannot continue to be passive in the realm of politics. Scholars must form affinities across disciplinary lines to facilitate social change. Haraway calls this strategy "weaving" (CM 170 ff).

Problematic Reception of Haraway's Work

The idea of scholar as political activist is what I want to focus on, but first I would like to explain why I do not think Haraway's work has been effective in the arduous job of changing society. Haraway has an honorable intention; she wants to use theory-writing to attack the dominant white males, namely scientists, right in their positions of power by

challenging "invisible" objectivity and uses of technology which follow

domination/subordination axes. Her target audience seems to be scientists, especially

feminist scientists, and feminists in science studies and rhetoric of science. Many more

audiences than this have actually ended up reading her work, and she has become an

important theorist in cultural studies and feminist theory. The problem lies in the fact that

her work has barely been acknowledged by the "hard" or "pure" sciences, and when it

has, the tone has been, for the most part, dismissive. I performed a keyword search for

"Haraway" in an assortment of library databases covering a wide variety of disciplines.

Table 1 includes articles responding to Haraway, texts written by Haraway herself, and

reviews of Haraway's books, and unfortunately, it shows how little influence her thought

has outside the humanities.

When scientists respond to Haraway's work, it is often with a sharp, defensive

tone. When faced with their racist, sexist, colonialist biases, they claim that Haraway is

biased. Consider the 1994 book by Paul R. Gross and Norman Levitt, entitled <u>Higher

Superstition: The Academic Left and Its Quarrels with Science</u>, or these words by Peter

S. Rodman from a 1990 review of Haraway's book <u>Primate Visions: Gender, Race, and

Nature in the World of Modern Science</u> (486, my emphasis):

> It is unlikely that anyone described in <u>Primate Visions</u> would belittle
>
> Haraway's stakes—anticolonial, antiracist, antisexist, and antiwar—and
>
> we cannot blame a colleague for having stakes, especially when they are
>
> made so clear. **At the same time, scholars cannot take this biased story
>
> of primatology seriously.**

Admittedly, Haraway's prose style could be part of the reason for her dismissal. She does not hide the fact that her theory is both a narrative and metaphorical. She often uses religious metaphors, and her prose is often whimsical, drawing from images in fantasy, such as monsters and vampires. However, using religion and fantasy is preferable to claiming objectivity. As I stated before, I believe people who call themselves feminists and anyone else who finds fault with science's fallacious "objectivity" should be vocal in their opposition. Haraway clearly states what she wants (MW 127):

> I want feminists to be enrolled more tightly in the meaning-making processes of technoscientific world-building. I also want feminists—activists, cultural producers, scientists, engineers, and scholars (all overlapping categories)—to be recognized for the articulations and enrollments we have been making all along in technoscience, in spite of the ignorance of most 'mainstream' scholars in their characterizations (or lack of characterizations) of feminism in relation to both technoscientific practice and technoscience studies.

However, Haraway's dream of "a feminist speaking in tongues to strike fear into the circuits of the supersavers of the new right" seems almost futile in light of this audience response (CM 181). We have a problem: Haraway is preaching to the feminist theory and cultural studies converted. The people who need to hear and heed her message the most—biotechnologists, geneticists, primatologists, anthropologists, astronomers, CEOs, and politicians—are not listening.

Table 1. Results of a keyword search for "Haraway" in databases from a variety of

academic disciplines.

DATABASE SEARCHED	NUMBER OF RESULTS
MLA International Bibliography	53 results
Humanities Abstracts	35 results
Historical Abstracts	0 results
Anthropological Literature	1 result
JSTOR (Anthropology)	40 results
JSTOR (Botany)	0 results
JSTOR (Ecology)	6 results
JSTOR (Economics)	1 result
JSTOR (Education)	5 results
JSTOR (General Science)	11 results
JSTOR (History)	24 results
JSTOR (Language and Literature)	19 results
JSTOR (Philosophy)	3 results
JSTOR (Political Science)	8 results
JSTOR (Population Studies	2 results
JSTOR (Sociology)	19 results
Social Science Abstracts	23 results
ATLA Religion Resources	11 results
Philosopher's Index	16 results
Biological Abstracts	0 results
Animal Behavior Abstracts	0 results
MedLine	0 results
General Science Index	16 results
Applied Science and Technology Index	5 results
Web of Science	10 results

What's a Cyborg to Do? Start Weaving.

Like Haraway, I believe scholars have been shamefully passive in the political arena, but I do not think she has emphasized enough the importance of academic activism. So far, Haraway and others like her have mostly taken a top-down approach to the problem of domination and the myriad forms it takes. I propose a top-down *and* bottom-up approach that takes advantage of the strategy of "weaving" (CM 170 ff.). The networking strategy is enormously popular in everyday discourse. College students, budding politicians, and Young Urban Professionals (yuppies) are encouraged to network: "Mix and mingle with the higher-ups in this organization;" "Rub shoulders with Dean Beaty"; "You scratch my back, I'll scratch yours." Networking brings to mind a strategy with self-interest, a strategy designed to get a person "ahead" or "higher on the totem pole." With weaving comes a different relationship, which Haraway calls affinities. Weaving produces a fabric, one which might be made with a dozen different colors and textures of thread. The threads are fine by themselves, but stronger when woven together.

Grassroots organizations can benefit greatly from weaving, and these organizations are where academics need to be. Professors and teachers have published prolifically on the need for social change, and some, such as Paulo Freire, bell hooks, and Ira Shor, have brought activism into their pedagogies. Haraway wishes for affinities between academics in more politically aware fields like political science, history, feminist theory, and cultural studies and academics in the sciences. Many scientists do not want to use their intellectual gifts to serve the military-industrial complex (CM 169). She wants academics to reclaim public life and culture; for example, academics should assist politicians with public service by helping draft proposed bills. Professors and

teachers need not worry about politicizing technoscience or any other scholarly discipline by making their agendas known; academic disciplines are already politically charged. Cyborgs would just bring previously silenced voices to the table.

One organization at the University of Tennessee in Knoxville has already adopted this strategy: the Progressive Student Alliance (PSA). This organization began when students protested the blatant class divide in the Knoxville area, but at first its focus was the homeless population of Knoxville, and they called themselves Alliance for Hope. Over a period of about two years, these student activists wove, and Alliance for Hope formed affinities with university organizations like the Muslim Student Association, the Black Cultural Center, the Commission for Women, the Knoxville Living Wage Campaign, and Manthan, the Indian student association. The focus widened to include ending unfair labor conditions at the University of Tennessee and in the Knoxville area, and the student activists wove with campus custodians and food service workers. Students, along with a few professors, helped start the United Campus Workers, the independent union for workers on the UT campus. They wove more and started getting attention from larger organizations like Jobs with Justice, Earth First!, and Food Not Bombs. In the summer of 2001, Alliance for Hope decided to change its mission and its name, and it became the Progressive Student Alliance. They distributed their manifesto in September 2001, and here is their redefined mission (emphasis in original):[6]

> We present this document in a time of crisis for our university. At its
> heart, the crisis that threatens UT is defined by the contradiction between
> **two competing visions**. One vision, held by the majority of trustees and

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[6] See Appendix C for the complete Manifesto of the Progressive Student Alliance.

administrators, sees the university as a corporation, run by an

unaccountable hierarchy with little concern for the impact on the people

who work here, the surrounding community, or the students themselves.

The other vision sees the university as a **democratic institution** governed

so as to **empower** UT students, faculty, and staff; and which serves not the

corporate bottom line, but rather the best interests of the people. This is

the vision we are fighting for.

I quote from this at length both to demonstrate Haraway's almost prophetic vision of

current lived experience and to explain the expanded horizon of the PSA.

Through weaving, the PSA has discovered a more diverse mission. They still

want a society where no one is homeless and everyone gets a living wage, but they also

want to end racism, sexism, religious intolerance, and corporate takeover of UT, and they

will continue to weave. Earlier I claimed that not only should grassroots activist groups

use the cyborg strategy of weaving, but they should also know the theory of the cyborg

and weaving, and call themselves weaving cyborgs. Academics should help familiarize

nonacademics in the activist community with Haraway. I make this argument because

Haraway insists that letting knowledge remain an abstraction, a form of intellectual

snobbery, is another way Western thought has retained its hegemony. Because the cyborg

is a theory of real, physical, lived experience, it is a theory for everyone, in and out of the

academy.

Chapter Four.

"Fruitful Couplings": Conceptions and Near-Conceptions of Cyborg Writing

In the previous chapter, I tried to make clear the concept of the cyborg as set forth by Haraway and to argue that the best way to live as a cyborg is to be an activist, that is, an active agent who keeps challenging the informatics of domination in politics, the economy, and technoscience, not just in writing and speech but also in action. I also briefly mentioned the ways scientists have responded to Haraway's work. Audience reception of Haraway, particularly in the fields of rhetoric and composition theory, is the area I would like to closely examine in this chapter.

The cyborg metaphor easily lends itself to eliciting some kind of response; readers might be interested in its interdisciplinarity, intrigued by its imaginative construction, repulsed as a result of previous exposure to cyborgs in popular culture, dismissive because the cyborg is both a theory and unabashedly a fiction, or curious because the cyborg presents new ways to think about politics, economics, science, and society. Haraway writes, "I am making an argument for the cyborg as a fiction mapping our social and bodily reality and as an imaginative resource suggesting some very fruitful couplings" (CM 150). A commonly observed point in rhetoric is that audience response to a text is just as important, if not more so, than the writer and text themselves; indeed, the cyborg metaphor would not be as widespread in academe as it currently is if scholars had not read it and/or used it in their own fields of study. So far, the cyborg has coupled with audiences in many disciplines, but here I am studying its coupling with audiences in

rhetoric and composition theory. Rhetoric and composition scholars have discussed various issues related to the relationship between Haraway's cyborg theory and their own interests, but they all describe or imply a notion of *cyborg writing*. In order to understand this term, one must understand writing in a broad sense: writing is not simply an activity a person does with a writing implement (pen, pencil, keyboard and word processing software); writing includes socially constructed minds composing thoughts, logics of inscription, the act of reading, and rhetorical situations, all of which are political.

I will start by establishing a definition of what cyborg writing is according to Haraway, which she explains in "A Cyborg Manifesto" and an interview with Gary Olson. Then I will review six essays in which rhetoric and composition scholars respond to Haraway, pointing out the numerous insightful responses and contributions to the conversation about cyborg writing, and the responses that veer away slightly from the cyborg metaphor as Haraway envisions it. Many rhetoricians and composition theorists have made passing references to Haraway's cyborg, but I have chosen these particular articles because they address the cyborg at some length and apply Haraway's theory to their own work. I do not think any rhetoric or composition scholars have actually misconceived cyborg writing; that is why I call these readings conceptions and near-conceptions. I am basing my critique on the assumption that a viable theory of cyborg writing should remain consistent with Haraway's own definition of cyborg writing, but, at the same time, I realize that if the cyborg metaphor stays utterly intact during couplings with other ideas, no real engagements, weavings, and border-crossings have taken place. Finally, I will offer my own contribution to the cyborg writing conversation, which is to insist that in cyborg writing, the medium of the text—print, hypertext, speech, image—is

less important than the content and the people doing the writing, and to argue for postcolonial literature as cyborg writing.

Defining Cyborg Writing

Haraway discusses cyborg writing in "A Cyborg Manifesto" and in a 1998 interview with Gary Olson. Although Haraway does not present the doing of cyborg writing as a five-paragraph-essay-style method, I have gleaned some of its characteristics from these two texts. This brief sketch is a starting point for understanding what cyborg writing looks like in Haraway's terms:

- The writer must demonstrate a knowledge of his or her construction as a subject in the context of both discourse and the material world. According to Haraway, "You have to take your implication in a fraught world as the starting point" (Olson 5). A system of domination and injustice—conqueror's tongues, class, race, gender, education—allows some to have the privilege of literacy and authorship and the power to make knowledge, but also denies many people these privileges. Haraway says, "I think cyborg writing is resolutely committed to foregrounding the apparatus of its own authority, even while it's doing it. It's not eschewing authority, but it's insisting on a kind of double move, a foregrounding of the apparatus of production of bodies, powers, meanings" (Olson 5). This principle connects with her argument that the cyborg is not a pristine category; that is to say, the cyborg is a blend of the conqueror and the conquered.

- The writer should identify himself or herself in the story s/he is telling and take responsibility for his or her point of view, but avoid taking an isolated, utterly oppositional perspective by building bridges for affinities with audiences (Olson 12).

While cyborg writing is about writers "seizing the tools to mark the world that marked them as other" (CM 175), it also strives for a vision of unity without totalization.

- Cyborg writing entails recoding and exposing the old myths and narratives that the agents in the informatics of domination use as tools in the wielding of power (CM 175, Olson 10, 22). Narratives of origin, for example, trace complex phenomena to one source or cause, like the Creation, or even the Big Bang, a scientific theory that is itself a narrative. Oedipal and psychoanalytic narratives are often heterosexist in their ideas of family and sexuality. Technoscience narratives are often conquest narratives in disguise. A recent series of ITT Tech commercial portrays the friends, families, and coworkers of ITT Tech graduates talking about the ITT Tech alumni. They make comments such as, "He's become a better father . . . and a much better friend"; "It's nice to see him succeed"; "It's amazing what his career change has done for us." The viewer sees the ITT Tech graduate, usually a white man, in various situations including playing catch with his son, confidently conducting board meetings, dining in fine restaurants with his beautiful wife, and playing golf. Mastery of technological tools in these narratives becomes a golden key to economic prosperity. Before gaining skills at ITT Tech, these men and women worried about money. Because they no longer have to worry about money, they are virtuous providers with plenty of self-esteem. Cyborg narratives would tell the stories of women in Third World countries who assembled the computers.

- Cyborg writing contains elements of propaganda. Haraway says, "I really do think we're incredibly stupid and klutzy about doing propaganda. We [academics] ought to

do more of it [. . .] I also think that we ought to be doing much more work with congressional staffers and with getting into the process of writing legislation, policy, and federal regulations" (Olson 21). As I argued in the previous chapter, the academics who are writing scholarly articles about social change need to practice these theories and strategies in real life as outspoken, visible, weaving, cyborg activists striving to make concrete changes in people's lives and the more abstract, subtle changes in power structures.

- Finally, because the cyborg asserts that there can be no perfect, unmediated communication, cyborg writers must not try come to a polished conclusion. Haraway says that "while you're engaging in meaning-making with others, you at least at some point in your project deliberately stutter, deliberately trip; you don't try to smooth out the trouble. The tripping and stuttering [. . .] is a kind of precious moment that blocks idolatry" (Olson 14). Leaving narratives and arguments in a state of open-endedness is a way to resist objectivity and totalization and to leave the door open to other voices that might want to talk back.

I intend this sketch to be a starting point in conceptualizing cyborg writing. Rhetoric and composition scholars have responded to the cyborg in innovative, thought-provoking ways, and I would now like to review these responses.

The Fruit of the Couplings

In his interview with Haraway, Olson encourages her to address misunderstandings of her work. She says, "One of them that just really does gall me is the reading of my work, from the 'Cyborg Manifesto' on, as a sort of techno-phillic love

affair with techno-hype" (25). Rhetoric and composition scholars certainly have not read Haraway in that simplistic a manner, but some have been eager to link cyborg writing with hypertext, a term I use to describe any text that exists on networks or servers, and collaborative writing. I argue that while cyborg writing can be hypertext, print, speech, or image, and written by one author or more than one, it is primarily political, situated in physical, lived experience, and propagandistic, with all or some of the characteristics I explained earlier.

In Johndan Johnson-Eilola's 1993 essay "Control and the Cyborg: Writing and Being Written in Hypertext," he argues that writing and reading hypertext is a constant struggle for control, and that systems of language, including hypertext, suture subjects into roles: speaking and spoken. Awareness of this aspect of language is a means of resistance to hierarchies. A person's subject position is closely associated with the discourses s/he uses. A person who knows and uses the discourse of the university has a different position from a person who knows and uses the discourse of a factory. In other words, one can passively accept a position in discourse or construct a position for himself or herself.

In this article, Johnson-Eilola uses Haraway's cyborg "to provide a critical vantage point (or points) for composition theorists and teachers who wish a way to explain and transform the cultural and technological activity of writing" (383). Although he advocates seeing technology as situated in the social, and gives a pertinent discussion of hypertext as an information frontier to be conquered, he seems more concerned with process-based writing pedagogy and hypertext as both process and product than he is with the many lived-experience implications of Haraway's argument. He also puts too

much emphasis on the literal, machine-human interaction as "cyborg activity" (386-7). Johnson-Eilola's reading of the cyborg, with its focus on language and the fluidity of hypertext, lacks the political conviction Haraway intended the cyborg to have.

In 1995, Carol Winkelmann published "Electronic Literacy, Critical Pedagogy, and Collaboration: A Case for Cyborg Writing." She describes a class she taught in which the general themes were technology, computers, and writing. The class of 16 students collaboratively wrote one paper about cyberpunk films: *Blade Runner*, *Total Recall*, and *Lawnmower Man*. These students had to work as a collective, without a hierarchy. Winkelmann discusses the problems the class had working as a group, particularly gender conflicts; often, the men in the class were more outspoken during class time, dominating the discussions, while the women logged onto the network to add to or edit the text at night and on weekends. Winkelmann compares this behavior to the notion of the homework economy, which Haraway mentions in "A Cyborg Manifesto," which places men in high-profile, public roles and women in diminutive, private roles. She calls the project cyborg writing because the students had to work as a group in unity without totalization, and they had to resist Western notions of individualism.

In microcosm, Winkelmann's project has some merit. Her ethnographic approach is useful for teachers seeking ways to implement collaborative learning theories in their practice. However, I would argue that her students' text is not cyborg writing. Excerpts of the student text are conspicuously absent from her essay, and Winkelmann gives no evidence that the students put their subject positions in the foreground, situate the text in lived experience, critiqued dominant narratives, or make any political argument whatsoever about the films. Winkelmann accentuates the polyvocality of the text, but

does not indicate whether a number of different political perspectives are represented in it (444):

> This language is heteroglossic and hypertextual, cooperative and conflicted, fused and fragmentary, totally irreverent and thoroughly intertextual. In the spirit of Haraway's cyborg feminism: it is a language that denies the one perfect code in order to celebrate a multiplicity of codes. This is language in the age of technology.

This alliterative passage is an encomium of technology, as is most of Winkelmann's argument. It comes dangerously close to a "techno-phillic love affair with techno-hype," and does not embody cyborg writing in a meaningful way at all. Unfortunately, it is an example of many teachers' attitude of uncritical enthusiasm toward using technology in pedagogy.

Fortunately, however, three years later Winkelmann published "Cyborg Bodies: Race, Class, Gender, and Communications Technology," which shows a more sophisticated understanding of cyborg writing. At the beginning, Winkelmann states her sociopolitical location and that of her institution and her students. She makes her whiteness and middle-classness visible, thereby firmly situating herself and her perspective. This time, instead of having her students write a collaborative hypertext about cyberpunk films that may or may not have had transgressive political content, Winkelmann connects her own life as an activist with her life as a teacher and scholar. She describes her work at a women's shelter, particularly her encounters with a 38-year-old African American woman she calls "Sheila." Sheila tells Winkelmann the story of her life. She is a construction worker who is interested in science and technology, and briefly

attended college, but got pregnant and could not afford tuition. Her daughter also developed an interest in science and technology, and attended college, but got pregnant and lost her scholarships. They both have drug problems, and Sheila came to the shelter to get away from a partner who is abusive because he cannot find a job.

Winkelmann, with Sheila's consent, shares the story with her students, and the students write back to her. Winkelmann shares the students' responses with Sheila; some of them are "replies of politeness and genuine concern born of goodwill and utter naiveté," and some express a "faith in progress" (10). Ultimately, though, Sheila challenged the world views of most of Winkelmann's students, and motivated some to get involved in activist organizations. This exchange is inspired by Haraway's concept of border crossings. It creates conflict, both between the students and Sheila, and between Winkelmann and her critics, who have accused her of tokenizing and objectifying Sheila, and Winkelmann has not attempted to "smooth over the trouble," instead insisting on Sheila's agency in the exchange. She also describes her work in "a social-change educators network, SCENE," in which "[t]he goal is to form coalitions between university and community educators and between activists and community people, such as domestic-violence survivors: cultural workers all who merge in joint social-justice ventures in popular education" (19). This focus on activism and lived experience, especially on the cyborg strategy of weaving, is consistent with Haraway's view of cyborg writing. This time, Winkelmann puts technology in a secondary role; it facilitates SCENE and facilitated the students' communication with Sheila, but it is not the focus here.

Cynthia Selfe and Richard Selfe, Jr.'s 1996 essay "Writing as Democratic Social Action in a Technological World: Politicizing and Inhabiting Virtual Landscapes" again examines the political climate of virtual spaces. Selfe and Selfe's audience for this essay consists of both academics and nonacademic technical communicators. They review the history of "public" discursive spaces such as the assembly in classical Greece and periodicals and coffeehouses in eighteenth-century bourgeois society and point out that women and slaves were excluded from these spaces because the definition of citizenship included having property rights. They discuss Paul Virilio's work, which connects computers to "war machines" by arguing that electronic space is similar to land, air space, oceans, and transportation systems in that first it is thought to be open, but then the State exacts more and more control over these spaces in its lust for speed and information. This argument is consistent with Haraway's discussion of command-control-communication intelligence, or C^3I in "A Cyborg Manifesto." Selfe and Selfe argue that even though virtual landscapes and institutional contexts in which academics and technical communicators work—universities, corporations, government agencies—are controlled to a great degree by the military-industrial complex, or umbrella term "the State," these entities do not have complete, seamless control of electronic discursive spaces. As academics and nonacademic technical communicators, "we may want to educate ourselves to recognize not only the connectedness and extent of the electronic landscapes as shaped by the State and the military-industrial complex, but also its gaps, partiality, complications, contradictions, and schisms" (346). They also argue for politically conscious uses of technology and a reconceptualization of the roles of academics and technical communicators.

This argument for more socially responsible uses of technology is Selfe and Selfe's version of cyborg writing. They encourage writers to become "nomadic, feminist, cyborg guerrillas" (346 ff.) and practice "resistance in the form of serious play" (353). For example, after a power lunch, a professor or technical communicator might go online in her office and post a scathing message against capitalism to an electronic discussion board on the *Ms.* magazine Web site. Selfe and Selfe repeatedly assert Haraway's argument that they and their audience for this article are deeply embedded in the patriarchal capitalist system, that they are implied in a "fraught world."

Nomadic, feminist, cyborg guerrillas ironically fight a war that is partially against themselves; they fight the system that gives them their privileges, which is in the spirit of Haraway's cyborg. However, I find the nomadic guerrilla parts of the term problematic. They argue that power is made less powerful by its visibility; therefore, academics and technical communicators, acting as nomadic guerrillas, can be potent agents of resistance by this adoption of alter egos, speed, and invisibility (351-2). I believe that invisibility and subtlety have been the keys to power; for example, many theorists have turned from the studies of blackness and femininity—marked bodies—to interrogating and challenging the less marked and visible categories of whiteness and masculinity. Selfe and Selfe only discuss what we can do underground in virtual spaces and do not gesture toward lived experience and outspoken, visible activism. Although I agree with using technology in politically subversive ways, I also think that making systems of domination *more* visible, not less, via loud, visible challenges to the status quo, is necessary.

Pamela Gilbert, in "Meditations upon Hypertext: A Rhetorethics for Cyborgs," also ponders this question of hypertext as liberating or colonizing, but argues that with

the questionability of online identities, i.e. someone claiming to be a twenty-year-old woman might be a fifty-year-old man, the only ethos in hypertext is that of the reader. Because hypertexts often have many writers, and one cannot necessarily trust that a person claiming to be a nineteen-year-old woman truly is one, the boundary between rhetoric and ethics (which has always overlapped) breaks down to become rhetorethics. Gilbert urges readers to look not only at the texts, but the links between the texts, and to try to account for rhetorical strategies involved in linking. If readers do this, Gilbert reasons, they are also breaking down the boundary between writing and reading; they engage in the act of "wreading" (29). Cyborg readers must resist hypertext as democratic heaven or totalitarian hell. Also, "the cyborg reader must take the text very seriously indeed" because "we can expect the informatics of domination—government and marked-based—to permeate the hypertextual 'space' to the same extent and even more subtly than it does television" (31). Going back to the issue of online identity, Gilbert also discusses the notion that people are becoming more comfortable with the idea of one body/multiple selves, supporting Haraway's argument for taking pleasure in the breaking down of boundaries.

Obviously, Gilbert is more interested in cyborg reading than cyborg writing, but one point in her argument is significant in a conception of cyborg writing. Because the cyborg resists dualistic logic, it does not deify or demonize technology or hypertext. Moreover, a rhetorethics for cyborgs means taking responsibility as a reader; cyborg readers have to be more critical and vigilant than ever about texts, selves, voices, and what is implied by silences in between. However, this argument also stays within the confines of virtual space and does not address the materiality of lived experience, and

instead of a specific discussion of marginalized voices that challenge dominance and hegemony, Gilbert only discusses multiplicity and multiple voices in general.

Michelle Ballif calls for a "Third Sophistic postmodern posthuman transrhetoric" (56) in "Writing the Third-Sophistic Cyborg: Periphrasis on an [In]Tense Rhetoric." She does not clearly define this term, but the Third-Sophistic cyborg is Third-Sophistic in the temporal sense[7] and cyborg in the logical sense—Ballif wants to avoid the dichotomy implied by communication. She distinguishes her argument for a Third Sophistic postmodern posthuman transrhetoric from neopragmatism, which she sees as limiting because it bases contingent truths on conversation and discourse, and democracy, for its tendency to create a big "we" while still leaving an implied "they." Observing the postmodern deaths of grand narratives, a sense of history, and the "future anterior" as theorized by Lyotard (54-5), Ballif argues that the cyborg is ambiguous; it does not espouse a world view that subjects are constructed entirely by power relations, a view which logically determines dichotomies such as active/passive, but it also does not espouse a self-determination view that each person is the architect of his or her own destiny. Because of this ambiguity, Ballif sees the cyborg as a kind of primordial ooze from which binary logics, grand narratives, and the linear logic of history arose (63-4). Metaphorically, and in terms of logical priority, the cyborg existed before Plato, Aristotle, the Renaissance, Haraway, and computers.

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[7] Ballif explains that the First Sophistic movement took place in the fifth and fourth centuries B.C.E. and the Second Sophistic in the first century C.E. Also, Ballif cites recent rereadings of the sophists as people who made democracy stronger by exposing the importance of persuasion to the democratic process and teaching the tricks of persuasion to those who could pay a fee to a sophist teacher, but perhaps could not afford a liberal education.

As a theory, Ballif's argument is a fruitful coupling in that she discusses the cyborg, postmodern theory, and classical rhetoric and makes some interesting connections; for example, she argues that a postmodern rhetoric should not be ruled by technê (art) or tuchê (chance), but facilitated by mêtis, "a knowing, doing, and making not in regards to Truth (either certain or probable), but in regards to a 'transient, shifting, disconcerting and ambiguous' situation such as our postmodern condition" (Detienne and Vernant 3, qtd. in Ballif 53). The term mêtis most closely describes Ballif's notion of cyborg writing; mêtis takes place in a tension-filled rhetorical situation where past, present, and future are shifting categories, hence her term [in]tense rhetoric. However, Ballif's argument, which complicates temporality and logic with the cyborg, closely resembles an origin narrative with linear cause-and-effect logic. Her use of the cyborg is somewhat commonplace as well: "the Cyborg—as an effect of language—will produce 'noise' and will occasionally disrupt the circuit, causing the 'perfect communication' to crash" (64). She turns the lived-experience implications of the cyborg into abstractions, and ends by describing the cyborg as a network in an "ecstasy of communication" (67). Ballif's statement here both undermines her own argument against the two-ness of communication, a two-ness that keeps an implied third one out (59), and the spirit of Haraway's theory, in which materiality and real life take center stage.

Throughout the 1990s, rhetoric and composition theorists have started and continued a conversation about notions of cyborg writing. They have mostly connected Haraway's cyborg theory with writing in technological contexts and the implications for long-standing rhetorical principles, like the rhetorical triangle, speaker, text, and audience, and long-standing logical principles, such as pro- and anti- dualisms. They

have been right to describe cyborg writing as communication that is imperfect, not necessarily hierarchically structured, and always contestable. They have also argued against utopia/dystopia arguments about electronic spaces while still infusing these spaces with political meaning and critiquing conquest narratives associated with technology. The conflation of reading and writing as a rhetorical strategy that exposes what is not being said is also important, a point that Haraway underscores in "The Promises of Monsters" as she comments on "the necessity of active rewriting as reading. I cannot read this story without rewriting it; that is one of the lessons of transnational, intercultural, feminist literacy" (355). The cyborg has facilitated valuable insights from rhetoric and composition scholars into the nature of the political acts of reading and writing in technological environments; however, much of the response to the cyborg has over-associated cyborg writing with multivocal hypertext and has also privileged these abstract notions of hypertext over writing as a concrete act with pointed political goals. The response has been fascinated with polyvocality of hypertext, but has not focused specifically on marginalized voices. Cyborg writing, while it can be hypertext, can also be spoken orally or printed on paper. Haraway's "A Cyborg Manifesto" is deeply concerned with technology, but cyborg writing does not have to employ a specific tool of technology, i.e. a computer. A cyborg text can be written by a collective, or it can be written by a single person, even though I say this realizing that nothing is ever written by literally only one person.

Cyborg Writing: A Political Act in a Marginalized Voice in any Medium

A cyborg writer conveys his or her implication in society by exposing the system that allows him or her the privilege of literacy. A cyborg writer attempts to form affinities with readers even when taking an oppositional view, helps readers understand dominant narratives in a new way, actively propagandizes, and keeps arguments and narratives open for responses from other perspectives. A cyborg writer speaks in a marginalized voice; by marginalized, I mean marginalized ideas. A white male, if arguing against dominant cultural values and ideologies, is speaking in a marginalized voice. I would like to argue for postcolonial literature as cyborg writing, but in doing so, I want to discourage a reading of this argument as a conquest narrative: postcolonial literature as a new frontier of cyborg writing just waiting to be digested and analyzed. I argue for postcolonial literature as cyborg writing because the voices are marginalized, the content is always political, and the narratives that postcolonial authors tell are stinging indictments of domination and the forms it takes. Jamaica Kincaid's A Small Place is the example I would like to focus on here.

Kincaid was born in Antigua in 1949 and lived under British colonial rule for much of her life before moving to the United States. Antigua, a small island in the West Indies, was under British control until 1967 and was not recognized as an independent state by Great Britain until 1981. A Small Place is a memoir of living colonized and a jeremiad against colonialism, domination, and capitalism. Kincaid begins by describing Antigua through the eyes of a native and a tourist. She argues that people become ugly and selfish when they become tourists; when they come to Antigua, they see the beauty of the land but remain in utter ignorance of the suffering of the people, who have trouble

growing food because of the constant drought, go to other countries to work so they

can send money home to their families, endure a government corrupted by colonialism's

greed, and are too poor to "get away" on holiday or get educated enough to understand

why their government is corrupt and why they are poor. Kincaid then tells the story of her

experience in the Antiguan school system, which taught the children to glorify England,

Queen Victoria, colonialism, and capitalism, and discusses the Antiguan government in

detail, exposing the subtle ways British colonialism still inflicts devastating harm on

Antiguans, acknowledging the painful irony in telling her story in the British tongue.

Haraway observes that "[w]riting has a special significance for all colonized

groups" because Western thought has used it to separate "primitive" cultures from

"civilized" cultures (CM 175). Kincaid sardonically situates herself in the English

language (31-2):

> For isn't it odd that the only language I have in which to speak of this
>
> crime is the language of the criminal who committed the crime? And what
>
> can that really mean? For the language of the criminal can explain and
>
> express the deed only from the criminal's point of view. It cannot contain
>
> the horror of the deed, the injustice of the deed, the agony, the humiliation
>
> inflicted on me.

In this way, Kincaid exposes the system that has enabled her to author, although the price

of the authorship, the events in the story she tells, is too high for her to enjoy the

"privilege" of authorship. Kincaid also dispels the romantic conquest myth: "the fairy tale

of how we met you, your right to do the things you did, how beautiful you were, are, and

always will be" (42). In this passage, Kincaid is talking about the books she read in the

large, beautiful Antiguan library as a child. The library they have now is small with

molding books because the greedy ministers in government, who learned decadence from

the British, spend public money on themselves, not public services.

This greed is a lingering effect of capitalism. Kincaid explains that some

Antiguans have become extremely wealthy, but many have not embraced it as the best

socioeconomic ideology (36-7):

> Do you know why people like me are shy about being capitalists? Well,
>
> it's because we, for as long as we have known you, *were* capital, like bales
>
> of cotton and sacks of sugar, and you were the commanding, cruel
>
> capitalists, and the memory of this is so strong, the experience so recent,
>
> that we can't quite bring ourselves to embrace this idea that you think so
>
> much of.

The way Kincaid speaks in A Small Place, in "I" and "you" terms, is a cyborg writing

strategy. In an unmistakably direct manner, she addresses all Western readers, and by the

West, she means Western Europe and North America after Western Europe colonized it.

Kincaid is unapologetic in her polemic against domination, but even though her view is

obviously oppositional to dominant values in global culture, she refuses to become

alienated in her anger.

While Kincaid maintains that she will never cease to be angry over the

horrendous crimes against her home and people, and other countries and peoples unjustly

dominated, abused, and stolen from, she tries to form affinities with her audience. At the

end of A Small Place, she writes, "once you cease to be a master, once you throw off

your master's yoke, you are no longer human rubbish, you are just a human being, and all

the things that adds up to. So, too, with the slaves. Once they are no longer slaves, once they are free, they are no longer noble and exalted; they are just human beings" (81). Kincaid expresses the understanding that no one completely dominates or is completely subordinated; there is no pure innocence or guilt. She rewrites dominant narratives, as do many postcolonial, African American, and feminist writers.

I see <u>A Small Place</u> as a more accurate embodiment of Haraway's definition of cyborg writing than most of the conceptualizations of cyborg writing offered by rhetoric and composition scholars, even though it is not explicitly multivocal and is not a hypertext. Cyborg writing is primarily political; medium is less important. Pedagogically, we can seek out these voices and have our students engage with important challenges to the informatics of domination. Then, the fallacious dream of a common language can be laid to rest, and the imperfect communication, affinities, and maybe even the unity without totalization, can truly begin. As far as cyborg writing outside the classroom is concerned, I propose a redefinition of cyborg writing that is embodied by *both* the nomadic, feminist, cyborg guerrilla *and* the outspoken, visible, cyborg activist.

Afterword: What Is Form to a Cyborg?

In the previous chapters, I have discussed Burkean form, Haraway's cyborg theory, and cyborg writing. Burke and Haraway are two very different thinkers, speaking from two very different bodies and positions in history. Burke offers a theory of form as the creation and fulfillment of desires in the audience and explains what the sources of those desires might be. He argues that desire is rooted in ideology, which generally comes from economic class. Haraway offers a social theory of the cyborg, which is a metaphor for seeing society in a more complex way, resisting essentialisms and dualisms, and striving toward unity without hierarchy. She argues against origin narratives such as Marxism, which traces problems in society back to a problem of labor and means of production, describing instead a web of systems of power constituted of patriarchy, racism, capitalism, Western individualism, colonialism, and technoscience which she calls the informatics of domination. Cyborgs, as agents influenced by both these systems of power and revolutionary ideologies, are as complex and multiple as the system itself; in other words, there is no one textbook example of a cyborg. Therefore, to present a singular definition of what form is to a cyborg would be an essentializing move. In the spirit of cyborg writing, I do not want to smooth over the trouble here. There can be no one account of cyborg desire, but the question of cyborg desire raises issues for further inquiry; I would like to conclude with these issues.

First, Burke's theory of form, with its aesthetic implications, highlights the intersection of art and rhetoric. Burke, in his notion of desire, implicitly brings up the

questions of what constitutes beauty and why people appreciate beauty, questions which

are studied by aestheticians, but situates desire in the interactions among author/artist,

text, and audience, a principle studied for millennia by rhetoricians. In thinking toward a

rhetorical cyborg aesthetic, I do not intend to argue for a feminist aesthetic, queer

aesthetic, or Black aesthetic per se, but for an inquiry that uses the questions of

aesthetics[8] along with rhetorical methods of studying the interactions among writer/artist,

text, and audience, taking into consideration the informatics of domination and their

social consequences. Such a rhetorical cyborg aesthetic would be useful intellectually and

pedagogically.

Second, it would be useful to devote further study to medium and how to use it

against the informatics of domination. Haraway argues in "The Persistence of Vision"

that feminists should reclaim vision as a metaphor and practice. Cameras have been

criticized by feminist theory as objectifying Western patriarchal eyes, but Haraway

claims that Others can use visual metaphors and visual technology in a way that is

consistent with situated knowledges. Because we live in a visual culture, and literacy is

coming to be defined more and more as a reading of images in addition to traditional

print texts, strategies for using media in cyborg ways are needed.

"It's Not a Happy Ending We Need, But a Non-Ending."

Haraway makes this statement in "The Promises of Monsters" when discussing a

transgressive way of reading—"active rewriting as reading" (PM 355). This strategy calls

for not looking at the text as a "closed logic" (355), but for recognizing the narratives told

by racist patriarchal culture, who is telling the narratives, and the myriad ways the

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[8] For example, "What is beauty? [. . .] What is the relationship of the beautiful to other values? [. . .] How is beauty perceived and recognized?" (Holman and Harmon 11).

narratives are told. The form is never complete, and it shouldn't be. The "form" is always a complex entanglement of desires, resistances, voices, and perspectives.

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Appendices

Appendix A. Further Explanation of Burkean Terms

In Burke's first collection of essays, <u>Counter-Statement</u>, three of the essays delineate his idea of form: "Psychology and Form," "The Poetic Process," and "Lexicon Rhetoricae." In the first, "Psychology and Form," Burke offers his often-cited definition of form (31):

> form is the creation of an appetite in the mind of the auditor, and the adequate satisfying of that appetite. This satisfaction—so complicated is the human mechanism—at times involves a temporary set of frustrations, but in the end these frustrations prove to be simply a more involved kind of satisfaction, and furthermore serve to make the satisfaction of fulfillment more intense.

Implied in Burke's definition is that the role of the artist, or writer, supercedes that of the audience, even though the artist or writer must appeal to the "psychology of the audience" (31) and the audience must be satisfied if a work is to have form. Burke uses the term "psychology of the audience" as a way into a dialectic he establishes between two other terms: "psychology of form" and "psychology of information." The psychology of form depends on the audience's aesthetic and emotions. In order for a work to appeal to the psychology of form, it must be able to "bear repetition": that is, "We cannot take a recurrent pleasure in the new (in information) but we can in the natural (in form)" (35). He cites music as a particularly effective example of form. The psychology of information, he argues, is based on novelty and surprise.

Contemporary audiences embrace new information via the information superhighway. A degree in "information technology," for example, is sought-after in contemporary culture. Even in 1931, Burke acknowledges and laments the changing of audiences due to temporal, experiential, and ideological factors: "The contemporary audience hears the lines of a play or novel with the same equipment as it brings to reading the lines of its daily paper. It is content to have facts placed before it in some more or less adequate sequence" (37). Burke writes, "Proposition: The hypertrophy of the psychology of information is accompanied by the corresponding atrophy of the psychology of form" (33). We see that Burke clearly privileges aesthetic, emotional *form* over "mere" information. He defines form in terms of literature, and one might argue that to apply these definitions to hypertext would be a misappropriation, but in "Lexicon Rhetoricae," Burke defines literature as any "written or spoken words" (123). Burke acknowledges that "literature" must have an expansive definition and that its role as communication is important. In making this allowance, Burke concedes that as audiences change, so will the state of "literature."

Returning to Burke's idea of form, it should be noted that in his essay "The Poetic Process," he introduces another term which is implied in his definition of form: "crescendo," or "climactic arrangement" (45). Form in poetry, Burke argues, begins with the poet's mood, the poet's self-expression: "If the artist were to externalize his mood of horror by imagining the facts of a murder, he would still have to externalize his sense of crescendo by the arrangement of these facts. In the former case he is individuating an 'emotional form,' in the latter a 'technical form.'" (51).

In "Lexicon Rhetoricae," Burke offers more formal terms. "Syllogistic progression" describes a logically coherent piece of work. We get from beginning to ending via a series of logical steps. Burke writes, "In so far as the audience, from its acquaintance with the premises, feels the rightness of the conclusion, the work is formal" (124). "Qualitative progression" takes place when the artist raises an emotion in the audience, and then evokes a contrasting emotion; comic relief in a tragedy is an example of qualitative progression. In "repetitive form," the artist shows the audience a principle "under new guises," such as discrepancy in size between Gulliver and others in Gulliver's Travels, or the artist shows the audience a character who speaks in a consistent way, such as Mercutio's humor in Romeo and Juliet. "Conventional form" is the simplest of the terms: These are forms readers know, like the sonnet, the epic, and the ode. Readers have expectations of these forms before they approach the texts. "Minor or incidental forms" are forms on a smaller scale, like rhetorical figures of speech, paragraphs, and any excerpt of a larger work which can stand on its own, such as Antony's oration from Julius Caesar. In this essay, Burke acknowledges that formal principles can come into conflict and also overlap.
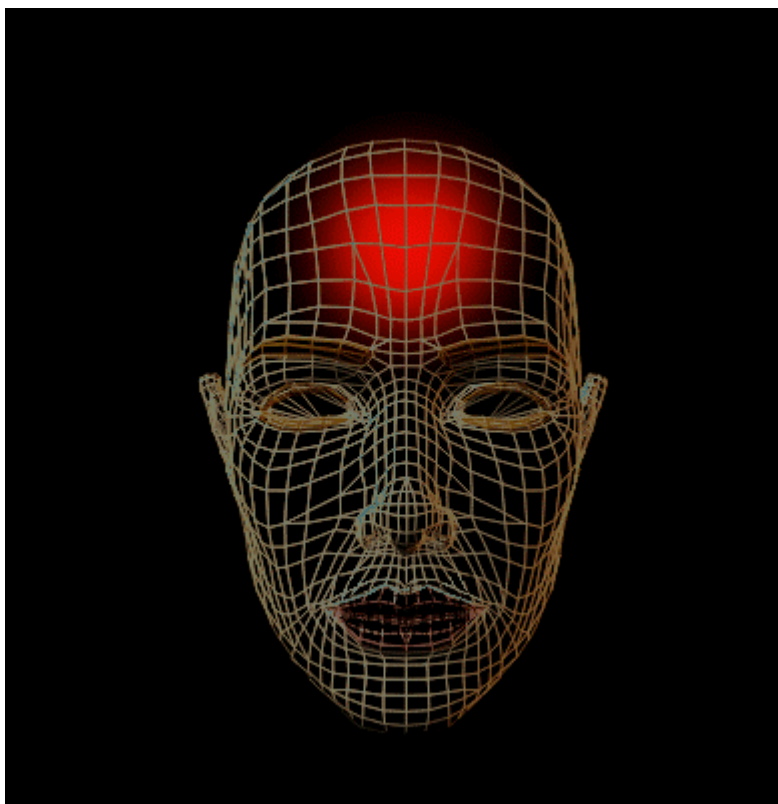
Appendix B. Images of Bodies as Systems

Figure 1. Headache. Image is accessible via the World Wide Web at http://www.headacheshurt.com.
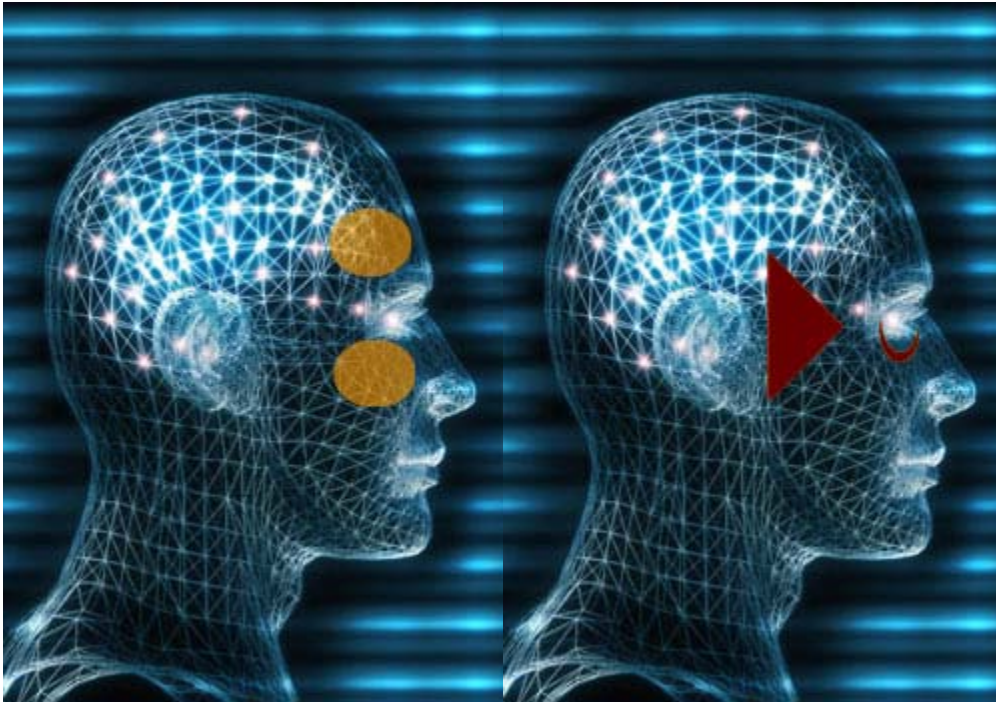
Figure 2. Sinus headache and temporomandibular jaw joint disease (TMJ) headache. Images are accessible via the World Wide Web at http://health.discovery.com/convergence/headaches/wherehurt/wherehurt_zoom4.html and http://health.discovery.com/convergence/headaches/wherehurt/wherehurt_zoom6.html.

PROGRESSIVE STUDENT ALLIANCE

We, the members of the Progressive Student Alliance, submit the following statement in an effort to spur public debate and action around issues that cut to the core of our university's public mission.

TWO COMPETING VISIONS FOR OUR UNIVERSITY

We present this document in a time of crisis for our university. At its heart, the crisis that threatens UT is defined by the contradiction between **two competing visions**. One vision, held by the majority of trustees and administrators, sees the university as a corporation, run by an unaccountable hierarchy with little concern for the impact on the people who work here, the surrounding community, or the students themselves.

The other vision sees the university as a **democratic institution** governed so as to **empower** UT students, faculty, and staff; and which serves not the corporate bottom line, but rather the best interests of the people. This is the vision we are fighting for.

DEMOCRACY AND THE GREATER GOOD

What should be the central lesson learned iń any democratic society – that all people are fit to govern – should be reflected in the how the university is actually run. We need to replace the corporate model of administration with a system in which students, faculty, staff, and the public play the key role in the decision-making process.

Furthermore, the gender, racial and class makeup of Tennessee as a whole should be reflected in the makeup of students, faculty, and staff. The university

should also be an institution where diversity of thought is promoted, and departments receive equal attention in terms of funding, faculty, and facilities.

Likewise, athletics at UT should operate as a full member of the university instead of a separate entity, as the two are vital to each other's existence.

While ensuring that sufficient funds are available to meet the educational needs that are the ultimate function of the university, we must remember that dollar signs are not the bottom line. Costs should not be cut to the detriment of human life.

The university should not outsource or privatize its services to outside corporations who do not have vested interests in the welfare of the UT community. UT should respect the rights of all campus workers to organize free of intimidation, collectively bargain, and earn a living wage.

UT should also demonstrate respect for the community in which it resides. We should have an environmentally sustainable campus, and the university contribute to the positive development of the surrounding Knoxville community in terms of quality of jobs, support of non-profit organizations, respect for historic property, patronage of the arts, and so on.

We, working together with other like-minded individuals, are committed to taking action to achieve this vision.

Progressive Student Alliance

Formerly Alliance for Hope
(865) 546-6721
Email: hopeutk@utk.edu
http://web.utk.edu/~hopeutk

Vita

Clancy Ratliff was born in Florence, Alabama on October 3, 1974. She grew up in Florence and graduated from Coffee High School in June 1993. In August 1993, she entered the University of North Alabama, Florence, Alabama, where she majored in English and minored in photography, and in December 1997 she received a Bachelor of Arts degree from UNA. She entered the University of Tennessee, Knoxville, Tennessee, in August 1999. While at the University of Tennessee, she taught Freshman Composition and Technical Communication classes, and in December 2001 she earned a Master of Arts in English with a concentration in Technical Communication. She is currently applying to doctoral programs.