

University of Texas Press
Society for Cinema & Media Studies

Machine as Messiah: Cyborgs, Morphs, and the American Body Politic

Author(s): Doran Larson

Source: *Cinema Journal*, Vol. 36, No. 4 (Summer, 1997), pp. 57-75

Published by: University of Texas Press on behalf of the Society for Cinema & Media Studies

Stable URL: <http://www.jstor.org/stable/1225613>

Accessed: 29/03/2009 17:16

Your use of the JSTOR archive indicates your acceptance of JSTOR's Terms and Conditions of Use, available at <http://www.jstor.org/page/info/about/policies/terms.jsp>. JSTOR's Terms and Conditions of Use provides, in part, that unless you have obtained prior permission, you may not download an entire issue of a journal or multiple copies of articles, and you may use content in the JSTOR archive only for your personal, non-commercial use.

Please contact the publisher regarding any further use of this work. Publisher contact information may be obtained at <http://www.jstor.org/action/showPublisher?publisherCode=texas>.

Each copy of any part of a JSTOR transmission must contain the same copyright notice that appears on the screen or printed page of such transmission.

JSTOR is a not-for-profit organization founded in 1995 to build trusted digital archives for scholarship. We work with the scholarly community to preserve their work and the materials they rely upon, and to build a common research platform that promotes the discovery and use of these resources. For more information about JSTOR, please contact support@jstor.org.



University of Texas Press and Society for Cinema & Media Studies are collaborating with JSTOR to digitize, preserve and extend access to *Cinema Journal*.

<http://www.jstor.org>

Machine as Messiah: Cyborgs, Morphs, and the American Body Politic

by Doran Larson

The Liquid Metal Man of Terminator 2 exposes ambiguities in the figure of the American body politic that have existed for over three hundred years; in contrast, the reprogrammed T101 suggests a body politic as cyborg and offers false assurances of popular control over mass democracy under late capitalism.

I consider it possible to convert men into republican machines. This must be done, if we expect them to perform their parts properly, in the great machine of the government of the state.

—Benjamin Rush, “Of the Mode of Education Proper to a Republic”

A technological rationale is the rationale of domination itself.

—Max Horkheimer and Theodor W. Adorno, *Dialectic of Enlightenment*

On September 22, 1676, a Dr. Brakenbury conducted the first human dissection by Europeans in North America. Samuel Sewell's diary records that a Mr. Hooper, “taking the [heart] in his hand, affirmed it to be the stomach.”¹ As James Schramer and Timothy Sweet have remarked, this misrepresentation of the internal organs of a geopolitical enemy was necessary to that ideological apparatus whereby the Puritan community gained its sense of social cohesion. The community of saints had inherited from monarchical England a single image, the body politic, to legitimate coherence as a political organization. But this image was deeply problematic in the absence of a monarch as head. It was thus necessary to demonstrate the community's coherence as a body in relative and oppositional terms. In essence, the corporeal integrity of the Puritan community was confirmed by demonstrating the tangibly inhuman, bodily disorganization not only among but inside the “savages.” By this means, moreover, figural violence in the battle between good and evil legitimated physical violence.²

This structural necessity haunts us today: that section of the American population which both conceives of itself self-consciously as democratic and unconsciously as healthy cells and organs in the body politic requires a nonhuman other which it can eviscerate in order to confirm its own political and spiritual legitimacy.³ Real change occurs only insofar as there is politically opportune evolution in this Other: Native Americans, Redcoats, urban immigrants, Communists, and, since the end of the Cold War, drug dealers, feminists, homosexuals, PC academics, black jurists, and so on.⁴

Doran Larson is assistant professor in the Division of English, Classics, Philosophy and Communication at the University of Texas–San Antonio. He has previously published in *Modern Language Studies* and *Arizona Quarterly*.

© 1997 by the University of Texas Press, P.O. Box 7819, Austin, TX 78713-7819

The internal contradictions of this will to self-conception as both a fixed, organized body *and* as a mobile, democratic republic is revealed in the vehemence with which the enemy is demonized in popular culture. For intrinsic to this psychopolitics is the gnawing possibility that such surgery, while it may mutilate the Other, in fact anatomizes the self: that, for example, a cry to execute entrepreneurial drug dealers covers middle-class frustration with an economy more and more class-bound, that the black youth is condemned for engaging in violence the Crime Watch member desires to wield. In Norman O. Brown's formulation, "there is only one psyche, in relation to which all conflict is endopsychic, all war intestine. The external enemy is part of ourselves, projected, our own bodies, banished."⁵

As evidenced from Dr. Brakenbury's surgery to *Nightline* attacks on Simpson jurists, demonization is both swift and culturally familiar whenever any figure threatens to expose this unconscious will. A popular survival of patristic notions of Christ and Satan as symbiotic tricksters, sly foxes for good as well as for bad,⁶ American literature is filled with shape-shifters: characters who terrify because, rather than appearing overtly on the side of evil, they flow back and forth, frustrating attempts to stabilize binary opposition, and thus exposing the ambivalence—the resentment—in our embrace of the good. We think of Brockden Brown's Carwin the biloquist, Poe's many self-projections, Hawthorne's villagers in "Young Goodman Brown" or Arthur Dimsdale, Melville's Confidence Man, on through Oates's Arnold Friend in "Where Are You Going, Where Have You Been," and variations on the "Sleeping with the Enemy" plot. Except during crises in national identity, however, it is rare to see a figure express so graphically as Brakenbury's victim the intimate tie between this Puritan notion of the demonic and the tensions intrinsic to democracy's dependence upon the metaphor of the body politic. And it is this tie, just such an identic crisis, and the links between this demonization and the body politic metaphor and postmodernism/late capitalism that I will argue is expressed in James Cameron's T1000 or Liquid Metal Man (LMM) of *Terminator 2: Judgment Day* (1991).⁷

In Cameron's Terminator films (as in *Blade Runner* and *Metropolis* and arguably all films preoccupied with distinguishing humans from machines and cyborgs), we see the same political agenda motivating Dr. Brakenbury's Mayan sacrifice to civil order, for we revisit here the troubling ambiguities involved in distinguishing heathens from Christians, loyalists from patriots, Communists from free-enterprise democrats, the damned from the elect.⁸ Fundamental is not only the loaded tautology, best articulated by feminism, in which "we" (in this case humans) are who we are because we are not like "them" (machines) but the next necessary step: we have hearts, while they have only stomachs; while we have charity and empathy, they have only political appetite. Coherence as a healthy political body is confirmed by cutting difference into the very viscera of the Other.

I do not propose, however, simply to write a political gloss over a rich tradition of cyborg and android-film criticism that explores the ambiguous state of boundary wars between male and female,⁹ machines and humans,¹⁰ or human spontaneity and capitalist rationalization.¹¹ Instead I want to suggest that with the introduction of the morphing LMM, we see not simply a rehearsal of older cultural or psychological dichotomies but a profound cultural shift. For in marked contrast to Jefferson's belief

that the vocation and paraphernalia of machine production are threats to the health of the body politic, this shift reveals a popular surrender to the realization that democracy in mass, capitalist society is inescapably technodemocracy: a body politic at best as cyborg, at worst on life-support systems.¹² At the same time, in *Terminator 2* we see the fulfillment of the ideal of the fascist body, according to Klaus Theweleit: the machine incorporated *into* the body politic facing an extratechnological and *fluid* enemy.¹³ I will argue, finally, that at the moment of such incorporation, anxieties intrinsic to democracy in consumer capitalism are tellingly exposed in the very body and vanquishing of the Liquid Metal Man. First, I offer a brief synopsis of *Terminators 1* and *2*, followed by a reading of *Terminator 1* in order later to demonstrate the depth and thoroughness of revision of human-machine relations in *Terminator 2*.

Retrofitting the Enemy. In 1997, advances in computer technology lead to the creation of an unmanned military defense system which begins to learn at a “geometrical” rate. The system triggers a nuclear holocaust in order to save itself from human intervention, but after years of struggle, led by one John Connor, humans defeat the machines. To rewrite history, the machines send a Terminator cyborg model T101 (played by Arnold Schwarzenegger) back through time to kill John Connor’s mother before John’s conception. John Connor sends back Kyle Reese, apparently to protect but also to impregnate Sarah Connor. *T1* ends with the death of Kyle Reese, the destruction of the T101 terminator unit, and a pregnant Sarah headed into Mexico to await the coming storm. In *Terminator 2: Judgment Day*, the old terminator model T101 has been reprogrammed by John Connor as a protector for (and subject to the command of) the young John Connor, while a new T1000 terminator (composed of liquid metal and sent back by the machines from an even later moment in history) seeks to kill John Connor as a boy.

Consistent with the serial killer genre as described by Kim Newman, the terminator of *T1* is without human motivation. Yet it does have what amounts to appetite in the machine age—a program, here directing it to kill every Sarah Connor in the Los Angeles phone book. Appropriately, Arnold takes on synthetic clothing from a trio of punks, one complete with tire tracks tattooed down his face, motiveless rebels without a cause (met at James Dean’s last stand, the Griffith observatory). Thus viewed simply as a serial killer, the original T101 is literally run-of-the-mill, “a creature beyond powers of understanding.”¹⁴ Arnold becomes more complicated as a figure, however, when we see him as other to Kyle Reese.

In passing through time, Arnold arrives unscathed in the superhuman (and hypermasculine) body of a former Mr. Universe and assumes flawless functioning. Kyle, in his slender, war-scarred body, is dashed to the street, in fetal position and steaming agony, as he will later tell Sarah, “like being born.”¹⁵ The coding is clear: by virtue of flesh and heart that can suffer, Kyle is to represent the good, while Arnold—to complete the oppositional logic which will read Kyle’s body as the threatened body politic of the present and future—must be evil, an incomprehensible Other.¹⁶ Binary oppositions thus proliferate: flesh versus machine, tennis shoes versus jackboots, human wit versus computer programming, masculinity-qua-fatherhood versus masculinity-qua-violence-against-women.¹⁷ Moreover, in true dystopian tradition, reminders

are constant of how woefully naive the present is about the potential deadliness of machines. Walkmans, answering machines, and so on repeatedly subvert human communication and facilitate murder.¹⁸ And while Arnold is the alarm to this danger, Kyle is the reassurance that we can save ourselves if we are capable of strict discipline.

The sin of prizing the works of our own hands is facilitated by a lack of diligence, by the sinner's delusion that fate is given rather than earned. The question is the same one asked of Cotton Mather in the aftermath of King Philip's War, of the House Committee to Investigate Un-American Activities, of the characters in *Blade Runner*, *Alien*, *Robocop*, and of a populace harried by HIV, the question of whether we can purge the evil within in time to avoid the wrath of the evil without.¹⁹ If this is to be done, we must be able to identify our enemy and, in turn, ourselves. As was the case for Hooper and Brakenbury, for Brockden Brown, Hawthorne, and Melville, the difference between man and machine, between Christ-like human and satanic trickster, is incarnateness itself, particularly the presence or absence of an organ of mercy and empathy, the presence or absence of a heart.

The aesthetics of this distinction becomes manifest when Arnold enters the Tech Noir nightclub, where Sarah is waiting for the police to rescue her. In a slow-motion sequence, Arnold walks through the room, stiff and linear as though on tracks, surrounded by the wonderfully fluid movement of young men and woman dancing. Hyper-rational directedness (the fascist body) cuts through and identifies itself as distinct from fluid, organic human motion. When the shootout ensues, Arnold, clearly lacking any organ of empathy, simply blasts everything in sight. Without remorse or pity, and like the "Indian Spirits" in a poem by Benjamin Thompson (who witnessed the Brakenbury dissection), such cyborgs "need / No grounds but lust to make a Christian bleed."²⁰ In contrast, Kyle dodges and leaps, sparing the innocent, selflessly bruising and scarring himself, and so modeling the flexible but also humanely disciplined body we want to fancy our own.

To survive his militarized, postapocalypse youth, Kyle Reese has been trained to believe pain can be "disconnected" as though he were a machine. Like Germany's Freikorps, this armored body is achieved through a "lengthy process of 'self-distancing,' 'self-control,' and 'self-scrutiny.'"²¹ But in truth Kyle is vulnerable; he is in fact scarred both in soul and body. And while his body becomes even more scarred throughout the film, demonstrating the authenticity of his incarnation, his soul is further and further healed by the modern curative equivalent to religious faith, by romantic love. Like the bodies of other saints, as described in Samuel Willard's 1684 essay, "Saints Not Known by Externals," Kyle's body "putrifie[s] and rot[s]" even as his soul heals and he falls into love's dissolution of boundaries.²² Thus he learns, as will Arnold in *T2*, to accept what fascist militarism abhors: antimechanical flow—tears for Arnold, procreative semen for Kyle. In contrast, we watch the soulless Arnold of *T1* cut the flesh from his arm and around his eye to repair himself, revealing rods for bones and a camera shutter in place of an iris. In a politically charged reversal of the Brakenbury evisceration, we witness Arnold rip the heart from the chest of one of the punks; and when Kyle is apprehended by the police, he screams that the T101 will come after Sarah and "tear her heart out" simply because "that's what it does"—it eviscerates humans, removing what it cannot itself have, the human heart.

On grounds deeper than mere empathy, we see in Kyle a viable representation of the political body of the American 1980s. He is scarred in soul and body by a foreign war (if we read the future, like the past, as another country); it is also a war it is clear “we” should by moral rights win (or have been allowed to have won); and it’s a war whose continuing legacy is evident in attempts literally to rewrite the past (making *T1* a subtle compliment to the gross revisionism of the *Rambo* films). And it is a body, literally neglecting its domestic health for expenditures on defense.²³

David B. Morris has observed that in the postmodern world, utopia has “fixed its new location in the solitary, private, individual body,” and in turn a healthy body must indicate a healthy society as a “summarizing metaphor of an ideal state.”²⁴ The body politic as such has been reduced to the politicized body, in this case reflecting a threatened state in a body in pain. But it is precisely that state’s moral viability that is claimed when we see Kyle become not less but more human in the course of his suffering. And in the classic wish fulfillment of horror, thriller, and adventure genres, the heathen/machine is destroyed by manipulation of existing technology. Let the heathens invade, the moral goes; even using relatively primitive tools, wielded with strong hearts, we can take care of ourselves. And so ends the postindustrial, Cold War nightmare of 1984.

It will be impossible within this essay to argue conclusively that the changes evident in *T2* result from real political events between the 1986 release of *T1* and the 1991 premier of *T2*.²⁵ Yet in the reading to follow I want to suggest that key shifts in the mythos of technology from *T1* to *T2* imply real changes in the body politic’s self-conception. As Will Wright has remarked in his discussion of westerns, “within each period the structure of the myth corresponds to the conceptual needs of social and self understanding required by the dominant social institutions of that period; the historical changes in the structure of myth correspond to the changes in the structure of those dominant institutions.”²⁶ Assuming such correspondence, I want to explore how *T2*, as a product of a myth industry, implies the cultural and economic truth of its own narrative content: that the myths of later “dominant social institutions” (technoculture) literally return in time to rewrite their own, more human prehistory. More concretely, *T2* works to endear us to the very technology—including its incapacity for flow—demonized in *T1*.²⁷ In *T2* we are taught to identify with the reprogrammed T101, or “Uncle Bob,” as the young John Connor will rename him in one of many gestures to incorporate Arnold, John, and Sarah into a postmodern family. In essence, we are taught to see not a machine with flesh on the outside but an inchoate human being with an alloy core, and this shift, set in contrast to the LMM, represents a shift in the conception of the body politic vis-à-vis the technological landscape.

Fashion signals the initial recuperation from the first film: where Arnold Sr. took the synthetic-based, chain-draped clothes of the dead-end punks, Uncle Bob takes the leather chaps and jacket of a biker, a type older and figurally familiar as a descendent of the wilderness-taming frontiersman and cowboy. A kind of Natty Bumppo with attitude, he is backed by George Thorogood and the Delaware Destroyers singing “Bad to the Bone.” Unlike the depiction of Arnold Sr., we are to appreciate that Arnold Jr. *has* bones, even if they are of tungsten, as well as “data” for pain. And like Kyle, Uncle Bob becomes more human throughout the film (as well as a better father, Sarah Connor

reflects, than any man she has known). If a machine can learn humanity and search for the meaning of tears, Sarah says at the end of the film, perhaps there is hope for mankind as well. The machine becomes the trickster/messiah/frontiersman to lead us from an inhuman technological wilderness. He is thus in body and cultural mythos our perfect champion against postmodern, postindustrial society, “against which we find ourselves pitted . . . as we did with forests and mountains.”²⁸ Arnold can do this because he has been reprogrammed; he has, in effect, gone through the experience central to the elect of Old New England—conversion by JC (John Connor), the savior of mankind.

Strange Love; or, How We Are Taught to Love a Machine. Consistent with the oppositional logic discussed above, we are only made to identify with Arnold as our culture hero once we learn that traditional human/machine antitheses have achieved synthesis. This is clarified in Arnold’s first face-off with the newer T1000, or Liquid Metal Man. In a high noon–style shootout, in a back alley of the Main Street of suburban America, a shopping mall, Arnold proves John Connor’s protector as his shotgun blasts stun and throw the LMM backward. But the LMM’s wounds suck back together, healing not only the flesh but the clothing outside the flesh. Further, when he is blasted backward, his arms flail with wild fluidity. Thus the binary imagery used in the Tech Noir disco of *T1* no longer differentiates hero and enemy. In fact, the significance of fluid versus mechanical has been reversed. We know and understand a blunt, brutal machine like Arnold, whose strength is “predictably mechanical”²⁹ (he is stronger than us because he is bigger), but we are disoriented by this flexible and seemingly more human enemy who is slender, has no Austrian accent, and seems a clean-cut American boy.³⁰ Arnold fits our understanding of a correspondence between size and power, and he retains his wounds and so does not strike us as uncanny. Like the technical arts for nineteenth-century theologians, Arnold is restrained by “obedience to God’s physical laws . . . [the] outward correlative to the moral law.”³¹ But the LMM seems neither a product of human technology nor subject to physical law. He is a monster of some diabolically other Nature.

What we eventually recognize is that this other is not a manmade machine but a machine-conceived element, reaching back through the patristic trickster to Proteus as we watch it become other people and things. Where Arnold imitated voices in *T1* and in *T2* does so only once, and then only in order to “beguile the beguiler,”³² the LMM can become a floor, a prison guard, John Connor’s foster mother, even Sarah Connor herself. Like the Indians viewed by Edward Johnson in the seventeenth century, the LMM is diabolically impenetrable.³³ The menace is perhaps best described in Giambattista Vico’s discussion of Greek ideas of chaos: “they imagined it as Orcus, a misshapen monster which devoured all things . . . the prime matter of natural things which, formless itself, is greedy for forms and devours all forms.”³⁴ Also conceived as Pan, according to Vico, this figure of chaos is associated with forests and wilderness. Like the Native Americans in the eyes of Sewall and Brakenbury, it is a being “having the appearance of men but the habits of abominable beasts” whom Odysseus—like Arnold in the final scenes—is “unable to . . . grip . . . who keeps assuming new forms.”³⁵ But as we will see, this is chaos with a rigid program.

Like the Devil for Mather and Seward, the morphing LMM never does putrefy and rot and takes on human shape only as a convenient disguise. Above all, this figure epitomizes—as no figure before morphing technology could have—the morphology of the oppositional logic in the body politic: it is the thing, now Indian, now Communist, which continually changes forms yet must survive if the body politic in democracy is to sustain its own morphology. And by presenting a threat that forces us to cling to the machine, we are forced back again (our critical *recherche* mirroring the films' own time loops) to rethink the Arnold from *T1*.

What we appreciate now is that, though he is a machine, Arnold's prototype is the human body. He cuts the flesh painlessly from his own arm, but at least, like us, he requires repairing, and the model for his camera-shutter eye is the human iris. Distinctly unlike the LMM, after incineration he is reduced in *T1* to a robotic framework, just as Sarah's dream of nuclear holocaust in *T2* proves the human body just such a framework of bones. And, reflecting a body that figures the political nation, his command center is where we would expect it, in the skull.³⁶ Above all, this modeling after human anatomy facilitates symbiosis with and subordination to humans: *T1*'s flesh versus machine is revised in *T2* as flesh as prototype for machine, Kyle's tennis shoes versus Arnold's jackboots becomes John's tennis shoes commanding a jackbooted Arnold, human wit now supplements computer programming, masculinity-qua-fatherhood motivates masculinity-qua-violence-against-Other,³⁷ and sensitive human anatomy (John's, Sarah's, and Arnold's own) mourns the tragic lack in heartless mechanism. And it is this *moral* relationship, in which the machine envies and so selflessly follows human understanding, that makes incorporation of the machine into the body politic acceptable. It is just such moral subordination—hyperphallic, yet safeguarded by the machine's self-consciousness of lack, its heart-envy—that underwrites the political cyborg of postmodern nationalism.³⁸

In contrast, the LMM, "devouring all forms," has no anatomy, no organ-ization, no subordination of internal parts definitive of the very *raison d'être* of the body politic. A part broken from his hand is reabsorbed into his foot. His head is several times blown apart without loss of command. When Arnold punches through his head, this head simply becomes gripping hands. As a vision of the body politic, the LMM man is dissolution into anarchy, a nightmare image of continually overturned hierarchy. As such, he is an icon of the popular fear of democracy itself in the electronic age. In the LMM we see a body whose parts have lost rational priority, precisely as is bewailed of the political disorganization of the state. The complaint, whose manifesto is the "Contract with America," is monotonous: social engineering in accord with New Deal/Great Society/Politically Correct agendas is overturning meritocracy, mutilating the body politic, and replacing the hegemony of strong (i.e., white male) hearts with bottomless (i.e., minority female) stomachs.³⁹

Arnold versus the T1000 thus reduces to democracy versus democracy: the myth of all citizens rising regularly and systematically upon the disciplined back of laissez-faire capitalism and its proudest expression in technological innovation versus democracy's potential for permanent class upheaval; the myth, in short, of economic democracy versus fear of the mythically chaotic power of the "rabble."⁴⁰ Yet, paradoxically, what is most threatening in this potential chaos is its very discipline; for the fascistic, mechanical body

demonized in *T1* is not simply embraced in *T2*, it is reprogrammed as a protector seeking the sources of human fluidities, of emotion, tears, and self-determining fate, while at the same time demonstrating that just such fluidity can be channeled into “humane” violence. (Arnold is taught not to kill, but he does cripple.) The question here is whether the apparent valuation of life and emotional flow is simply ideological in Althusser’s sense of an “imaginary relationship . . . to . . . real conditions of existence”—those real conditions being violent (however nonlethal) defense of human control of technical capital.⁴¹ In contrast, the LMM, however fluid in body, cannot bleed, ejaculate, weep, or defecate, and such limitation is the sign of a choice between disciplined and uncontrolled flow: “The mass that is celebrated [by fascism] is strictly formed, poured into systems of dams. . . . To the despised mass, by contrast, is attributed all that is flowing, slimy, teeming.”⁴² In contrast to the simpler oppositions claimed here by Claudia Springer, Scott Bukatman, and Mark Dery (mechanical versus fluid, male versus female, industrial versus electronic technology),⁴³ *T2* sets up an opposition of mechanical man seeking human fluidity versus fluid man seeking fascist channeling. Within this battle of political bodies, democracy versus democracy becomes right-wing capitalist rigidity proving its ability to bend to human need versus left-wing (albeit nominal) pluralism programmed for totalitarian rule. For *T2* to create an aesthetic of violence with propaganda value, it must deny the latent fascism in such aestheticization itself; it must endear us to the callow sentimentalism vindicating violence from the right and so legitimate that violence as both moral and physical defense against the tearless violence from the left.⁴⁴

Vox Populi, Vox ex Machina. That democracy in a nation of one quarter of a billion citizens is untenable without technical assistance hardly requires documentation. That the means of this national connection, the news media, are themselves further consolidated in the hands of corporate America has been made quite clear in the work of Herman and Chomsky.⁴⁵ What is less obvious is the manner in which particular products of the “culture industry” not only replicate this dependence upon the status quo of corporate capitalism but present the loss of popular control of political institutions as itself desirable. To understand how this is manifest in the *Terminator* films, we must again revisit the gestures by which the films endear us to the cyborg, as well as how this endearment is vitally tied to the film as a market product.

In the opening sequences of *T2*, we see briefly the adult John Connor as post-apocalypse commando: a scarred fighting machine in defense of humanity against machines. Indeed, this face bears a striking resemblance in shape to the T101’s metallic skeleton featured menacingly behind the flaming opening credits, complete with scars that reflect the T101’s metallic subcomponents. In such images the *Terminator* films evolve a cliché of wanna-be-human robots and cyborgs from Baum’s Tin Man to *Star Trek*’s Data, suggesting not only that humanization of the machine is possible but that humanization itself is perishable. In *T1*, Sarah humanizes warrior Kyle, becomes a formidable fighter in the closing sequence of the film, and reappears a fighting machine herself in *T2*. Young John humanizes not only Arnold but his mother, teaching both not to kill and reconnecting the mother to her apparently more “authentic” maternal self; yet John too could become the scarred warrior of the opening sequence.⁴⁶

Change in character is represented literally in the flesh: in his humanization, Kyle earns and exposes more and more scars; Sarah loses the little fleshiness she had in *T1* (once her maternal duty is served) and appears a sleekly muscled, caged animal in *T2*; John grows from savvy, baby-fattish boy to scarred macho commander.

The literal loss of undisciplined flesh (as a result of conditioning, maturation, or wounds) signifies the loss of flowing humanity. In such a vicious circle, it is only the machine, Arnold, who proves truly humanized, for only the literal machine has minimal flowing excess to lose. Naturally enough, then, whereas the T101 of the first film ends as a robotic skeleton, Arnold Jr. retains his covering of flesh to the end, except for that scarring and tearing required to represent how he has endured human suffering for our sakes. Arnold, like Kyle, Sarah, and John but distinctly unlike the T1000, records history across his very body and so teaches us how to suffer the abuses of postindustrial life.⁴⁷ Arnold is not only the perfect man, he is the perfect postmodern, Puritan pilgrim: demonstratively humanoid and incarnate, and thus of this world, but retaining just enough of his Puritan/fascist discipline in order not to be corrupted by it. Ultimately, of course, Arnold will prove not only the perfect pilgrim but the perfect postmodern Christ: technological genius incarnate and ready to die to smelt away the sins of technological man. Yet, as was the case for Kyle, it is in the organic body as flesh that Arnold's real political import resides.

That the state of the body is the state of the state is a notion set deep in the American psyche; moreover, from the ship as church and church as body metaphors of Winthrop and the community of saints, to Benjamin Rush's machine-men in "the machine of government," to Teddy Roosevelt, champion of the Panama canal, stating, "As it is with the individual, so it is with the nation," the politicized body in America has framed itself in technological landscapes.⁴⁸ Add to this Madison's faith that "that national unity which nature had intended . . . the technological arts would fulfill," and we begin to understand that perhaps wherever we witness American bodies in conflict (or combination) with technology, we witness figures of the body politic in an age when the "technological arts" are not only a means of national unity but are the *only means* that make any conception of a unified political body viable.⁴⁹

Understood as depictions of the state in postindustrial democracy, the *Terminator* films (as well, perhaps, as an obsession with bloody mutilation on big and small screens) represent a crisis in national identity. "Outsiders" to the healthy state (immigrants, academics, minorities, the poor) would mutilate the body politic, rearranging parts in an "unnatural" order. What I want to suggest now is the political implication of *T2*'s path out of this morass, the direction of its "Come with me if you want to live."

Selling Submission. Both popular and academic presses have noted that the *Terminator* films constitute, in Richard Corliss's phrase, "an annunciation story," as well as that the time-loop plot leads to a paradoxical *mise-en-abyme* of its own logical unraveling.⁵⁰ What has not been noted is a parallel universe of inevitability in humanity's triumph in this loop, the resonances of Christian historiography in this inevitability, and the commodification of these features in what was, in 1991, the most expensive Hollywood film to date.

As Christ's flesh was conceived in the premodern world merely as a "bait" to Satan, so is John Connor bait to the T1000, and with equal assurance of a mercurial Satan's downfall.⁵¹ By the very act of returning to destroy John Connor in order to preserve technological dominance, the T1000 causes a battle that aborts development of the very technology it is trying to defend. Were John not born, no terminator would return to kill him and no recovered chip facilitate the development of "Skynet." The question is not, then, whether John's hope for human dominance (that is, traditional control of technical capital) will succeed, just as it is never a question for the faithful whether the messiah will triumph, or for the American movie viewer whether good will triumph. Whether Arnold, Sarah, or Kyle learn to cry or not, whether their tears ever bless this violence, it is only a question of *when* technocapital will triumph. And the answer, as invariably as it has been for millennialists for millennia, is "later."

Ostensibly this "later" is in the initial and later attempts on John's conception and boyhood; of course, the true later is the later of all Hollywood sequels: once the public is ready to pay to see another *Terminator* film. But there is a larger and overarching "later" of popular anxiety: the "later" of, We are slipping later and later into labyrinthine technologization of daily life, losing the thread of connection to the world we thought we had come, finally, to understand—the world of the machine. It is the embrace of the machine *as* machine that signals the desperation with which we appear to be trying to take the machine (in nostalgia for the obsolete) into a public consciousness of national identity.⁵²

Not only do the terminator units grow more advanced and incomprehensible in each film, but the means of their destruction grow more primitive. Whereas the older T101 is crushed in a late-twentieth-century robotics factory, T1000 is smelted in what could well be a nineteenth-century steel mill. As technology moves farther beyond our full understanding, so much more primitive do we need to believe are the necessary tools of combat. With each invasion of contemporary life from a more distant future, each technical disenfranchisement of the populace from the control of life, each evolution of technology into its own ecosystem, the farther back we need to search for where we went wrong, for the place where we can ourselves rewrite history by turning technology against itself. As Hugh Ruppensburg remarks, such science fiction films do for us what the biblical epics did for the fifties and sixties; reactionary and defeatist, they present fantasies of the patterns of the past vanquishing the possibilities of the future.⁵³ One can thus speculate that terminator units in a *Terminator 3*, *4*, and so on, while leaping in advance of mere morphing, would somehow be destroyed in a steam engine, spinning jenny, mill wheel, ultimately developing into pure electrical energy vanquished by a glowing, white-bearded Arnold descending with stone tablets from Mount Sinai.⁵⁴

It is no mystery that we are witnessing the cynical populism of Hollywood: presenting Arnold Jr. as a champion of individualism set against the extension of precisely those global forces which could *afford* to create *T2*.⁵⁵ What endears such sleight of hand to an American audience is long-standing Yankee faith in progress and the benevolent teleology of all technical innovation. For even today, particularly in the advent of breakthroughs in medical technology (including robotic prostheses), Americans continue to want to believe that, in the words of John C. Kimball writing in 1869

(despite four recent years of evidence of what technology could do to human flesh), “The great driving wheel of all earthly machinery is far up in the heavens, has its force and direction supplied immediately from Omnipotence.”⁵⁶ Moreover, we are also offered the moral satisfaction of demonizing precisely that cycle of consumerism (sequelization) in which we are caught. We are allowed to feel triumphant over the global Skynet even as we watch films bounced from satellites, from the extant “earthly machinery . . . far up in the heavens.” This, according to Horkheimer and Adorno, truly is a pleasure of late capitalism: a pleasure that “promotes the resignation which it ought to help to forget,” a pleasure that allows “flight . . . from the last remaining thought of resistance,” a pleasure that “identifies [oneself] with the power which is belaboring [one].”⁵⁷

I have noted that we identify with Arnold Jr. because, like Kyle, he is vulnerable to wear and damage, suffers (limited) blood flow and loss, and records this damage in his material body. What this record shows us above all is that, like us, and unlike the LMM, Arnold is subject to time and the existential status of his own history. In contrast, Thomas Andrae has demonstrated the striking timelessness in the lives of other popular superheroes. Andrae notes, for example, that the paradox of time in Superman (he is fresh for a new adventure each week) is “the commodity structure of mass culture in late capitalism.”⁵⁸ If this is indeed the case for Superman’s (and Dick Tracy’s, and Batman’s) recovery week by week, we seem to witness in the LMM not only a new fear of (rather than messianic reliance upon) commodity structure but a nightmarish impatience even with weekly regeneration, for he is a figure that reflects commodity structure as instant, time-lapse recovery and wish fulfillment. Yet perhaps even more importantly, he is himself the popular face of consumerism. The LMM, now suburban housewife, now policeman, now shining cutlery, now checkered floor, now security guard, now mother, represents commodities, consumers, and the security apparatus that protects private property. In one morphing gestalt, he is the mass consumer/commodity nexus and a guard against its undisciplined indulgence; once again, this becomes clear when the LMM is seen as a revision of his coequal in *TI*.

In the final fight scene in *TI*, the T101, reduced to its robotic skeleton, seems to express a confused sense of self-recognition as it searches for Sarah among robotic factory units. This scene is echoed and updated when the LMM stares quizzically at a featureless silver mannequin head in a men’s clothing store. The revision is striking: the original T101’s threat is that of the military-industrial complex turned against its creators, a threat that nonetheless confirms technology’s proper conception as servant to humanity as commodity *producer*, and ultimately proves beatable by a wage-earning, time-clocked laborer, Sarah Connor. The T1000 is, instead, the facelessness of retail consumerism, the Everyman who is generic Noman. Its antecedents are not in production but in retail consumption, in the culture of commodified desire rather than in commodity manufacture. As J. P. Telotte observes, the LMM “seems to be all surface, with no real ‘inside’”;⁵⁹ the LMM is also the very ideal of the fascist body, a “polished artwork.”⁶⁰ And as such polished surface, he is as surely the image of humanity generated by market research as he is a figure generated by computer graphics. He is a material sign that “the more absolutely the body armor is mechanized, the more its product becomes . . . an expression of being . . . [disassociated from] machinery as means of production.”⁶¹

The LMM emerging from fire, the featureless mannequin progressively transformed into a clothed individual, is thus a kind of time-lapse metamorphosis of a mass market profile into the false individuality of the commodity consumer. For his is an individuality betrayed in wearing a uniform. And in this costume, he is an apt figure of *Homo consumer*, or mass-produced humanity: desire-driven, yet policed by programmed appetites. He is also, emerging from homogenizing flames, the faceless citizen of the public opinion poll, a thing of round percentages, the cipher of a citizen evoked in claims to speak for "the average American."

Just as the change in Superman, for Andrae, from monster to hero was a switch from suspicions about Horatio Alger individualism to a championing of the experimental collectivism of the New Deal,⁶² so is this new collective illness, and its cures, marked by its era:⁶³ Arnold is our technosuperman against the fait accompli of corporate-media take-over of democracy; he fights for us, and destroys himself, as a protest against the transformation of national identity into another surrender to that neofascism which offers identity through the disciplined mass: commodity consumerism. In the final scene, by literally melting the LMM down into abhorrent flow and the specter of a commodity-dissipated vox populi, and bearing witness to his own, linear slowdown in power, Arnold appears to reverse mass culture's "substitution of mythic repetition for historical development."⁶⁴ The cynicism in this image in a ninety-million-dollar Hollywood sequel hardly requires comment.

Here the tension Mark Seltzer has outlined in an earlier era, between "possessive individualism and market culture" versus "disciplinary individualism and machine culture," breaks down and flows into a chaos of interdependence and self-conditioning.⁶⁵ The disciplinary individualism and machine culture Arnold represents (with John Connor playing the role of Frederick Taylor, thrilled by his ability to command and calibrate the movements of the man-machine), is here seen as the *margin of safety* enjoyed by an audience addicted to possessive individualism and market culture; and that margin is set up against nothing other than mass culture's capacity for endlessly titillating desire, for protean transformations in self-conception as a body unified by nothing so vitally as its machinelike adherence to the lead of the market-driven media. As Sardar Ziauddin remarks, "When everything carries a market value, then human beings and bits of their bodies too become subject to market forces."⁶⁶ Thus we see here indeed a reflection of a nation of Benjamin Rush's "republican machines," with the proviso that the name of the republic is Market.

Shadowing forth a pattern evident from Sewell's diary to Salem, from lynch mobs to HUAC minutes, what we witness in *T2* is the assurance offered to an audience afraid of its own protean, tempted-and-never-satisfied desires, seeking protection from itself, an audience afraid of its own powers and wants and particularly horrified by its own role as the nominal leadership of democracy. In the LMM, we see a reflection of ourselves as a political body: unvarying in our programmed need for change yet also seeking machines to protect us from ourselves, to protect us from the very production-consumption machinery to which we feel ourselves appendages.

And yet, in figuring what we fear most in ourselves, the LMM also presents an ironically utopian vision. In this political body, each part, or person, can be head, arm, heart, fist. The LMM is the theoretical amorphism of democracy as feared by

antidemocrats since Plato, an amorphism which has always plagued the reality of an exclusive, hierarchical civil and economic order. It is an awe-filled image and one which cannot be destroyed so much as it can be dissipated, melted down into each member of the mass cherishing his or her belief that when he or she makes a choice as a consumer—as the Skynet of advertisers say he or she does—he or she defines rather than abandons personal integrity.

T2 demonstrates popular inheritance from the cosmology of early Christianity, along with the political/spiritual agenda of Puritanism. But it also exhibits a fundamental tenet of the postmodern: that the historically prior is no longer the culturally fundamental. For the film demonstrates not simple appropriation but expropriation of such heritage into the workings of late capitalism. And this expropriation constitutes abandonment of democracy to the very conditions of democracy's possibility: corporate mass media. In identifying with Arnold as he battles the LMM, we assure ourselves that we still wield control by destroying the Liquid Metal body we have ourselves become. We say that, so long as the recognizable man-machine envies our humanity, we have not sold it away. We say that we can manage all but one of the frightening possibilities that stand before us. All save the recognition that were we ever to reach out and turn off the TV or leave the mall and movie-plex and assemble in the light of day with other workers, citizens, and consumers, we might begin to contemplate seriously the power we could wield.

Notes

1. Samuel Sewell, *The Diary of Samuel Sewell, 1674–1729*, vol. 1, ed. M. Halsey Thomas (New York: Farrar, Strauss, and Giroux, 1973), 23–24.
2. James Schramer and Timothy Sweet, "Violence and the Body Politic in Seventeenth-Century New England," *Arizona Quarterly* 48, no. 2 (Summer 1992): 1–32. For the standard (and still best) history of the concept of the body politic, see Ernst H. Kantorowicz, *The King's Two Bodies: A Study in Mediaeval Political Theology* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1957).
3. Schramer and Sweet, "Violence and the Body Politic," 5.
4. Roy Harvey Pearce, among others, has documented the dehumanizing view of Native Americans throughout our history in *Savagism and Civilization: A Study of the Indian in the American Mind* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1965). The evolution of these images, applied opportunely to varying subaltern groups, has been discussed by several authors. For example, in *Form and History in American Literary Naturalism* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1985), June Howard quotes Henry George, in 1880, writing about urban immigrants: "there are in the heart of our civilization large classes with whom the veriest savage could not afford to exchange" (78). Herbert G. Gutman cites nineteenth-century authors who, looking at the urban scene, invoke the threat of "extermination" already leveled against Native Americans (see *Work, Culture and Society in Industrializing America: Essays in American Working-Class and Social History* [New York: Random House, 1977], 71–72). More broadly, Hayden White notes the dialectical use of ideas of "wildness" and "savagery" to prescribe normative notions of civilization and the familiar (see "The Forms of Wildness: Archaeology of an Idea," in *The Wild Man Within: An Image in Western Thought from the Renaissance to Romanticism*, ed. Edward Dudley and Maximilian E. Novak [Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 1972], 4).

5. Norman O. Brown, *Love's Body* (New York: Random House, 1966), 162. Similarly, Jean-Paul Sartre writes in *Saint Genet*, trans. Bernard Frechtman (New York: Pantheon, 1963), 29: "And whom does one strike in the person of the 'dirty, greedy, sensual, negating' Jew? One's self, one's own greed, one's own lechery. Whom does one lynch in the American South for raping a white woman? A Negro? No. Again one's self. Evil is a projection. I would go so far as to say that it is both the basis and the aim of all projective activity."
6. See Kathleen M. Ashley, "The Guiler Beguiled: Christ and Satan as Theological Tricksters in Medieval Religious Literature," *Criticism* 24, no. 2 (Spring 1982): 127, 128.
7. For the relations between "postmodernism" and "late capitalism," see Fredric Jameson, *Postmodernism; or, the Cultural Logic of Late Capitalism* (Durham, N.C.: Duke University Press, 1991), i–xxii, 1–55.
8. For Constance Penley, "it is by now well known" that classical Hollywood's attempts to demarcate proper gender relations, in a gender-ambiguous age, have retreated to apparently easier distinctions such as man versus machine (see "Time Travel, Primal Scene, and the Critical Dystopia," *Camera Obscura* 15 [Fall 1986]: 75–76). I would only add that what stands deepest behind the manifest opposition in these films may be variable: gender certainly in many cases, but also race and class could be argued as more fundamental sites of struggle in certain works, historical periods, or genres.
9. For examples, see Margaret Goscolo, "Deconstructing *The Terminator*," *Film Criticism* 12, no. 2 (Winter 1987–88): 37–52; Penley, "Time Travel"; Claudia Springer, "Sex, Memories, and Angry Women," *South Atlantic Quarterly* 92 (Fall 1993): 713–33, and *Electronic Eros: Bodies and Desire in the Postindustrial Age* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1996); and Jeffrey A. Brown, "Gender and the Action Heroine: Hardbodies and *The Point of No Return*," *Cinema Journal* 35, no. 3 (Spring 1996): 52–71.
10. See J. P. Telotte, "The Terminator, Terminator 2, and the Exposed Body," *Journal of Popular Film and Television* 20 (Summer 1992): 26–34; Mark Dery, "Cyberculture," *South Atlantic Quarterly* 91, no. 3 (Summer 1992): 501–23, and "Cyborging the Body Politic," *Mondo 2000* 6 (1992): 101–5; Per Schelde, *Androids, Humanoids, and Other Science Fiction Monsters: Science and Soul in Science Fiction Film* (New York: New York University Press, 1993).
11. See Mark Jancovich, "Modernity and Subjectivity in *The Terminator*: The Machine as Monster in Contemporary American Culture," *Velvet Light Trap* 30 (Fall 1992): 3–17.
12. For Jefferson's attitude toward technology and the state, see *The Life and Selected Writings of Thomas Jefferson*, ed. Adrienne Koch and William Peden (New York: Modern Library, 1944), 280.
13. Klaus Theweleit, *Male Fantasies, Volume 1: Women Floods Bodies History*, trans. Stephen Conway (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1987), and *Male Fantasies, Volume 2: Male Bodies, Psychoanalyzing the White Terror*, trans. Eric Carter and Chris Turner (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1989).
14. Kim Newman, "Time after Time," *Fear* 12 (December 1989): 9.
15. This fall is due to the fact that the homuncular sphere in which Kyle arrives in the present—unlike Arnold's—materializes above the ground. He has, after all, jockeyed a machine never intended for him and which he did not build, as he tells Sarah. This apparently trivial point again underlines both Kyle's Yankee wit and the human struggle with contingency in fighting technoculture.
16. See Goscolo, "Deconstructing *The Terminator*," 42, 43.
17. Readings of performances of masculinity in these films vary; see Springer, *Electronic Eros* 106–7, and Vivian Sobchack, "Child/Alien/Father: Patriarchal Crisis and Generic Exchange," in *Close Encounters: Film, Feminism, and Science Fiction*, ed. Constance Penley et al. (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1991), 23.

18. Jancovich, "Modernity and Subjectivity," 8.
19. Schramer and Sweet make this point about the Puritans ("Violence and the Body Politic," 21).
20. Benjamin Thompson, *Benjamin Thompson, Colonial Bard: A Critical Edition*, ed. Peter White (University Park: Pennsylvania State University Press, 1980), 86. (Also quoted in Schramer and Sweet, "Violence and the Body Politic," 19.)
21. Theweleit, *Male Fantasies*, Vol. 1, 302.
22. Samuel Willard, "Saints Not Known by Externals," in *The Puritans*, vol. 1, ed. Perry Miller (New York: Harper, 1963), 369. Theweleit cites Freud in discussing the Freikorps's repulsion at love's tendency to dissolve boundaries (*Male Fantasies*, Vol. 1, 252).
23. Hiding out in a motel, Kyle returns to Sarah after shopping. She assumes he's brought food, but he has only the makings for explosives. We recall Reagan-era schoolchildren told that catsup is a vegetable while Star Wars contracts ballooned. How Vietnam hangs over this and other man versus machine movies is not mysterious: the programmed minions of a machinelike totalitarian state take advantage of the self-reliant and human Americans who play by the rules imposed by constitutional democracy.
24. David B. Morris, "Postmodern Pain," *Heterotopia: Postmodern Utopia and the Body Politic*, ed. Tobin Siebers (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1994), 152, 153–54.
25. Such an argument might cite the end of the Cold War, the rise of AIDS, the Rodney King videotape and riots, the Willy Horton, Bush/Dukakis/Duke campaign of 1988, the transformation of the American people into a jury-cum-chorus of millions witnessing the Greek tragedy of Hill/Thomas, the rise of daytime TV and radio talk shows, the Internet, the World Wide Web and its local tributaries, the computer-driven stock market panic of 1987, and the closest thing yet to an unmanned war, Desert Storm (which, if it did not cure the Vietnam syndrome, certainly made less convenient the stigmatization of technology as a metaphor for totalitarian states). These events carry two intertwined implications: first, technology alone binds together the national consciousness; second, while we have no viable external enemies (or at least none more threatening than the video arcade games John Connor trains on), we don't need such enemies because we have more formidable problems in our inner cities, in our homes and offices, indeed, in our very blood. Even if technology contributes to a confusion in which one really cannot sort out the elect from the damned, the infected from the uninfected, friendly from unfriendly targets, or the forces of civil order from the sources of anarchic brutality, it is also certain that without technology such a sorting is hopeless.
26. Will Wright, *Six Guns and Society: A Structural Study of the Western* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1975), 14.
27. I am not suggesting that *T1* is a problematic text or that its own business was left unfinished (except insofar as was required for a sequel). Indeed, more significantly, *T2* proves that business apparently finished, within technoculture, is always open to upgrading. To emphasize this point, I will below call the new T101 Arnold Jr., for in the revisions outlined below, particularly the Christ-like self-sacrifice the reprogrammed T101 makes at the end of the film, the new T101 truly plays technical revision as the downloading of the merciful mediator-son both to humankind and to the plaguelike wrath of the Jehovah-like Arnold Sr.
28. William Fisher, "Of Living Machines and Living-Machines: *Blade Runner* and the Terminal Genre," *New Literary History* 20, no. 1 (Autumn 1988): 195.
29. Scott Bukatman, *Terminal Identity: The Virtual Subject in Postmodern Science Fiction* (Durham, N.C.: Duke University Press, 1993), 306.
30. Springer claims that the LMM, representing feminine fluidity, is less physically powerful than Arnold and succeeds simply by absorption of blows and projectiles (*Electronic Eros*,

- 112). It is significant for my reading that this is not the case; in all hand-to-hand combat scenes, the LMM is, disconcertingly, Arnold's match in raw power. The film also teases by making us at first assume the LMM is John's protector, dressing him as a Los Angeles policeman, the motto on whose patrol car is "To Protect and to Serve." (The irony is, of course, bitter for viewers of the Rodney King beating tape.) In contrast, Schwarzenegger's brilliance as an endearing cyborg is precisely that he cannot act, that he always exhibits "machinelike awkwardness" (Schelde, *Androids, Humanoids*, 203) and so is never confused with humans (let alone with actors competent at nonmachine roles).
31. John F. Kasson, *Civilizing the Machine: Technology and Republican Values, 1776–1900* (New York: Grossman, 1976), 152.
 32. Ashley, "The Guiler Beguiled," 126.
 33. Edward Johnson, *Johnson's Wonder-Working Providence, 1628–1651* (1652), ed. J. Franklin Jameson (New York: Scribner's, 1910), 168.
 34. Giambattista Vico, *The New Science of Giambattista Vico*, trans. Thomas Goddard Bergin and Max Harold Frisch (Cornell: Cornell University Press, 1984), 260.
 35. *Ibid.*, 260–61. See also Telotte, "The Terminator," 29.
 36. Lines of speech are also revised in *T2*: Kyle says to Sarah, "Come with me if you want to live," as they both stare up at the T101; in *T2*, we have a low point-of-view shot up at Arnold as he delivers the same line, again to Sarah, now with the sense of surrender to a higher power; where Arnold's famous "I'll be back" in *T1* is promise of destructive violence against a police station in an attempt to kill Sarah, in *T2* the line is a paternalistic promise to come back to John and Sarah after wiping out the police who would kill them all; whereas Arnold Sr. emerges from the fiery tanker truck with a limp, the LMM man walks out of his truck explosion virtually unscathed; where Arnold as evil force tells a trucker to "get out" of a semi and the man falls to the street, the LMM not only repeats this scene but later tells a pilot to "get out" of a hovering helicopter. In all of these cases, the old phrases and actions are transformed either into more lethal threats or work to reidentify our savior-figure, or are fully inverted in their meaning, from promises of destruction into promises of help.
 37. Arnold Jr. is also sexualized. Arnold Sr. kills Sarah's roommate, Ginger, shortly after she has had sex (figuring a kind of puritanical, postcoital wrath), whereas in *T2* a waitress in the bar where he finds the bikers sighs in the face of Arnold as icon of masculine sexuality. This is not to say, however, that the misogyny of *T1* is overturned. For the LMM is, in Mark Dery's words, "androgyny, hermaphroditism, and, most often, the feminine" ("Cyberculture," 505); further, Kyle, the slender, suffering lover, is replaced in the role of mankind's champion by Arnold's hypermasculinity.
 38. Sarah Connor too is brought to feel heart-envy at the moment her phallic power (an M-16) threatens a father. The film ostensibly condemns hot-lead phallocentrism. But, as we will see, this is simply a sales pitch for more discrete violence. This, of course, models an ideal far distant from Donna Haraway's utopian cyborgs imagined in "A Manifesto for Cyborgs: Science, Technology, and Socialist Feminism in the 1980's," *Socialist Review* 80 (1985): 65–105. This distance is articulated by Springer even while she sees both cyborg types "aris[ing] from dissatisfaction with current social and economic relations" ("Sex, Memories, and Angry Women," 719). Here the cyborg suggests neither revolution nor prognosis but is simply—and more hopelessly—prescriptive and normative: a celebratory surrender to the status quo.
 39. The Left, of course, has its own version of this conspiracy theory—that corporations consciously scheme to disenfranchise the disenfranchised. But this view (itself absurd since capitalism requires no such conspiracy in order to fulfill its agenda) today is in such disrepute as to be significant to national discourse only as straw man.

40. On the American faith in a link between technocapital and social progress, see Kasson, *Civilizing the Machine*, passim, and Leo Marx, *The Machine in the Garden: Technology and the Pastoral Ideal in America* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1964), 187. The Right's corporeal fear of democratization is well expressed in the following: "The left has torn apart the social and cultural membranes that protect a society from opportunistic diseases . . . We feel that we participated in a destructive movement, which has had deleterious consequences for society, and we'd like to make some kind of restitution" (qtd. in Vince Stehle, "The Right's Aggressive 'Battle Tank,'" in *Heterodoxy* 3, no. 5 [September 1995]: 3). This statement from former *Ramparts* editor David Horowitz nicely combines the image of body politic as host to infection (from those forces not favored by a conservative agenda), the tone of religious sanctimony surrounding the healthy parts of that body, and, in the statement's location, the tie to late capitalism. These words appear in an insert soliciting donations to a conservative "battle tank," printed directly above the space for Visa, Mastercard, Discover, or Amex numbers of those sick and tired of "the power of leftists in American institutions" (*ibid.*, 2).
41. Louis Althusser, *On Lenin and Philosophy and Other Essays*, trans. Ben Brewster (New York: Monthly Review Press, 1972), 162.
42. Theweleit, *Male Fantasies*, Vol. 2, 4.
43. See Springer, *Electronic Eros*, 112; Dery, "Morphing the Body Politic," 102–3; Bukatman, *Terminal Identity*, 306–7.
44. Within this essay on more traditional politics, I cannot, regrettably, engage all of the gender politics evoked here. But I would note that such oppositions, insofar as they are founded upon existing gender divides, are most profoundly undermined by theories of gender as performance, as demonstrated in the work of Judith Butler, *Gender Trouble: Feminism and the Subversion of Identity* (New York: Routledge, 1990). In contradistinction from Jeffrey Brown's (passing) application of gender-performance theory to Sarah Connor in "Gender and the Action Heroine," my point is that *T2* seems to elide a simple dichotomy only in order to demonstrate one side to be politically self-sufficient—a reactionary maneuver in defense of the brutality of the status quo. For example, Brown sees Sarah and Arnold performing masculine and feminine gender stereotypes, respectively (murderous gun toting versus protective nurturing). My observation here is that while Sarah's traditional model is Arnold's maternalism, her intentional (though failed) ideal is the LMM—channeling fluidity into rigid, unfeeling discipline. Thus even within performance theory, she is not a woman performing masculinity (i.e., a virtual male) but a man trying to outperform the film's (conservative) attribution of "deep-down" femininity (i.e., a typical man); her tensions, in essence, are caused by the old binary logic.
45. Edward S. Herman and Noam Chomsky, *Manufacturing Consent: The Political Economy of the Mass Media* (New York: Pantheon, 1988), 1–35.
46. This is so, of course, only in one possible future: the one the film is intent to abort. Yet Cameron apparently decided to keep this cycle consistent. In an early scene cut from *T2*, Sarah dreams in the hospital that Kyle comes to her. (Stills of the scene are reprinted in the book cited below, indicating the scene was shot and later cut in editing footage rather than simply dropped from the script.)

They gaze into each other's eyes. And in that look we see that his death and the horror she has been through hasn't touched their love at all.

SARAH: Hold me.

She melts into Reese's arms. Pulls him to her.

REESE: I love you. I always will.

SARAH: Oh, God . . . Kyle. I need you so much.

(James Cameron and William Wisher, *Terminator 2: Judgment Day—The Book of the Film: An Illustrated Screenplay* [New York: Applause Books, 1991], 37)

47. The observation that this is the lesson of culture industry films in general was made in 1944 by Max Horkheimer and Theodor W. Adorno, *Dialectic of Enlightenment*, trans. John Cumming (New York: Continuum, 1982), 138.
48. Benjamin Rush, "Of the Mode of Education Proper to a Republic," in *Essays Literary, Moral and Philosophical*, 2nd ed. (Philadelphia, 1806), 7–8; Theodore Roosevelt, *The Works of Theodore Roosevelt*, vol. 15 (New York: Scribners, 1924–26), 267.
49. For Madison's ideas, see Kasson, *Civilizing the Machine*, 35. Taking body-as-nation literalism to its extreme in 1900, Ernst Haeckel wrote: "We can only arrive at a correct knowledge of the structure and life of the social body, the state, through scientific knowledge of the structure and life of the individuals who compose it, and the cells of which they are in turn composed" (*The Riddle of the Universe* [New York: Harper, 1900], 8).
50. Richard Corliss, *Time*, November 26, 1984, 105. See also Penley, "Time Travel"; Karen B. Mann, "Narrative Entanglements: *The Terminator*," *Film Quarterly* 43 (Winter 1989–90): 17–27; Hugh Ruppersburg, "The Alien Messiah in Recent Science Fiction Films," *Journal of Popular Film and Television* 14, no. 4 (Winter 1987): 158–66. The loop works as follows: John cannot be conceived unless he is already the adult who sends back Kyle to become his own father. It is worth noting that this conundrum at once demands solution and precludes reason; that is, it demands a leap of faith.
51. On Christ as bait, see Ashley, "The Guiler Beguiled," 129.
52. On the reactionism and nostalgia of such gestures, see Springer, *Electronic Eros*, 111.
53. Ruppersburg, "The Alien Messiah," 165, 166; see also Bonnie Brain, "Saviors and Scientists: Extraterrestrials in Recent Science Fiction Films," *Et Cetera: A Review of General Semantics* 40 (Summer 1983): 219.
54. The reactionary nature of popular unease with dependence upon technology is evidenced in the popular press's treatment of *T2*. The vital concern here is to demystify morphing as a technology and show its subordination to human desire as a mere marketing device (Cliff Gromer, "Morphing," *Popular Mechanics* [October 1992]: 54–55) or highlight the dependency of the morphed figure upon human input (e.g., "Artists tell the computer what to do every step of the way. Machines can't do it on their own" [Stuart Weiner, "Morphing It," *TV Guide*, August 1–7, 1992, 19–20]), or mourning with bitter chagrin that "the cyber-effects are more potent than the live actors" (Christopher Sharett, "The Cinema of Human Obsolescence," *USA Today* [January 1993]: 67).
55. The flippant side of this commercial cynicism was expressed by Louis Ruykeyser in his opening comments on *Wall Street Week* for September 1, 1995, following the ABC-Disney merger. He joked that a nagging question might soon be answered: whether "media" is plural or singular. In the foreseeable future, Ruykeyser smirked, hinting at the emergence of a real Skynet, we could literally speak of "The Medium."
56. John C. Kimball, "Machinery as a Gospel Worker," *Christian Examiner* 87 (November 1869): 327. The current form of this position is best seen in Speaker of the House Newt Gingrich if we add to his unconditional faith in futurist technofantasy (see Joan Didion, "Newt Gingrich, Superstar," *New York Review of Books*, August 10, 1995, 8) his support for Christian Coalition values.
57. Horkheimer and Adorno, *The Dialectic of Enlightenment*, 142, 144, 153.
58. Thomas Andrae, "From Menace to Messiah: The Prehistory of the Superman in Science Fiction Literature," *Discourse: Journal for Theoretical Studies in Media and Culture* 2 (Summer 1980): 108.

59. J. P. Telotte, "The Terminator," 29.
60. Theweleit, *Male Fantasies*, Vol. 2, 207.
61. *Ibid.*, 202.
62. Andrae, "From Menace to Messiah," 90.
63. See Susan Sontag, *Illness as Metaphor* (New York: Vintage, 1979), 31–35.
64. This is Martin Jay's characterization of an idea common to the Frankfurt School, and specifically Adorno, as stated in *The Dialectical Imagination: A History of the Frankfurt School and the Institute for Social Research, 1923–1950* (New York: Little, Brown, 1973), 187.
65. Mark Seltzer, *Bodies and Machines* (New York: Routledge, 1992), 5.
66. Sardar Ziauddin, "Terminator 2: Modernity, Postmodernism and the 'Other,'" *Futures* 24 (June 1992): 496.