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'YOU'VE GOT POST' - Assessing the Posthuman

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Abstract

Recent themes of theoretical developments have been those of the 'post'. Following challenges to epistemology, the ontology/ontic status of the body itself is being subjected to 'post' theorising. Distancing myself from the vile slush of 'You've got Mail', a film that I raid for its title alone, I would like to consider the posthuman debate in this paper. Assuming the postal metaphor, could the electronic 'mail' ever be any substitute for the electronically unmediated 'post'? Jeanette Winterson writes that 'My life is not my own, shortly I shall have to haggle over my own reality...I don't want to smash the machines, but neither do I want the machines to smash me...'

Keywords:

Theoretical developments, post, the body, posthuman.

Introduction - You've got *what*?

What is posthumanism? Where does it find its theoretical roots? How might it be used in a legal context? How desirable is 'post' in this context - what is the value of being posthuman? For me, these are key questions to consider. However, before I start to think about the posthuman, it might first be advantageous to consider the 'post'. My position is that posthumanism is part of an increasing trend of 'post' theorising, but what might 'post' mean here? As Stuart Elden writes, "how are we to understand 'post'? As a consequence, as a development, as a denial, or as a rejection?"[\[2\]](#) For some, it may carry suggestions of advancement, of progress, that the 'post' theory is the logical progression of the preceding theory; a refinement, an enhancement, an improvement somehow. Such a reading would account for the preserving of the name of the previous theory as a link, rather than the need to give a new name to what, by implication, would be a distinctly new and separate theory. 'Post' may then be associated with the aspirations of another vogueish prefix, 'neo'.[\[3\]](#) But if this is true, then as Halberstam and Livingston appear to suggest in their introduction to a collection of essays on posthuman bodies, this can be taken to mean that the 'post' signifies nothing more than an academic/theoretical cop-out - 'the proliferation of academic "post-isms" marks...the necessary or regrettable failure to imagine what's next and the recognition that it must appear as "the yet unnameable..."'[\[4\]](#) Indeed, there are those who are openly sceptical of the 'post'. Speaking of postmodernism, Catherine MacKinnon suggests that the 'post' has 'failed to grasp, or has forgotten, or is predicated on obscuring' the negative and hierarchical politics of the language of modernity, and is thus more 'pre' than anything in so doing.[\[5\]](#) She may have a valid point. Considering for a moment the title of the paper and its cinematic links, 'post' in the sense of correspondence brings to

my mind images of physical, material post.[6] Preferably hand-written letters, in hand-written envelopes, on Faulkner paper, but even official letters will suffice at a stretch. *That* is proper *post*. Email, on the other hand, though more modern, with all the advantages of contemporary technology, could never even come close. Its homogenised fonts and attempts at little envelope symbols fall far short of the romance and decadence of post. Post in this sense is both prior, and better. It is difficult, perhaps, to use 'post' without implying a value judgement. That there may be a value judgement underlying 'post' could go towards accounting for the apparent disappointment of Halberstam, Livingston and MacKinnon.

Would that be to read too much into 'post'? Kathy Acker seems unimpressed by the hype, and writes (again, on postmodernism) that it is 'for the moment, a useful perspective and tactic. If we don't live for and in the, this, moment, we do not live.'^[7] I think that by saying this she reveals that post can signify a negotiation, an appropriation. It is something that she can use to her own ends, and influence the meaning of. Furthermore, for her, the emphasis is on *temporality*, that 'post' somehow describes the immanent state of the art. This echoes Boaventura de Sousa Santos, who on a somewhat grander scale, sees the 'post' as descriptive of nothing less than a complete paradigm shift. He envisions a juxtaposition of transitional philosophical, social and cultural phases where the new phases are elusive and slippery, the 'post' being the label that describes these qualities.^[8] That 'post' implies a shift in temporality of some sort is a theme adopted by Frederic Jameson, who writes that the case for the existence of a 'post' 'depends on the hypothesis of some radical break or *coupure*' with the preceding state of affairs.^[9] However, this position is not without problems. Precisely when, temporally, is the break identified and by what criteria? How precise need it be? Considering that his article is fully titled 'Postmodernism, or The Cultural Logic of Late Capitalism', the question that is raised, is, when does the 'late' become the 'post'?^[10] Thinking of letters, I know that the *post* is often *late*, but can the reverse also be said? In colloquial terms, 'late' is synonymous with 'dead'. Which could be worrying if the (id)entity to be considered is the 'posthuman', who may then literally be 'posthumous' - already dead...what then of Acker's comment, that if we do not live for the moment then we *do not live*?^[11] Of course, the notion of the 'posthuman' forces us to ask the question of precisely who - or what - 'we' might be. Whether we are in a new phase, nearing one, or still in the present, late, but not yet new. Whether humans have actually got post, or are still in the post, or are still being written (by whom? For who?). As Halberstam and Livingston suggest, perhaps to figure the 'post' is the wrong question to ask, as it presupposes a linear history. Such a history, they argue, does not belong to the posthuman.^[12] What is more interesting to ask, and perhaps more productive to ask, is not so much how the "'post"...posits some subsequent developmental state, but as it collapses into *sub-*, *inter-*, *infra-*, *trans-*, *pre-*, *anti-*...'^[13] And why not? Why limit ourselves to a narrow interpretation? Couldn't the posthuman be about having it all?^[14]

What is posthumanism? Theoretical roots.

Bearing in mind the previous discussions, three possible positions arise.^[15] Firstly, that the posthuman is chimaeric. This paper presupposes the existence of something that might not even exist, theoretically or otherwise. Which if true, logically negates the need for a paper, as one cannot realistically assess the existence of a non-entity. In which case, I can finish the paper here and go for dinner. Secondly, the position arises that the posthuman did exist, but is now dead. Which if true, logically negates the need for a paper, as who cares about it anymore? In which case, I can finish the paper here and go for dinner. And then hide, in case someone asks what comes after the posthuman, which I don't even want to start to think about. Thirdly, that the posthuman shadily exists, but in a state and context of uncertainty, in which case...

In which case, where did it come from? Posthuman is a term that only recently surfaces in academic writings.^[16] I think it would be interesting to discern its history, but this could be a mistake.^[17] What does it mean to trace a lineage? To search for beginnings and ends may be to confound the

project of the posthuman, which, as Haraway suggests, may consciously reject linearity, teleology and temporality.[18] 'History' after Foucault has become problematic, as 'history' can be as constructed and contingent as the body itself. As Halberstam and Livingston point out, 'If the announcement of the discovery that "the body" has a *history* has become conventional, the field that it inaugurates has only begun to be established.' 'Even so,' they continue, 'the emergence of "the body" in history, and thereby its partial reification and relativisation, also opens a space for posthistorical bodies to establish themselves.' [19]

Perhaps considering the 'human' as 'the body' is a good place to start. Carl Stychin has written that 'the ontological status of the body itself grounds subjectivity in a way that it is difficult to imagine transcending.' [20] His anxiety is shared by Allucquere Rosanne Stone, who has also noted the classically accepted fixity of the corporeal body. She says (pleasingly continuing the postal theme) that the body is seen as a 'physical envelope', a bounded material 'substrate' that delimits the human. [21] Posthuman, then, may suggest a shift or disruption of *corporeality* - something more than human, less than human, or a hybrid of some kind. If this is the case, then the posthuman is not a recent emergence at all. One need only look to films and literature to see one thread of origin. In the *Alien* film series, the Queen Alien has humanoid characteristics grounding her more abstract ones. She has a recognisably human gender, 'she' is without doubt precisely that. She has a head, limbs reminiscent of arms and legs, and the biological instincts that are commonly held in association with a 'mother'. The theme of disrupting corporeality takes an ironic twist as the 'human' crew gestate the 'alien' spawn, or 'chestbursters', something that suggests that alien and human may not be so separate. Later in the series, Ripley also becomes fuzzy around the edges - buzz cuts aside - as she is cloned from the remnants of her former self. [22] Her cloned self takes on some of the alien characteristics, she becomes unhumanly strong and her senses heighten beyond human range. She recognises that she is no longer human like the human crew, even though she still looks human from the outside. The development echoes a former plot line in which the crew member Bishop, who is ostensibly human on the outside, turns out to be a robot. It's hard to tell from looks sometimes, as skin may or may not hold the answer. Who is nearest to human, the Alien, Ripley, or Bishop? Ultimately, all three variations - posthumans - problematise the boundary between what is distinctly human and what is not. [23]

Yet perhaps the gender of the Alien gives something away, in that the fact that the Alien is female simply reifies existing gender categories rather than disrupt them or create entirely new ones. In considering whether gender can be subject to 'post' as well as the physical flesh that houses it, Judith Halberstam looks at another film, *The Silence of the Lambs*, to find some answers. [24] In this film, a serial killer, Jame Gumb, kills women and flays them for their skin. [25] He is using the skins to make himself a suit of woman's skin to displace his own. This literal appropriation of flesh is part of his gender dysphoria, but his acts go beyond a substitution of female for male. Halberstam explains his behaviour via Hannibal Lecter, the murderous psychologist who helps the FBI agent Clarice Starling find out who is behind the killings: '[he] hates identity, he is simply at odds with any identity whatsoever; no body, no gender will do and so he sits at home with his skins and fashions a completely new one. What he constructs is a posthuman gender, a gender beyond the body, beyond the human, and a veritable carnage of identity.' [26]

Jame's use of flesh to refashion his own leads to the possibility that the posthuman is closely implicated with the question of prosthetics. The posthuman can be seen as an extension of the human, though appropriated flesh or other means. The theme of prosthetics is one which several writers on the posthuman take up as key. Rather than accept the medico-aesthetic construction of the body as discrete, several writers look at the possibility that the body is situated in a far wider framework. Contrasting with the discussions above that place the body as important in posthumanism, in the field of Artificial intelligence (AI), the Cartesian separation of the body and mind is taken to its furthest limits, the suggestion being that the posthuman is the postbiological, the mind that has transcended the body and exists as a pure and separate entity. [27] This position shadows that of cyberpunk fiction, where the posthuman is the consciousness in cyberspace, where

as the human 'meat' of the body is left far behind, (leaving gender behind with it) as an undesirable and cumbersome burden.[28] Perhaps AI's version could be seen as a very radical reading of posthumanism, where rather than changing the flesh, the flesh is abandoned altogether. Or perhaps as an extreme form of biological evolution, where the body is no longer needed to survive.[29] In which case, why posthuman and not simply 'post'? On the letter theme, this is most definitely *mail*, the physical, material trappings of *post* abandoned for a communicative essence that only exists in intangible electronic form.

The environment that the disembodied consciousness is envisaged to exist in is that of cyberspace and communications technologies. Researchers such as Moravec seek to download the human mind into computer networks.[30] Computer networks and cybernetics are at the heart of those theories that see the posthuman as part of an integrated network of prosthetics. The networks of communications become a prosthetic extension of the body, as opposed to the body being physically and materially separate. The term Cybernetics, coined by Norbert Wiener, is described by Sadie Plant as being the science of control and communication systems in animals and machines. Cybernetic systems are made of feedback loops that create webs of communications and adjustment.[31] The posthuman here is the Cyborg, the *cybernetic organism*. The body is retained, but only as part of a situated continuum, cybernetics being the construction of the body through technology. As Donna Haraway in her seminal article on cyborgs writes, '[w]hy should our bodies end at the skin, or include at best other beings encapsulated in it?'[32] 'Post' can be read here as *interhuman*, *infrahuman*, *transhuman*: the human as one distinct configuration of communications interstices among many. *Post* is *mail* on this reading, inclusive of the keyboard, the interface, the terminal, the wires, the cables, hardware and software.

The cyborg as Haraway sees it is 'a hybrid of machine and organism, a creature of social reality as well as a creature of fiction...a creature in a post gender world...resolutely committed to partiality, irony, intimacy and perversity'[33] It (and it must be an 'It', being postgender,) positions itself as a boundary entity, an entity that is contingent and unstable. As a hybrid, it deliberately defies corporeal boundaries, and extends itself into animal and/or machine. Haraway's article is consciously political in that the cyborg serves as a metaphor for postmodern subject positions that might be usefully appropriated by women. The cyborg, for example, aligns itself according to groups of affinity rather than blood. It integrates with technology and claims it for its own rather than be separate to it and just using it as a tool. In a postmodern era of matrices the cyborg is a part of the fabric, integrated as much as oppositional. It problematises the boundary between human and machine, human and animal, being part of the cybernetic system.

In encompassing the characteristics of postmodernity such as flux, contingency and multiplicity, the posthuman on a cyborg reading is, as N Katherine Hayles argues, as much theoretical and suggestive as it is prescriptive.[34] It is a symbolic configuration of the qualities of a postmodern, poststructuralist, postindustrial world in human fashion, situated in a technosocial environment. It represents the possibilities of the human after history, after biology, after the constraints of social construction have been dismantled. As Halberstam and Livingston write, 'the posthuman participates in redistributions of difference and identity'[35] Perhaps, then, the posthuman can be seen as the physical side of the queer debates on identity and sexuality. Where cybernetic debates have focused on the technological mediation of the body, queer debates have looked at the construction of sexualised self, and subjected it to a thorough deconstruction.[36] The posthuman cyborg is the perfect host/ess/? to the fragmented, plural and fluid sexuality of queer theory. The cyborg debate serves to contextualise the queer self in contemporary technoscience and cyberculture. As both a fusion and extrapolation of these two perspectives, several writers think about how the posthuman with its queered identities exists in relation to cybertechnology. Allucquere Rosanne Stone, for example, pursues the inquiry of what happens to our perceptions of body and self in cyberspace. She asks herself several focal questions, *inter alia*, how bodies are represented through technology and what the relationship of the body is to self-awareness. Her position is that the fragmented and plural selves seen in cyberspace are representative of the postmodern self in general. She sees cyberspace

as an ideal cyborg environment, and wonders whether cyberspace `is a base camp for some kinds of cyborgs, from which they might stage a coup on the rest of reality.'.[37] Again, then, the posthuman is as much potential as actual. She notes that although the mind/body distinction may not map directly on to the real/virtual distinction, cyberspace may necessitate a change in the way we view the relationship between the self and the body, thus questioning the notion of what `human' is.[38] Her underlying thesis is that `the socioepistemic structures by means of which the terms *self* and *body* are produced operate differently in cyberspace.'[39] According to Stone, if we can learn to think outside the fixity of the body, and the body as the inevitable locus of the self, then the posthuman can become more fully realised. After all, in order to stage a coup, you have to have an imagination. *Post* here could well have the effect of a letterbomb...

The value of the Posthuman - Junk mail?

To recap, it has been shown how the posthuman emerges from disparate sources: It is a long standing feature of film and literature, a more recent development in cybernetics with links to feminist writings, where it appears as the cyborg, in AI it appears as an evolutionary postbiological consciousness, and in technoculture with affinities to queer theory, it represents one version of the postmodern cybercitizen. It can be read simultaneously as actual, possible and/or somewhere between the two. In a sense I would have expected nothing less than these conflicting and multiple incarnations, after all, the posthuman is a creature of the postmodern era, which surfaces at points of density in overlapping discourses, forming and reforming as the nets of the discourses shift.

Predictable, almost. But in a sense I would have expected something more. For an entity that is seen as critical to our understanding of ourselves in postmodern times,[40] as iconic of our future possibilities that may teach us to fully become what we are, that is, being bodies and identities mediated by technology in a technosocial and increasingly cyberspatial age, I would have expected far more. For me, my concerns are partly political, partly practical. From a political perspective, my concerns are mainly feminist ones. Consider again Haraway's version of the cyborg. The cyborg is supposed to be an inhabitant of a postgender world. Consider also the AI incarnation of the posthuman, the downloaded consciousness that has left its body and gender behind. Also recall the Queen Alien, who, while better adapted at survival than the human, still reifies gendered constructs. Writings on posthumanity are not without feminist perspectives, after all, Haraway's article is consciously a feminist one, but how politically useful is the posthuman? How can the postgendered cyborg be feminist?[41] How can the disembodied consciousness be feminist? Neither, I would argue, has any real form of feminist politics as a central agenda. Perhaps the posthuman debate calls for a rethinking of the feminist politics, postfeminism aside. It could be that the posthuman requires a reconsideration of women's concerns, now that challenges to the physical biological construction of the body cast doubt on coherent sexes, and queer debates focus on destabilising gender. But this lack of political basis worries me. I share the concerns of Paula Rabinowitz, who writes that `in claiming space for the posthuman are we erasing yet again women's lives and stories? I am not arguing for making women human. Who needs it? Rather I want to suggest that women's stories circulate apart from human knowledge.'[42] Why is this deconstruction of the body desirable, when it remains perhaps the most vivid and tangible source of feminist knowledge and politics? Would the cybernetic integration of the body mean ultimately a loss of control? Who runs the networks? Considering that the posthuman comes from so many disparate sources and symbolises so many variable qualities, it may be in danger of becoming too malleable to be politically useful or even identifiable. It could be suggested that it is no more than a vague collection of all the best parts of `post' theories without any coherent theoretical basis, which would make it incredibly weak. I am not convinced that it is, as yet, a useful construct, but that is not to say that its visionary capacity for imagining the future is without value.

My concerns about the posthuman are also practical. In what context would the posthuman have any practical use? One context where the construction of the self and body is an issue of concern is that of the law. Could it be possible that the posthuman debate could have some influence in the way that

the law sees its subjects, particularly as those subjects are increasingly existing in a technologically mediated environment? Considering the posthuman could be one way that the law could update itself to both the impacts of modern communications technologies and immanent theories on the body and the self. (And perhaps, at this juncture, political concerns could be raised and incorporated in the function of the posthuman as a symbol of our technosocial selves. How this might be done is another question.) After all, it is encouraging that law is starting to concern itself with sophisticated technologies. As the rest of the conference papers clearly show, legal scholars are alert to the need to think about the law in relation to the state of the art as it changes and updates, but without theoretical considerations as to how these technologies might affect both the law itself and its subjects, the full potential for understanding is arguably limited.

I base the need for an updated understanding of the human in the context of the law on the argument that the legal subject is still largely the modernist Cartesian self, the liberal humanist subject that knows neither fragmentation (physically or otherwise) nor technological mediation. This can be illustrated by reference to the criminal law, where the body has clear physical boundaries, and the mental capacities of the unitary self, the ubiquitous and entirely charmless reasonable 'man' who may assume the odd 'characteristic' such as gender and age, but little more. Eminent criminal writers Smith and Hogan in their section on Computer Misuse Offences say that 'The impact of computer technology on society has of course been profound'.^[43] So the impact, then, is self evident, 'of course', but they do not consider that the implications may be more far-reaching than they envisage in that the technology may be not an imposition but an *integration*. Having said that, the law itself does not appear to be overly confident here anyway, declining to venture a legal definition of 'computer' for the purposes of the Computer Misuse Act. Technology remains an imposition, but could it be anything else? If it were considered as an integration, then in the context of criminal law, the distinctions between the offender, the crime and the object of the crime would start to collapse. A cybernetic analysis here would confound a legal system that bases its very existence on dualisms and oppositions.

Precisely where would the posthuman figure as a legal subject? Perhaps in the context of genetic engineering, in intellectual property law covering patents on genes and chromosomes, an area which is arguably making the law consider what is human and what is not. Posthuman here could influence the law's concept of the human in wider ways that it presently does, but is this desirable? I'm not sure if I would be happy to accept clones and other biological constructs as anything to do with 'human' at all. Perhaps this is because although I certainly see myself as less than conformist, I'm a long way from understanding myself as posthuman on any of the interpretations given as to what posthuman might be. Perhaps I should be disappointed that I am (as yet) not radical enough...^[44]

Perhaps, recalling Smith and Hogan, in the context of computer crime. Can computers themselves commit crimes? If corporate entities, which, for the purposes of homicide at least, can assume human personae, then perhaps computers can. If corporate entities have legal persona are they posthuman? Perhaps the law is already on its way to accepting a more flexible notion of what a human is. Or perhaps, staying with computers, cyberlaw could be a context that might want to consider the posthuman as influential in the construction of the (cyber)legal subject. Posthuman in this context would be the cybernetic reading, which considers the human as being technologically mediated. Perhaps the cybercitizen could be the political version of the posthuman. How the law reacts to the cybercitizen is something that is already being considered by academics. Catherine MacKinnon, for example, has considered some of the difficulties arising for the law in dealing with crimes in cyberspace, notably rape. Whether 'real' definitions of crime map over to 'virtual' arenas is a debatable point, but still one that raises basic questions of how the self and the body is conceptualised in cyberspace and how this differs from 'real' understandings of the human.

Allucquere Rosanne Stone considers these questions extensively. She looks at the way the relationship between the body and the identity is constructed in the 'real' world and how this changes in cyberspace. She examines the legal constructions of a unitary person where multiple personalities

are considered largely pathological, in that the ratio of selves to bodies is supposed to be 1:1. In cyberspace, where it is not uncommon to have several 'on-line' persona, what legal status might these electronic avatars have, if any?[45] Following the cyborg view of posthuman, that the body may be physically integrated with the systems of technology that surround it, where is the identifiable legal subject? From what I currently understand of posthumanism, the integrations are more theoretical than physical, and the boundaries are only starting to be breached. Microchip implants beneath the skin are hardly full cybernetic integration, but they are a material sign that the posthuman may soon start to be realised. Perhaps what law can learn from posthumanism is considerations of integration, connectivity and context. I would suggest that the law needs to think about the situated self, the body that is located in a technosocial environment even if the degree of integration and corporeal disruption is not yet fully realised, and even if it is still rather unclear as to what these changes might mean. I can't say that I have the answers, but what if I'm asking the right questions? To this, I invite *your* answers...on a postcard...

[1] I would like to thank Tony Bradney, Fiona Cownie, Alison Diduck, Michael King and Dr. Stuart Elden for their encouragements and comments relating to this paper. This paper is dedicated to Kate Moss, just like last year's...

[2] Dr. Stuart Elden, unpublished seminar paper, Department of Government, University of Brunel, 15th September, 1997.

[3] For those of you that are following the film theme here, you will be familiar with the hero (though Trinity was *far* cooler, Keanu/Neo, I think, was *such* a waste of space) of *The Matrix*, Neo. I guess 'Post' just didn't have the same ring...

[4] Judith Halberstam and Ira Livingston, (eds.) *Posthuman Bodies*, Indiana University Press, Bloomington and Indianapolis, America (1995) pp 1 - 19 at p. 2, quoting from Derrida (Writing and Difference)

[5] Catharine MacKinnon, *Only Words*, HarperCollins, London (1993/1994) Ch. 1 p 3 at p 20 n 41

[6] Speaking of cinematic links, I also distance myself from David Brin's *The Postman*, or any other Kostner *film* but I naturally recommend the *book*...

[7] Kathy Acker, *Bodies of Work*, Serpent's Tail, London/NY (1997), p 5

[8] Boaventura de Sousa Santos, 'Three Metaphors for a New Conception of Law: The Frontier, The Baroque, and The South' (1995) 29 (4) *Law and Society Review*, p 569, *passim*

[9] Frederic Jameson, 'Postmodernism, or the Cultural Logic of Late Capitalism' (1984) 146 *New Left Review*, p 53 at p 53

[10] Consider also Allucquere Rosanne Stone's *The War of Desire and Technology at the Close of the Mechanical Age*, MIT Press, Cambridge, Massachusetts (1995) a title which *prima facie* raises the question as to whether any break or new phase has occurred at all.

[11] '(id)entity' here is borrowed from Alexandra Chasin, 'Class and its Close Relations: Identities among Women, Servants and Machines' in Halberstam and Livingston, n 4 above, p 73 at p 93

[12] Halberstam and Livingston, above n 4, pp 3 - 4. See also Donna Haraway's comments on the Cyborg, where she argues that it 'is outside salvation history...it has no truck with...pre-Oedipal symbiosis...no origin story...it is not made of mud and cannot dream of returning to dust...' in Donna Haraway, 'A Manifesto for Cyborgs: Science, Technology, and Socialist Feminism in the

1980s' (1985) 80 (5) Socialist Review, p 65 at p 68 *et seq.*

[13] Halberstam and Livingston, above n 4, at viii

[14] I happen to be reading an issue of Cosmopolitan at the time of writing this (there were rumours that Kate Moss was featuring...). I'm now wondering whether the search for the posthuman need go no further than the infamous Cosmo Girl...

[15] I avoid the question of whether all three or combinations thereof can exist simultaneously as it's just too confusing for now.

[16] However, several writers, notably Nietzsche, would seem to prefigure this debate, at least in the context of philosophy.

[17] In which case, can I finish the paper here, and finally go for dinner?

[18] see Haraway, n 12 above, *ibid.*

[19] Halberstam and Livingston, n 4 above, pp 1 - 2. See also Stone, n 10 above, p 91

[20] Carl Stychin, Law's Desire, Routledge, London/NY, (1995) p21

[21] Stone, n 10 above, p 16, p 65

[22] *Alien 4 - Resurrection*

[23] For an alternative perspective see Kelly Hurley, Reading Like an Alien: Posthuman Identity in Ridley Scott's *Alien* and David Cronenberg's *Rabid* in Halberstam and Livingston, n 4 above, p 203. See also Jenny Wolmark, (ed) Cybersexualities: A Reader on Feminist Theory, Cyborgs and Cyberspace, Edinburgh University Press, Edinburgh (1999) *passim*

[24] Judith Halberstam, *Skinflick: Posthuman Gender in Johnathan Demme's The Silence of the Lambs* in Judith Halberstam, Skin Shows: Gothic Horror and the Technology of Monsters, Duke University Press, Durham and London (1995) p 161

[25] Even his name is a blurring of genders, being halfway between Jane and James

[26] Halberstam, *op. cit.* at p 163

[27] after researchers such as Hans Moravec. Sourced from Niran Abbas, The Posthuman View on Virtual Bodies, a review of N Katherine Hayles How We Became Posthuman: Virtual Bodies in Cybernetics, Literature, and Informatics, University of Chicago Press, Chicago (1999) in 22 (1-2) *Ctheory journal of Theory, Technology and Culture*, Review 49, 25/5/99, <ctheory@concordia.ca>; <ctech@alcor.concordia.ca>

[28] see Claudia Springer, The Pleasure of the Interface, in Wolmark, n 21 above, p 34 at p 41,

[29] Abbas, n 25 above, *ibid.*

[30] see Thomas Foster, Meat Puppets or Robopaths? Cyberpunk and the Question of Embodiment in Wolmark, n 21 above, p 208 at p 215

[31] Sadie Plant, The Future Looms, in Wolmark, n 21 above, p 90 at pp 106 - 7; Sadie Plant, Zeros

and Ones, 4th Estate, London (1995)

[32] Haraway, n 12 above, at p 97

[33] Haraway, n 12 above, pp 65-7

[34] Abbas, n 25 above

[35] Halberstam and Livingston, n 4 above, p 10

[36] However, having said this, queer debates are not without reference to the body, for example, Gill Valentine and David Bell, *The Sexed Self: strategies of performance, sites of resistance* in S Pile and N Thrift (eds.) *Mapping the Subject*, Routledge, (1995) pp 143 - 157; Judith Butler's *Bodies That Matter: on the discursive limits of 'sex'* Routledge, London/NY (1993) and also Lynda Nead's *The Female Nude: Art, Obscenity and Sexuality*, Routledge, London/NY (1992) for a related History of Art perspective. The work of Del La Grace Volcano is a notable example of queer readings and constructions of the corporeal self as a part of 'queer' that does not (for once, thankfully...) dwell on who Queers have sex with, and why. In a short piece called *Gender Terrorist 101* ([1999] 38 *Diva* pp 36 - 7) she gives a tantalisingly brief but fascinating account of the possibilities of being a Gender Terrorist, that is, 'an Intentional Mutation and Intersex by Design' saying that she 'believes in the infinite capacity of gender to mutate and transgress all numerical boundaries.'

[37] Stone, n 10 above, pp 17, 36, 37, 39

[38] Stone, n 10 above, p 40

[39] Stone, n 10 above, p 59

[40] see Haraway, n 12 above, p 70: 'Who cyborgs will be is a radical question; the answers are a matter of survival.'

[41] see further Kirsten Notten, *Keyboard Cowboys and Dial Cowgirls*, (1996) 3 *Soundings*, p 185

[42] Paula Rabinowitz, *Soft Fictions and Intimate Documents: Can Feminism be Posthuman?* in Halberstam and Livingston, n 4 above, p 97 at p 97

[43] J. C. Smith (ed.) *Smith and Hogan, Criminal Law*, 9th. ed. Butterworths, London (1999) p 706 at p 706

[44] in which case I should finish this paper here, go for dinner, then join the Lesbian Avengers...

[45] see generally Stone, n 10 above, Chs. 1 - 4