

The Body Project: Anatomy, Relationships, and Representation
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Svitlana Matviyenko

MU Department of English

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The Posthuman Body in the Works of Andy Warhol, David Cronenberg and Matthew Barney

Today, it has been assumed that in the mixed reality of virtual and physical realms, the body is not perceived as a whole. The instances of how the unity and homogeneity of the body is challenged by technology come in a great variety: application of cosmetics, pilling off dead skin, erasing the wrinkles, fighting with cellulite (on a micro-level), as well as plastic and cosmetic surgery, reshaping the body and/or its parts (on a macro-level). Due to our interaction with technology, the imaginary wholeness of the body despoils. The body is perceived as open to modification. This traumatic acknowledgement concerns the realization of fragmentary nature of the body, the issue that has been always in focus of Lacanian psychoanalysis.

The term “cyborg” that initially stood for a “cybernetic organism” has undergone sufficient changes, having been largely expanded from a “cybernetic organism” to a body that has been “technologically modified in any significant way” (Grey). Working with Donna Haraway's definition of a cyborg as a “condensed image of both imagination and material reality” as well as its recast by the later scholarship, I explore Andy Warhol's discourse on technology along with David Cronenberg's films and Matthew Barney's installations, whose disturbing body horrors embody one of the fundamental fears on our time, the fear of transition from human to posthuman. In my work, I approach this theme through the lens of cyborg theory and Lacanian psychoanalysis. In my paper, I claim that both--cyborg theory and Lacanian psychoanalysis--show a sufficient affinity in terms of what they reveal about the body.