

## Book Review Essays

### Hybrid Athletes, Monstrous Addicts, and Cyborg Natures

Hoberman, John. *Mortal Engines: The Science of Performance and the Dehumanization of Sport*. New York: The Free Press, 1992. Pp. x, 374. Notes, index.

Reeves, Jimmie, and Campbell, Richard. *Cracked Coverage: Television News, the Anti-Cocaine Narrative, and the Reagan Legacy*. Durham: Duke University Press, 1994. Pp. 330. Notes, appendices, index. \$19.95.

In modern Western culture, identity is typically understood as the expression of a true, authentic self which is contained in an organic and whole body. The categorical-limits which organize that common sense generate the experience of identities as fixed, innate, and stable because those limits make it difficult to imagine that it might be, indeed is, otherwise. Yet, and ironically, this imagined correspondence or organicism is the basis for “imagined differences” or “imagined unity through differences.” Here, we emphasize the category of “imagined” in an effort to underscore that, regardless of their apparent naturalness, recognized identities, bodies, and differences are not the result of innate and inevitable characteristics but are accomplished representations, markings, inscriptions, and performances that render visible corporeal identities. Michel Foucault directs our attention to how modern identities and experiences are made and remade through complex, contradictory, and complicated dynamics that produce the normal body over, against, but always in relation to, abnormal bodies.<sup>1</sup> Identities are neither self-referential nor self-contained but accrue meaning through Others. Identities, then, are entangled in a dense web of differences in which bodies are marked as normal and abnormal and inextricably bound up with political claims and related notions of character, morality, and responsibility.

Sport, as we experience it, developed in response to and as part of the dynamics and practices associated with modernity. (Of course, common sense imagines the origin of sport otherwise.) Sport offers a compelling myth-generating space, a space which simultaneously appeals to nature in bodies and bodies that are larger than life. Sport is celebrated for its diversity, individuality, discipline, order, and solidarity: as a mythic practice, sport is understood as a democratic and meritocratic site in which individuals compete. In terms of theory, it may be more useful to consider modern sport as a technology—knowledges and prac-

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1. These themes are elaborated throughout Foucault's writings but for our purposes neatly encapsulated in “The Dangerous Individual” in *Michel Foucault: Politics, Philosophy, Culture*, ed. Lawrence D. Kritzman (New York, Routledge, Chapman & Hall, Inc., 1988), 125–151.

tices that converge in, produce, and regulate so-called athletic bodies. The athletic body is a body through which particular claims are made: it is a body whose symbolic purchase accrues most obviously around the categories of health, discipline, and productivity. Sport, then, can be more usefully understood as the site where apparatuses produce, control, and regulate bodies under the guise of protecting a space that displays the pure body and the proficiencies of its will. The prominent position of sport in the national imaginary can be understood as evidence of the cultural significance of the bodily performances accomplished under its signature. Additionally, cultural investments in the athletic bodies are evident not only in their prominence but in the financial success of the networks and industries that *are* sport, exercise, and fitness in post-industrial societies. Indeed, the cultural fascination with and investment in a “style of flesh” associated with a transformed self that transgresses the weight of the historical-social is clearly captured in the 1990s by the financial success and ubiquity of Nike’s *just do it* campaign and its most famous embodiment “Michael Jordan.” The particular claims made through athletic performances as well as how we come to see, think about, feel, and become such bodies are not self-evident but require interrogation.

How are we to understand the “athletic body” and the curious place and the place of curiosity it has held in the modern imagination? How do bodies become recognized as athletic bodies through discursive apparatuses which produce and regulate bodies? How do we explain the thrill, exhilaration, pleasures, and fantasies derived in relation to the athletic body? How does the athletic body appear within and through knowledges and power that render visible sex, race, and nation—categories through which modern subjectivity is established? Although apparently unified through the themes of physical perfection and transcendence, the athletic body, like the ordinary body, is multiply inflected through invisible mechanisms of power in ways which shape how the body is seen and how it is met—invisible mechanisms that shape whether bodies are met with enthusiasm and pleasure, anxiety and horror, or some combination of these. How do we understand the historical association of blackness and natural physical advantage? The link between communism and artificial, scientifically-induced athletic performances? The very different national responses to Nadia Comaneci and East German swimmers? The shame and outrage directed at Ben Johnson after he tested positive for drugs? The deep impression that Michael Jordan has made on the cultural imaginary? How are these apparently diverse responses related to the modern identity categories and understandings of the body which enable and constrain the national imaginary? How do identities gather force and momentum in particular historical moments?

Although the above questions appear to address different and perhaps even incompatible issues, we suggest that these issues and problems are linked through the related categories of knowledges/powers/bodies: the visible/invisible, corporeal/non-corporeal, and surveillance/spectacle. Those familiar with Foucault’s diagnostics of the modern epistemic regime will recognize these as a

series of concepts related to Foucault's understanding of the mechanisms and effects of modern power. In this essay, we review two books which bring into relief, albeit in different ways, the dynamics of modern practices and power: John Hoberman's *Mortal Engines: The Science of Performance and the Dehumanization of Sport* and Jimmie Reeves and Richard Campbell's *Cracked Coverage: Television News, the Anti-Cocaine Narrative, and the Reagan Legacy*. While their strategies and trajectories deviate, and although their understandings of history, science, identity, power, the body, and sport differ, taken together, these two books provide necessary ground for excavating the invisible powers that regulate and shape bodies and identities in the spaces that we imagine as sport. If taken seriously both for what they do and do not interrogate, the books have the potential to make a difference in how we imagine the curious place and the place of curiosity the athletic body holds in the cultural imaginary.

As John Hoberman explains, *Mortal Engines* interrogates the "obsessive quest to find the limits of human athletic potential: "how it [the quest to locate human limits] began, how it grew, and where it may take us in the future."<sup>2</sup> Hoberman defines his project as one which seeks to illuminate the unknown story of "scientific" sport—its origins, phases, current predicament and uncertain future in a time of momentous biotechnological innovations that may conceivably be applied to the development of athletes in the future." Hoberman continues, "The genetic engineering of athletes, for example, could be the next logical step for the sport sciences."<sup>3</sup> He first asserts that science is rebuilding the "human" body and self, and then attempts to capture what this might mean for life as we know it.

Hoberman initiates his narrative by invoking images whose force and momentum have been established through the discourses of condemnation and characterological poverty dominating the political context in which he writes—1980s America. However, in this case, the images are not those associated with crack or AIDS, but with sport. The body of 26-year-old, German heptathlete, Birgit Dressel is portrayed through toxic terms. The images of her body animate a sense of fascination, horror and urgency which pervade the book. White, crusted lips, blue fingernails, and unbearable but unlocatable pain serve as evidence of the deteriorating effects of illicit practices (the ingestion of illegal substances) which will culminate in death. The narration of Dressel enables Hoberman to question the historical and invisible forces and practices that have created Dressel as an experiment which has eluded control and as an apocalyptic sign of the times. That is, Hoberman uses Dressel as a figure to render visible evidence of the underground forces, strategies, and techniques that have invaded and shaped what is represented as a treacherous domain mired in banal and, in this case, not so banal evils.

Hoberman's narration of evil gains its force from a broader cultural imagination. During the 1980s, while NBA superstars like Charles Barkley and

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2. Hoberman, *Mortal Engines*, ix.

3. *Ibid.*, 5.

Michael Jordan captured the national imagination, other African American men captured the American imagination of evil as “criminals” and “deviants” in need of policing. It was an historical moment marked by a racially coded media-hyped crime wave and, most notably, by the so-called war on drugs. Although it is difficult to imagine that NBA superstars and criminal-addicts have much in common, drugs and sport were intertwined not only as professional sport, especially basketball, became the site of multiple drug-related scandals during the 1980s but also they were related in the American imaginary through the overarching category of race. As the ABA-NBA merged, race was made more visible not only by the increased numbers of African American players, but also through tropes of criminality, laziness, and drug-use. Most notably, the narration of cocaine, sport, and race became part of a national atrocity tale organizing the racist imaginary with Len Bias’ cocaine-induced death. The images of threat to and breakdown of law and order, spun through such atrocity tales, served as the basis for heightened surveillance and policing.

In *Cracked Coverage: Television News the Anti-Cocaine Narrative, and the Reagan Legacy*, Jimmie Reeves and Richard Campbell offer an ambitious and impressive analysis of the significance of the cocaine/crack narratives produced and circulated by the mainstream media during 1980s America. As they explain their project, they interrogate “how what passes for the provisional truth about a particular substance (cocaine) and a particular transgression (drug abuse) is produced, communicated, and revised in American culture during a particular stretch of recent history (the Reagan era).”<sup>4</sup> At one level, their project focuses on the articulations that linked illicit drug use with elements of the New Right’s moralistic agenda, the ‘new racism,’ ‘family values,’ and the ‘orthodoxy of nostalgia,’ pathology, and criminology in the context of postindustrial America. At another level, they examine the modern logic of containment and normalization, their corresponding strategies of surveillance and spectacle, and mobilizations of identities produced through this logic in the context of Modernity and Reaganism. At yet another level, they examine how the media and drug control establishment (spectacle and surveillance) are intertwined in order to understand how the media “facilitated the staging and legitimating of Reagan’s war on drugs as a major political spectacle.”<sup>5</sup> Overall, their project can be characterized as one that seeks to identify and denaturalize the optics of deviance invoked (produced and circulated) by the mass media. Whereas John Hoberman appeals to atrocity tales in an effort to demonstrate the effects of scientized sport, Reeves and Campbell are interested in how atrocity and morality tales are produced as truths and in whose interests such truths function.

Reeves and Campbell are interested not only in how media reveal, but also actively produce, deviant objects codified through the threat they pose to the non-deviant and how these narratives organize the popular imagination. For example, the war on drugs was absolutely central to the definition of social

4. Reeves and Campbell, *Cracked Coverage*, 32.

5. *Ibid.*, 15.

problems grounded in global transformations in late capitalism . . . “as individual moral problems that could be resolved by voluntary therapeutic treatment, compulsory drug testing, mandatory prison sentences, even the penalty of death.”<sup>6</sup> The narration of drug use is embedded in and reproduces an us/them binary whose division corresponds not simply to the non-drug user and drug-user, but also to such racially-coded concepts as free will/compulsive will. Reagan blamed people victimized by economic shifts, unemployment, and the erosion of social welfare programs through a logic of “urban poverty” that displaced the economic effects of late capitalism and Reagan-sponsored policies onto a moral poverty located in welfare recipients, the so-called vanishing black family and, perhaps the most vivid expression of racially coded-moral poverty, the crack addict. “In the 1980s, in large part because of how the Reagan administration waged its war on drugs, the pathology of delinquency was literally inscribed on the body of the young, poor, black male whose very life was a punishable offense requiring disciplinary models of exclusion.”<sup>7</sup> It was in this context, that Len Bias’s death induced by cocaine intoxication was made to matter in the racist imaginary. Reeves and Campbell suggest that the “Bias death and its aftermath transcended the scale of routine sports scandal and displayed all the characteristic stages of a full-scale social drama . . . . In death, though, Bias would become something of a *doppelgänger* of his living self—a decaying example of the wasting, undisciplined body, a symbol of how winning at all costs has defiled college sports, an emblematic representative of ‘the mob’ who perished at the threshold of becoming one of Us.”<sup>8</sup>

A rhetoric of recovery was directed not only at the multiplying numbers of individuals who were labelled and labelled themselves addicts, but also at America’s spirit, its economy, its place in the world order. Addiction is a term that implies a substance, licit or illicit, and a subject, a compulsive subject, who can be managed. Although identities produced through the logic of addiction cannot be separated from the conjunctural forces through which they gain meaning and momentum, and while “drugs” is a preeminent sign in America’s affective economy, it would be a mistake to limit the critique of the logic of addiction to conservative forces such as Reagan’s war on drugs. In other words, the affective purchase and the discursive significance of the sign “drugs” exceeds the hysteria generated around inner-city crack use. The logic of addiction is evinced not only in the monstrous body of Len Bias, but also in the hybrid body of Birgit Dressel.

Bias and Dressel are boundary creatures who suggest the relationship of the pure athletic body and the drugged body. In the opening chapter of Hoberman’s book we meet other boundary creatures and other deteriorating bodies whose range of associations move from Mary Shelly’s Frankenstein to death. The creatures (anorexics, drug-crafted athletes, steroid-men/women, genetically-

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6. *Ibid.*, 38.

7. *Ibid.*, 41.

8. *Ibid.*, 139.

crafted athletes, and human machines) stand in a complex and antithetical relation to nature and to the natural self. These are bodies that do not conform to, and, in fact, refuse the normal. These are figures which suggest disease, alien bodies, and illicit acts. They connote artificial selves and unethical creations. They are images that are meant to disturb—to incite feelings of horror and condemnation. These images, are, like Dressel, representative of concealed forces and transgressions in need of surveillance, regulation, and control.

The repeated appearance of these boundary creatures are indicative of the anxieties that motivate Hoberman's narrative. By his view, these anxieties are identified with an epidemic of assaults on the self and bodily integrity which pervade sport culture and have become not only tolerated but expected. Just as drugs are represented through the logic of epidemic in the dominant imaginary, scientized sport and drugs in sport are portrayed in terms of danger, threat, and the need for control. The issues raised extend beyond scientized sport: they represent the breach of the dividing lines related to the modern identity process: self/other, free-will/compulsive will, good/evil. So, while the variables in Hoberman's story may differ, the "story that has not been told before" may, in fact, be one of the most familiar stories of our time. In the case of high-performance sport, as in the more general crisis of the modern logic of identity, we might ask: What is it that needs policing? What is it that needs protecting? And what is the antidote?

As Hoberman understands it, the bioethical crisis he addresses was produced through the development of high-performance sport and the physiological erosion of the boundary between the pathological and normal during the nineteenth century. In an effort to demonstrate the shift in the object and motive of science, Hoberman identifies what have remained relatively obscure knowledges related to the athletic body and the development of sport culture. In the first section of the book, Hoberman highlights two components that are crucial for understanding the relations among science and sport. First, he locates and explains the elements constitutive of the knowledge network which contributed to shaping, but which he argues remain distanced from, performance-preoccupied sport science. Hoberman's narration of the science-sport relation reduces science to two moments: an age of scientific truth-seeking which sought to reveal and record; and the Age of Calibration in which science was and continues to be preoccupied with measurement and transgression of natural limits. Second, he draws attention to the ontological assumptions that underlie the debates over the deployment of prosthetics in sport.

As Hoberman portrays it, the early relation between science and sport (what we might refer to as the pre-history of scientized sport) was characterized by a mode of perception and optical techniques that aimed to reveal the natural laws of the body: he calls this "pre-modern science." These pre-modern sciences include the anthropological work and racial biologies which produced questions about the relationships between intelligence and physical attributes, civilized and savage bodies; Brown-Sequard's work (the forerunner of modern

endocrinology) which considered the biological and regenerative significance of testicular extracts; physiologist and inventor Etienne-Jules Marey's stop-action photography (chronophotographe) which rendered movement visible in ways not accessible to the human eye; Galton's eugenics; and Taylor's fatigue research.<sup>9</sup> While Hoberman is well aware of the relations of power embedded in colonial situations in which the savage body was produced, and while much could be made of the sciences of endocrinology, eugenics, work labor efficiency, Hoberman distinguishes these sciences from those which more enthusiastically interrogated sport performance. By Hoberman's view, because the aim of these "pre-modern sciences" was to interrogate human potentials and because of the marginal position of sport in culture, athletic performance remained a minimal concern.

Hoberman locates the break between pre-modern science and modern science in a preoccupation with enhanced performance which, to a great extent, resulted from the influence of sport culture on science. We might ask how Hoberman's analysis might have differed had he considered these pre-modern sciences as elements in the historical production of the human body and identity. It is here that we begin to see the effects of the narration of a science that can reveal truth, exist apart from power, and work on objects external to their production. Although Hoberman is not concerned with interrogating the ways in which science produces truth, we suggest below that this concern would open more possibilities for understanding the cultural politics of science-sport relations.

Next, Hoberman directs his and our attention to the complexity and deceptiveness of the seemingly straightforward division between the natural and the unnatural as well as the presumed correspondence between nature and the moral order. As Hoberman explains the dilemma:

In fact, the idea of natural limits is to some degree a social construct: Within certain parameters, there is much variability that subverts fixed categories. Some observers have exploited this variability to argue that currently illicit drugs like anabolic steroids cannot be distinguished in principle from accepted performance-enhancing techniques like electric muscle stimulation (EMS) or electro-massage, and that doubts about steroids "appear to be based on vague, moralistic feelings rather than on rational analysis . . . . Whether or not one agrees with these arguments, they perform a valuable function by exposing *the emotional foundations of certain cultural values; for example, our feelings about drugs, their invisible but seemingly magical presence within the body, and their associations with intoxication surely influence out 'ethical' deliberations about the use*

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9. For an excellent discussion of disciplinary technologies and the worker, including the work of Etienne Jules-Marcy, see Anson Rabinbach, *The Human Motor: Energy, Fatigue, and the Origins of Modernity* (Los Angeles: University of California, 1992). For discussions of the scientific and artistic significance of Marey's inventions, see Marta Braun, *Picturing Time: The Work of Etienne Jules-Marey (1830-1904)* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1993) and Francois Dagognet, *Etienne Jules-Marey: A Passion for the Trace* (Cambridge, Mass.: Zone Books/The MIT Press, 1993).

*of such such substances within the idealized world of sport.* But despite the value of these arguments, they are flawed by naivete about the pathological consequences of steroid use and about the social dynamics of steroid abuse both inside and outside elite sport circles. They also employ an imprecise kind of analogical reasoning that demands scrutiny," [emphasis added].<sup>10</sup>

Additionally, Hoberman identifies Western sport's preoccupation with the division "between the natural and the unnatural, the nutrient and the stimulant, the regenerative and the performance enhancing" as evidence of "the deeper uncertainties about the essential nature of the human organism . . . ."<sup>11</sup> In an effort to sidestep the trap of natural fact versus social construct, he redefines what counts as trouble:

Today the most urgent problem is to determine whether anabolic steroids, the most notorious and widespread ergogenic drugs, are uniquely dangerous to the ethos of sport. The medical and psychological hazards of steroid use suggest that indeed they are, not least because of the ways these performance-boosting drugs affect the very identity of the athlete.<sup>12</sup>

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Along with other current developments, the threat of pediatric abuse of hGH [human growth hormone] confirms that the bioethical crisis of sport is a crisis of human engineering in which the concept of human nature is at stake.<sup>13</sup>

The second part of *Mortal Engines* develops the terms established in the first section in an effort to discuss the far-reaching issues embedded in the mutant identities and bodies developed through high-performance sport. "Human identity" (which is how Hoberman identifies the concern) is breached when the source of performance is other than the original self or the exercise of that self, as it would be with the hidden hand of science and prosthetics. Science and sport are classified as dangerous and pathological to the extent that they call into question or violate the boundaries of human identity (the mythic liberal individual and the weight of nature that it carries). To the extent that Hoberman attributes "threat" to those practices and behaviors that challenge the line dividing human identity from others, we gain insight into the parameters that define his object of study and govern his work. In an effort to demonstrate the logic governing the second part of *Mortal Engines*, we want to discuss two chapters: "The myth of communist sport sciences" and "Horses and humans: Equine performance and the future of sport."

In "The myth of communist sport sciences," Hoberman highlights the common-sense understanding of communist sport and reconsiders the public

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10. Hoberman, *Mortal Engines*, 26.

11. *Ibid.*, 27.

12. *Ibid.*, 27.

13. *Ibid.*, 32.

(American) perceptions of the Soviet and East German athlete. In the case of the Soviets, he points to both their extraordinary sport performances after their return to Olympic competition in 1952 and how those performances captured the American imagination. In the American context, the Soviet athlete was represented as a sober, dehumanized, despiritualized and robotic automaton. Hoberman is careful to point out that the American relationship to the Soviet athlete was not simply based on fear or condemnation but was complicated by fascination. Hoberman examines this relationship in terms of its historical foundations in 1920s Soviet sciences, especially behaviorism and its popularization under Stalin, and the American perception that Soviets were searching for the basis of human nature in an effort to exploit and control human potential and to develop a more rationalized society. In the American imagination, science was understood to be the religion of the Soviet Union. As Hoberman explains, these images gathered momentum and force through real atrocities associated with Stalinism. Hoberman makes two points: the American impression of Soviet science was exaggerated and misleading; and the U.S. projected its own desires and fears related to creating such creatures [scientifically manipulated athletes and workers] onto the Soviets.

While Hoberman's discussion of the Soviet athlete in the American imaginary is useful, we think that a different set of questions would allow us to understand how such (mis)representations worked to construct, for example, post-war American identity. In this case, we could raise questions about what and who we are seeing, How were such images conveyed? How were Americans taught to read Soviet bodies? How is communism and/or the communist body rendered intelligible? How is the production of that normalizing gaze related to norms of gender and nation in America? How do such narratives invoke an imaginary set of relations and public fantasies that shape how "communism" and "democracy" are understood in the popular? How do such narratives shape public fantasies about what counts in U.S. interests? How do such creatures of the American imagination work to "purify" modern concepts? Raising and engaging such questions would enable us to think about how such "misrepresentations" functioned in a particular historical moment.

Finally, in his effort to clarify and illustrate the dilemmas posed by the preoccupation with enhanced performance, training, and new biotechnologies, Hoberman provides an account of equine training and breeding techniques. Hoberman's depiction of equine prosthetics and its contrast with practices associated with human athletes are not simply meant to inform, they are strategies meant to direct our vision under the guise of extending it. This narrative technique establishes potential correspondences between equine and human training techniques and implies that the distance between human and animal (the civilizing space) is eroding. Hoberman asks: "What can the current status of the equine athlete tell us about the future of the human athlete?" In response, he documents the use of illicit and dangerous drugs, breeding strategies, and mechanical doping techniques (pain-oriented techniques designed to stimulate muscular

exertion) that have been deployed in an effort to enhance equine performance. We might understand this chapter as a cautionary tale: Hoberman wants to warn us now while we can still turn back; he asks us to consider the future repercussions of unrestrained technological applications. What kind of creatures will we be creating? What kind of world will we inhabit?

In addition to calling attention to the disturbed boundary between human and non-humans, Hoberman highlights the new technologies we have acquired, such as the Human Genome Project and new reproductive possibilities, that challenge what we understand as “human.” Like the images associated with drugs, the Human Genome Project and reproductive technologies conjure up real possibilities and questions about creations and who will be responsible for their productions. While the first section of this chapter emphasizes the breach between human and animal, genetic manipulation highlights the breakdown between natural and artificial. Additionally, the appeal to reproductive technologies and genetic manipulation works to transpose the future into the present.

*Mortal Engines* is a project that attempts to underscore the stakes in what is presented as unrestrained technological applications to the human body. As Hoberman understands those stakes, they include disturbing human identity as we know it, diminishing humanity, and degrading human nature. As he constructs our options.

Haldane [a physiologist and eugenic dreamer] also dreamed of gene-grafting techniques that would permit the crossing of men and beasts, of legless astronauts, and other specially adapted creatures—a vision perfectly suited to the development of athletes who would be monsters as well. The supreme biological question confronting mankind today is whether Haldane’s vision of the pursuit of organismic efficiency will prevail over the human image that appeared in the Old Testament thousands of years ago.<sup>14</sup>

Hoberman’s concerns rely on an origin story of nature. Although Hoberman recognizes the complexity of the division between the natural/unnatural, he recuperates and spins a tale of nature through human identity and related categories. Identity is valued, desired, and rendered morally superior if it is determined to be authentic rather than synthetic. Human nature and identity serve as normalizing optics through which various practices are demonized and criminalized. Identity, for Hoberman, is never a question of reshaping and re-making but of affirmation and violation. Why should sport performances work to affirm human identity? Why and how do athletic performances calf into question and interfere with our ontological being? Here, we meet the thesis motivating *Mortal Engines*. We want to discuss that thesis and raise some questions about its implications.

The professed concern of *Mortal Engines* is scientized sport and the obsession with enhancing performance. Yet, the “problems” repeatedly illuminated in the narrative are not simply those of scientized sport performance but what

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14. Hoberman *Mortal Engines*, 290.

Hoberman understands to be the effects of such performances. In this case, the effects of such performances are depicted as the breach of boundaries that maintain our identity as human. Boundary creatures are narrated as trouble and threat, monsters from whom we need protecting. But, what if we are already boundary creatures/monsters? What if the categories of human, nature, man, and organic are already “contaminated” by their outside? How would our questions change and what possibilities might there be in this acknowledgement?

Hoberman acknowledges that “the idea of natural limits is to some degree a social construct.”<sup>15</sup> As historian of science Donna Haraway explains, “[W]e are chimeras, theorized and fabricated hybrids of machine and organism; in short, we are all cyborgs. The cyborg is our ontology; it gives us our politics.”<sup>16</sup> While Hoberman does not elaborate the Old Testament image of Man he invokes, we might note that Adam was not only God’s creature but also endowed with the power, indeed the responsibility, to name nature. Which is to say, at least on one reading, that Hebrew Scripture images the human as both creature and creator or, as Thomas Hobbes put it, Man is both Matter and Artificer.<sup>17</sup> To be a cyborg is to live in a condition where purportedly “pure” categories are always “contaminated” by the other, in which we are creatures of natural artifice as well as creators of hybrids and monsters. If this is so, what are the consequences of our refusal to recognize the impossibility of succeeding in the continual quest to purify bodies and categories? The opposition between nature/artifice, the non-human/human and the effort to maintain/create the purity of each, as Bruno Latour notes, tends to render the processes by which hybrids are produced unrepresentable and thus invisible.<sup>18</sup> These dual yet opposed processes of hybridization and purification are the root of the awesome powers and productivity of “modern” civilization.<sup>19</sup> Ironically, both Haraway and Latour suggest, the pursuit of pure bodies and categories tends to foster the irresponsible production of hybrids and monsters by rendering invisible their processes of production. In other words, exactly what concerns Hoberman.

We read Hoberman’s text as evidence of contemporary anxieties generated by affronts to the modern logics that generate and contain the body, Hoberman’s project signifies our cultural preoccupation with and desire for “purity.” As we suggested earlier, the anti-drug narrative dominating 1980s America conditions and gives *Mortal Engines* its narrative force. They are mutually re-enforcing narratives—both appeal to the discrete, organic body threatened by compulsion and addiction. Although the hybrid-athlete may not share a stigma identical to the monstrous crack addict, and while the experience sought through the ingestion of drugs may differ, the logic of addiction organizes each narrative.

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15. Hoberman, *Mortal Engines*, 27.

16. Donna Hamsay, “A Cyborg Manifesto: Science, Technology, & Socialist-Feminism in the Late Twentieth Century.” In *Simians, Cyborgs, and Women: The Reinvention of Nature* (New York: Routledge, 1991), 150.

17. Thomas Hobbes, *Leviathan* (New York: Penguin), 82.

18. Bruno Latour, *We’ve Never Been Modern* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1993), 27–35.

19. *Ibid.*, 37–43.

Addiction is both the logic of “modern” culture and the danger of modern logic. The search for “pure,” natural bodies necessarily finds unnatural, compulsion/addiction in other bodies. But, as a mechanism that classifies and produces pathological/excessive/deviant bodies, the discourse of addiction, as such, is also a technology of the body as artificial creature, that is to say, a technology of hybrid, monstrous bodies. We share Hoberman’s sense of danger. But we suggest that the search for the pure body always risks producing hybrid monsters thoughtlessly and irresponsibly. Instead, we might, as Bruno Latour suggests, slow down, reorient, and regulate the proliferation of monsters by interrogating their production in the space between nature/machine, human/non-human, purity/hybridity.<sup>20</sup>

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20. *Ibid.*, 12.