

Somatechnics, or Monstrosity Unbound

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“Who was I? What was I? Whence did I come? What was my destination?” (Frankenstein’s monster in Shelley 1992: 125)

“Who am I?” is about (always unrealizable) identity; always wobbling it still pivots on the law of the father, the sacred image of the same. ...[W]ho are “we”? that is an inherently more open question, one always ready for contingent, friction-generating articulations. It is a remonstrative question (Haraway 1992: 324)

It is often claimed that with the rise of Enlightenment ideas came the question of the subject; ‘his’ origin, character, and future potential. This issue has since been taken up by feminists of various persuasions and the question of who woman is and what she might become has been the source of much, and often heated, debate. Central to much of this debate is the role and status of ‘technology’. But what exactly do we mean when we use the term technology?

Anti-natalist Equality Feminism and Anti-technology Radical Feminism

In 1970 Shulamith Firestone published her landmark text *The Dialectic of Sex: The Case for Feminist Revolution*, in which she, like de Beauvoir before her, identified female biology and women’s reproductive roles as central to their subordinate status. Whilst both writers argued that women must transcend their ‘sex’ and free themselves “from the tyranny of reproduction” (Firestone 1972: 238) in order to participate fully and equally in public and political life, Firestone suggested that this could be best achieved by technological means or “cybernetic socialism” (1972: 238). For Firestone, then, the answer to the problem of ‘biology’ lay in the development of neutral technologies which would enable extra-uterine gestation. In freeing women from their biology such technologies would, Firestone argued, undermine the forms of social life organised around biological reproduction and thus make possible alternative forms of relations and relationality. In more recent years anti-natalist equality feminism’s optimistic view of technology has diminished somewhat and one more commonly finds a view of reproduction, even of the ‘non-traditional’ kind, as an inherent obstacle to equality. For example, in her discussion of “alternative means of intercourse, pregnancy, or child raising”, Jeffner Allen claims that “none is sufficient for women’s effective survival, that is, for the creation of a female’s self-chosen, non-patriarchal, existence” (1986: 26).

The problem with these arguments is that they rely on a series of related philosophical dualisms: nature/culture, biology/technology, body/mind, private/public, reproduction/production, immanence/transcendence, woman/man. In doing so they perpetuate- albeit inadvertently- the historically and culturally specific meanings and values responsible for the (necessarily inequitable) construction of what Luce Irigaray refers to as sexual (in)difference (1985: 76). In other words, what we see here is what Dion Farquhar identifies as the “legacy of male-identified equality feminism” (1996: 110): in accepting the implicit value system which associates women with biology, nature, the body, reproduction and immanence, and concluding that equality can only be achieved in and through the transcendence of such things, these writers reproduce, amongst other things, “the superiority of masculine values and occupations” (Gatens 1991: 2).

Technology, on the instrumentalist model embraced by Firestone, is constituted as a neutral tool that is separate from, and can be manipulated by, the subject whose intentions it serves: it has no inherent ethical or political qualities and yet it holds out the promise of progress. Firestone’s articulation of technology thus makes her the rather unlikely bedfellow of Freud who, in *Civilization and Its Discontents*, suggests that with “every tool man [sic] is perfecting his own organs, whether

motor or sensory, or is removing the limits of their functioning” (Sigmund Freud cited in Woodward 1995: 51). Anti-technology radical feminists beg to differ with this idea of technology as a neutral tool of liberation or self-overcoming. For example, writers such as Gena Corea, Renate Klein, Maria Mies, Janice Raymond and Robyn Rowland- all of whom are associated with FINRAGE, the Feminist International Network of Resistance to Reproductive and Genetic Engineering, established in 1984- argue that reproductive technologies are, by definition, patriarchal and detrimental to women. “According to [these] narratives, women-hating, womb-envying, male medical terrorists control women’s desires, making them submit (irrationally) to invasive, costly, and risky procedures” (Farquhar, 1996: 8). For example, in a passage that clearly shares resonances with her inflammatory account of the ways in which “transsexuals rape women’s bodies ... [and] appropriate [them] for themselves” (1979: 308), Raymond states that “technological reproduction is first and foremost about the appropriation of the female body” (1993: xxxi). Mies takes this one step further, arguing that “any woman who is prepared to have a child manufactured for her by a fame- and money-greedy biotechnician must know that in this way she is ... surrendering yet another part of the autonomy of the female sex over childbearing to the technopatriarchs” (1987: 43).

Interestingly, these theorists share with anti-natalist equality feminists an essentialist view of women that is founded on and reinforces the binary oppositions noted above. However, whilst for Firestone and her followers nature is the problem to which technology is the answer, for anti-technology radical feminists nature is what is most sacrosanct and technology, as the tool *par excellence* of patriarchal appropriation and oppression, is the problem. What is demonised in one account is mythologised in the other, and vice versa. A particularly poignant example of the essentialist mythologisation of Nature and of Woman can be found in Katha Pollitt’s claim that “Painting is male. Rhyme is male. Plot is male. ... logic and language are male. What is female? Nature. Blood. Milk. Communal gatherings. The Moon. Quilts” (cited in Farquhar 1996:101). This sort of woman-identified logic has, over the last couple of decades, been subject to much criticism from feminists and non-feminists alike, not least because it constructs Woman and Nature as pre-discursive, universal entities and in so doing, fails to acknowledge difference(s), and to account for the discursive effects of its own ideas and practices- its own ‘technologies’, if you like.

Both the pro- and anti-technology feminists discussed above conceive of ‘Technology’ as a monolithic cultural object or force whose essence is innate and knowable. In these over-optimistic or over-pessimistic accounts, technology as a tool which is separate from the subject who employs it, is unequivocally good or bad, liberatory or repressive. However, postmodern feminists have critiqued this either/or model and the logic that informs it, claiming instead that “there is no “real”, fixed, or essential technology” (Farquhar 1996: 5). Technologies, they argue, are heterogeneous in their histories, their uses, and their effects, and are thoroughly embedded in contextually specific cultural processes. Technologies, writes Anna Munster, are “always in a dynamic relation to the matter which gives [them their] substance and to the other machines- aesthetic, social, economic- which substantiate [them] as ... ensemble[s]” (1999: 121). Further, insofar as technologies are always already inextricably bound up with systems of power/knowledge, they do not stand outside the subject, but rather, are constitutive of the very categories integral to the construction of subjectivities, categories “such as the real, the natural and the body, which remain the bedrock of humanist forms of feminism” (Munster 1999: 122). In reference to the work of Foucault, de Lauretis and Haraway, Terry and Calvert make a similar point when they write: “technologies, as organized systems, produce a range of products, effects, representations, and artefacts, chief among them ... what we could call technologies of gender, race, and sexuality” (1997: 5).

What we find in the work of postmodern feminists, then, is an understanding of technology which moves beyond the narrow and somewhat literal understanding that informs the work of the pro- and anti-technology feminists mentioned earlier. Of course, tools and machines have not entirely vanished from the postmodern feminist imagination, but now they are conceived not as epistemological objects, but rather, as integral to and constitutive of “the process of connection between discursive practices, institutional relations, and material effects that, working together, produce meaning or “truth effect[s]” for the human body” (Balsamo 1996: 21). In contradistinction to the claims made by the theorists discussed earlier, then, postmodern feminists posit a chiasmatic interdependence of soma and techne: bodily-being, they argue, is always already technologised, and technologies are always already enfolded. As Lily Kay puts it, “when *episteme* and *techne* are seen as intertwined ... the time-honoured dichotomies between ... discovery and intervention, observer and phenomenon are blurred. Technology and theory generate each other, epistemic things become technical things and vice versa” (2000: 36). Given this, feminism’s task is less an outright refusal or naïve celebration of ‘Technology’, and more an

ongoing detailed and nuanced analysis of the “difficult territories of compromise and ambivalence” (Munster 1999: 128) associated with the use, appropriation, extension, and/or subversion of specific practices and procedures in specific historical, cultural, and political contexts.

Haraway’s hybrids, or is ‘every technology is a reproductive technology?’

The epitome of the postmodern feminist conception of technology is, many would argue, Donna Haraway’s “ironic political myth”, ‘A Cyborg Manifesto’. At the centre of this piece of blasphemous writing (-as-technology) is the cyborg, the hybrid creature of social reality and fiction that “is our ontology”, that “gives us our politics” (Haraway 1991/1998: 435). The cyborg tells of the “inextricable weave of the organic, technical, textual, mythic, economic and political threads that make up the flesh of the world” (Haraway, 1995: xii). Like the cyborg, writes Haraway, “we are all chimeras, theorized and fabricated hybrids of machine and organism” (1995: 435): we are all agents and effects of a border war, the stakes of which “have been the territories of production, reproduction, and imagination” (1995: 435). In giving us our politics the figure of the cyborg functions as an imaginative resource, an optical instrument that intervenes in this border war, generating “effects of connection, of embodiment, and of responsibility for an imagined elsewhere that we may yet learn to see and build here” (Haraway, 1992: 295).

For Haraway, then, there is no singular pre-discursive state or place that we can simply name Nature and which we must transcend (de Beauvoir, Firestone) or remain true to (Raymond et. al.), violate or save. Nature, in this sense, is the truth-effect- both fiction and fact- of a reproductive optics, of historically and culturally specific technologies (humanism, equality feminism, radical feminism, and so on) that reproduce the “sacred image of the same” (Haraway, 1992: 299) that is at the centre of a phallogocentric economy. Rather than championing the kind of (re)productionism that informs the politics of both anti-natalist equality feminism and anti-technology radical feminism, and that presupposes the pre-discursive existence of singular opposed entities (human/machine, nature/culture), Haraway deploys what we might think of as a diffractive optics to envision “a regenerative politics for inappropriate/d others” (1992: 299).

Haraway’s problem with (re)productionism and its corollary, humanism, is that it is informed by and informs the myth of autogamy in which “man makes everything, including himself, out of the world that can only be resource and potency to his project and active agency” (1992: 297). In this myth the (humanist) subject, and not the cyborg, is at the heart of (the) matter. This (same old) story (Irigaray, 1985: 174) which is central to technologies of gender and of “the subject”, constitutes man as “tool-maker and –user, whose highest technical production is himself” (Haraway, 1992: 297): “in this productionist story women make babies, but this is a poor if necessary substitute for the real action in reproduction- the second birth through self-birthing, which requires the obstetrical technology of optics” (1992: 331). But of course, it is not only men who tell these stories: Allen’s vision of “the creation of a female’s self-chosen non-patriarchal existence” (1986: 26), and Raymond’s dream of the reproduction of female bodies unappropriated by patriarchal technology, are likewise coloured by the ((re)productionist) desire to make (of) oneself a singular and idealised subject. Like Foucault, then, Haraway “exercises a hermeneutics of suspicion towards the axiomatic boundaries and categories by which modernity is ordered” (Graham 2002: 202-3) and (modern) selves are technologically constituted.

And so to ‘the promises of monsters’ and cyborgs, the ironic myth of an imagined elsewhere in which “transgressed boundaries, potent fusions, and dangerous possibilities” (Haraway 1991/1998: 438) are no longer the stuff of dystopian nightmares. Harkening to Zoe Sofia’s claim that “every technology is a reproductive technology”, Haraway acknowledges the potency of myth-making, the fact that what is at stake are ways of life (1992: 299), modes of enfleshment, somatechnologies if you like. Consequently, unlike the feminist theorists discussed in the previous section, Haraway refuses the ((re)productionist) single vision which reiterates the same old story of technology as either good or bad, liberatory or oppressive. Instead Haraway deploys a “double vision”, a seeing “from both perspectives at once because each reveals both dominations and possibilities unimaginable from the other vantage point” (1991/1998: 439). What most interests me about this optical device is that it constitutes a generative technology “askew from productionism” insofar as its rays “diffract rather than reflect” (Haraway, 1992: 299). Rather than a (re)production of the Same, then, “the issue from this generative technology, the result of this monstrous pregnancy, might be kin to ... feminist theorist Trinh Minh-ha’s ... ‘inappropriate/d

others” (Haraway 1992: 299). To be an inappropriate/d other is, as Haraway goes on to explain, “to be in critical, deconstructive relationality” it is “a way to figure ‘difference’ as a ‘critical difference within” (1992: 299). The regenerative politics Haraway envisions, then, is neither simply opposed to, nor outside of the (re)productionist (utopian/dystopian) myths embraced by the feminists discussed earlier. Rather, there is a chiasmatic intertwining of Haraway’s monstrous offspring and the progeny of Firestone, Raymond, Allen, that diffracts, deconstructs and reconstructs, and in the process, generates “scary things, risky things, contingent things” (1992: 325). The myth of the cyborg, then, exposes as fabrication-fact and fiction- humanist ontology in which “the boundaries of a fatally transgressive world, ruled by the Subject ... give way to the borderlands, inhabited by human and inhuman collectives” (Haraway 1992: 328), by many-headed monsters, hybrid creatures, us.

Mary Shelley’s *Frankenstein*: The promise of monsters

As other critics (for example, Anderson (1999), Dobson and Luce-Kapler (2005), Klugman (2001)) before me have noted, there is undoubtedly a connection between Mary Shelley’s ‘monster’ and Donna Haraway’s cyborg, although exactly what the relation is, remains the stuff of debate. Rather than trying to define this relationship in and through a definitive reading of Shelley’s *Frankenstein*, I want instead to offer a very specific, contingent reading of the text, one that is informed by my interest in Haraway’s politics, in the notion of somatechnics, and by my location in a particular historical, cultural, theoretical milieu. This hybrid vision of *Frankenstein*, will, I hope, go some way to articulating ‘the promise of monsters.’ For Haraway, to articulate is “to put things together, scary things, risky things, contingent things” (1992: 324). Articulation, then, does not produce seamless, closed wholes. Rather, what is articulated is, like the body of Shelley’s monster ‘cobbled together’ and remains open and “accessible to action and intervention” (1992: 327).

For Anne K. Mellor, who takes a position much like that of the anti-technology feminists discussed earlier, *Frankenstein* is a technophobic allegory. Mellor writes:

At every level, Victor Frankenstein is engaged upon a rape of nature, a violent penetration and usurpation of the female’s “hiding place”, of the womb. Terrified of female sexuality and the power of human reproduction it enables, both he and the patriarchal society he represents use the technologies of science and the laws of the polis to manipulate, control and repress women (1989: 122).

I want to take a different view - one that diffracts the logic informing Mellor’s position- and suggest that *Frankenstein* can instead be seen as a monstrous interrogation of the technological construction of ‘the human’ and its limits. As Victor Frankenstein recounts, in the early stages of his project he “began the creation of a human being” (Shelley 1818/1992: 52), however, as his story unfolds an important conceptual shift occurs and what was once to be a human being is later described as “a new species [that] would bless me its creator and its source” (1818/1992: 52). As Maureen McLane notes, “Victor’s labours ultimately become ... an experiment in speciation” (1996: 962). However, Victor’s dreams turn into nightmares as his increasingly desperate attempts at the creation of taxonomic certainty are gradually eroded.

As McLane tells it, speciesism- a spurious ‘science’ much like race science- is founded on appearance, on the presupposition that difference is self-evidently visible, and interestingly, the term species derives from the Latin *specere*, to look. However, as Linda Alcoff has argued in her critique of technologies of race, “what is taken as self-evidently visible” is in fact “the product of a specific form of perceptual practice, rather than the natural result of human sight” (1996: 268). Whilst perception, then, is conventionally “defined as access to truth” (1996: 275), it in fact, argues Alcoff, “represents sedimented contextual knowledges” (1996: 272). Victor Frankenstein is, of course, incapable of seeing this and his ‘single vision’- which he shares with the majority of the characters in the book- leads to the perception of the monster’s ‘monstrosity’ as both opposed to, and a threat to, the ‘human’: “when I looked upon him, when I saw the filthy mass that moved and talked, my heart sickened and my feelings were altered to those of horror and hatred” (Shelley 1818/1992:142). This way of seeing is diffracted by old De Lacey who, in true Derridean style, welcomes the monstrous stranger into his home. “I am blind and cannot judge of your countenance” (Shelley 1818/1992:130) says De Lacey, and in doing so (and being so) bestows on both the monster and the reader the gift of (in)sight; that is, a view of “normal human vision as

ideologically blinkered” (McLane 1996: 976), as a normalised and normalising somatechnology.

The monster himself is also aware of the logic of the Same that informs normative perception and the taxonomic violence that accompanies it, and this, of course, is what makes him truly monstrous. He says, “the human senses are insurmountable barriers to our union” (Shelley 1818/1992: 140), and it is for this reason that he demands that Victor create for him a “companion [who] must be of the same species” (1918/1992:139). This desire for a ‘mate’ leads Haraway to conclude that Frankenstein’s monster is not, in fact, a cyborg, since, unlike the former, the latter “does not expect its father to save it through a restoration of the garden; that is, through the fabrication of a heterosexual mate, through its completion in a finished whole, a city and a cosmos” (1991/1998: 436). However, one could equally well argue that the monster’s desire is not simply a reproductive one: what he imagines, I would suggest, is ‘communion’, affection, “become[ing] linked to the chain of existence and events, from which [he is] now excluded” (Shelley 1818/1992: 142-3). In other words, like the cyborg, he is “wary of holism, but needy of connection”; he too desires the generative “effects of connection, of embodiment, and of responsibility for an imagined elsewhere that we may yet learn to see and build here” (Haraway 1992: 295), and this *elsewhere* is literally beyond the territories of the ‘civilized’ world. So, whilst the monster is unlikely, as Victor fears, to sire a “race of devils” (Shelley 1818/1992: 160) he may nevertheless participate in the imagination and technological generation of alternative ways of seeing, of knowing, and of being; in the generation of “many-headed monsters” (Haraway 1991/1998: 439) that intervene in taxonomical border wars and thus “make the very existence of the species of man a condition precarious and full of terror” (Shelley 1818/1992: 160). In short, what the monster heralds is a monstrous future, one which, as Derrida reminds us, “can only be surprising”: a future, he writes “that wouldn’t be monstrous wouldn’t be a future; it would already be predictable, calculable and programmable tomorrow. All experience open to the future is prepared and prepares itself to welcome the monstrous *arrivant*” (1992: 386).

Carter’s blasphemous myth: The (re)generation of monstrous monstrosities

Since the publication of *Frankenstein* a plethora of monsters have populated the realms of feminist fiction, interfering with, rather than reflecting, dominant ontologies, generating mutant offspring, cyborg vision(s). The one who most readily comes to mind for me is Angela Carter’s ‘Mother’, the larger-than-life surgeon-cum-goddess responsible for the technological creation of the post-apocalyptic “New Eve” (Carter, 1977/2005). ‘Mother’ is a strange hybrid of anti-natalist equality feminism, anti-technology radical feminism, and possibly of phallogocentric nightmares, a “complicated mix of mythology and technology” (Carter 2005: 48), a “sacred monster” (2005: 59). In embodying numerous incompatible perspectives at once, Mother- who resides in Beulah, “a place where contrarities are equally true” (1995: 48)- is simultaneously an agent and an effect of ‘cyborg unities’, monstrous, illegitimate, potent myths, the greatest of which is, of course, herself: “She had been human, once; and now ... she is the hand-carved figurehead of her own self-constructed theology ... The self-anointed, self-appointed prophetess, the self-created god-head that had assumed the flesh of its own prophecy” (1995: 58).

Like the inappropriate/d other, Mother ironises, deconstructs, inhabits, as a “critical difference within” (Haraway 1996: 299) the flesh of the world as we know it and the liberal humanist myths responsible for its propagation. This multi-breasted Woman, this “piece of pure nature” (Carter 2005: 60), this “Great Emasculator” (2005: 49) who wears a “beard of crisp black curls like the false beard Queen Hatshepsut of the Two Kingdoms wore” (2005: 59), is both the embodiment of woman-identified feminism and its monstrous transgendered nemesis; a transsexual surgery specialist who “had reconstructed her flesh painfully, with knives and with needles”, and covered herself with “a patchwork quilt stitched from her daughter’s breasts” (2005: 60). In other words, the figure of Mother embodies the intertwining of *episteme*, *techne*, and soma; no longer embroiled in epistemological border wars, she is, and she generates, “a powerful infidel heteroglossia” (Haraway 1991/1998: 463).

Mother is, of course, all too aware that “the stakes of the border war have been the territories of production, reproduction, and imagination” (Haraway 1991/1998: 435) and perhaps it is for this reason that she rapes the misogynistic Evelyn in order to procure his sperm, surgically transforms him into the “New Eve”, and impregnates her(him) with Eve/Lyn’s own seed so as to create a “child [that] will rejuvenate the world” (2005: 77). Like Haraway’s blasphemous myth, his monstrous vision diffracts the logic of hyper-(re)productionism that reproduces the sacred image of the same, and in doing so makes possible

“the generation of novel forms” (Haraway 1992: 299).

Novel forms: Shelley Jackson’s *Patchwork Girl*

Shelley Jackson’s hypertext pastiche which, one might argue, is both textually and technically monstrous, is the story(s) of Victor Frankenstein’s female monster, once (allegedly) destroyed by her maker, and now regenerated- written and sewn together like a great quilt- by ‘Mary/Shelley, & Herself’ (This refers to the inextricability of Mary Shelley, Shelley Jackson and the she-monster in the telling of this generative polyvocal tale). In the text the intertwined authors “perform a certain surgery ... Mary writes, I write, we write, but who is really writing?” Also woven into the fabric of the text are the writings of Haraway, Derrida, Carter, and a plethora of others. “Assembling these patched words in an electronic space”, writes Jackson

I feel half-blind, as if the entire text is within reach, but because of some myopic condition I am only familiar with from dreams, I can only see that part most immediately before me, and have no sense of how that part relates to the rest (<this writing>).

What Jackson offers here is an insightful account of hypertext as a novel form with no beginning, no determinate sequence, and no ending; one that generates a (un)canny critique of what Haraway refers to as ‘single vision’ and the dangerous illusions such vision (re)produces.

Jackson’s she-monster, the issue of ‘several births’ is less a monster in any essential sense than “a powerful infidel heteroglossia” (Haraway 1991/1998: 463) of other people’s body parts, reminiscent perhaps of the performance artist Orlan: Jackson’s she-monster sports the tongue of Susannah, a woman put into the stocks for drunken licentiousness; the nose of Geneva, whose curiosity got her into all matter of trouble; the ears of Flora, an inquisitive eavesdropper; the stomach of Bella, a glutton found guilty of crushing a man to death; the left breast of Charlotte who nursed eight children, buried six and felt each loss in her swollen breast; and a menagerie of other bits and pieces (<graveyard>). “I am hideous” she tells the reader, “because I am multiple, because I am mixed” (<severance/why hideous>). What we see here, then, is the literal embodiment of Haraway’s claim, included in a section of the text entitled <Identities>, that “Identities seem contradictory, partial and strategic. There is not even such a state as “being” female, or “being” monster”. This critique of the technologies of the self inherent in the humanist myth of the autonomous, unified subject is expanded on by Shelley in *Stitch Bitch* (2004). She writes:

The body is not one, though it seems so from up here, from this privileged viewpoint up top ... The body is a patchwork, though the stitches might not show ... We patch a phantom body together out of a cacophony of sense impressions, bright and partial views ... The project of writing, the project of life, ... is, to interrupt, unhinge, disable the processes by which the mind ... substitutes an effigy for that complicated machine for inclusion and effusion that is the self (2004).

This view of phallogocentric perception as ideologically blinkered is again apparent in a scene from *Patchwork Girl* in which the fragmented and fragmenting she-monster sits in the bath “amidst the warm nudging bodies of [her] vagrant parts”. With her vision “clouded by steam, dimmed in the candle-light” (<more partings>), she is able to see beyond the normal and normalising perception of the anomalous as a threat to be ‘contained’ or annihilated. It is here that she begins “to invent something new: a new way to hang together without pretending I was whole. Something between higgledy-piggledy and eternal sphere” (<I made myself over>).

What we see here, then, as in the other texts I’ve discussed, is a notion of hybrid ontology as (re)generative insofar as it transgresses the borders and boundaries of taxonomic logic, remapping ‘our social and bodily reality’ by articulating the transitory and shifting chiasmatic relations between bodies of flesh, bodies of knowledge, and social bodies. What this monstrous vision shows us is that “We are inevitably annexed to other bodies: human bodies, and bodies of knowledge. We

are coupled to constructions of meaning; we are legible, partially, we are cooperative with meanings, but irreducible to any one” (<bodies too>). In other words, our very be(com)ing is technological, somatic and textual: we are the matter(ialisation) of writing-as-technology. This imbrication of bodies and texts is fore-grounded repeatedly in *Patchwork Girl*, and we are told, by a text that narrates itself, “I am like you in most ways. My introductory paragraph comes at the beginning and I have a good head on my shoulders. I have muscle, fat, and a skeleton that keeps me from collapsing into suet. But my real skeleton is made of scars: a web that traverses me in three-dimensions. What holds me together is what marks my dispersal” (<dispersed>).

What we find articulated in the (interconnected) monstrous fictions of Haraway, Carter, Shelley and Jackson, then, are attempts to reconceive the boundaries and connections between technologies (in the broadest possible sense of the term) and selves. Here, selves are fleshly hybrids, the partial, perverse, and forever shifting effects of what we might (un) productively think of as somatechnics. In other words, in raising the remonstrative question of who *we* are these texts not only enable, but perform, contingent, friction-generating articulations, and in doing so constitute technological interventions into the same old stories that have surely had their day.

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