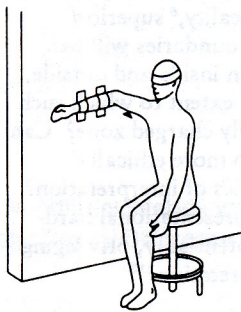


Catherine Richards

The Bioapparatus Membrane

When *I* investigate the boundary between the bio and apparatus I'm forced into the first person, a first person experience. I write as if speaking to myself in the dark.

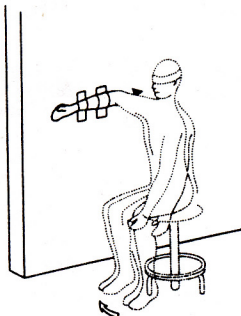
At first impression, *I* (bio) and certainly *it* (apparatus) meet each other in full materiality, physicality. Where we meet our edges seem solid, determined, and yet easily deceived – a membrane through which traffic ebbs and flows like osmosis.



an apparatus

I watch a film. I see moving images as light flickers across my irises. I have held celluloid in my hands and all these images are frozen. Now I cannot see a single one as still. They move. They move at thirty frames a second through an opening in my eyes that appears at that speed. If they moved slower, they would miss the threshold to my body. They are only revealed at a certain speed. They would never be able to enter without my permission, never find this threshold or cross over. As soon as I open my eyes they are across and I am taken up, believing, I am somewhere, moving, everywhere. We travel back and forth together criss-crossing the threshold as fast as the images can take me.

The persistence of vision – simple, obvious, invisible, only afterimages remain like burned traces.



Are there more such thresholds, other just noticeable differences in timing that reveal openings in the living body? Once these are found, identified, virtual instruments pass directly through the flesh without a mark – not unobserved but almost as much a part of the body as the circulation system.

another apparatus

Capturing the imaginary body. I put on virtual environment technology. I see my imaginary body right before me. I move my finger, the image moves. If the spectral image lags behind my living hand, it misses me. If it catches up, it crosses a body threshold racing to capture my imaginary body within its image. Now, when I move, I inhabit the virtual materialized image of my imaginary body.

I move within the semblance of my living body, a simulation of my physical and imaginary experience that is travelling back and forth across my thresholds, taking me away.

What am I here? My body is mediated experientially by my imaginary body that is materialized into a phantom image. One is intertwined with the other, each one reading the other, simulating the living cohabitation of my body and the imaginary.

