Incorporations
On the Mediality of Arnold Schwarzenegger's Cinematically Built Bodies

1. Introduction

Considering Schwarzenegger's massive physical presence on screen, critical debates on his rise to stardom point to the growing importance of masculinity as a field of investigation in film and media studies. Following Laura Mulvey's famous essay "Visual Pleasure and Narrative Cinema"[1], traditional concepts of gender in screen theory have concentrated on psychoanalytical models and methods. Relying on the theories of Sigmund Freud and Jacques Lacan, Mulvey's account postulates that the camera in classical Hollywood movies regulates the audience's view in an inevitable way. The result is an active/passive binary mapped on masculine and feminine subject positions: Whereas the male looks, the female is looked upon. Steve Neale's "Masculinity as Spectacle"[2] has been almost as influential. In reconsidering Mulvey's paradigm to open up a space for the analysis of screen masculinities as well as gendered spectatorship, Neale argued that while it was true that Hollywood's cinematographic conventions worked to represent women in the way Mulvey had described, male stars in Hollywood were also carefully constructed and screened in objectifying ways. In recent years, several studies on masculinities in film have been published, indicating a new awareness of the visibility of the male body in popular culture. Among them are Kaja Silverman's *Male Subjectivity at*

1 Laura Mulvey, "Visual Pleasure and Narrative Cinema," *Screen* 16.3 (1975): 6–18.

2 Steve Neale, "Masculinity as Spectacle; Reflections on Men and Mainstream Cinema," *Screen* 24.6 (1983): 2–17.

the Margins[3], Yvonne Tasker's *Spectacular Bodies*[4], and Susan Jeffords' *Hard Bodies*[5], as well as the collections *Screening the Male*, edited by Cohan and Hark[6] and *You Tarzan. Masculinity, Movies and Men*, edited by Kirkham and Thumim[7].

While the tradition of examining bodies in film concentrates on cinematic representations as gendered forms of producing and looking, I intend to take a different approach to some of the issues involved. As a cultural conglomerate, Arnold Schwarzenegger provokes multiple meanings. Given the variety of his image incarnations, as well as the changing structures of their understanding and valuation, Schwarzenegger has evolved as a highly ambivalent figure. Like all cultural forms, this figure does not exist in a vacuum. It relies on conditions that make it possible. Retracing these conditions, this essay proposes to examine the variability of Schwarzenegger's filmic embodiments as media procedures. Thus, it does not attempt to analyze Arnold Schwarzenegger's representation in film, but instead aims to outline the very process of filmic incorporation as dependent upon media logics. Given that a medium is that which is situated between different positions as well as that through which something propagates, Schwarzenegger himself might be discussed as a medium. Following this thought along three sites of exchange, I will try to connect distinct stages of Schwarzenegger's career with varied ways of mediating. All of them are concerned with movements around the middle of a scale of evaluation. The first section considers the built body, and thus the oscillation between mobility and immobility; the second debates the gendered body, and thus the vacillation between masculinity and femininity, and the third looks at the mechanized body, and thus the interrelation between biology and technology.

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3 Kaja Silverman, *Male Subjectivity at the Margins* (New York: Routledge, 1992).

4 Yvonne Tasker, *Spectacular Bodies: Gender, Genre and the Action Cinema* (London: Routledge, 1993).

5 Susan Jeffords, *Hard Bodies. Hollywood Masculinity in the Reagan Era* (New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press, 1994).

6 Steven Cohan and Ina Rae Hark, eds, *Screening the Male. Exploring Masculinites in Hollywood Cinema* (New York: Routledge, 1993).

7 Pat Kirkham, and Janet Thumim, eds, *You Tarzan: Masculinity, Movies, and Men* (London: Lawrence & Wishart, 1993).

2. Mobility/Immobility

It is commonplace to refer to Arnold Schwarzenegger as an action film icon: "Arnold Schwarzenegger is arguably action/spectacle's most representative star".[8] This approach concentrates on the notion that "stars like Schwarzenegger and Stallone, via their dominance of the action genre created an archetypal body type for that genre".[9] Susan Jeffords speaks of a new Hollywood concern with the male body which comes to be spectacularized by "hard-fighting, weapon-yielding, independent, muscular, and heroic men".[10] Where previously men's power sprang from their institutional positioning, their power now springs from their bodies in Hollywood action films. Jeffords interprets the muscular male body as a major symbolic expression of the so-called "Remasculinization of America." Accordingly, Arnold Schwarzenegger functions as a cultural key to the figuring of a hard body that serves as the locus of masculine authority and control—a kind of control that is pronounced and performed by decisively violent physical action.

Proposing to examine the formation of Arnold Schwarzenegger's visual imagery from the vantage point of the body in action seems inappropriate to the extent that it neglects the underlying logic of the bodybuilding culture as its predecessor. Since the built body is exposed via routines of stillness and is displayed by acts of posing, it seems reasonable to address "the ambiguous status of the musculature in question—what is it all for? As one critic commented, 'these baroque muscles are, after all, largely non-functional decoration.' They do not relate to the active function the hero is called on to perform".[11] I therefore suggest that we read Arnold Schwarzenegger's body as a figure that mediates between motion and motionlessness, as a site that involves solid self-presence as well as animation capacities.

"Do you visualize yourself as a living sculpture?" asks the interviewer in the documentary movie *Pumping Iron* (George Butler and Robert Fiore, 1977), whereupon Arnold Schwarzenegger replies: "Yes, definitely. Good

8 Jose Arroyo, "Arnold Schwarzenegger as Spectacle in Action (and Some More)," in *Action/Spectacle Cinema: A Sight and Sound Reader*, ed. Jose Arroyo (London: BFI, 2000), 27.

9 Ibid., 28.

10 Susan Jeffords, "The Big Switch. Hollywood Masculinity in the Nineties," in *Film Theory Goes to the Movies*, ed. Jim Collins, Hilary Radner and Ava Preacher Collins (London: Routledge, 1993), 197.

11 Tasker, *Spectacular Bodies*, 78.

bodybuilders have the same mind when it comes to sculpting that a sculptor has." Schwarzenegger's remark points to an awareness of the possibility of developing the body as art, of shaping it in a way that resembles traditional artists' work with clay or stone. Schwarzenegger had shown his heightened attention to the body as aesthetic practice as early as 1976 when he presented himself as a living statue in the Whitney Museum of American Art's exhibition "The Body as Art."[12] The built body exposes itself as somatic artwork. It does not present itself as physical power to be wasted in battle but as a contoured site of pure aesthetics. Indeed, it does so by drawing on classical art traditions, as Richard Dyer demonstrates:

> Bodybuilding makes reference to classical—that is, ancient Greek and Roman—art. Props or montages often explicitly relate body shape and pose to classical antecedents, as does writing about bodybuilding. The standard posing vocabulary was elaborated at the end of the nineteenth century in conscious emanation of the classic statuary then so prized in visual culture. Eugen Sandow, the first bodybuilding star, affirmed for himself a lineage back to the Greeks and Romans in his 1904 manual *Bodybuilding, or Man in the Making*.[13]

The subtitle of Eugen Sandow's guidebook points to a basic belief in the bodybuilding subculture: the body is considered raw material that can be built, that can be formed, that can be cultivated—that can be made. Working on the body is not regarded as a purposeful exercise or as a training method, but as a constructive practice in its own right, as an investment in perfectibility. Moreover, by exposing the sculpture as a bare body, it becomes a vehicle of display, a figure that asks not only for contemplation but also for scrutiny. Jim Hoberman emphasizes: "Mapped, quantified, evaluated, the Schwarzenegger torso is less a sex object than an object lesson, recapitulating the post-Renaissance transformation of the human body into something to be manipulated and ra-

12 The emphasis on the body as art continues to be of interest, as a recent event exemplifies. On July 9, 2009, the Museum of Art/Fort Lauderdale, Nova Southeastern University and the 2009 NPC Southern States Bodybuilding Championship united to present "The Muscular Body as Living Art." The special event was held at the Museum's Auditorium and outdoor Sculpture Terrace, and an announcement declared that the event had been inspired by the Whitney Museum of American Art's live exhibition, which featured Arnold Schwarzenegger.

13 Richard Dyer, *White. Essays on Race and Culture* (London: Routledge, 2008), 148.

tionalized, surveyed and regulated, subjected to the institutional discipline of prisons, schools, hospitals."[14]

Hoberman's explanation hints at the Foucauldian notion that the inquisitive and examining gaze is instrumental in accessing the body because it transplants the body to the wider domain of discourse, where it can be dominated and manipulated. Besides the above-mentioned institutional discipline, it is possible to add the camera's gaze as a device that renders the body visible in a distinctive way. Dyer observes that bodybuilders "are not necessarily agile or acrobatic; the point is their size and shape, frozen in moments of maximum tension." Likewise, the cinematic showcasing of muscular male bodies incorporates "not only the posing vocabulary of bodybuilding competitions but also the *mise-en-scènes* of such non-narrative forms as physique photography".[15] Filming the built body indicates not only the possibility of physical feats but also the stability of a fixed figure. It designates an ultimate paradox. the simultaneity of crafted movement and stillness. It addresses the fascination of human beings turned into abstract figures, even to the simple pleasures and problems of striking a pose.

André Bazin's account of "the ontology of the photographic image" praises the innovation of photography for its ability to petrify life's motion and mobility. The outstanding quality of the photographic image is thus credited to "the disturbing presence of lives halted at a set moment." Photography renders the living immobile; it molds the moving body into a static statue. Further, it is one of the means by which individuals are constructed as visual objects; it thereby shows how the photographic image participates in the disciplining of the body. Following the thought of the photographic image's capacity to "embalm time," Bazin considers cinematography as photography's completion: "The film is no longer content to preserve the object, enshrouded as it were in an instant [...]. The film delivers baroque art from its convulsive catalepsy. Now, for the first time, the image of things is likewise the image of their duration".[16]

Seen from this perspective, Arnold Schwarzenegger's media existence seems to exemplify a modality capable of reconciling several characteristics of visual technologies. As the built body exists to be exposed, it tends to present

14 Jim Hoberman, "Nietzsche's Boy," in *Action/Spectacle Cinema: A Sight and Sound Reader*, ed. Jose Arroyo (London: BFI, 2000), 31.

15 Dyer, *White*, 167.

16 André Bazin, "The Ontology of the Photographic Image," *Film Quarterly* 13.4 (1960): 8.

itself as a work of sculpture, specifically as a work that is able to reimagine its own stillness and materiality. Thus, it becomes proficient to point to the performative process of bodily creation, and, what is more, to allude to media's contribution to this very process. Whereas the photographic camera freezes mobility to immobility, the cinematographic camera attributes motion to what has no motion. Arnold Schwarzenegger's physical presence seems to reflect both directions at the same time. Actually, even his first appearances on screen offer valuable examples of the simultaneous existence of stillness and movement. This is due not only to his bodybuilding physique but also to his strong association with cartoon imagery. Jim Hoberman observes: "Not simply personifying the notion of the film star as an expensive expanse of well-lit torso, our Arnold returns the movies to their fairground origins. […] The sloping planes of his smooth, simian features are as chiseled as a comic book superhero."[17]

Arnold Schwarzenegger not only looks like a cartoon character; he has succeeded in embodying one in a remarkable way. In his first film, *Hercules in New York* (Arthur Allan Seidelmann, 1970), he was credited as "Arnold Strong," a name that clearly designates resemblance to the superhero's comic culture tradition. This association was carried further by Schwarzenegger's breakthrough film *Conan the Barbarian* (John Milius, 1982), which was a box office hit. Adapted from one of the most popular comic series of the 1970s, the movie animates the static iconography of its source to become lifelike movement. The outcome offers a kind of hyperreal cartoon imagery, a continuum between mimesis and abstraction. As filmic photography, it is sequential in time, but not spatially juxtaposed as comics are. Yet some of the central features of cartoon art seem to have been transferred to the motion picture. For example, the contemplating gaze on the hero's extra-muscular body is made possible in moments that bring the action to a standstill. When Conan is crucified on the "Tree of Woe," the narrative seems to stop and the moving image seems to freeze. Instead of combat and power, the spectator is confronted with a passive body being exhibited in extraordinarily long takes. Schwarzenegger's immobility is thus displayed in a way that crystallizes his position as a static icon.

Other films likewise emphasize the action character's stillness as a commodity in its own right. In *The Last Action Hero* (John McTiernan, 1993), Arnold Schwarzenegger, playing Jack Slater, is presented as a plastic action figure—as

17 Hoberman, "Nietsche's Boy", 30–31.

a piece of merchandise that hints at Mattel's successful toy line Masters of the Universe, featuring He-Man as the lead character. As an element of consumer culture, the plastic toy comments on the action hero's motionlessness, on a stillness that has to be animated by those who play with it. Ultimately, this arena of tension, this shifting field of mobile/immobile characteristics, reaches its climax in Arnold Schwarzenegger's embodiment of Mr. Freeze, the villain in *Batman and Robin* (Joel Schumacher, 1997). Again based on a successful comic series, this character is a veritable snowman, planning to freeze first Gotham City and then the whole world. Demanding mastery over movement and stillness, Mr. Freeze aspires to turn the living bodies of his enemies into the inanimate shapes of sculpture. Interestingly enough, he is accompanied by a bionic muscleman character named Bane. Chemicals pump his muscles to six times life-size portraying the very embodiment of excessive physical performance that enabled Schwarzenegger to become a star.

By offering mutable visual strategies of display, Arnold Schwarzenegger's outstanding corporeality presents itself as performatively constructed. It is rendered as a multi-mediated body that knows varying applications of its representational forms. Designating action and agility as well as motion withheld, it shows a complex vision of itself and its medium.

3. Masculinity/Femininity

Speaking about a major shift in Arnold Schwarzenegger's star persona in the 1990s, Michael A. Messner observes: "Taken together, Schwarzenegger's films of the 1990s display a masculinity that oscillates between his more recognizable hard guy image and an image of self-mocking vulnerability, compassion and care".[18] Mediating between violent indifference and tender concern, between physical hardness and sensitivity, between destroying and creating, Schwarzenegger became an intricate figure bearing significant cultural meaning: "He is a muscleman pregnant with sociological and semiotic significance".[19] Indeed, it is possible to trace this kind of symbolic pregnancy back to the body and the implications it involves. However, the attention to the

18 Michael A. Messner, "The Masculinity of the Governator: Muscle and Compassion in American Politics," *Gender & Society* 21.4 (2007), 467.

19 Arroyo, "Arnold Schwarzenegger as Spectacle in Action", 27.

body raises the question not only of its own position in a widespread discursive terrain, but also the question as to how it relates to other bodies. Sean Nixon underlines: "Particular versions of masculinity are not only constituted in their difference from other versions of masculinity but are also defined in relation to femininity. This suggests, then, that an adequate understanding of masculinity requires our locating it within the wider field of gender relations as a whole."[20]

As masculinity and femininity are in constant interaction, they influence the conditions for each other's presence and thereby constantly transform themselves. Condensing this issue and expanding it to the body's materiality, Schwarzenegger's cinematic portrayal of a pregnant man in *Junior* (Ivan Reitman, 1994) provides a remarkable example, as he appropriates

> an ultimate bodily sign of femaleness: pregnancy and childbirth. But Schwarzenegger's gender hybridity could never be mistaken as an embrace of […] androgyny. Instead, in the Kindergarten Commando masculinity of Arnold Schwarzenegger, we see the appropriation and situational display of particular aspects of femininity, strategically relocated within a powerfully masculine male body.[21]

Schwarzenegger's embodiment of male pregnancy seems to point to a conservative political project, to "the restoration of the family to its former status as a strong Ideological State Apparatus and the reinstatement of the father within this patriarchal stronghold".[22] Fathers, fathering, and fatherhood have emerged since the late 1970s as a topic of major interest to researchers and policymakers alike. Debates over gender relations have aimed at exploring the discourse of the father as a historically changing practice, as a shifting series of complicated and often contradictory configurations. By describing the father as a multifaceted figure, researchers have proposed considering the paternal function on several levels. One of these levels concerns the intersection of cultural representation and social practice. Assuming that patriarchy surfaces as a political and social function perpetuated by cultural images and

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20 Sean Nixon, Sean "Exhibiting Masculinity," in *Representation: Cultural Representations and Signifying Practices*, ed. Stuart Hall (London: Sage Publications, 1997), 298.

21 Messner, "Masculinity of the Governator", 467.

22 Marsha Kinder, "Back to the Future in the 80s with Fathers & Sons, Supermen & Pee-Wees, Gorillas & Toons," *Film Quarterly* 42.4 (1989): 4.

aesthetic structures, mass-cultural representations of fatherhood can be understood as participants in ongoing struggles over the father as person or principle. Although filmic representations do not directly reproduce the way that people experience their daily lives, they can serve as "an instructive instance of how the culture industries selectively recognize social concerns".[23]

The changing nature of fatherhood depends on and is inscribed within a cultural process that provides and challenges the values and beliefs surrounding possible images of fatherhood. One of these images—and a rather radical one, as it discusses the question of fathering in relation to the materiality of the male body—is sketched out in Ivan Reitman's comedy Senior. The film presents two scientists, Dr. Alex Hesse (Arnold Schwarzenegger) and Dr. Larry Arbogast (Danny de Vito), who work on a new fertility formula that will reduce the chance of a woman's body rejecting an embryo and thus causing a miscarriage. When their research funding is withdrawn and their request for human trials is denied, they decide to test the project by impregnating Hesse. The two men agree that they will terminate the pregnancy after a few months, but later Hesse, who has begun to change both emotionally and physically, insists on carrying the baby to term.

In a scene that presents the two men in Dr. Arbogast's office, they lovingly examine Dr. Hesse's fetal sonogram. "The little string of pearls … that's the spine," Dr. Arbogast explains affectionately, while Dr. Hesse looks reverently at his unborn child. Jane Maree Maher comments: "The visualization of the fetus through the use of medical imaging technology is positioned as a key turning point in the film narrative […]. Seeing, for these male characters, is a necessary precondition to developing any relationship of nurturance with the child-to-be. This insight permits them to become involved."[24] It is this image of caress and tender bliss that departs most strikingly from conventional filmic representations of the male body, even more so since it is applied to a body that is associated with the physical strength of an action hero. Given that Schwarzenegger's star persona used to center on the visual staging of hard-fighting muscles, the display of an overtly passive body points to an alternate discourse of masculinity. As the scene's camera position emphasizes, it is not Schwarzenegger's hyper-masculine physique that fills the screen but instead

23 Elizabeth G. Traube, *Dreaming Identities: Class, Gender and Generation in 1980s Hollywood Movies* (Boulder: Westview Press, 1992), 146.

24 Jane Maree Maher, "A Pregnant Man in the Movies: The Visual Politics of Reproduction," *Continuum* 22.2 (2008), 281–282.

de Vito's short stature, which bends over the immobile patient stretched out on an examination couch. The mise-en-scene does not attempt to emasculate the protagonist, however: Although the scene deprives Hesse of almost any action or movement, he is not shown to be impotent or inept. Rather, he is portrayed as the bearer of new responsibilities.

Integral to this vision of paternal power is the invocation of the new-found fatherly role in Schwarzenegger's preceding films. Throughout the 1990s, Schwarzenegger's star text gradually embraced a softening of his hardened image, primarily through the construction of Schwarzenegger as an ideal loving father in films like *Kindergarten Cop* (Ivan Reitman, 1990). Susan Jeffords emphasizes: "Throughout the late 1980s, fathering was a key characterization and narrative device for displaying the 'new' Hollywood masculinities. […] Fathering became the vehicle for portraying masculine emotions, ethics, and commitments, and for redirecting masculine characterizations from spectacular achievement to domestic triumph."[25] This kind of paternal trajectory should not be underestimated. While it does not erase the star text's power and authority, it instead relocates it into another terrain, namely the realm of fathering. lust how carefully Schwarzenegger's physical presence and dominance is brought into play is shown in another scene of the film that dramatizes Hesse's defense of his unborn child. Schwarzenegger's physical agility and the sound- track's up-tempo music score collaborate to convey a sense of heightened action. The excitement reaches its climax when Schwarzenegger, insisting on keeping his baby, cries out: "My body—my choice!" It is this reverberation of a feminist slogan—a slogan that was formulated to propagate women's rights to abortion—that most clearly exemplifies the film's conservative agenda. Howard Feinstein remarks: "*Junior* is clearly keyed to the mood of America. A pro-life ode to the nuclear family, Ivan Reitman's film opened in the wake of the recent conservative Republican sweep of both Congress and the Senate—and yet another assassination attempt (in Canada) on a pro-choice doctor."[26] Feinstein's observation addresses a rightward turn in U.S. culture after the radical critique and political movement of previous decades had put in question institutions such as the family and patriarchy. Elizabeth G. Traube explains: "The New Right sought to tap nostalgia for the traditional family and resentment of independent

25 Jeffords, *Hard Bodies*, 166.

26 Howard Feinstein, "Junior," *Sight and Sound* 5.1 (1995), 47.

women. […] The ideological legitimation of the New Right derives from its aggressively antifeminist 'pro-family' campaign".[27]

Since independent women and advances in reproductive technology present substantial threats to the weakening patriarchy, some kind of countermeasure has to be taken. Thus, Schwarzenegger's attempt to fight for his body may be understood as a way of compensating for the intimidations confronting men due to changing conditions of re- production. Judith Roof underlines:

> The Arnold figure's overcompensatory muscles are situated at the nexus of interlocking American anxieties about control (the illusion of being able to shape culture), potency, masculinity, and paternity threatened by female independence, reproductive freedom, overgrown technology, and a loss of world prestige. These anxieties are refocused specifically in issues of paternity, whose loss is seen as causing cultural decay and whose revivification is imagined to be cultural salvation in the late 1980s and 1990s.[28]

Seen in this light, the film's policy clearly agrees with Schwarzenegger's conservative Republican politics, taking into account that this kind of paternal discourse may help fortify Schwarzenegger's bid to become the ultimate patriarch: a state leader. Beyond the surface of several happy-go-lucky confusions, Schwarzenegger's struggle to protect his baby from hostile intervention reads like an anti-abortion campaign. Thus, emphasizing sensitive fatherhood in the realm of comedy does more than displaying contemporary cultural concerns with gender and parenting. It also provides the metaphor of the father as the preferred protector of unborn life, solidifying the symbolic power of the male body in previously unscreened terrains. Taking into account scientific developments like in vitro fertilization, Maher points to a historical turning-point, "when the relative newness of assisted reproductive technologies meant that much anxiety and interest was focused on the potential outcomes of these innovations for reproduction, and for women's and men's roles in childbearing." As a result, it was possible to negotiate the binary opposition of masculinity/femininity in a new-found way: "Using the space for new visual representations created by scientific advances, Junior presents a positive

27 Traube, *Dreaming Identities*, 129.

28 Judith Roof, *Reproductions of Reproduction. Imaging Symbolic Change* (New York: Routledge, 1996), 58–59.

image of men and pregnancy, while simultaneously marginalizing women's reproductive capacity and activity".[29]

The fantasy of the pregnant father serves to reclaim the paternal function, which was allegedly lost due to female independence and social change. As the film's scenario shows, fatherhood has been redefined in a far-reaching way. Junior makes it possible to extend the male role in parenting to physical ends. Moreover, it presents fathering as a narrative device that concerns both cultural production and reproductive choices.

4. Biology/Technology

Analyzing the "science-fictional connotations of Schwarzenegger's gubernatorial campaign," Carl Freedman observes a proliferation of connections to "the most widely popular of all Arnold's roles: the Terminator. The word *terminator* itself and its variants were every- wherein the candidate's speeches, in his campaign literature, and in statements by supporters." Claiming that "it is science fiction that suits Arnold particular resources best"[30], Freedman points to a central concern surrounding the Schwarzenegger figure, namely its exposure of technology's reconfigured meaning with regard to human experience. Having become one of the best-known emblems of film history and having been declared an icon of cultural significance, the Terminator designates a passage from confidence to indecision, centering upon the relation between biological and technological definition.[31]

This kind of border crossing is actually sketched out in the term itself: in astronomy "the terminator is the line between the day side and the night side of a planetary body." Following this definition one step further provides an astonishingly instructive proposal for expanded discussion: "Examination of the terminator can yield information about the surface of the body".[32] Indeed, the Terminator raises questions about bodily boundaries and the binaries that

29 Maher, "A Pregnant Man in the Movies", 279.

30 Carl Freedman, "Polemical Afterword: Some Brief Reflections on Arnold Schwarzenegger and on Science Fiction in Contemporary American Culture." *PMLA* 119.3 (2004), 541.

31 In 2008, *The Terminator* was considered "culturally, historically, or aesthetically significant" by the Library of Congress and selected for preservation in the United States National Film Registry.

32 "Definition Terminator," Webster's Online Dictionary, 2006, Accessed 1 May 2010, http ://www.websters-online-dictionary.org/definitions/terminator?cxy artner- pub-093945

are associated with them. Introducing the figure in the movie trilogy's first film, *The Terminator* (James Cameron, 1984) is portrayed as a cybernetic organism or cyborg, a mechanical contrivance with a human-looking outside. Kyle Reese, a human resistance fighter, delivers the following classification: "The Terminator is an infiltration unit, part man, part machine. Underneath, it's a hyper-alloy combat chassis—microprocessor-controlled, fully armored. Very tough. But outside, it's living human tissue flesh, skin, hair, blood, grown for the cyborgs." Shifting from the rigidly fixed to the frighteningly unstable, the Terminator mediates between biologics and techno-logics. Its thematic and aesthetic formations imply changes in the body's self-conception. Breaking with a long-established tradition that constructs the body as a site of impermeable boundaries serving as a basis for a sound identity, it opens up a space where fissures in the conventional perception can occur. Claudia Springer underlines: "What popular culture's cyborg imagery suggests is that electronic technology also makes possible the thrill of escape from the confines of the body and from the boundaries that have separated organic from inorganic matter".[33]

If the cyborg transgresses boundaries between biology and technology, between flesh and steel, then Arnold Schwarzenegger seems to be the most appropriate applicant to embody the figure. As early as Pumping Iron, a film whose very title addresses the issue quite fittingly, "it would seem apparent from the very start that the bodies we see are not natural," since they are "obviously and necessarily constructions"[34]. Via the vehicle of a behind-the-scenes documentary movie, Schwarzenegger's extra-muscular physique depends on the underlying logic of a machine-built body. Pumping iron leads to "technologically honed, scientifically fed bodies".[35] It is the machine that organizes and regulates the body's outcome; it is its logic of serial mechanical movement that shapes the body as its own product. Scott Bukatman stresses this point by stating, "Schwarzenegger fuses the natural ability of the athlete with

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0753529744%3Av0qdol-tdlq&cof=FORID%3A9&ie=UTF-8&q= terminator&sa=Search #906>.

33 Claudia Springer, "The Pleasure of the Interface," In *Technology and Culture. The Film Reader*, ed. Andrew Utterson (London: Routledge, 2005), 73.

34 Chris Holmlund, *Impossible Bodies: Femininity and Masculinity at the Movies* (London: Routledge, 2002), 18.

35 Dyer, *White*, 174.

a symbiotic relation to technology".[36] This proves true of the tendency to think of the body itself as a mechanism. Furthermore, bodybuilding's technology is preoccupied with the construction of better machines to work on the bodies now conceived of as machines. The bodybuilding machinery thus turns out to be a technology that produces bodies in its own image. Viewed from this perspective, lifting routines, relying upon the logic of infinitely repeatable mechanisms, function to fabricate a veritable techno-musculature.

Likewise, Schwarzenegger's portrayal of the Terminator does not intend to differentiate humans from machines but instead situates bio-logy and technology as coexistent, codependent, and mutually defining. Claudia Springer points out that "while robots represent the acclaim and fear evoked by industrial age machines for their ability to function independently of humans, cyborgs incorporate rather than exclude humans, and in so doing erase the distinctions previously assumed to distinguish humanity from technology."[37] *The Terminator* emphasizes this structure by presenting the cyborg as being indistinguishable from humans. The Terminator consists of a metal endoskeleton combined with an external layer of living tissue so that it resembles a human being. Because of its outer appearance, the cyborg cannot be recognized as nonhuman. The movie thus acutely accentuates the similarities between the Terminator and its human antagonist Kyle Reese: both are beings of a post-apocalyptic future, both are transported back in time to 1984 Los Angeles. Moreover, their time travel is portrayed in exactly the same way: Both arrivals are visually accompanied by identical blue lightning, both bodies are dashed to the street, both are shown as naked figures in fetal position. Furthermore, both choose the clothing of social outsiders (the Terminator attacks some punk youths in order to steal their outfits; Kyle takes the trousers of a homeless man). In the course of the narrative, both get hurt on the right arm and on the left side of their faces. On the level of stylistic arrangement in space, both are frequently presented in close-ups, and both are included in extended passages of crosscutting with shots of Sarah Connor. After all, their narrative function is precisely the same: Both characters fight for access to Sarah Connor, both were chosen because of their battling efficiency, both follow their orders consequently and uncompromisingly—and, in the end, both of them die for their command.

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36 Scott Bukatman, *Terminal Identity: The Virtual Subject in Post-Modern Science Fiction* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2002), 303.

37 Springer, "The Pleasure of the Interface", 73.

Moreover, the movie suggests that humanity has already become integrated with technology: "Machines provide the texture and substance of this film: cars, trucks, motorcycles, radios, TVs, time clocks, phones, answering machines, beepers, hair dryers, Sony Walkmen, automated factory equipment".[38] Thus, confusions over the boundaries between the self and technological systems become obvious not only in the figure of the Terminator's man-machine but actually in everyday life. Brian Jarvis emphasizes:

> The Terminator is also simply a paradigmatic form for the intractability […] of the more mundane technological forms which compromise the landscape through which the characters in the film move: a process that begins with answering machines and personal hi-fis, it is suggested, builds to global transportation and communication systems and culminates with the 'Skynet' computer network, which will eventually design the perfect fusion of human and machine.[39]

In an age that witnessed considerable advances in prosthetic surgery and that invented artificial pacemakers as programmable, implantable devices, the differences between human and technological forms seem to have become constantly challenged. According to Jean Baudrillard, the distinction between Self and Other has already collapsed. Instead of technology forming an extension of man, Baudrillard inverts McLuhan's famous phrase by locating the subject inside an integrated circuit of media flow. This contravenes a model of techno-human relations that views the subject as a discrete component that is connected to but fundamentally separate from media networks. In the age of new technology, the notion of prosthesis takes on new meanings as bodies are theorized as flawlessly conjugal to technological forms. Baudrillard speaks of a "point when prostheses are introduced at a deeper level, when they are so completely internalized that they infiltrate the anonymous and micro-molecular core of the body, when they impose themselves upon the body itself as the body's 'original' model".[40] Similarly, Arthur and Marilouise Kroker consider

38 Constance Penley, "Time Travel, Primary Scene and the Critical Dystopia," in *Liquid Metal. The Science Fiction Film Reader*, ed. Sean Redmond (London: Wallflower Press, 2007), 126.

39 Brian Jarvis, *Postmodern Cartographies. The Geographical Imagination in Contemporary American Culture* (New York: St. Martin's, 1998), 161.

40 Jean Baudrillard, *The Transparency of Evil: Essays on Extreme Phenomena* (London: Verso, 2002), 119.

electronic challenges to subject definition, pointing to the precarious status of the body: "[The body's] reality is that of refuse expelled as surplus-matter no longer necessary for the autonomous functioning of the technoscape".[41] New ways of disciplining the body appear via novel technological inventions.

Thus, *The Terminator* does not present the body as a stable entity that can be distinguished from technological trappings, but instead displays humankind and machine as inextricably linked:

> Individuals are presented as becoming increasingly identified with and through a second nature of technological forms: Sarah Connor routinely clocks in for work and her flatmate is permanently plugged to her Sony Walkman; she is reduced to a voice on a tape recording […] and is heavily reliant upon machines in her flight from the Terminator.[42]

Taking into account the heightened mediatization of the body, bio-logics and techno-logics are not separated but instead appear as variants of the same principle: "Whilst the human is being encased within a second skin of technologies, the technological, in the guise if the Terminator, has acquired a living tissue to flesh out its robot skeleton." Thus, the film does not proceed to deliver an "us against them" argument but emphasizes Schwarzenegger's embodiment of the cyborg as a figure of far-reaching cultural impact. Consequently, we are made "to identify with Arnold as our culture hero once we learn that traditional human/machine antitheses have achieved synthesis".[43] The film stresses this perspective by allowing the viewer to become a cyborg himself. In the form of several subjective point-of-view-shots, we are offered to see the world through the Terminator's eyes. The film thus gives us a cyber-view perception, shown through an infra-red lens and accompanied by analytical data.

Instead of outlining a dystopian future world, the Terminator films seem to imply this: It's all about Arnold. While neither Robert Patrick (who played

41 Arthur Kroker and Marilouise Kroker, "Theses on the Disappearing Body in the Hyper-Modem Condition," in *Body Invaders: Panic Sex in America*, ed. Arthur Kroker and Marielouise Kroker (New York: St. Martin's, 1987), 21.

42 Jarvis, *Postmodern Cartographies*, 162.

43 Doran Larson, "Machine as Messiah: Cyborgs, Morphs and the American Body Politic," in *Liquid Metal: The Science Fiction Film Reader*, ed. Sean Redmond (London: Wallflower Press, 2007), 194.

the T-1000 in *Terminator 2: Judgement Day* [James Cameron, 1991]) nor Kristanna Loken (who played the T-X in *Terminator 3: Rise of the Machines* [Jonathan Mostow, 2003]) became stars, it is Arnold Schwarzenegger who succeeded in making the cyborg spectacularly visible. Referring to the film series' changing characters and its centering on the Arnoldian figure, Bukatman remarks: "Electronic technology becomes a new site of anxiety: it can't even be relied upon to keep its shape. By contrast, Schwarzenegger, as the 'nice' Terminator, is predictably mechanical and trustworthy—he always looks like Arnold".[44] Thus, Arnold's most famous line "I'll be back" does not come out as a menace but as a promise—and, moreover, as a firm statement of what it means to be a film star. Speaking of constant and inconstancy as two vectors of acting, Stephen Mulhall points out: "If […] we acknowledge that the relationship between these two vectors in screen acting is determined by the material basis of the medium, hence by the camera's automatic reproduction of the individual human physiognomy placed before it, then we would expect the actor to be prior to the character in film."[45] Continuing to develop this position, Mulhall remarks that the figure "whose appearance in the 'Terminator' films helped to project him into the highest reaches of cinematic fame was the one who […] allowed the camera to transcribe and retranscribe his utterly distinctive physiognomy without obstacle or interruption […]—Arnold Schwarzenegger"[46]. Thus, the body we see on screen is not just some cyborg character—it IS Arnold. Since it points to the intertwined bio/techno-logics of cinematic representation, the idiosyncrasy of the Arnoldian figure lies in its capacity to mediate between the producing and the produced.

5. Conclusion

Arnold Schwarzenegger's incorporations provide us with the means to make connections between abstract and concrete concepts—and, what is more, to reflect upon these concepts. For instance, they provide us with a partial understanding of complicated ideas such as movement, gender, and machine. While they evolve as a consequence of blurred lines between mobility and immobility, between masculinity and femininity, and between biology and tech-

44 Bukatman, *Terminal Identity*, 305–306.

45 Stephen Mulhall, *On Film* (London: Routledge, 2002), 87.

46 Ibid.

nology, they point to the instability of fixed definitions. In addition to this, they have an element of flexibility within them that can be stretched beyond the information given by raw sensation. Arnold Schwarzenegger's embodiments thus do not represent already existing knowledge; rather, they form knowledge as a genuine mode of production. Since they are cinematically built bodies, they indicate a retrieval of their physical resources as well as an interrogation of their filmic form. As such, Arnold is the body made possible.