

**Contextualizing Gender**  
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**Indian Institute of Technology, Roorkee**

**Lecture - 57**

**A Cyborg Manifesto: Science, Technology and Socialist – Feminism in the Late Twentieth Century by Donna Haraway**


Welcome dear participants. In the previous module, we had discussed the Fundamentals of the Posthuman as a critical subject in Humanities. We will take this discussion further by referring to the hybrid image of the cyborg as proposed by Donna Haraway in her 1985 essay with the title of ‘A Cyborg Manifesto: Science, Technology and Socialist-Feminism’ in the Late Twentieth Century.

In week 11, we had discussed Donna Haraway’s approach to the term gender and her arguments about ownership and absence of the genealogy of the term gender in canonized narratives. The current module discusses Haraway’s cyborg imagery by contextualizing complexities of identity politics in a techno scientific society. Haraway presents the cyborg as a tool to subvert the anthropocentric situatedness of man dualisms and binaries.

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**“A Cyborg Manifesto: Science, Technology, and Socialist-Feminism in the Late Twentieth Century”**

- The *Cyborg Manifesto* was published in 1985 in the *Socialist Review*.
- It aimed to find political direction while foregrounding the hybridized existence of the humans in 1980s, and is regarded as a seminal text in the development of feminist posthumanist theory, and has a prophetic quality.
  - In her reading of the cyborg, Haraway breaks the rigid boundaries of the “human & animal”, and “human & machine.”
- It denotes a shift away from the anthropocentric category of the Man in technoscientific discourses.




Source: wikipedia.com





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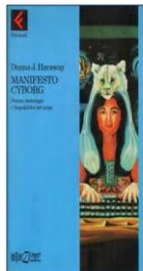
The Cyborg Manifesto was published in 1985 in the Socialist Review. It aimed to find political direction while foregrounding the hybridized existence of the humans in 1980s,

and is regarded as a seminal text in the development of feminist posthumanist theory, and has almost a prophetic quality. In a reading of the cyborg, Haraway breaks the rigid boundaries of the human in animal and human in machine. It denotes a shift away from the anthropocentric category of the Man in techno scientific discourses.


It provides a figuration of the cyborg as a possible alternative identity a tool for the feminist, postmodern, posthuman universe. We can see the reworkings of Haraway's cyborg imagery in several works. For example, Shelley Jackson's 'Patchwork Girl', Anne Balsamo's 'Technologies of the Gendered Body' and Chris Gray's 'Cyborg Citizen' etcetera. The cyborg figure is as much part of the popular discourse as it is part of our day-to-day use of technology.

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- The cyborg, as a concept, is associated with scientist, innovator and musician Manfred Clynes, who deployed it in his 1960's article "Cyborgs and Space", where he argued for altering the human body to make it suitable for space travel. (Nour Ahmad)\*
- Haraway believes that, already today, we are all cyborgs. More significantly, she posits that the advent of cybernetics might help in the construction of a world capable of challenging gender disparities. The cyborg is a matter of lived experience that changes what counts as women's experience in the late twentieth century.
  - The end of twentieth century marks the coming of the cyborg figure into the social life of people along with the fictions that we have read.




Source: amazon.in



\* <https://www.mediasupport.org/navigating-a-changing-world/we-are-all-cyborgs-how-machines-can-be-a-feminist-tool/>



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The concept of the cyborg, is associated with Manfred Clynes, a scientist innovator and musician. Clynes had deployed this idea in his 1960s article with the title cyborgs and space where he argued for altering the human body to make it suitable for space travel. Haraway believes that, already today, we are all cyborgs.

More significantly, she posits that the advent of cybernetics might help in the construction of a world capable of challenging gender disparities. The 'cyborg' is a matter of lived experience that changes what counts as women's experience in the late twentieth century.

The end of twentieth century marks the coming of the cyborg figure into the social life of people along with the fictions that we have read. The cyborg marks our politics as in her opinion it showcases the interconnectedness of humans, machines and others. It does not necessarily relate to technology only as Haraway notes that the modern medicine is also full of couplings between organisms and machines.

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- According to Haraway, the debates about '*scientific objectivity*' in feminist theory argue for a transformation of the organic and technological vision to foreground specific subjective positioning of the female subject, historically.
- She suggests that the late twentieth century marks, "our time, a mythic time, we are all chimeras, theorized and fabricated hybrids of machine and organism; in short, we are cyborgs. The cyborg is our ontology; it gives us our politics". (151)
- The cyborg is a condensed image of both imagination and material reality as it challenges and almost ridicules the binary opposition of the self and the other, the machine and the human, the anthropocentric male and disposable category of the fe(male).

Source: sciencetrnds.com


Haraway posits that the debates about scientific objectivity in feminist theory argue for a transformation of the organic and technological vision to foreground a specific subjective positioning of the female subject. She suggests that the late twentieth century marks, "our time, a mythic time, we are all chimeras, theorized and fabricated hybrids of machine and organism; in short, we are cyborgs. The cyborg is our ontology; it gives us our politics".

The cyborg is a condensed image of both imagination and material reality as it challenges and almost ridicules the binary opposition of the self and the other, the machine in the human, the anthropocentric male and disposable category of the female. The cyborg has no origin story or genesis as it denotes interconnectivity and the idea of relationality.

To explicate this further we will discuss a video in the next slide. The video shows Dr. Danya Glabau an anthropologist STS scholar at NYU School of Engineering. She deconstructs the image of Haraway's cyborg as a tool for future change.

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My guide to cyborgs: Donna Haraway



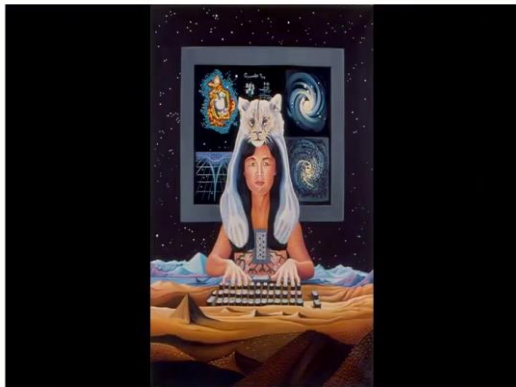
- Dr. Danya Glabau defines the cyborg image as explicated by Haraway in her essay.
- She suggests that the cyborg imagery marks the present, future and possible past of our cyborg-ian society.

Source: <https://youtu.be/sC9VZSicXeY>

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“Dr. Danya Glabau suggests that the cyborg imagery marks the present, future and possible past of our cyborgian society. My guide to cyborgs and a cyborg feminism is a little bit more ordinary everyday contemporary than all of those. My guide is the philosopher of technology Donna Haraway a totally a sort of normal middle aged, middle American, middle class woman here with her dog who inspires much of her writing.

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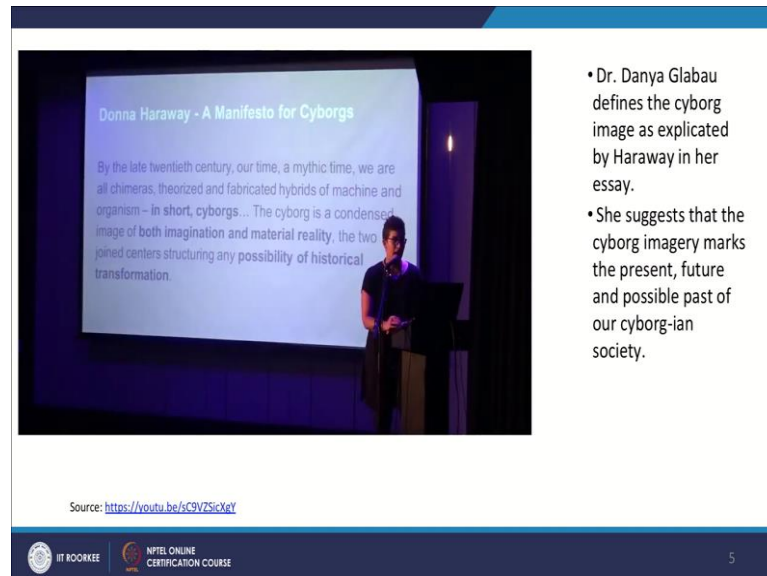
- Dr. Danya Glabau defines the cyborg image as explicated by Haraway in her essay.
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Source: <https://youtu.be/sC9VZSicXeY>

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And, this is the cyborg that Haraway is writing this is a cyborg drawn by her sometime collaborator artist Lynne Randolph”.

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- Dr. Danya Glabau defines the cyborg image as explicated by Haraway in her essay.
- She suggests that the cyborg imagery marks the present, future and possible past of our cyborg-ian society.

Source: <https://youtu.be/sC9VZSicXeY>


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And, in her very famous paper a manifesto for cyborgs she kind of lays out this idea of the cyborg not necessarily the thing that actually exists in the world not necessarily as a sort of future thing that we can be concretely working towards but, is this kind of mixed material semiotic, mixed physical and ideological tool for thinking about what kinds of futures we want to bring into being.

And, so, she writes by the late twentieth century our time, a mythic time, we are all chimeras, theorized and fabricated hybrid the machine and organisms – in short, cyborgs. The cyborg is a content a condensed image of both imagination and material reality, the two joined centers structuring any possibility of historical transformation.



So, again the cyborg the figure of the cyborg for cyborg feminism is this joined figure this figure that is both imaginary and that reflects some of our material realities that is both at the same time.

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Source: <https://youtu.be/sC9VZ5icXgY>

- Dr. Danya Glabau defines the cyborg image as explicated by Haraway in her essay.
- She suggests that the cyborg imagery marks the present, future and possible past of our cyborg-ian society.




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“The image of the cyborg in Haraway’s imagination contributes to the utopian tradition of a genderless society a world without gender and also without genesis.


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**“The cyborg has no origin....”**

- The cyborg is a creature in a post-gender world, in a sense, the cyborg has no origin story in the Western sense.
- According to Haraway, the origin stories depend on the myth of original unity, fullness, bliss and terror, represented by the western notion of Humanism (the great unity of the Man as the universal being).
- The cyborg skips the step of original unity, of identification with nature in the Western sense as it is a hybrid.



Source: deviantart.com






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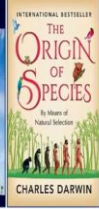
The cyborg is a creature in a post-gender world, in a sense; the cyborg has no origin story in the Western sense. According to Haraway, the origin stories depend on the myth of original unity, fullness, bliss and also terror, represented by the western notion of humanism that is the great unity of the Man as the universal being. The cyborg skips the step of original unity, of identification with nature in the Western sense as it is a hybrid”.

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- Exploring the history of the relationship between humans and machines, Haraway argues that three boundaries have been broken throughout human history, which have changed the definition of what is deemed cultural or otherwise natural.
- First : the publication of *On the Origin of Species* (1859) by Charles Darwin.
- Second: Industrial Revolution (1760-1820/40)
- Third: Modern day complex technological/software based advancements, which are microscopic in size or even invisible.
  - It results in a close relationship between people and technology, making the boundaries between the cultural and the natural more and more imperceptible.




Source:  
eng-literature.com




Source:  
amazon.in





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Exploring the history of the relationship between humans and machines, Haraway argues that three boundaries have been broken throughout human history, and this has changed the definition of what is deemed cultural or otherwise natural.

The first boundary which has been broken is the publication of Charles Darwin's book 'On the Origin of his Species' in 1859. The second is the Industrial Revolution which is normally timed between 1760 to 1820 or 1840. Third is the modern day complex technological and software-based advancements, which are microscopic in size or even invisible.

These advancements have resulted in a close relationship between people and technology, making the boundaries between the cultural and the natural more and more imperceptible. So, how do we look at the implications of this statement by Haraway? The biological connections between all organisms were discovered and publicized by Charles Darwin in his book.

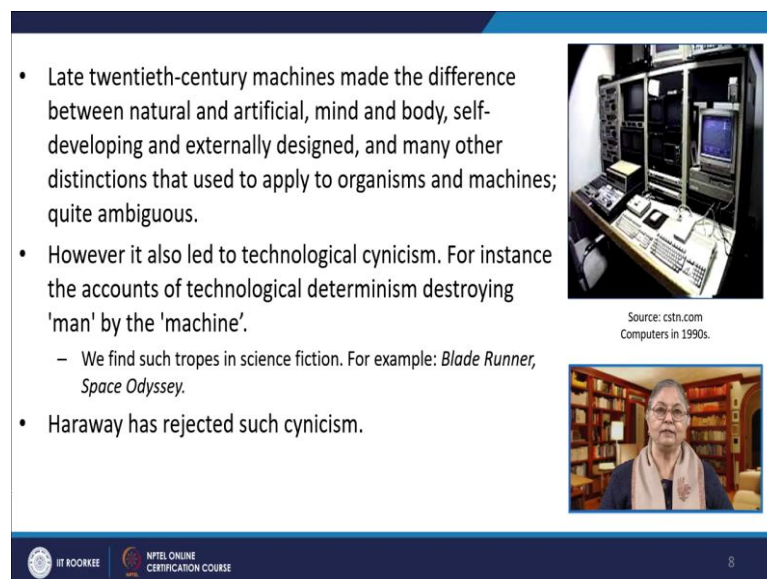
It served as a rejection of notions of human exceptionalism and also of human superiority, turning the evolution of the organism into a puzzle. It also introduced the concept of evolution as necessary for understanding the meaning of human existence. It was the first breaking of the boundary according to Haraway.

The second boundary breaking event relates to the relationship between machines and organisms. As the industrial revolution arrived all aspects of human life became more and more mechanized as human dependence on machines increased machines became an

inseparable part of what it is to be human. They became an extension of physical capability of human beings.

The third boundary concerns more contemporary technological advancements, complex machines and mechanisms which can be minuscule in size or as in the case of software altogether invisible. For example, semiconductor chips now pervade every domain of our life. As these machines are practically invisible it is then difficult to decide where the machine ends and human beings start. This machine thus represents culture intruding over nature also intertwining with it and changing it in the process.

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- Late twentieth-century machines made 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; quite ambiguous.
- However it also led to technological cynicism. For instance the accounts of technological determinism destroying 'man' by the 'machine'.
  - We find such tropes in science fiction. For example: *Blade Runner*, *Space Odyssey*.
- Haraway has rejected such cynicism.

Source: cstrn.com  
Computers in 1990s.

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Late twentieth-century machines made 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; quite ambiguous. However, it also led to a technological cynicism.

For instance, the accounts of technological determinism destroying man by the machine. We find such tropes often in science fiction. For example, in *Blade Runner* or the *Space Odyssey*. Haraway however, has completely rejected such cynicism.


For Haraway science and technology can best perform their functions when read in the lines of feminism in considering the types of technologies we need in order to create a sustainable future.

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- The cyborg figuration does not conform to the politics of exclusion, rather can be used as a tool to highlight the politics of exclusion in the name of gender, race, and class etc.
  - Such categories provide a false sense of unity. Haraway argues that “there is nothing about being 'female' that naturally binds women” as a homogenous category.
- Cyborg erases contradictions between nature and culture, therefore it is no longer possible to associate a particular role with any gender.
- Cyborg belies the normative claims of gendered statements, allowing a new distinction of roles, based on neither sex nor race, rather providing humans the freedom and agency to construct themselves on every level.



Source: gpinterst.com



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The cyborg figuration does not conform to the politics of exclusion, rather it can be used as a tool to highlight the politics of exclusion in the name of gender, race, and class etcetera. Such categories provide a false sense of unity. Haraway argues that “there is nothing about being female that naturally binds women” as a homogeneous category.


Cyborg erases contradictions between nature and culture, therefore, it is no longer possible to associate a particular role with any gender. Cyborg belies the normative claims of gendered statements, allowing a new distinction of roles, based on neither sex nor race, rather providing humans the freedom and agency to construct themselves at every level.

When we use the term natural in the context of gender it expresses. Firstly, how the speakers view the world. Secondly, it is also a normative claim about how the world should be and thirdly it is a statement on what cannot be changed. The image of the cyborg has obliterated the gender boundaries it suggests that the gender categories are not inherently natural or absolute.


We are all constructed and reconstructed when given the right tools. Since the cyborg figure rejects purity, it does not also correspond to the idea of us and absolutism. It challenges the mind body dualism of the enlightenment philosophy.

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- The state of being female is highly complex and contested by many social constraints. Haraway notes that “gender, race, or class consciousness is an achievement forced on us by the terrible historical experience of the contradictory social realities of patriarchy, colonialism, and capitalism”. (157)
- However, who counts as 'us' is a posthuman question. Braidotti also asks it in her reading of the posthuman.
- Geolocates, language, colour, class, race, profession are only some of the variables fracturing the political identity of “us” and who counts as “us”.
- “Us” is not a sense of affinity but identity.



Source: lifeof science.com



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The state of being female is highly complex and contested by many social constraints. Haraway notes that gender, race, or class consciousness is an achievement forced on us by the terrible historical experience of the contradictory social realities of patriarchy, colonialism and capitalism.

However, who counts as us is a posthuman question. Rosi Braidotti also asks it in her reading of the posthuman. Geolocates, language, color, class, race, and profession etcetera are only some of the variables fracturing the political identity of us and who counts as us. Us is not a sense of affinity, but identity. For Haraway the cyborg figure is not restricted to a sexy one high-tech, exoskeletons, androids, robots or a myth.

It refers to material semantics of physical and ideological tool for thinking about the future and what changes do we want in the system. Keeping this definition in mind Haraway defines a cyborg as a representative of women’s struggle in labor market, women of color while deconstructing the sense of wholeness.

She suggests that the feminist movement requires a tool to subvert the marginalization produced by the white discourse and the cyborgian image can function as that tool. Haraway suggests a sense of partial interconnectedness for the woman as a subject as we are connected to human’s machines, animals as opposed to an imaginary sense of collective struggle in feminist practices.

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- Haraway provides the example of the “women of colour” as they “refused stable membership in the social categories of race, sex, or class”.
- For Haraway the phrase “Women of colour” marks a sense of “historical consciousness” to challenge the white discourse and the ideas of otherness, difference, and specificity.
- Haraway quotes Katie King as she criticizes the persistent tendency of feminist theories from different “moments” or “conversations” in feminist practice to taxonomize the women’s movement to make one’s own political tendencies as especially those “typical units called radical, liberal, and socialist-feminism”.

Source: soaboxie.com

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Haraway provides the example of the women of color as they refused membership in the social categories of race, sex or class”. For Haraway the phrase women of color marks our sense of historical consciousness to challenge the white discourse and the ideas of otherness, difference, and specificity.

Haraway quotes Katie King as she criticizes the persistent tendency of feminist theories from different moments or conversations in feminist practice to taxonomize the women’s movement to make one’s own political tendencies as especially those typical units called radical, liberal, and socialist-feminisms.

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- For Haraway, Radical/Socialist/Marxist-Feminisms, along with their ‘epistemologies’, have failed the task to build effective affinities.
- The anthropocentric self is conscious of what it means to have a historically constituted body.
- In light of this argument, Haraway suggests an urgent need for political unity to confront effectively the dominations of ‘race’, ‘gender’, ‘sexuality’, and ‘class’.
- For Haraway, as a counter narrative, “cyborg feminists have to argue that ‘we’ do not want any more natural matrix of unity and that no construction is whole”. (159)

Source: pnx.org

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For Haraway, radical, socialist, Marxist-Feminisms, along with their epistemologies, have failed the task to build effective affinities. The anthropocentric self is conscious of what it means to have a historically constituted body.

In light of this argument, Haraway suggests an urgent need for political unity to confront effectively the dominations of race, gender, sexuality and class. For Haraway, is a counter narrative, “cyborg feminists have to argue that we do not want any more natural matrix of unity and that no construction is whole”.

Due to the participation of women in the workforce the cyborg highlights the changed phase of labour since 1980s as it is related to the body mind machine and technology that is feminization of the workforce. It refers to the modern production of lived experiences of women in the workforce.

The cyborg becomes a signifier of the changed conditions of women in late 20th and early 21st century as Haraway criticizes the different schools of feminism diluting the core of feminist thought.

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- Haraway critiques both Marxist/socialist-feminisms and radical feminisms as they have denatured the category 'woman' and consciousness of the social lives of 'women'.
- Marxian socialism is rooted in an analysis of wage labour which reveals class structure.
- However under capitalist patriarchy, women's labour in the household and women's activity as mothers generally are discounted.
  - Atwood's *The Handmaid's Tale* suggests that the unity of women rested on supervised, forced "labour" as production and re-production.


Source: peoplearchive.com

Haraway critiques both Marxist, socialist-feminisms and radical feminisms as they have denatured the category women and consciousness of the social lives of women. Marxian socialism is rooted in an analysis of wage labour which reveals class structure. However, under capitalist patriarchy women's labour in the household and women's activity as


mothers generally are discounted. Atwood's 'The Handmaids Tale' suggests that the unity of women rested on supervised, forced labour as production and re-production.


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- On the other hand, while addressing the issue of sexual appropriation and sexual objectification, Haraway notes that a woman loses all sense of agency due to sexual appropriation.
- In other words, "to be constituted by another's desire is not the same thing as to be alienated in the violent separation of the labourer from his product". (160)




Source: zncun.com





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On the other hand, while addressing the issue of sexual appropriation and sexual objectification, Haraway notes that a woman loses all sense of agency due to sexual appropriation. In other words, to be constituted by another's desire is not the same thing as to be alienated in the violent separation of the labourer from his product.


While problematizing the influence of late 20th century capitalism and the conditioning of women in the labour force, Haraway suggests that technology dictates not just the public space, but also the private space.

In considering these crucial paradigm shifts the growth of technology and the boundaries between human and the machine, she draws the idea of the informatics of domination which translates to process of creating new metaphors for thinking about society and technology.


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## The Informatics of Domination

- Haraway's approach towards the cyborg as a figuration and feminism is based on the rearrangements in social relations tied to science and technology.
- She suggests that we are living in a polymorphous, information system and provides a systematic arrangement of material and ideological dichotomies as she charts the transitions from old hierarchies to the new network that she calls the Informatics of Domination.
- The term suggests the global science-and technology-based systems that lead to inequitable socio-economic conditions that are especially pernicious for women.



Source: ted.com



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Her approach towards a cyborg as a figuration and feminism is based on the rearrangements in social relations tied to science and technology. She suggests that we are living in a polymorphous, information system and provides a systematic arrangement of material and ideological dichotomies as she charts the transitions from old hierarchies to the new network that she calls the informatics of domination. The term suggests the global science and technology-based systems that lead to inequitable socio-economic conditions that are especially pernicious for women.


The term refers to the emerging techno social world order which discredits women in social media, science and technology, communication sciences, biology, robotics and artificial intelligence as a field. The cyborg figuration for Haraway attempts to challenge the informatics of information to produce a post gender narrative an alternative to fellow centric discourses.



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## Informatics of Domination

Old Hierarchies	New Network
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Eugenics</li> <li>Organic Division of Labour</li> <li>Mind</li> <li>Public/ Private</li> <li>Reproduction</li> <li>Realism</li> <li>White Capitalist Patriarchy</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Population Control</li> <li>Ergonomics</li> <li>Artificial Intelligence</li> <li>Cyborg Citizenship</li> <li>Replication</li> <li>Science Fiction</li> <li>Informatic of Domination</li> </ul>

As a "post-gender" creature, cyborg can be a vehicle to challenge the "informatics of domination".






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In this slide we can look at the comparison of old hierarchies to the new network. As a post gender creature cyborg can be a vehicle to challenge the informatics of domination. We can see that how eugenics has resulted in population control in new network, how the mind has been replaced by artificial intelligence etcetera.

Haraway suggests that we are not linked to one idea one group or one technology. We assemble and disassemble; we are weaved into connections with the human, the machine and the animal as a representative of the environment.


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- The cyborg is part of this new world, the informatics of domination.
- It is disassembled and reassembled, it is a postmodern collective and represents the personal self.
- To justify her arguments and prove that the cyborg is part of our social lives today, Haraway provides the example of communications technologies and biotechnologies.
  - "Communications technologies and biotechnologies are the crucial tools recrafting our bodies. These tools embody and enforce new social relations for women world-wide.
  - "Technologies and scientific discourses can be partially understood as formalizations, i.e., as frozen moments, of the fluid social interactions constituting them, but they should also be viewed as instruments for enforcing meanings." (161)





Source: cyborg.com



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The cyborg is a part of this new world, a part of the informatics of domination. It is disassembled and reassembled. It is a postmodern collective and represents the personal self.


To justify her arguments and prove that the cyborg is part of our social lives today, Haraway provides the example of communications technologies and biotechnologies. Communication technologies and biotechnologies are the crucial tool recrafting our bodies in the opinion of Haraway. These tools embody and enforce new social relations for women world-wide.

And I quote, “Technologies and scientific discourses can be partially understood as formalizations, that is, as frozen moments, of the fluid social interactions constituting them, but they should also be viewed as instruments for enforcing meanings” unquote. These technologies are applied to different fields. We extend quoting from database maintenance to fields like molecular, genetics, ecology, socio-biological evolutionary theory and immunobiology.


The cyborgian feminisms ask us not to analyze such knowledge and technology as isolated systems. Technologies are instruments enforcing meaning and different streams interact and borrow from one another.



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- Therefore, “communications sciences and biology are constructions of natural-technical objects of knowledge in which the difference between machine and organism is thoroughly blurred; mind, body, and tool are on very intimate terms”. (161)
- Technology formulates our identity. It marks the hybridization of the machines and organisms to produce cyborg.



Source: literary.org



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Therefore, Haraway suggests that communication sciences and biology are constructions of natural technical objects of knowledge in which the difference between machine and organism is thoroughly blurred; mind, body and tool are on very intimate terms. Technology formulates our identity. It marks the hybridization of the machines and organisms to produce cyborg.



So, where do women stand in this technological interface? In a post-industrial society, the women enforce attention to the new not so pure body of the cyborg as a tool to subvert the constraints of anthropocentric humanism, capitalist patriarchy, phallocentric paradigms of power and their marginalization.

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### "Women in the Integrated Circuit"

- Women's social relations are dictated by science and technology and are more interconnected than ever. For Haraway, "networking" is both a feminist practice and a multinational corporate strategy.
- In the "integrated places" such as Home, Market, Paid Work Place, State, School, Clinic-Hospital, and Church; women face domestic violence, commodification, surveillance, control, continued intense sexual and racial division of labour and marginalization.
- These circuits require a broad understanding of a more comprehensive labour organization. "The permanent partiality of feminist points of view has consequences for our expectations of forms of political organization and participation". (162)



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For Haraway networking is both a feminist practice as well as a multinational corporate strategy. Women's social relations are dictated by science and technology and are more interconnected than ever. In the integrated places such as home, market, paid workplace, state, school, clinic-hospital and church; women face domestic violence, commodification, surveillance, control, continued intense sexual and racial division of labour and marginalization.

These circuits require a broad understanding of a more comprehensive nature of labour organization. The permanent partiality of feminist points of view has consequences for our expectations of forms of political organization and participation. Haraway suggests

that we might perhaps learn about subversion from the entanglement of humans in machines as western humanism has failed us especially the feminist cause.

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- Haraway presents a utopian dream for the future.
- “The feminist dream of a common language, like all dreams for a perfectly true language, of perfectly faithful naming of experience, is a totalizing and imperialist one. In that sense, dialectics too is a dream language, longing to resolve contradiction.
- “... perhaps, ironically, we can learn from our fusions with animals and machines how not to be Man, the embodiment of Western logos.
- “From the point of view of pleasure in these potent and taboo fusions, made inevitable by the social relations of science and technology, there might indeed be a feminist science”. (162)



Source: az quotes



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Haraway also presents a utopian dream for the future. She says that “The feminist dream of a common language, like all dreams for a perfectly true language, of perfectly faithful naming of experience, is a totalizing and imperialist one. In that sense, dialectics too is a dream language, longing to resolve contradiction”.

And, she goes on to say that “...perhaps, ironically, we can learn from our fusions with animals and machines how not to be Man, the embodiment of Western logos”. “From the point of view of pleasure in these potent and taboo fusions, made inevitable by the social relations of science and technology, there might indeed be a feminist science” unquote.


With the rise of the cyborg in Haraway’s evolutionary politics we can no longer talk about man and woman as a binary. The cyborg figure represents rebellion and it is an agent of subversion which can be used by feminism and other significant adults to bring change and understanding of our present and future. The first incitation of the cyborg for Haraway is to rewrite our origin stories starting with the garden of Eden.

For Haraway the origin myths bind humans, animals, machines and especially women in binary oppositions and provide a rigid sense of unification. Haraway suggests that the cyborg would not be a part of the Garden of Eden as it does not recognize the binary


oppositionality of the man and the female as his counterpart of man as a progenitor of human race propounded by faith and western humanism.


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- According to Haraway, “cyborg is resolutely committed to partiality, irony, intimacy, and perversity. It is oppositional and utopian. The cyborg would not recognize the Garden of Eden; it is not made of mud and cannot dream of returning to dust”. (153)
- The cyborg figuration stands in opposition to militarism and patriarchal capitalism.
- Post 1980s we are witnessing a growing consciousness of our interconnectedness with other species, technology, and machines as our significant others.
- Later on, in 2003, Haraway rebrands the “significant others” as “companion species” in her work “The Companion Species Manifesto”.



Source: pinterest.com



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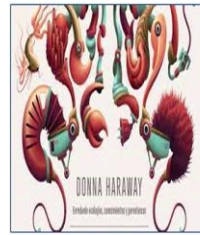
Haraway suggests that “cyborg is resolutely committed to partiality, irony, intimacy, and perversity. It is oppositional and also utopian. The cyborg would not recognize the Garden of Eden; it is not made of mud and cannot dream of returning to dust”. The cyborg figuration therefore, stands in opposition to militarism and patriarchal capitalism.

Post 1980s we are witnessing our growing consciousness of our interconnectedness with other species, technology, and machines as our significant others. Later on, in 2003, Haraway rebrands the significant others as companion species in her work the ‘Companion Species Manifesto’.

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## Writing Cyborgs and cyborg writing

- Cyborg writing is about the power to survive by retelling the stories that have displaced the hierarchies presented by the western discourse.
- We have all been colonized by the phallogentric origin stories.
- However for feminist cyborg story telling the task is to recode the anthropocentric rationale of meaning making and meaning production.
- Cyborg writing problematises the dualities of Man and Woman, language and gender, nature and culture, God and Man.



Source: earthly survival.com



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However, for feminist cyborg story telling the task is to recode the anthropocentric rationale of meaning making and meaning production. Cyborg writing problematises the dualities of man and woman, language and gender, nature and culture, and god and man. As a potent tool the cyborg imagery as a part of our existence can help us make better sense of our techno scientific way of life today.

(Refer Slide Time: 28:55)

- In the cyborgian imagery, the body articulates power and performance. The organic quality of body is not limited to gender anymore. It is more than that. The body is a performance in power and identity.
  - For example: The replicant Rachel in the Ridley Scott film *Blade Runner* stands as the image of a cyborg culture's fear, love, and confusion.
- Cyborg writing asks a fundamental question: "Why should our bodies end at the skin, or include at best other beings encapsulated by skin?"
  - Some recent examples of cyborg figures are Alita from *Alita: Battle Angel*, who is a battle cyborg and goes on a quest to find her true identity; and *Nebula* in Marvel Universe.



Source: display.com  
Rachel in Blade Runner.



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Cyborg writing asks a fundamental question: "Why should our bodies end at the skin, or include at best other beings encapsulated by skin?" – Some recent examples of cyborg figures are Alita from 'Alita: Battle Angel', who is a battle cyborg and goes on a quest to find her true identity in also Nebula in Marvel Universe.

To conclude Haraway suggests that the machine is not an external thing, it is what we have become. The machine is part of our organic body and we are becoming more and more cyborgian in our embodiment.


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### "We are all Cyborgs": Humans Today!

- Our bodies, just like cyborgs exhibit the power to produce change. According to Haraway, the machine is us as it demonstrates our processes, an aspect of our embodiment.
- According to Haraway, the cyborg imagery can help express two crucial arguments in this essay –
- First, it rejects the production of universal theories
- Second, it takes responsibility for the social relations of science and technology while reconstructing the boundaries of daily life, "in partial connection with others, in communication with all of our parts"- the animal/machine/human/male/female.



Source: Haraway's Simians, Cyborgs and Humans.




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Our bodies, just like cyborgs exhibit the power to produce change and according to Haraway the machine is us as it demonstrates our processes in aspect of our embodiment. The cyborg imagery can help express two crucial arguments in her essay.


First, it rejects the production of universal theories. Secondly, it takes responsibility for the social relations of science and technology while reconstructing the boundaries of daily life, "in partial connection with others in communication with all of our parts" which include the animal, machine, human, male and female.

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- For Haraway, the realities of modern life happen to include a relationship between people and technology so intimate that it's no longer possible to tell where we end and machines begin.
  - Being a cyborg isn't about how many bits of silicon you have under your skin or how many prosthetics your body contains. It's about Donna Haraway going to the gym, looking at a shelf of carbo-loaded bodybuilding foods, checking out the Nautilus machines, and realizing that she's in a place that wouldn't exist without the idea of the body as high-performance machine. (<https://www.wired.com/1997/02/fharaway/>)
- Cyborg imagery can thus destroy dualisms in which we have explained our bodies and our tools to ourselves.



Source: planet.com



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For Haraway, the realities of modern life happen to include a relationship between people and technology in such an intimate manner that it is no longer possible to tell where we end and machines begin. I would refer to an interview which was published in Wired.

“Being a cyborg is not about how many bits of silicon you have under your skin or how many prosthetics your body contains. It is about going to the gym looking at a shelf of carbo-loaded bodybuilding foods, checking out the Nautilus machines and realizing that she is in a place that would not exist without the idea of the body as a high-performance machine”.

Cyborg imagery can thus destroy dualisms in which we have explained our bodies and our tools to ourselves. In the previously referred interview, Haraway also gives the example of an Olympic player and she remarks that the training and technology make every Olympian are note in an international techno cultural network just as artificial as sprinter Ben Johnson at his steroid peak. The cyborg denotes the possibilities of our current techno advance situatedness and Haraway suggests that she will rather be a cyborg, than a goddess.

(Refer Slide Time: 32:34)



A photograph of Amber Case on a TED stage. She is standing next to a grand piano. The TED logo is visible in the background. The name 'AMBERCASE' is overlaid at the bottom of the image.


- Amber Case suggests that we are all cyborgs as we are connected to machines, gadgets, and AI.

Source: <https://youtu.be/t1KJAXM3xYA>

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In the next slide, we have a video by Amber Case an American cyborg anthropologist case suggests that we are all cyborgs as we are connected to machines gadgets and artificial intelligence.

(Refer Slide Time: 32:39)



A photograph of Amber Case wearing a prosthetic arm. The text 'we are all cyborgs' is overlaid in white and yellow. Below it, 'WASHINGTON DC' and 'DEC 2010' are visible. The source URL is at the bottom.


- Amber Case suggests that we are all cyborgs as we are connected to machines, gadgets, and AI.

Source: <https://youtu.be/t1KJAXM3xYA>

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“I would like to tell you all that you are all actually cyborgs but not the cyborgs that you think. You are not Robocop and you are not terminator.

(Refer Slide Time: 32:45)



- Amber Case suggests that we are all cyborgs as we are connected to machines, gadgets, and AI.


Source: <https://youtu.be/z1KJAXM3xYA>

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But you are cyborgs every time you look at a computer screen or use one of your cell phone devices.

(Refer Slide Time: 32:51)



- Amber Case suggests that we are all cyborgs as we are connected to machines, gadgets, and AI.


Source: <https://youtu.be/z1KJAXM3xYA>

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So, what is a good definition for cyborg well traditional definition is an organism to which exogenous components have been added for the purpose of adapting to new environments.

(Refer Slide Time: 32:59)



A photograph of an astronaut in a white space suit floating in space, with the Earth's horizon visible in the background.


- Amber Case suggests that we are all cyborgs as we are connected to machines, gadgets, and AI.

Source: <https://youtu.be/z1KJAXM3xYA>

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That came from a 1960 paper on space travel because if you think about it space is pretty awkward. People are not supposed to be there, but humans are curious and they like to add things to their bodies so that they can go to the Alps one day and then become a fish in the sea the next.

(Refer Slide Time: 33:14)



A black and white photograph of a group of people, including men, women, and children, sitting and standing in front of a thatched hut. The text 'traditional anthropology' is overlaid at the bottom of the image.


- Amber Case suggests that we are all cyborgs as we are connected to machines, gadgets, and AI.

Source: <https://youtu.be/z1KJAXM3xYA>

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So, let us look at the concept of traditional anthropology. Somebody goes to another country says how fascinating these people are, how interesting their tools are, how curious their culture is and then they write a paper and maybe a few other anthropologists read it and we think it is very exotic.

(Refer Slide Time: 33:26)



- Amber Case suggests that we are all cyborgs as we are connected to machines, gadgets, and AI.

Source: <https://youtu.be/z1KJAXM3xYA>

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Well, what is happening is that we have suddenly found a new species I as a cyborg anthropologist have suddenly said, wow. Now, suddenly we are a new form of homosapiens and look at these fascinating cultures and look at these curious rituals that everybody is doing around this technology they are they are clicking on things and staring at screens”.

Case is making this statement from the point of view of a cyborg anthropologist. However, we will be borrowing this statement to analyze the cyborg imagery in popular discourse. In the next module we shall explore the image of the cyborg as a tool to decode feminism in more detail. We shall look at the placement of cyborg and cyborg like figures in our day to day lives as well as in popular culture.

(Refer Slide Time: 34:21)

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(Refer Slide Time: 34:26)

- <https://youtu.be/sC9VZSicXgY> [You Tube Video]
- <https://youtu.be/z1KJAXM3xYA> [You Tube Video]



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Thank you.