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Response to “A Cyborg Manifesto” by Donna Haraway

“A Cyborg Manifesto” by Donna Haraway was a very difficult read. There were many points that I did not understand what specifically she was trying to convey to readers. However, the themes that were apparent were the mixture of humans and technology, as well as feminism. After finishing the read, the section that stood out most to me was her discussion of the three boundary breakdowns between political and scientific ideas, specifically the third item.

Haraway says that a cyborg is “a cybernetic organism, a hybrid of machine and organism, a creature of social reality as well as a creature of fiction. (Haraway 149)” A cyborg is a mixture of a biological or human aspect and an artificial or electronic aspect. I think this ties into the idea of the third point Haraway brings up. She says that the “boundary between physical and non-physical is very imprecise for us. (153)” These two ideas of humans and technology made me think about the current trends in society. Everyone is essentially a cyborg walking around. In today’s society people are so connected with technology and electronics that it is hard to see the separation.

Everywhere you turn there is someone on a computer or a cell phone or iPod. People cannot detach themselves from technology. It provides them with their news, entertainment, and boredom-saving activities. They use these devices to update themselves on various social media sites, as well as updating others on their life. Websites like Facebook, Twitter, and Blogger are just a click away.

Another aspect of being a cyborg is more medically related. There are some people that are literally walking around with technology in their bodies. This technology is either saving their life or helping them live a better life. Some people have machines to check their sugar or heart monitors. Other people use the technology to provide them with an arm or a leg so they can carry on everyday tasks.

Haraway’s idea of a cyborg might have been a little different from my interpretation, but I think that it still pertains to today’s media and communication. She mentions that the best machines “are light and clean because they are nothing but signals, electromagnetic waves, a section of a spectrum, and these machines are eminently portable, mobile. (153)” This is definitely true even today. Everything is getting smaller and more compact.