

# CYBORGS

## In this class:

We will discuss, research, and write about the cultural relevance of cyborgs to your everyday life.

Darth Vader is a cyborg, or a human being whose interaction with the world is mediated by technology.



## COLLEGE WRITING II-21011-007-15190

**Instructor: Jason W. Ellis, Office: SFH 203-E, Contact: [dynamicsubspace@gmail.com](mailto:dynamicsubspace@gmail.com)**

**Class Meetings: MWF 8:50am-9:40am Moulton Hall 333**

What is a cyborg? Simply, a cyborg is a human or animal whose body is enhanced by technology in such a way that their relationship with the world and others is mediated by that technology. The cyborg interfaces with the world and others via technology. In the weeks that follow, we will work together to expand and focus this definition as needed to better suit the research and writing that you do here.

During this semester, you will read and write about the relationship between humanity and technology. Specifically, our concern is the image of the cyborg in fiction and its utility for understanding our transformative relationship with technology.

As a class, we will build a foundation for your work in the first half of the semester, and then you will expand on this knowledge with

self-guided research in the second half. In the first half, we will look at several different cyborg texts (e.g., short stories, novels, graphic novels, and television shows). Then, we will segue into a discussion of your relationship to technology. Finally, you will choose a topic of study related to the cyborg for your final essay.

We will use the image of the cyborg as the unifying theme of the course and it will be the focus around which you satisfy the following requirements of College Writing II: develop critical and evaluative skills, undertake professional research, utilize the writing process to enhance writing style and argumentation, periodically present summaries of your work to the class, write throughout the semester with emphasis on your three major essays, and reflect on the process of professional writing.



### Is R2-D2 a cyborg?

Unlike Darth Vader, who was a man augmented by technology, R2-D2 is a robot, or an autonomous and intelligent machine.

## WHO IS A CYBORG?



### Who above is a cyborg?

Boba Fett and Jango Fett, the first two pictured above, are cyborgs. They are humans whose bodies are enhanced with a variety of technologies including armor, rocket flight, and augmented reality. C-3PO, pictured in the third box, is a robot, like his friend R2-D2 on the cover.

## Classroom Expectations and Grading

In our class, you will have a steady reading and writing component. Keep up with the assignments and hand in your work on time. Late work will not be accepted.

Your assignments should always be printed out on white paper, Times 12-pt font, double spaced, and stapled. Assignments on the attached schedule are due at the beginning of class. You may not print assignments in class. Save your work in a safe place for future reference. Always bring paper and a pen to class for notes and in-class assignments. Do not boot the classroom computers unless I tell you that we will be using the computers on that day.

We have an early class this semester, but this will not be an excuse for arriving late or not at all. For each two late arrivals, you will receive one absence from class. If you are absent four to six times, your final grade will be reduced by one letter. If you are absent from class more than six times, you will automatically fail the class. It is your responsibility to keep up with your absences.

Grading in our class break down as: 15% participation, 15% daily writing assignments, 20% Essay 1, 20% Essay 2, and 30% Essay 3. You will produce approximately 5000 words of graded content in your three major essays. You will also give presentations to the class on your second and third essays.

## Required Texts

Gibson, William. *Neuromancer*. New York: Ace, 1984.

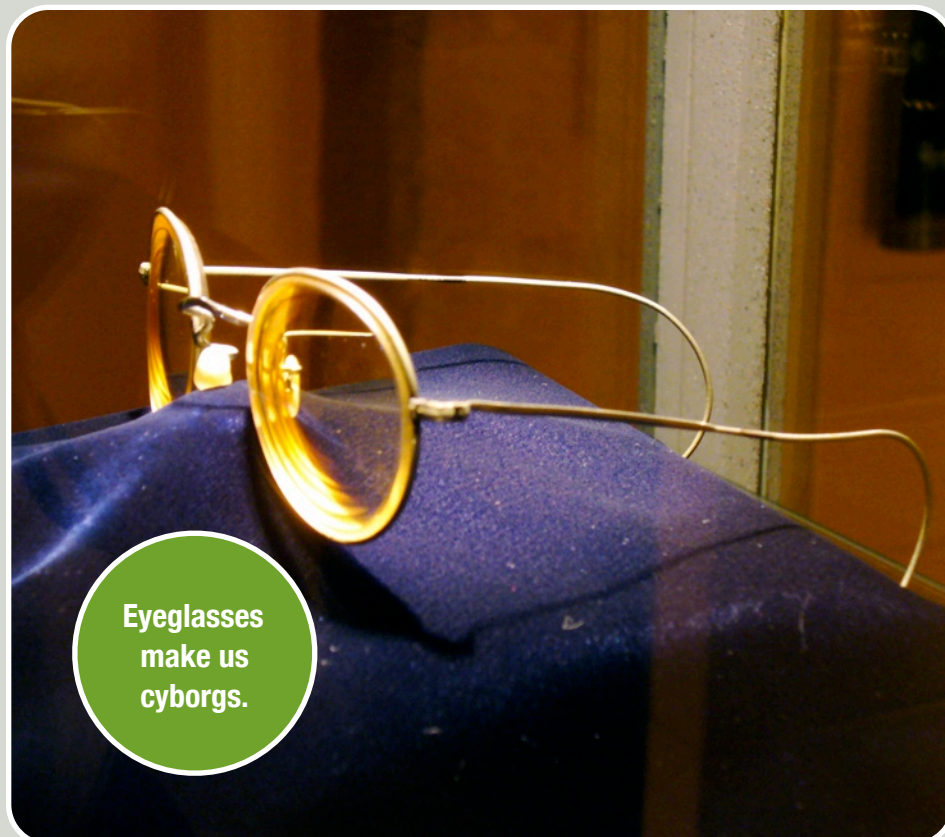
Morrison, Grant. *We3*. New York: Vertigo, 2005.

Writing Program, Kent State University. *A Guide to College Writing I & II, 2009-2010*. Plymouth, MI: Hayden-McNeil, 2010.

Wysocki, Anne Frances, and Dennis A. Lynch. *The DK Handbook*. New York: Pearson Longman, 2009.

## Office Hours

I will have two office hours per week on Mondays from 10:00am-12:00pm in SFH 203-E. I believe that it is a good idea for all students to stop by and see their professors during office hours at some point during the semester.



Eyeglasses  
make us  
cyborgs.

## Registration Requirement

The official registration deadline for this course is September 12, 2010. University policy requires all students to be officially registered in each class they are attending. Students who are not officially registered for a course by published deadlines should not be attending classes and will not receive credit or a grade for the course. Each student must confirm enrollment by checking his/her class schedule (using Student Tools in FlashFast) prior to the deadline indicated. Registration errors must be corrected prior to the deadline. The last day to withdraw is November 7, 2010. Other important dates are here: <http://www.registrars.kent.edu/home/FALL/Calendar.htm>

## Student Accessibility Policy

University Policy 3342-3-01.3 requires that students with disabilities be provided reasonable accommodations to ensure their equal access to course content. If you have a documented disability and require accommodations, please contact the instructor at the beginning of the semester to make arrangements for necessary classroom adjustments. Please note, you must first verify

your eligibility for these through Student Accessibility Services (contact 330-672-3391 or visit [www.kent.edu/sas](http://www.kent.edu/sas) for more information on registration procedures).

## Plagiarism Policy

Plagiarism is the act of presenting the work or ideas of someone else as your own. Examples include: lifting a passage from a website, copying a section from an article or book, having a friend write your paper even if you are dictating your own ideas, taking someone else's big idea and saying it is your own, or buying a paper from an essay writing service. You should choose not to plagiarize for three reasons: 1) ideas and cultural works are property and should not be stolen, 2) stealing the work of others does not give you the developmental benefit of having done the work yourself, and 3) there are severe penalties for plagiarism and academic dishonesty. We will follow the official school plagiarism policy: <http://www.kent.edu/policyreg/chap3/index.cfm> (search for plagiarism). Plagiarized work will receive zero credit. If you have any questions about plagiarism, please see me before turning in an assignment. We will discuss the importance of academic honesty all semester.



## CYBORG TECH



### What do all three of these things have in common?

Each technological artifact above mediates our interaction with the world and makes us into cyborgs. Augmented reality games provide new modes of playing in the virtual and real, we see the world differently through our digital cameras, and bicycles enable different modes of movement and views of our surroundings.

# TENTATIVE SCHEDULE

**Assignments and due dates are subject to change. Come to class regularly for updates.**

## Week 1, Aug 30

M, syllabus, plagiarism, library research  
W, working definitions exercise, introduce Moore and Tiptree  
F, Moore's "No Woman Born", 250 word synopsis and 250 word definitions in your own words

## Week 2, Sept 6

M, Labor Day  
W, Tiptree's "The Girl Who Was Plugged In", 250 word synopsis, introduce *Star Trek: TNG*  
F, 500 word compare and contrast of Moore and Tiptree, *Star Trek: TNG* "The Best of Both Worlds Part 1" in class

## Week 3, Sept 13

M, 250 word synopsis of "Best Part 1," Watch "Best Part 2" in class  
W, 250 word synopsis of "Best Part 2," work on compare and contrast of all earlier works, introduce *Neuromancer*  
F, *Neuromancer* Part 1, 250 word synopsis

## Week 4, Sept 20

M, *Neuromancer* Part 2 and 3, 500 word synopsis  
W, *Neuromancer* Part 4 and Coda, 250 word synopsis  
F, 500 word compare and contrast between all previous works, introduce *We3*

## Week 5, Sept 27

M, *We3* Part 1, 250 word synopsis  
W, *We3* Part 2, 250 word synopsis  
F, *We3* Part 3, 250 word synopsis

## Week 6, Oct 4

M, 500 word compare and contrast of all previous works, Essay 1 topic: 1250 word cyborg essay using all previous works

W, peer review training session  
F, essay 1 introduction due, bring to discuss in peer review groups

## Week 7, Oct 11

M, Cyborg readings, 250 word synopsis  
W, Cyborg readings, 250 word synopsis  
F, Peer review 1250 word draft of Essay 1

## Week 8, Oct 18

M, Essay 1 due, Essay 2 topic: 1250 word essay, "How are you a cyborg in your private and professional lives (if there is a distinction)?"  
W, Haraway's "A Cyborg Manifesto", <http://www.stanford.edu/dept/HPS/Haraway/CyborgManifesto.html>, 250 word synopsis or outline  
F, cyborg reading, 250 word synopsis

## Week 9, Oct 25

M, 5 minute presentations on essay 2  
W, 5 minute presentations on essay 2  
F, 5 minute presentations on essay 2

## Week 10, Nov 1

M, Essay 2 peer review  
W, Essay 2 due, essay 3 topic: design your own argumentative research paper that connects the cyborg theme of the class to something you are interested in (preferably your major), 2500 words minimum, 10 sources.  
F, Define essay 3 topics, do in-class research. Email me 250 word topic proposal by Sunday, Nov 7, 6:00pm.

## Week 11, Nov 8

M, Conferences



**Hang in there! It's not as bad as it looks.**

W, Conferences  
F, Conferences

## Week 12, Nov 15

M, in-class research and writing, 250 word log of progress  
W, in-class research and writing, 250 word log of progress  
F, in-class research and writing, 250 word log of progress

## Week 13, Nov 22

M, Essay 3 Peer Review, Presentations 101, Attendance required  
W, Thanksgiving Holiday  
F, Thanksgiving Holiday

## Week 14, Nov 29

M, 10 minute presentations, reports  
W, 10 minute presentations, reports  
F, 10 minute presentations, reports

## Week 15, Dec 6

M, 10 minute presentations, reports  
W, 10 minute presentations, reports  
F, 10 minute presentations, reports, Essay 3 Due, Good luck on your other classes!

\*Above image assembled in Photoshop by Mark Warbington. All other images by Jason W. Ellis.

**Please, please, please see me during my office hours or by email appointment if you have any**

**questions or important life events that I should know about. Talk to me as soon as something happens**

**that may affect your work, not after, and we can work something out to keep you in the game.**