Hacking
Humanism
Life as we have known it is over.

Resistance is futile.

Cyborg
Manfred Clynes
Nathan Kline

“Cyborgs and Space”
Astronautics 1962
“Altering man’s bodily functions to meet the requirements of extraterrestrial environments would be more logical than providing an earthly environment for him in space.”
“For the exogenously extended organizational complex functioning as an integrated homeostatic system... we propose the term cyborg.”

“Altering man’s bodily functions to meet the requirements of extraterrestrial environments would be more logical than providing an earthly environment for him in space.”
“There are many actual cyborgs among us in society. Anyone with an artificial organ, limb or supplement (like a pacemaker), anyone programmed to resist disease (immunized) or drugged to think/behave/feel better (psychopharmacology) is technically a cyborg.”

“A much higher percentage participate in occupations that make them into metaphoric cyborgs, including the computer keyboarder joined in a cybernetic circuit with the screen, the neurosurgeon guided by fiber optic microscopy during an operation, and the teen gameplayer in the local video game arcade.”

Donna Haraway
“A Cyborg Manifesto”
Two Boundary Breakdowns

• That between animals (or other organisms) and humans

• That between self-controlled, self-governing machines and organisms especially humans
“By the late twentieth century in United States, scientific culture, the boundaries between human and animal is thoroughly breached. The last beachheads of uniqueness have been polluted if not turned into amusement parks--language, tool use, social behavior, mental events. Nothing really convincingly settles the separation of human and animal”
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“Late twentieth century machines have made thoroughly ambiguous the difference between natural and artificial, mind and body, self-developing and externally designed, and many other distinctions that used to apply to organisms and machines. Our machines are disturbingly lively, and we ourselves frighteningly inert”
“The concern about man’s animal and mechanical nature came forcefully together in the west in the seventeenth century and did so in terms of a debate over what was called the animal-machine.”

Bruce Mazlish, *The Fourth Discontinuity* (New Haven, Yale University Press, 1993)
Rene Descartes
*Discourse On Method*

La Mettrie
*L’Homme-Machine*
“We have decided to call the entire field of control and communication theory, whether in the machine or in the animal, by the name Cybernetics, which we form from the Greek Kybernetes or steersman.”
Human Genome Project
“From one perspective, a cyborg world is about the final imposition of a grid of control on the planet, about the final abstraction embodied in a Star Wars apocalypse waged in the name of defense.”
“By using the cyborg as a starting point, I’m saying--and this is by no means an astounding observation--rhetorics of humanism and organicism have produced, are currently producing, and, I dare say will probably always produce radical material inequities for the vast majority of people.”

Allison Fraiberg, “Of AIDS, Cyborgs, and Other Indiscretions” (1993)
“Perhaps we can learn from our fusion with animals and machines how not to be Man, the embodiment of Western Logos.”

“The trespass across the once-forbidden zone between the natural and the artificial, the organic and the inorganic render much of what we know--or thought we knew--provisional.”

Mark Dery, *Escape Velocity*  
(New York: Grove Press, 1996)
Conclusions

1. We are Borg. We are already assimilated. The cyborg is not some future promise or threat. It already describes and defines who and what we are.

2. Resistance is futile. Because we are already cyborg, the cyborg is not something that could be resisted with any amount of strength or resolve.
Conclusions

3. From one perspective, a perspective that still values the human and humanist thinking, this can only appear to be a bad thing—dehumanizing operation.

4. From another perspective, a perspective that is open to alternative arrangements and values, this post-human entity challenges the humanist assumptions that have all too often created problems for us and for the others who inhabit this planet with us.