

FRAGMENTED NATURE AND AUGMENTED REALITY: FEMINIST THEORY ON SEXTechs

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Abstract

There are millions of different life forms that we can fully or partly perceive. Those categories of life are replacing with more mechanical versions and humans are in the line. In order to comprehend this evolution and its connection with feminist theory, I shall divide the topic into different parts. The industrial developments, the psychological effects and my main analysis with an approximation function.

The aim of this article is to explain and evaluate the crucial effects of technology to our perspectives of life. How patriarchy is not going to destroy by it but rather get stronger, in contrast to Haraway and other body-centered feminists. If the body and its functions are the problem of the patriarchy and how is it going to develop even we destroy the given and normal body? In order to understand this, firstly we must interpret the following question, "Do humans only form within a physical body and nothing beside it?" and if we accept that we are losing our humanity by becoming-cyborg then how can we overcome patriarchy in different life forms.

Consequently, the main aim of this article is the explain all of them within a theory, examples and also in an analytical screening. While robotics and cyborg industry still using the woman's body for production and commerce, it is not going to decrease the objectification of women. Last but not least, changing the woman body is not the answer the overcoming the patriarchy and will not be.

Key words: post-human studies, cyborgology, radical feminism

Introduction

"...but the boundary between science fiction and social reality is an optical illusion." (Haraway, 1991)

The nature is fragmenting. All the "normal" we have known until today is in absolute change. The experiences that we are subject to begin to more personalized and plural only in one year gap. The technological effect on those is undeniable, unforeseen and uncontrollable. The nature has a substance about what makes it natural, but augmentation of the "idea" of the real is overwhelming the natural. This article is prefer to examine that augmentation and fragmentation within a causal relationship. Along with this, the concept of patriarchy is keep in the middle of those arguments because while we are augmenting the reality and decaying natural, we are also augmenting different kinds of patriarchy which is technological-patriarchy, I prefer to examine in this article.

In 2017, people need to begin considering their dynamic environments and conditions both in public and private spheres. Where are we headed with technology? Is there any destination calling or is it just another reflexive mechanism of human nature that will vanish soon? People could say that predictions about the future may be over-exaggerated but in this paper I may provide some important documents and examples that shown it is not that impossible to see them in 50 years.

Cybernetics and robotics are the main point of origin to research and make investigations. We can say that "A Cyborg Manifesto" is the bible of post-human studies especially when connected and considered with sexuality studies.

After brief definitions of sexuality-related technologies, which I prefer to call sextechs, and Haraway's main arguments about cyborgology, I will move on to current data and news about sextechs. In the following

section, I will explain why Haraway was wrong at some points but still farsighted regarding human nature and how we can relate cyborgology directly to the nature of sexual intercourse. Another important argument on this paper is how feminism and patriarchy are both to be tested by these sextechs. Finally, I will offer a conclusion my own hypothesis for this problematization.

Many questions are being raised today; “should robots have rights?”, “does bioethics applicable?”, “are we still human or stay as human or should we stay as human?” etc. In this paper, I shall try to answer them by offering my own perspective. Cyborgology and future-sextechs are included in to this area because of their direct effects on the bodily functions of human beings. After a hundred years we might essentially have law books that protect the lives and properties of cyborgs and robots. This is why I am considering nature as a fragmented concept; because it will be fragmented eventually.

The Digital Love Industry

Technological developments are more and more widespread in every field of life and thus affect our perspectives on the world. Every new day, we need to accept and agree on some changes that are happening apart from us. For example, we have no say in a new feature for our smart phones that observes our sleeping behaviors; we only accept to buy it or not but somehow we are nevertheless pushing to have them. Technology is the extreme illusion of our lives - we feel a certain necessity to have what we don't really need.

When the human body and technology target the same page, the ultimate changings of human body, which means “becoming-cyborg”, our point of origin to thinking on bioethics and cyborgology. Cyborgology etymologically comes from cyborg which means biological and mechanical forms are maintain the same body at the same time. Cyborgology is connected with dozens of concepts, but I will examine only three of them; robot fetishism, transabled people/transablism, and the Uncanny Valley.

Sexual-oriented-mechanisms which I prefer to call sextechs are the other side of the same coin.

Cyborgology and sextechs are changing the normal way of our sexual experiences. Today, hundreds of products are being developed with millions of dollars investments and they have become very popular. For instance, the world's most famous adult website “*pornhub*”, opened a VR enterprise in order to create sexual content with more lively and actionable figures. *Virtual Reality (VR)*, is the most common content producers nowadays. VR contents are being used in real estate, fashion, and now in the sex industry as well. People are seeking more lively experiences without a real partner. This has advantages for those interested in using these sextechs products. It is easy to use, helping asocial people to experience their sexualities and more crucially, it does not include any existence of a woman or man.

The post-human discussions start exactly on this point. Are we becoming non-humans or transforming the man-made products to humans? Normally, sexual experience includes a man and a woman, though it can also be man to man or woman to woman but always includes a human body form to interact with. After sextechs, and some of them prefer to call it “*the digital love industry (Vice, 2014)*”, “virtual romance” or “artificial sexual interaction” it changed. One way or another, it exists and keeps developing every day even more. Sex dolls/robots have became the most common sex-partners in the world. They used to be produced with fewer features and complications but now they can have vibrating vaginas and even reflections of some emotions (The Sun, 2016). The Silicon Wives (Silicon Wives, 2015), is a well-known sex-doll producers in the world, and luckily we have comments on their products in the website of a Q/A platform Quora: “*I'd say the general consensus is the dolls are great for the physical pleasure part of sex but lack in fulfilling the emotional intimacy component of sex.*” (a review from a user.) (Quora.com, 2016) In 2010, Anthony Ferguson published a book named “*The Sex Doll: A History*” which includes all history of the sex dolls. “*Thus the twentieth century begins a growing synthesis between the image of women as dolls and as items of consumption. While such a notion was hinted at in earlier times, the growth of technology afforded the opportunity to turn fantasy into reality.*” (Ferguson, 2010)

According to another research, which is the only official statistical data can be found on internet, doll-owners have some common features: “*The majority doll-owners sampled are: (a) males, (b) middle-aged,*

(c) White, (d) single, (e) employed, (f) hold a high school degree (or its equivalent) or higher, (g) identify sexual orientation as heterosexual. “ (Valverde, 2012)

The theory and the practice are quite overlapping. The women are subjects of the sex-doll industry. There are male sex-dolls as well but their numbers are not as high as the female dolls. This situation is still reproducing the oppression, inequality and patriarchy even upon the lifeless-machines forms of women. This discussion will be extended in the further sections.

Uncanny Valley

“Since the origin of philosophy, the relationship between man and machine has been object of interrogation. Aristotle thought that the goal of techne was to create what nature found impossible to accomplish... this will a reconstruction of the concept of machine that goes far beyond the technical machine.”(Guattari, 1992)

In 1992, only one year after Haraway published *Simians, Cyborgs and Women*, Guattari wrote *Chaosmosis*. In the chapter two, *Machinic Heterogenesis*, Guattari was referring to Cybernetic perspectives. In the philosophy of Guattari and of course in Deleuze, “becoming” was a substantial concept. Becoming is also connected with the creation of new situations, forms or machines. Becoming-machine or becoming-cyborg in my part, connected to that creation of new condition. Cybernetics, sextecs and all industry that serves for humans with machines creating a new condition in our individuation processes. Humans can highly adaptive to the new situations and this is just one of them, but the problem is, are we becoming less human when machines become more human; in this article's opinion, the answer is yes.

The augmentations in reality by cybernetic developments, causes a fragmentation in nature thus what we consider normal as well. In 1970, *Masahiro Mori* used the term of the Uncanny Valley for the first time. This concept is referring to alienation from artificial forms which overly resembles their natural versions. Cyborgs, sex dolls and every kind of human-like artificial forms are in this uncanny valley if they are too close to be natural like humans.

Sex-dolls are heading to humanly form and humans are becoming-cyborgs by losing their humanly functions and physical looks. This is the opposite effects of technology on human nature.

Neil Harbisson, who is the first legal cyborg in the world, taking as a “cyborg” with apparatuses on his head which provide him an ability to “hear” colours as vibrations because he is color-blind. Nameless sex-dolls are gaining more humanly looks than Neil Harbisson if we consider that normal humans do not have any apparatus on the top of their heads. This is still augmentation of realities but also a destruction of the nature part by part. An ambiguity of realities in which all of us fall into the uncanny valley by calling both of them as “nearly humans”. They keep closing in on the same point from different directions but eventually they will pass over each other and the one which we call normal will become abnormal and the abnormal will become more normal. In this case, are we either need to change our meaning of normal and accept what is going on in our world or keep denying and try to focus on staying as “human”?

Frankly speaking, the obsession of inertia **will** destroy the nature of human being not the movement.

Terence, the famous Roman playwright, has a saying about human nature, *“Homo sum, humani nihil a me alienum puto”*, the translation is, *“I am a human and nothing which came from human is alienated to me.”* (*Jocelyn, 1973*). It is clearly highlighted the confusion of our era, the acceptance of what is created by our hands or make it alien to us like we never created it by ourselves.

Aristotle's concept of *techne* reminds us that creation and craftwork were always there and philosophy was always aware of it, but nowadays, more likely since Heidegger, we have started to fear what we are capable to create.

Analysis

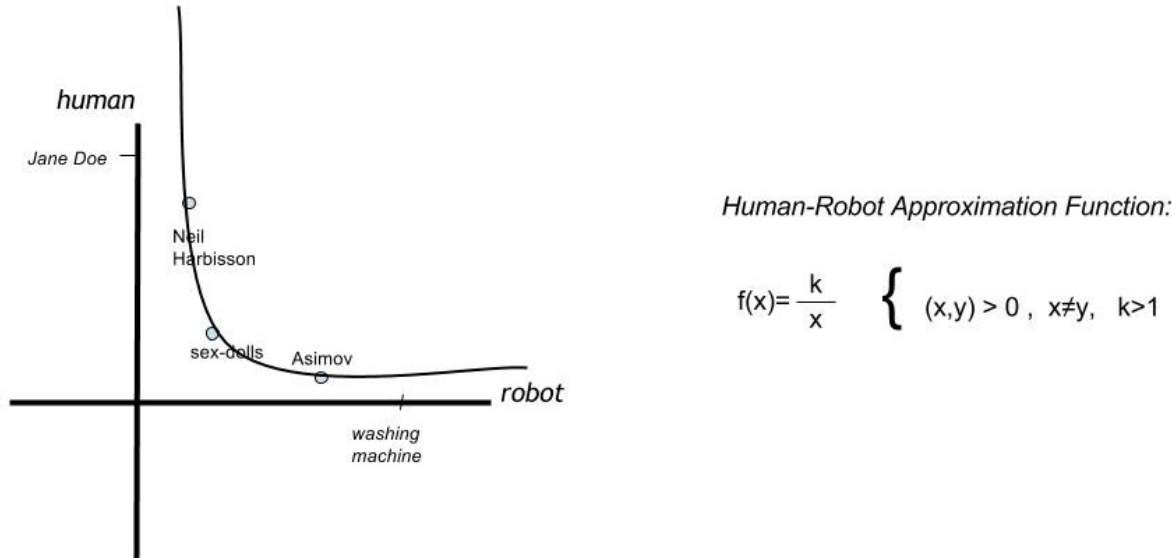


Figure 1. Human-Robot Approximation Function (Başkaya, 2017)

Last but not least, the analysis is the most crucial part of this article. First of all, people need to accept that we are changing, and this change is irreversible, as yet. The denial of this change will only cause more and more conflicts that irritated the nature of human beings. As we accept the change, things won't get any more clear but can be bearable.

The two way street of the human/robot dilemma can and will be stay as a conflict. The sex doll industry is still producing patriarchy because of the using the woman body as a production tool but on the other hand it is limiting harassment and letting people do whatever they want with a lifeless form thus another problem occurs from here, the dolls or robots may necessitate a right to protect. Because humans attitude towards them may exceed the *prima facie* intention and become uncontrollable in a possible future. Today, we can face to face with robot fetishism cases and intentional amputations to become cyborgs whom transabled people. Transabled people willingly amputate limbs of themselves and use cyborg limbs in order to become more able to express their true identities. Robot fetishists express their sexual interests through the robots. Nothing seems impossible after that point, and it shouldn't be forced to stay impossible.

According to my function, at the beginning of this section, and my main hypothesis, we are becoming them and they are becoming us. Human is the main subject to both of them but it is not possible to stay human and stay robot equally, that's why in this equation x can't be equal to y . This exponential function is aiming to prove the becoming-cyborg approximation by analytic screening.

Asimov is more human than a washing machine but still less human than an overqualified sex doll. Jane Doe is more human than Neil Harbisson because in order to become cyborg, Neil Harbisson cannot be equal to other non-apparatus-having humans, and he also has legal documents that prove he is a cyborg. It creates a difference between him and Jane Doe.

I formed this graphic because I intend to say that while we are becoming robots, which I am considering cyborgs are including that process, we are losing our human features and hence our nature is decaying. As a last word, in a TED talk Juan Enriquez, a researcher at Harvard University, answered the question of "Is it ethical to evolve the human body?" with this clear sentence "It is unethical not to evolve the human body." (TEDx, 2016), which I am strongly agree with it.

We are accepting the evolution of the human body to robot or cyborg but we are refusing that it is overcome the patriarchy while still using *bionic-women*. In order to fight with patriarchy and penis-politics we shouldn't make concessions from our bodies. We can change, or evolve but the important part is to stay as a "woman", cyborg or robot does not matter. We should bear in mind that woman robots are still

women that we need to protect. If we are in this fight because of our bodies, they are our strongest weapons.

Conclusion

Consequently, in order to solve *the technological patriarchy*, female and male dolls and other products should be bought in the same numbers. The male body is less an object for manufacturing because of lesser demands on the market. This is also related with social construction as well because women are always oppressed to hide their sexualities because of culture, religion so on and so forth.

Predominantly, this industry running by men but this market also has personalized features thus it does not reproducing a common body shape for women. Today, we can say that cybernetic technologies will create a post-gender era. All those apparatuses, tools, devices, features can reduce the burdens of having a real functioning body. For women, it can be helpful to not the subject to objectification everyday because there are other forms that can carry that, like dolls and tools without reacting to it. Ethical questions directly rising after this consideration, and moral irritations include; is it simply reproducing another oppression towards robots and if still there is an oppression, can we accept that we have overcome the patriarchy? Briefly, if concept of patriarchy keeping survive, we are only tricking ourselves because there are a "robot-body" that subject to that danger.

This paper is not offering any solutions to future problems, rather just predicting that it could take place in future. Mainly, we must ask the important question, if we made a robot that gave birth for our parts will we overcome the system, or just keep reproducing it another system that not includes us but "another thing" that is a robot?

Post-genderism proposing a solution that becoming-cyborg and using the technology to change our sexual identities could solve the problems. I can frankly accept that we will become-cyborgs but it will far beyond the solution to our problems, it is only a way through the future that we will live other experiences with our overqualified bodies and with other robots that we made. *"It's not just that 'god' is dead; so is the goddess."*(Haraway, 1991) We should not kill our goddesses inside us in order to be free and equal, we must make them stronger by accepting them thus this will be our real trophy. God shall stay as dead but not the misogyny and its creators.

The experiences will change but if those experiences still keep imprisoning the women body, it will not solve anything. It is already a problematic way to "cure" patriarchy by changing our bodies to other bodies or mechanisms. Patriarchy will only be overcome by unfettering our minds and bodies, not simply by changing who or what is subjected to it.

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