

Investigating the Cyborg

Essay Task: You will write an essay to build your own rich argument by considering thoughtfully chosen evidence from a number of sources. Your final idea will show your reader a new way of thinking or a course of action based on your own thinking/connecting/questioning, and source choices. You will base your essay around considering and reconsidering specific concepts and references that come up in your reading of “A Cyborg Manifesto,” by Donna Haraway. Following research will lead you to new knowledge regarding your question/problem and your focus. Your resulting essay will significantly engage with the first two texts (Haraway, plus an additional “larger conversation” text), as well as at least three additional texts from your own searching; one must be a scholarly (or peer-reviewed) text, and one should be an object, innovation, or other aesthetic text (total essay length: 7-9 pp).

Readings: As a group, we will begin by reading “A Cyborg Manifesto” by Donna Haraway and proceed to “How Algorithms Rule Our Working Lives” by Cathy O’Neil, “Mestizaje” by Alicia Arrizón, “The Mother of All Questions” by Rebecca Solnit, and other reader texts of your choosing from our e-reader.¹

Progression Assignments Include: Reading and re-reading, representation plus context, textual conversation, research to create argument/idea, presentation, drafting, workshopping, and revision.

¹ This is a sample selection. I adjust these each year depending on current cultural conversations and student interests.

Skills Practiced: In addition to all we learned in the last progression, we will practice research, considering audience and context, and re-envisioning our ideas.

Evaluation: You will be graded based on our three basic criteria -- (1) **representation** -- as related to how concepts and references come from your sources and lead your reader through your thinking, as well as what new knowledge your research yields (2) **problem, argument, idea** -- as related to how you communicate your initial question/problem and connect the parts of your research and progress towards an overall idea that is unique to you and this essay (3) **structure and convention** -- as related to how you work with beginning, middle, and end, as well as your acknowledgement of sources.