

## Cyborg Ontology in *Fear and Loathing in Las Vegas* On the Road to Consciousness: The Red Shark, The White Whale & Reading The Textual Body.

By Tom Murphy

### Introduction

In *On The Road*, Jack Kerouac's 1957 text, exploration and understanding are integral aspects that lead to enlightenment.<sup>1</sup> The road per say, is the location of divinity that unfolds before their eyes, providing *understanding*, in which the steering wheel that Dean and Sal use to drive forward in cars is itself the wheel of life and the altar of enlightenment. On their final road trip, Sal relates conscious moments of enlightenment as they drive in Mexico.

Dean and I had the whole of Mexico before us. "Now, Sal, we're leaving everything behind us and entering a new and unknown phase of things. ...and *understand* the world as, really and genuinely speaking, other Americans haven't done before us" (emphasis texts 226).

I was alone in my eternity at the wheel, and the road ran straight as an arrow. Not like driving across Carolina, or Texas, or Arizona, or Illinois; but like driving across the world and into the places where we would finally learn ourselves among the Fellahin Indians of the world, the essential strain of the basic primitive, wailing humanity that stretches in a belt around the equatorial belly of the world. (229)

Kerouac unfolds "*understanding*" as a combination of the road and the wheel coming together as divine events that allows enlightenment. However, the quest for enlightenment in cars changed with two cultural events: first, the invention of the integrated circuit by Jack Kilby in 1958 and separately by Robert Noyce in 1959<sup>2</sup> and second, the assassination of JFK in Dallas in 1963. The fallout of these two events not only lead us to, but also enhanced Hunter S. Thompson's 1971 *Fear and Loathing In Las Vegas: A Savage Journey to the Heart of the American Dream*. The characters Raoul Duke and his lawyer Dr. Gonzo journey in "the Red Shark" and "the White Whale," two cars that have named loci in which the counterculture's consciousness becomes not only grounded but accessible as we read these mobile hybrid human/car texts. Indeed the car has become monstrous in "Part One" and shifts towards a cyborg identity in "Part Two."

The intergraded circuit is the linchpin of cyborg ontology and Thompson's text illustrates the specification differences of the red Chevrolet convertible (the Great Red Shark) and the white Cadillac Coup de Ville (the White Whale). The intergraded circuit modifies the human/car automaton actions that become a closed loop system, which allows data flow throughout the cybernetic system and consequently permits the White Whale, Dr. Gonzo and Raoul Duke to become a single cybernetic system more causally called a cyborg. This paper's triptych aim includes discussion of a fundamental change in the third machine age that includes consciousness—the new cyborg consciousness, mapping Thompson's place in cyborg ontology, and the importance of the human/car hybrid shift in postmodern texts.

## Part I

Earlier, I mentioned a change in the third machine age that includes consciousness—the new cyborg consciousness—that enhances Thompson's classic text. First, I believe that I need to ground these terms before proceeding. In Frederic Jameson's *Postmodernism: Or, The Cultural Logic of Late Capitalism*, he states that Ernest Mandel “outlines” three steps of Capitalism based on technology:

The fundamental revolutions in power technology—the technology of the production of motive machines by machines—thus appears as the determinant moment in revolutions of technology as a whole. Machine production of steam-driven motors since 1848; machine production of electric and combustion motors since the 90s of the 19<sup>th</sup> century; machine production of electronic and nuclear-powered apparatuses since the 40s of the 20<sup>th</sup> century—these are the three general revolutions in technology engendered by the capitalist mode of production since the ‘original’ industrial revolution for the later 18<sup>th</sup> century.<sup>3</sup> (Mandel as qtd. 35)

Jameson equates each of these Machine periods with capitalism and literature, and for our purposes, he links the third Machine age with Late Capitalism or Multinational Capitalism or as the term Postmodernism. On a completely different vector, Social Science and Technology (SST) experts Mimi Sheller and John Urry claim “Automobility is a complex amalgam of interlocking machines, social practices and ways of dwelling, not in a stationary home, but in a mobile, semi-privatized and hugely dangerous capsule”<sup>4</sup> (739). This “dangerous capsule,” colloquially known as a car, is much described as a “cocoon” and the human drivers as “monsters” in Deborah Lupton's “Monsters in Metal Cocoons: ‘Road Rage’ and Cyborg Bodies.”<sup>5</sup> Americans understand “road rage” as possibly an ephemeral moment; but what does

really take place and how does this map American character and, moreover, what do these constellations of violence indicate about American culture? American culture isn't cloaked in some densely woven fabric that can be lifted up to digitize the anatomy of the beast as the great American novel through metanarrative and yet it can be datatized through medical and military means of information system theory by using what Donna Haraway describes as "the metaphor C3I, command-control-communication-intelligence, the military's symbol for its operations theory" (164). Moreover, the cyborg consciousness even in the most mundane of circuits is always political, always economic, always libidinal and always productive.

## Part II

In brief, *Fear and Loathing* is a post sixties tale of Raoul Duke, a freelance journalist, and Dr. Gonzo, his Samoan lawyer. The two characters cover two cultural events for journalism (3, 137)<sup>6</sup>. To travel from Los Angeles to Las Vegas, they rent a car on Duke's expense account. As most people are aware, the road trip is also a means and a reason for ingesting massive amounts of alcohol and drugs that contribute to the monstrous aspects of the car. Within Thompson's text, Duke identifies the cars they rent as amphibious animals he names the red Chevrolet convertible the *Great Red Shark* and the white Cadillac Coup de Ville convertible the *White Whale* (3, 106). Duke's name designations come about as a result from witnessing an auto accident early in the adventure. "[A] Stingray in front of us killed a pedestrian on Sunset Boulevard" (12-3). Duke consciously realizes that corporate America has taken a monstrous underwater killer and transformed it into a sleek amphibious killer that prowls the road. Moreover, Judith Butler states that "the name...functions as a kind of prohibition, but also as an enabling occasion" Duke and Dr. Gonzo's amphibious representations name the violent nature of the cars they rent. These car names have been chosen with great care; the first one represents a prehistoric predatory beast that never sleeps, and the second one represents Ahab's nemesis, God in the guise of the white whale, in Herman Melville's *Moby Dick*.<sup>7</sup> A shark and a whale are large sea monsters that have a history of killing people; even so, their becoming amphibious marks their body politic of difference.<sup>8</sup>

When the body politic converges as beast or as savage, as in the subtitle of the text, *A Savage Journey*, we witness the instability of the evolutionary cycle, cars and people becoming *unnatural* and *uncultured*. The monstrous body politic creates a codified commentary written

upon its body. To understand this new car/human entity, we must examine how it is a body of difference, or as being monstrous. The Latin root of monster is the noun *monstrum* that means "sign, portent, wonder; warning; monster, monstrosity."<sup>9</sup> Monsters are codified glyphs that indicate categorical crisis; monsters or the monstrous signify ruptures in dichotomous thinking.<sup>10</sup> Even though the text breaks down into two parts, "Fear" and "Loathing," and the two cars coincide with this bifurcation,<sup>11</sup> The road binds the cultural/natural divisions together as the car/human monstrous body that finds it has not only achieved motility but now mobility as well and prowls the boundary. In "Monster Culture (Seven Theses)," Jeffrey Jerome Cohen argues that to read culture through monsters one must first identify the bimodal narrative, "one that describes how the monster came to be and another, its testimony, detailing what cultural use the monster serves."<sup>12</sup> Monstrous human/cars function as a warning in Thompson's text; a warning of "blood, torture, death and terror," as Jameson characterizes "the under belly of the global or the American economy."<sup>13</sup> The bimodal narrative difference lies between the two cars' function in their spatial capacity; the *Great Red Shark's* narrative is one of interior projections that represents "how the monster came to be, while the *White Whale's* narrative is one of exterior projections that represents "what cultural use the monster serves."<sup>14</sup> When speaking of projections, I literally mean all projections from a body, whether they are matter, as in solid, liquid, or gas; *and/or* language, as in verbal, written and thought. Each one of these types of projections is codified, that is they can be read as signs of the postmodern crisis of the American cultural body. These projections represent the monster's ability to be abject. That is to say, the all-consuming and contemptible monster is "quite close," but the cultural body cannot assimilate the monstrous body to silence or cloak its hideous being.<sup>15</sup> In other words, the novel's characters and readers cannot avoid these monsters or their messages.

In the beginning of *Fear and Loathing*, Duke tries to tell their story to a hitchhiker they have picked up in the *Red Shark*, but his inarticulate condition caused by drugs and alcohol only scares the hitchhiker (3-8; 17-19). However, their story is *its* story, "how the monster came to be."<sup>16</sup> *Its story* is the text that describes the birth of the two-headed monster with red shark body, as it grows together piece-by-piece and moves from L. A. to Vegas. Rather than grasping their story, the hitchhiker does not read the text of the monstrous birth. The hitchhiker lacks the cryptographer's key to interpret the monstrous narrative of the *Shark's* coded beginning and cannot hear the text "detailing what cultural use the monster serves," or the warning of the

monster. Duke's inability to articulate within his coded language makes him self-conscious and thus makes conscious evaluation while speaking.

I leaned around in the seat and gave him a fine big smile...admiring the shape of his skull. [...] Was he gritting his teeth? "Can you *hear* me?" I yelled. He nodded. "That's good," I said. "Because I want you to know that we're on our way to Las Vegas to find the American Dream." I smiled. "That's why we rented this car. It was the only way to do it. Can you grasp that?" He nodded again, but his eyes were nervous. "I want you to have all the background," I said. "Because this is a very ominous assignment—with overtones of extreme personal danger. ... Hell, I forgot all about this beer; you want one?" He shook his head. "How about some ether?" I said. "What?" "Never mind." [...] I laughed and ripped open a beer can that foamed all over the back seat while I kept talking. (6)

Duke's communication breaks down by coding the monstrous car/human discursive projection with indecipherable terms that is indicated by the hitchhiker uttering the question "what?" when asked about "ether." In an attempt to somehow communicate, Duke tries another approach in which he exhibits inhuman strength in ripping the metal can open to project foaming or frothing that he pays no attention to because of his excitement of having an audience. However, the undercurrent here is that the hitchhiker has to pay attention to the monstrous foaming, in which the whole backseat that he occupies becomes completely engulfed and soaked by the beer. The beer projection as an attempt of communication serves only to push the hitchhiker further away until he leaves, in fear for his life. In this scene, the monstrous car/human body tries to incorporate a new piece unto its body, but quickly realizes that it will not fit and rejects the piece (while at the same time adding the hitchhiker's failed assimilation story to the cultural body). Furthermore, the fluid projection stays within the body and remains internalized until a catalyst exists. The *White Whale* becomes that catalyst because it contains "its testimony," a warning of full cyborg consciousness.<sup>17</sup>

The hybridity of organism and machine through a cybernetic interface means nothing less than that the *White Whale*/Duke & Gonzo are a singular cyborg with data flowing communication as it roams the roads. Furthermore, Jameson states, "the most energetic postmodernist texts, and this is the sense that beyond all thematics or content the work seems somehow to tap the networks of the reproductive process and thereby to afford us some glimpse into a postmodern or technological sublime."<sup>18</sup> To unpack this concept, we should start with the differences between the *Shark* and the *Whale*. During the *Shark* for *Whale* exchange, Duke signifies that the *Shark* "manually" operates while within the *Whale* "everything was automatic"

and "electric" (104, 119). The text describes the *White Whale* from the interior outward, "The dashboard was full of esoteric lights & dials & meters that I would never understand—but there was no doubt in my mind that I was into a *superior machine*" (text emphasis 104-5). The word "into" indicates that Duke is beyond the interior of the *Whale*, immersing himself into the whole body of the "*superior machine*." Indeed, Duke's immersion is not completely comprehensive, but he finds it more than acceptable as an interface. What Duke does not understand of these lights, gadgets etc., becomes clearer after examining the 1971 Cadillac Brochure.<sup>19</sup> Some of the most interesting accessories are "Automatic Climate Control," "Automatic Level Control" and "Track Master"; Track Master is the 1971 "Cadillac's computerized rear-wheel skid-control braking system."<sup>20</sup> In addition to Track Master, another interesting item is Cadillac's first time offering of a generator with an "integral regulator."<sup>21</sup> The generator of a car regulates the electrical impulses throughout a car's engine and electronic instruments much like the synaptic impulses of the human brain.<sup>22</sup> As much as the human/car cyborg is a *closed-loop system*<sup>23</sup> so has Las Vegas become unto its own.

Duke's narrative identifies the cultural situation of Las Vegas as "a Time Warp, a regression to the late fifties" in which the movements of the 60s: free speech, civil rights and Vietnam war protests had not existed; Vegas is a rare location that still holds onto so-called traditional white patriarchal values in 1971 (156). However, in the 1972 landmark text *Learning from Las Vegas: The Forgotten Symbolism of Architectural Form*, Robert Venturi argues that the Las Vegas "Strip" is a complex system of communication. "This architecture of styles and signs is antispatial; it is an architecture of communication over space; communication dominates space as an element in the architecture and in the landscape. [...] The mechanical movement of neon light...on the Strip as well as the tempo of its movement is greater to accommodate the greater spaces, greater speeds, and greater impacts that our technology permits and our sensibilities respond to."<sup>24</sup> Duke and Dr. Gonzo have mutated with the *Whale* before they enter this regression space and yet also a complex communication system, they become harbingers of the monstrous difference of the new age of cultural crisis. Dr. Gonzo's *emergence* from the shell of the *Whale* contains an assortment of categorical cultural crises as he verbally abuses two Oklahoma couples in a blue Ford along the Vegas Strip, who are assumed to be in Vegas for the cop Drug Conference.

[T]hey found themselves next to a white Cadillac convertible all covered with

vomit and a 300-pound Samoan in a yellow fishnet T-shirt yelling at them: “Hey there! You folks want to buy some heroin?” No reply. No sign of recognition. [...] “Hey Honkies!” my attorney screamed. “Goddamnit, I’m serious! I want to sell you some pure fuckin’ *smack!*” He was leaning out of the car, very close to them. [...] I glanced over, very briefly, and saw four middle-American faces frozen with shock, staring straight ahead. (151)

What becomes important here concerning the car/human identity is the emergence or the breaking of boundary surfaces to interact or in Gonzo's case, to attack.<sup>25</sup> The singularity of Gonzo's attack incorporates the verbal warning of the violent changes to come. Dr. Gonzo as a lawyer boards on being part of the establishment, however, within the complex system of communication of the “Strip” his data flows as a deranged dark skin fisherman who has usurped white patriarchal control. Indeed, posing as a drug dealing Vietnam veteran of color, a reality to some vets, dashes away the God and country consciousness of the corn fed Oklahomans he demeans. Furthermore, the open space of the “Strip” and the convertible allows Duke and Gonzo to freely interface while the Oklahomans are compressed and enclosed. From the perspective of the reader, Lupton’s notions of “Monsters in Metal Cocoons” are possibly the cyborg Whale or more likely the Oklahomans in the Ford car. The Ford car is a two door with a couple (male & female) in the back, which means that the front seat has to be folded to open the same in the space in the back seat, giving the back seat an overtly feminine sexuality as the folds of labia as being opened up. When the man lunges “across his wife” to yell back at Dr. Gonzo and Duke, it is an attempt to escape the feminized backseat to place his head/mouth in the masculinized driver seat next to the other man and yell through a single window. The image can be mapped as phallogentric inveigh through the one eyed vision of the white heterosexual (with latent homosexual overtones) bourgeois patriarchy control—these men’s thoughts have been surmised by Raoul Duke’s narrative as to show their wives a good time on “The Strip.” The privacy of the backseat in this scene would have been the promise of intimate location for gazing. That is the promise of lights—the fantastic—the stars—the coitus—the fantastic being *on* “the strip” is to strip inhibitions. “What happens in Vegas, stays in Vegas,” as the over used phrase that localizes taboo as long as it stays localized to Las Vegasazation. However, the Okalahoma Bumpkins as enforcement to the patriarchal society headed by Dick Nixon are disenfranchised by the topless white whale, its vomit crusted side, the lead foot Duke, the Samoan fisherman lawyer called Dr. Gonzo, whose own verbiage begins with questions concerning drugs, Vietnam, prostitution,

people of color—everything the Okies are not. In which the hierarchical dichotomy of the same and the other has been rhetorically reversed

The car represents an embodiment of American culture and the vomit is a corrosive rejection of the car/human's guts as an action of the horrific cultural conscious being written upon the body as scaring in progress, while simultaneously giving birth to itself as monster. In "Approaching Abjection," Julia Kristeva claims that self-birth is signified by the violence of vomit.<sup>26</sup> Also suggestive of a birthing process is *Fear and Loathing's* epigram from Dr. Johnson: "He who makes a beast of himself gets rid of the pain of being a man." These statements contain fluidity and communicate the warning to the reader, whether that data flow is moving away from being man to being another, it is the automobility towards difference or monstrous. The *White Whale's* difference of integrated circuits shifts the monstrous space into a cybernetic spatial interface.

### Part III

The integrated circuit has covertly entered a contemporary American car for the first time in Thompson's text. Duke's speaking of immersion with an integrated system suggests an interface of machine and organism as becoming cyborgs within a complex system of communications. In "A Cyborg Manifesto," Donna Haraway states that cyborgs are "couplings between organism and machine, each conceived as coded devices, in an intimacy and with a power that was not generated in the history of sexuality."<sup>27</sup> Once integrated circuits enter into automobile production, car/human shift from being monstrous to cyborgs because of communicating in code. However, the coded communication between *Whale* and Duke & Gonzo happens at the autonomic level. That is to say, that during the process of automobility or self propelled motion, automatic functions within the car occur beyond the knowledge of the car/human. The human consciousness lacks knowledge of such actions as the neurological synapses function to keep the heart pumping or to deplete a toxin. In "Man A Machine," David Paul asserts that, "Signal flow between organic and mechanical units linked in a system gradually becomes continuous and unbroken."<sup>28</sup> In other words, Duke and Gonzo are hardwired into the *Whale* and each other. As the text states at one point, "We are all wired into a *survival* trip now" (text emphasis 178).

After *Fear and Loathing in Las Vegas* there are two profoundly human/car texts. The search for wholeness includes merging or even ingesting in Henry Crews' 1972 novel *Car*. *Car* explores family life that centered on an auto-wrecker compound until the son decides to strikeout on his own by publicly eating a Ford Maverick square inch by square inch. His sister only has sex in the back of her boyfriends police cruiser at crash scenes and when they finally engage in coitus on a bed they are unable to perform because of the cruiser ambience is missing. In *Crash*, J. G. Ballard's 1973 novel documents a disenfranchised community that prowls the freeways to crash their cars into other cars as fetish transference of sexual energy. Characters fetishistic rewrite their bodies in which the car body penetrating their body during the staged crashes. Literally rewriting the body by orgasmic machine penetration. *Car* and *Crash* understate the shift towards merger of human/car cyborg conscious as a new textual paradigm. Briefly, other emergences of the human/car cyborg are not as obvious in texts and need to be mapped in a larger schematic of cyborg ontology.<sup>29</sup>

## Notes

<sup>1</sup> Jack Kerouac. *On The Road*. 1957. NAL-Signet: New York, nd. I will use the text's page numbers from here on.

<sup>2</sup> Bellis, Mary. "Inventors of the Modern Computer: The History of the Integrated Circuit (IC) - Jack Kilby and Robert Noyce." About.com. 8 April 2006. <<http://inventors.about.com/library/weekly/aa080498.htm>>.

<sup>3</sup> Mandel as qtd. 35. Jameson, Frederic. *Postmodernism: Or, The Cultural Logic of Late Capitalism*.

<sup>4</sup> Sheller & Urry, 739. Sheller, Mimi and John Urry. "The City and the Car." *International Journal of Urban and Regional Research* 24 (2000): 737-757.

<sup>5</sup> The idea of a cocoon manifests itself in E. L. Doctorow's *The Book of Daniel*, in which during a conversation about rain between Phyllis and Daniel: "I love rain," Phyllis said. "I especially love warm rain in the summer when there's no lightening or thunder." "No, I mean now, in this car," Daniel said. "The rain has the effect of a cocoon, it encapsulates us" (emphasis mine 56). Sheller and Urry also bring up the term cocoon as well: "People are trapped in congestion, jams, temporal uncertainties and health-threatening city environments, as a consequence of being encapsulated in a privatized, cocooned, moving environment that uses up disproportionate amounts of physical resources" (744).

<sup>6</sup> Hunter S. Thompson. *Fear and Loathing in Las Vegas*. 1971. New York: Warner-Random House, 1982. I will use the text's page numbers from here on.

<sup>7</sup> Olson, 55. Olson, Charles. *Call Me Ishmael: A Study of Melville*. New York: Evergreen-Grove P, 1947.

<sup>8</sup> Donna Haraway goes farther than Derrida's *différance* by her definition. "The evidence is building of a need for a theory of 'difference' whose geometries, paradigms, and logics break out

of binaries, dialectics, and nature/culture models of any kind. Otherwise, threes will always reduce to twos, which quickly become lonely ones in the vanguard. And no one learns to count to four. These things matter politically" (129). While Jeffery Jerome Cohen believes that, "the monster is difference made flesh...but for the most part monstrous difference tends to be cultural, political, racial, economic, sexual" (7). In the case of Thompson's text, the *Red Shark*, the *White Whale*, Duke, Gonzo are components that make up the body, but there are other components as well, such as the different radios playing simultaneously two different songs ("One Took Over the Line" and "Sympathy for the Devil"), the cache of drugs and alcohol, the guns, knives, mace, etc. Cohen's whole essay, "Monster Culture (Seven Theses)" is a discussion on what constitutes monsters or a monstrous body. Cohen, Jeffrey Jerome. "Monster Culture (Seven Theses)." *Monster Theory: Reading Culture*. Ed. Jeffrey Jerome Cohen. Minneapolis, MN, London, UK: U Minnesota P, 1996. 3-25.

<sup>9</sup> Haraway and Cohen each have their own spin on the Latin root of monster. "Monsters share more than the word's root with the verb 'to demonstrate'; monsters signify" (Haraway 226). "The *monstrum* is etymologically 'that which reveals,' 'that which warns,' a glyph that seeks a hierophant" (Cohen 4). However, Haraway and Cohen's glossing work well for their texts but is incomplete. The Latin root of monster and monstrosity is the noun *monstrum* that means "sign, portent, wonder; warning; monster, monstrosity" while the transitive verb *monstr-o-are* means "to show, to point out," however, the root of monstrous, the adjective *monstruos-us-a-um* "unnatural, strange" (New College Latin & English Dictionary 186).

<sup>10</sup> Haraway and Cohen discuss this limits, but in different ways. "Monsters have always defined the limits of community in Western imaginations" (Haraway 180). "The monster notoriously appears at times of crisis as a kind of third term that problematizes the clash of extremes" (Cohen 6). However, the postmodern monstrous body indicates it has evolved since Hiroshima & Nagasaki, in which it has become more impervious to all boundaries, straddling all bimodal systems in which it works to create a new form of code that combines analog and digital; as *diglog* for no other better term.

<sup>11</sup> Robinson, Sally. "Fear and Loathing in Las Vegas." Paranoia, Conspiracy and Gender in Postmodernism Seminar. Texas A&M University, College Station. 19 April 2000.

<sup>12</sup> Cohen, 13. Cohen also states that "the monster's body is a cultural body," such that "behead the corpse, so that, acephalic, it will not know itself as subject, only as pure body. The monster is born only at this metaphoric crossroads, as an embodiment of a certain cultural moment—of a time, a feeling, and a place...the monstrous body is pure culture. A construct and a projection, the monster exists only to be read" (4).

<sup>13</sup> Jameson, 5.

<sup>14</sup> Hayles, N. Katherine, 162. Hayles states in *How We Became Post Human: Virtual Bodies in Cybernetics, Literature, and Informatics*, "...the struggle for freedom often presses itself as an attempt to get 'outside' this corporate encapsulation. The ultimate horror for the individual is to remain trapped 'inside' a world constructed by another being for the other's own profit" (162).

<sup>15</sup> Cohen discusses Julia Kristeva's discussion of "Approaching Abjection." However, Kristeva takes the abjection much further than Cohen elaborates on. Kristeva delves deeper into the physical in conjunction with the psychological attributes. Kristeva, Julia. *Powers of Horror*. Leon S. Roudiez trans. New York: Columbia UP, 1982. 1; Cohen, 19-20.

<sup>16</sup> Cohen, 13.

<sup>17</sup> Cohen, 13.

<sup>18</sup> Jameson, (37).

<sup>19</sup> A couple items here: first off, Thompson and Oscar Zeta Acosta, an LA Chicano lawyer, traveled to Las Vegas together twice during April 1971; *Fear and Loathing* part I & II appeared in *Rolling Stone* issues of 11 November 1971 and 25 November 1971. "Hunter S. Thompson's Works – Chronologically: 1970-74." *Fear and Loathing with Hunter S. Thompson*. 26 June 2002. <<http://www.cornboy.com/hst/works/chrono.html#70>>.

Secondly, the text indicates that the white Coupe de Ville is a brand new vehicle, "it is not often that a man gets a chance to run terminal experiments on a virgin Cadillac" (154), although the 1971 Cadillac Brochure indicates that they did not specifically offer a Coupe de Ville as a convertible. However, the 1970 Cadillac Brochure does offer a convertible for the Coupe de Ville model. In addition, the normal dollar amount for the 1971 Coupe de Ville factory price was "\$6264" (one source states that the 1970 FP was "\$ 5,884" another "\$6,068") and even so, if it were the special edition as the text indicates by a sticker price of "ten grand" it is quite possibly that GM did construct 1971 Coupe de Ville convertibles rather than add four thousand dollars worth of "gimmicks and high-priced Special Effects" (co71.html; Coupe.html; 104). "1971 Cadillac Overview." *Cadillacs and Cruise Brothers*. 8 August 2000. 26 June 2002. <<http://www.fleetwood.demon.nl/cf/co00/co71.html>>.

"1970 Cadillac Coupe de Ville." *1970's Cadillac's*. 11 March 2002. 27 June 2002. <<http://hem.passagen.se/brynaren/Coupe.html>>.

<sup>20</sup> Automatic Level Control "Helps keep car level for best appearance and excellent handling" "...Automatically compensates for passengers and luggage compartment (sic.) loading." "1971 Cadillac Fleetwood Eldorado Coupe." *Cadillacs and Cruise Brothers*. 19 June 2001. 26 June 2002. <<http://www.fleetwood.demon.nl/cf/cf71/cf71h.htm>>.

<sup>21</sup> "1971 Cadillac Specifications." *Cadillacs and Cruise Brothers*. 18 June 2001. 26 June 2002. <<http://www.fleetwood.demon.nl/cf/cf71/cf71spc.htm>>.

<sup>22</sup> This method of mapping is much like Descartes mapping the cardiovascular system of the body. Descartes, René "Part V." *Discourse on the Method and Meditations on First Philosophy*. Trans. Desmond M. Clarke. London: Penguin, 1998.

<sup>23</sup> Virilio, 150. Virilio, Paul. *Open Sky*. 1995. Translated by Julie Rose. London-New York: Verso, 1997.

<sup>24</sup> Venturi, 8 & 116. Venturi, Robert, Denise Brown & Steven Izenour. *Learning From Las Vegas: The Forgotten Symbolism of Architectural Form*. 1972. Cambridge, MA & London: MIT P, 1977.

<sup>25</sup> Incidentally, eight years later in the film *Alien*, (1979) a similar birthing scene is played out when the alien pops out of John Hurt's torso, verbalizes and then scurries off.

<sup>26</sup> Kristeva, 3.

<sup>27</sup> Haraway, 150.

<sup>28</sup> David Paul's discussion starts off "When driving a car, one's nervous system becomes linked with the vehicle in a very basic way," which leads him to assert that humanity is on the brink of creating cyborgs. However, he claims that this evolutionary process means that man and tool evolve together, not as separate identities. Of course, he quotes Spengler to suggest the origins of his basis. "Man A Machine." *Apocalypse Culture*. Adam Parfrey Ed. New York: Amok P, 1987. 169.

<sup>29</sup> In Diane Johnson's *The Shadow Knows*, the narrator N. is raped in her car, pp. 274-6; In T. Coraghessan Boyle's *The Tortilla Curtain*, the unnatural birth from a woman that combines a

truck and a man is described, p. 129; In E. L. Doctorow's *The Book of Daniel*, Daniel tortures his wife Phyllis by using a cigarette lighter to burn her genitals while driving, pp. 58-60; In Mark Leyner's *Et Tu, Babe*, the Piranha 793 is a car that "not only protects its passengers in the event of a collision, but ensures the death of the passengers in the other car," p. 52. These are some of the more brutal aspects of the human/car cyborg but not the only episodes in these texts.