

Narrative Mode and Fiction
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Science Fiction - IV

Good morning and welcome back to the lecture series on narrative mode and fiction so we are discussing science fiction in the light of Donna Haraway's Essay Cyborg Manifesto.

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Cyborg Manifesto

- Cyborg is a hybrid of **militarism** and **patriarchal capitalism**, but not exceedingly faithful to either
- Cyborg is located at a point where **human** and **animal boundary-line** is transgressed. Rather than walling off humanity from animality, cyborg renders a special status to bestiality.
- The borderline between **organism and machine** is also blurred.
- In the age of dependence on microelectronics, there are copies without originals
- Cyborg is symptomatic of the postmodern era, in which simulation does not correspond either with the real or the truth. Rather, it is "inaugurated by a liquidation of all referentials," and entails "artificial resurrection [of referentials] in the systems of signs. It refers to the hyperreal without an original reference.

In continuation from our previous lecture we see that cyborg is a hybrid of militarism and patriarchal capitalism. And yet it is not exceedingly faithful to either cyborg is located at a point where human and animal boundary, line is transgressed and rather than walling of humanity from animal dam. Cyborg renders a apecial status to bestiality right so it is no longer a homocentric world the human body bears animal traits and vice versa.

The borderline between organism and machine is blurred in the age of dependence on micro-electronics there are only copies without originals. So we could see the symptom of simulacrum in, the cyborg is very much symptomatic of the postmodern era in which simulation does not correspond either with the real or the truth. So rather we are looking at simulation as inaugurated by a liquidation of all referential's.

So simulation entails artificial resurrection of referentials in the system of or rather in the systems of science it refers to the hyper real without an original reference.

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Cyborg Manifesto

- The **post-industrial age and cultures** since the **end of the 1950s** marks changing conditions of knowledge and an entrée into the postmodern conditions. It is coeval with the reconstruction of Europe. Having largely eliminated the agricultural workforce, post-industrial age is defined by manufacturing employment through creating new automated technology.
- The automatons increase manufacturing productivity but displaces human workforce. Haraway extrapolates this condition to humans themselves becoming mechanized and then machines.

If, we go back to the origin of the postmodern era what led to the postmodern you know postmodernism as a movement post modernism in art and culture. We see that the post-industrial age and cultures since the end of the nineteen fifties marks changing conditions of knowledge and an entry into the postmodern conditions. It is almost simultaneous with or co-evil with the reconstruction of Europe.

The European society, having largely eliminated the agricultural workforce post-industrial age is defined by manufacturing employment through creating new automated technology. So what happens with the introduction of automatons in the post-industrial society? The automatons increase manufacturing productivity but at the same time the automatons or the machines displace human workforce.

So Donna Haraway's extrapolates this, condition of a machine replacing a human workforce human productivity to humans themselves becoming mechanized and then partly machines the body parts having some electronic devices some technical devices in them.

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Cyborg Manifesto

- In the cybernetic cosmos, labour becomes **robotics**, sex becomes **genetic engineering**, mind becomes **artificial intelligence**
- Communication science and biology has blurred the gap between machine and organism → **mind, body** and **tool** on intimate terms and interwoven
- The boundaries between base and superstructure, public and private, material and ideal seem blurred
- In the late 20 C, machines are disturbingly lively and human beings surprisingly inert → the margin between artificial and natural is getting unclear
- The cyborg myth **undermines and cracks open the innocence of nature** and **primitive culture** fatally

In the cybernetic cosmos labor becomes robotics, sex, sexuality becomes genetic engineering and mind becomes artificial intelligence. So communication science and biology has blurred this, gap between machine and or organism mind body and tool are all on intimate terms and they are interwoven. The boundaries between base and superstructure public and private material and ideal are also subsequently blurred.

So in the late night in the late twentieth century machines are disturbingly lively whereas human beings are a very surprisingly inert. So the margin between what is, artificial what is synthetic and what is natural or organic is getting increasingly unclear. The cyborg myth basically tends to undermine and crack open the innocence the christianity of nature and primitive culture in a very significant fashion.

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Cyborg Manifesto

- The **authoritative Western epistemology's centrality is transcended**, although who the cyborg will be is a matter of survival – i.e. **whosoever survives in and as the post-Western world**, which is a world with reshuffled rules of gender, race, ethnicity, etc. Cyborg is a creature in the post-gender world, which has no 'origin' story in the Western sense.
- Movements for animal rights points to this connectedness between nature and culture → opposed to the **Christian creationism** in which man is at the centre of the world and nature is at his disposal, biocentrism is proposed. While deep ecologists oppose anthropocentrism in general, ecofeminists oppose male-centeredness or androcentrism.

The authoritative western epistemology is a centrality is thereby transcended with the concept of the cyborg. So we see however that who the cyborg will be, is a matter of survival in other words whosoever survives in and as the post-western world. And this post-western world is a world with reshuffled rules of gender race ethnicity etc. Cyborg is therefore a creature in the post-gender world which has no origin story in the western sense.

Now movements for animal rights points to this connection that cyborg is bringing in between the nature and the, culture. And this kind of interspersing nature with culture opposes the Christian or biblical creationism in which man is shown to be at the center of the world and the nature is at his disposal this is homo-centrism. This is also andro-centrism instead movements for animal rights point to us biocentrism.

So while deep ecologists oppose anthropocentrism in general we see that eco-feminists oppose male scentedness or androcentrism.

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Cyborg Manifesto

- A cyborg world is not afraid of their joint kinship with animals and machines, as well as not afraid of **permanently fractional identities** and **contradictory** standpoints.
- The cyborg world directly flows out of and into the post-modern artistic conditions defined through features such as anti-story or non-narrative, which is burdened with artifice and complex symbolic meanings. The meaning lies in mimicry or constant deferment/doubling.
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- Linearity is replaced by time arrested in an eternal present. There is a focus on dystopian narratives without suggesting avenues out of it.

A cyborg world is not afraid of a joint kinship with animals and machines. So human body kind of tied up with or linked to animals or machines and it is also not afraid of permanently fractional identities and contradictory standpoints. The cyborg world directly flows out of and into the postmodern artistic conditions defined through features such as anti-story or, non-narrative where meaning is not immediate and a priority right.

And such a postmodern aesthetics is burdened therefore with artifice and complex symbolic meanings. The meaning lies in mimicry or constant deferment or doubling we also see that in a postmodern art linearity is replaced by the time being arrested in an eternal present an

eternal presence situation. From which there is neither a, movement a productive or fruitful movement towards the future nor a re-coursing in a very significant way to the past. There is a focus on dystopian narrative as well without suggesting any way out of it.

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Cyborg Manifesto

- In the 20 C U.S. scientific culture, the boundary between human and animal world is thoroughly breached. People no longer feel the need for such separation. **Feminist culture** seeks pleasure in connection of human and other living creatures. Its origin could be seen in the radical-libertarian school that stressed on becoming androgynous persons, assuming both good and bad qualities of men and women.
- Joreen Freeman stresses on becoming androgynous person and celebrates the term 'Bitch' as containing ample traits of masculinity, such as arrogance and brashness that prevents the female from being only a sweet girl.
- The essential **unity of gender, race and class** has given away → there is nothing about being 'female' that naturally binds women.
- Each category such as **gender, race, or class** are formed through contradictory social realities of **patriarchy, colonialism and capitalism**. Fragmentation within feminism has caused **womanhood** to become an **elusive category**, within which one woman can dominate the other. E.g. Bourgeois women are not united with proletarian women but with bourgeois men for the protection of private property, profiteering, militarism, and racism. So primary oppressor for proletarian women is not patriarchy but capitalism.

So in the twentieth century U. S scientific culture the boundary line between human and animal world is completely overtaken completely breached. So people no longer feel the need for any certain, duration between the 2 and feminist culture seeks pleasure in connection of human and other living creatures. And it is origin the origin of blurring this boundaries that specify categories could be seen in the radical libertarian school which stresses on androgynous persons.

And thereby assumes both good and bad qualities of men and women in all the persons right. In fact for example we have Jordan, freeman stressing on becoming androgynous person and celebrates a term such as a derogatory term such as which bitch contains ample trees of masculinity such as arrogance and brashness. Actually prevents the female from being traditionally a sweet person or a caring sympathetic person.

So the essential unity of gender class has given away and hence there is nothing about being female which naturally, binds women across all the different intersections. So we have multiple sites or multiple cases or points of Japadi. We do not have one woman's problem anymore we do not have a unified feminist issue or kind of development. So there are multiple points of development multiple simultaneous development the development of feminism is not in a unilinear direction.

So each category of gender race and, class are formed through contradictory social realities of patriarchy, colonialism and capitalism. Fragmentation within feminism has caused a womanhood itself to become an elusive category within which one woman can dominates the other. As an example we see that the socialist and the Marxist feminists so for example we see that the socialist feminists point out how the bourgeois woman is not unified, with the proletarian woman or the proletarian sister.

But rather with; the bourgeois man for the protection of private property profiteering militarism and for propagating racism. So; primary oppressor for the proletarian woman is not patriarchy but capitalism.

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Cyborg Manifesto

- The cyborg **does not limit itself to boundaries of identities**, i.e. there is no obsession with 'pure' existence – pure woman, pure human. Existence is assumed as **irreversibly hybrid**. Consequently, the cyborg **defies** a social formation through **categories of binary differentiations**, i.e. man/woman, human/animal.
- The sophistication and intelligence of the machines and their capabilities lead to **breaking down of the idea of bodies 'ending at the skin'**- paring away of the definition of human.
- **Chela Sandoval's** formation of new political voice called 'Women of colour' signifies **breakdown of the Western male-centric world**. It constructs a postmodernist identity out of **otherness, difference and specificity**.

Now the cyborg does not limit itself to boundaries of identity or identities in other words there is no obsession with pure experience there is, no pure experience anymore as a simulacrum. It can only have a doubled meaning a displaced experience an experience which cannot trace back to an original referent. So pure woman pure human these are all elusive categories existence is assumed as irreversibly hybrid.

And consequently the cyborg defies a social formation through categories of binary differentiations such as man, woman, human animal, and, so forth. The sophistication and intelligence of the machines and their capabilities lead to breaking down of the idea of bodies which end at the skin or pairing away of the definition of human right. The human as a definition is revisited it is paired of and it is no longer restricted only to the skin of the human.

Chela Sandoval's formation of new political voice called women of color signifies, breakdown of the western male-centric world. And instead it constructs a postmodernist identity out of otherness difference and out of you; know the desire to focus on specificity.

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Cyborg Manifesto

- Rather than **relativism** and **pluralism**, Sandoval's oppositional consciousness is about **contradictory locations**
- The woman of colour has no essential criteria for defining who she is – or her **position** will be **defined through negative identities** by the non-black privileged people -The author is looking for a **brand of socialist feminism** that supports **incomplete, contradictory, open-ended** constructions of **personal** and **collective selves**
- Cyborg feminists, acc. to author, should argue that 'we' do not want any natural unity and that **no construction is whole**

Rather than relativism or pluralism oppositional consciousness is about contradictory locations. So the woman of color has no essential criteria for defining who she is her position will be defined through negative, identities by the non-black privileged people. The author here is looking for a brand of socialist feminism which supports incomplete contradictory open-ended constructions which center you know personal and collective selves not oneself but multiple selves right.

Because put it very simply whenever we have a subject formation of the non-white it is generally put in opposition to the white and it, refines the binaries. So the subject formation you know is not definitive and not forever in critics such as Chela Sandoval's and all we see you know incomplete contradictory open-ended subject construction or identity formations.

Cyber feminists according to Donna Haraway should argue that we as women do not want any natural unity in the development of feminism or in the in the discussion of the feminist, problem. And that no one whole construction is possible there is no construction is whole as such.

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Cyborg Manifesto

- Women's relation to the **world** and **history** restructured through science and technology → rearrangement of race, sex and class in **high-tech social relations**
- Familiar groupings are broken and new collectivities formed due to fast mobility of capital. Proliferation of information-processing machines have an effect on the circulation of learning as well as on **human circulation (transportation systems)** and in the **circulation of sounds and visual images (the media)**. Professional and scientific knowledge becomes the most marketable commodity.
- **Under post-modern conditions, knowledge is produced in order to be sold, it is consumed in order to be valorized in a new production: the goal is exchange. Knowledge ceases to be an end in itself, it loses its "use-value" and attains an "exchange-value".**

So women's relation to the world and history is restructured through science and technology as a in the cyborg world there is rearrangement of race, sex and class in high-tech social relations. Familiar groupings are broken and new collectivities are formed due to the fast mobility of capital. So, proliferation of information processing machines which is very much symptomatic of the postmodern era has an effect on the way learning or knowledge is circulated as well as on all other kinds of circulation.

Let us see human circulation is also facilitated the transportation system becomes more sophisticated people move from one part of the world to another more quickly. And with the media the fact that we are bombarded with information there is circulation of sounds and visual images at very high frequency. These are all you know happening at the onset of the post-modern era. Professional and scientific knowledge becomes the most marketable commodity during this era.

So under post-modern conditions knowledge is produced in order to be sold it is consumed in order to be valorized or celebrated in a new production. The goal of you know acquiring any knowledge is exchange knowledge therefore ceases to be an end in itself knowledge ceases to be an end in itself it loses its use value and attends instead and exchange value. From here Haraway is also looking at the prototypical Silicon Valley she is looking at the case of the women who work in the Silicon Valley.

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Cyborg Manifesto

- **Women** who work in the prototypical Silicon Valley → their lives comprise **heterosexual monogamy**, negotiating childcare, distance from kin and traditional community, and loneliness and economic vulnerability as they age
- **Richard Gordon** talks of a '**homework economy**', in which **factory, home** and **market** are integrated on a new scale and the places for women are crucial
- New communications and homework economy is an **attack** on and **decentralization** from white men's unionized jobs

The lives of such, women comprise a heterosexual monogamy negotiating child you know negotiating child care a distance from family and traditional community. And in the end there is loneliness and economic vulnerability as they age. So Richard Gordon talks of a homework economy in which factory, home and market are integrated on a new scheme. And here the places for women are crucial new, communications and homework economy is an onslaught or an attack on.

And a process of decentralization from white men's unionized jobs the traditional unions that are formed you know who had whose chief architects and protagonists are white men homework economy is a move away from the unionized jobs of white men.

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Cyborg Manifesto

- In industrial societies, men more vulnerable to job loss than women
- **Cross-race** and **cross-gender alliances** become necessary for sustenance of life
- The author sees how women survive **outside a unitary self**, within **dispersion** and **diaspora**

So in industrial societies we see men are in fact more vulnerable to job loss, than the women. So cyber manifest or the cybernetic world the world of cybernetic organism sees you know

cross race and cross gender alliances as very important necessary for sustenance of life. Haraway notes how women survive outside of a unitary self within dispersion and within a diasporic condition such as one can see in the case of the prototypical Silicon Valley.

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Cyborg Manifesto

- Although useful in imagining a departure from traditional categories of difference, the concept of **cyborg** itself is fraught with a Western, patriarchal violence that cannot be ignored in the greater context of technology and technological innovation.
- If a cyborg is originally a military invention, then the conceptualization of the female body as the **cyborg** is a product of the idea of **industrial war machine**, which has **violence intrinsically associated with it**. The nature of such a violence replaces imperialism with the military.
- Mechanism of war and technology enable formation of family through army and technology – Haraway calls propagation caused by the militaristic discourse as government issued children.

So although it is useful, in imagining a departure from traditional categories of difference the concept of cyborg one has to remember is itself fraught with a western patriarchal violence which cannot be ignored in the greater context of technology and technological innovation. If a Cyborg is originally a military invention then the conceptualization of the female body as the Cyborg is only a product of the idea of, industrial war machine which has violence intrinsically which has violence intrinsically associated with it.

The concept of Cyborg has violence and war and militarism intrinsic intrinsically associated with it. So the nature of such violence therefore replaces imperialism with the military. Mechanism of war and technology enable formation of family through army and technology and Haraway calls such a propagation caused by militaristic discourse as government issued children.

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Cyborg Manifesto

- Haraway hints that in the cybernetic world, new pleasures, experiences and powers emerge as a **changing rule of the game**
- The units of socialist feminist analysis –the race, gender and class – are undergoing transformations, leading to **emergence of new kinds of unity**
- Rather than being a feminist with a **common language** and thus **totalized and imperialist outlook**, Haraway studies how to **survive amid contradictions** – merging with animals and machines – away from the Western male-centric viewpoint
- When seen from women's point of view, the cyborg world is free from virulent forms of oppression. It is symptomatic of the alternate path shown by science and technology, where **science plays a feminized role**

And Haraway hints that in the cybernetic world new pleasures new experiences and powers emerge as the rule of the game changes. And keep changing the units of socialist feminist analysis which are the race gender and class are constantly undergoing transformations they are in a state of flux which leads to emergence, of new kinds of unity new you know kinds of power groups. If we may so rather than being a feminist with a common language among the women.

And thus totalized and imperialized outlook Donna Haraway studies how to survive within contradictions where let us say a human body itself the basic assumptions of all categories are reshuffled. The human body merges with animals and further merges with, machines and this is also a way of you know disarming or disempowering the western male-centric viewpoint the traditional categories existence of traditional categories such as class, sexual gender, race refi the western main century viewpoint.

And this is what gets foiled or frustrated when the categories are reshuffled when the entire power game the rule of the game is changed. When seen from, women's point of view the cyborg world is frees from virulent forms of oppression at least the virulent forms of oppression that women have traditionally and historically faced. It is symptomatic of the alternate path that is shown by science and technology where science could also play a feminized rule.

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Cyborg

- **Donna Haraway: "I would rather be a cyborg than a goddess"** → marks the departure of the idea of the woman as a natural, biologically driven, essentialized 'goddess' of the Earth, and embraces the potential of science and technology in providing a shifted idea of the woman → rejection of the nature-driven idea of the woman (the goddess) and replacing it with the cyborg → **Q. Is it replacing one system of control with another?**
- Cyborg is an image of both imagination and material reality → it reflects the tradition of racist, male-dominant capitalism, tradition of progress, tradition of appropriation of nature as reproduction of culture

There is a point where Donna Haraway says that I would rather be a cyborg than a goddess which, marks the departure of the idea of the woman as a natural biologically driven essentialized goddess of the earth and embraces the potential of science and technology in providing a shifted idea of the woman. This is a rejection of the nature-driven idea of the woman or the goddess and replacing it with the cyborg however the question remains is a cyborg replacing one system of control with another.

Because cyborg is an image of both imagination and material reality it reflects the tradition of racist male dominant capitalism two it just like it reflects the tradition of progress the tradition of appropriation of nature as reproduction of culture.

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Cyborg

- Drawing on **pre-1990s technophobia** and **post-1990s technophilia**, sociologist Judy **Wajcman** emphasizes the social studies of technology. She insists avoidance of both **technological determinism** and **gender essentialism** to understand a fluid and flexible gender-technology relationship.
- However, Wajcman notes, "the possibility and the fluidity of gender discourse in the virtual world is constrained by the material world." When technology is predominantly controlled and created by men, the question of material constraints set the limits to how much agency technology is capable of granting in redefining race, gender, and sexuality.
- The cyborg could be seen as existing in the liminal space, **not oppositionally, but frictionally** against other subjects and identities.

So drawing on the pre-nineteen nineties technophobia and post nineteen nineties technophilia sociology is Judy Wajcman emphasizes the social studies of technology. And white, man insists avoidance of both technological determinism and gender essentialism in order to understand a fluid and flexible gender technology relationship. In her words I quote Wajcman the possibility and the fluidity of gender discourse in the virtual world is constrained by the material world unquote.

So when technology is predominantly controlled and created by men the question of material, constraints set the limits to how much agency technology is capable of granting in redefining race gender and sexuality. Because technology in we put very plainly is the domain of has always been the domain of the male and it has been you know the medium of expressing very masculinist male centric ideas.

It has facilitated wars militarism all of which are offshoots of patriarchy so the sidewalk, could be seen as existing in the liminal space not oppositionally but frictionally against other subjects and identities.

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Cyborg

- Critics have seen the idea of the **cyborg as a self-serving offshoot of liberal feminism** that talks about gadgets and movements in techno-scientific ecosystem by looking at the animus and the automaton as an extension of each other.
- Critics like Julia DeCook note that Haraway's notion of personhood is deeply seated in the Western concepts → 'universality' of the cyborg is problematic, as the cyborg allows for the centering of the white identity and a techno-utopic worldview, where technology is seen as emancipatory, and not examined for its limitations.

Like I was saying critics have seen this idea of cyborg as a self-serving offshoot of liberal feminism which talks about gadgets and movements in techno-scientific ecosystem through looking at the animals and the automated as an extension of each other. Critics like Julia DeCook, do not that Haraway notion of personhood is deeply seated in the western concepts.

So universality of the cyborg is problematic as the cyborg allows for the centrality of white identity and a techno utopic worldview where technology is seen as emancipatory and

technology is not examined for its limitations. So what Decook trying to get at is that technology could have its own limitations the concept of Cyborg could have its flip side too.

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Cyborg

- In her work *Race After Technology: Abolitionist Tools for the New Jim Code*, **Ruha Benjamin** shows how **technological designs can be discriminatory and perpetuate inequity through amplifying racial hierarchies**. Haraway is not pointing to the many lapses of technology in 'fixing' problems.
- Technology and the **desire to create and control machines** is a realm **dominated by Man**, and thus **technology** itself may **inherently be patriarchal** (Wajcman, 2004).
- Is women's participation in cyberspace and the technological sphere disruptive of the very basis on which technology is built? Or is it merely, as **Audre Lorde** puts it, a futile attempt to **'dismantle the master's house with the master's tools'**? (Lorde, 1984)

In her work *race after technology abolitionist tools for the new gym code* Ruha Benjamin shows how technological designs can be discriminatory. And in fact they can perpetuate inequality or inequity through amplifying racial hierarchies. Donna Haraway is not pointing to the many lapses of technology in the process of fixing older problems. So technology is, being deployed to fix old problems of race and gender but technology has its own value of problems which is something Haraway does not address in racing.

So technology in the desire to create and control machines is a realm that is you know very prominently dominated by the man and thus technology itself may inherently be patriarchal like white men observes. So questions that come to our mind are, as follows is women's participation in cyberspace and the technological sphere disruptive of the very basis on which technology is built does it debunk the problematics associated with technology.

Or is it merely as you know or reload very correctly puts very significantly puts a futile attempt at dismantling the master's house with the master's tools. So we are trying to challenge patriarchy with a, tool of patriarchy that technology itself is.

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Cyborg

- The cyborg is supposed to shift the essentialized notions of gender and sex away from the body (but does the **technological revolution** of the **late 20th and early 21st century** further **reify these definitions** instead of appropriating them?)
- What possibilities can the **woman**, the **people of color**, the **disabled**, and the **queer** persons find in science, technology, and the cyborg identity? How much access to technology do people from these categories have, upon which the concept of cyborg is built? →unequal technological access exacerbates social inequality.
- Does the cyborg enable dismantling of traditional confines of identity and categorization of existence across all levels?

So the cyborg is supposed to shift the essentialized notions of gender and sex away from the body but does the technological revolution of the late twentieth and early twenty first century further reify rather than move away from or challenge. These definitions what possibilities can the woman the people of color the disabled the queer persons find in signs technology, and the cybernetic identity the Cyborg identity.

How much access to technology do people from these categories have? Upon which the concept of Cyborg is built unequal technological axis could in fact exist a bit worsen the social inequality. So does the Cyborg enable dismantling of traditional confines of identity and categorization of existence across all levels this is something we need to, understand and ask.

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Cyborg

- According to Vandana Shiva, a spiritual ecofeminist, cyborg promotes a '**reductionist constructivism**' in its garb of integrating women's problems. Shiva looks at how global power structures and the destructive logic of techno-science tends to engulf the sacred feminine principle *prakriti*/nature, as imagined in the ancient Indian cosmology.
- **Nina Lykke** argues that the cyborg and the goddess (one as a proponent of science/technology and the other of nature, respectively) are not as dissimilar as they may appear, and have much in common. Feminists working within the techno-scientific paradigm cannot really privilege one over the other.

According to eco-feminist Vandana Shiva a spiritual you know eco-feminist that she is Cyborg promotes a reductionist constructivism in its garb of integrating women's problems. So Vandana Shiva looks at how global power structures and the destructive logic of techno-science tends to engulf the sacred feminine principle called as prakriti or nature as imagined in the ancient Indian cosmology.

Further Nina Lykke argues that the cyborg and the goddess we could call it the goddess or the Devi which is the one as a proponent of you know science or technology whereas the other as the proponent of nature. So the Cyborg being the proponent of science and technology whereas the goddess or Devi being the proponent of nature of prakriti are not as dissimilar as they may appear this is, what Lykke has to say.

In fact they have much in common feminists that are working within the techno scientific paradigm cannot really privilege Cyborg over the goddess or vice versa. We would like to stop our discussion here today and let us meet for another round of discussions in another lecture thank you.