

# Analysis2

Literature



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## A Critical Analysis of Donna Harraway's, " A Cyborg Manifest Science, Technology, and Socialist-Feminism in the Late Twentieth Century"

In the essay " A Cyborg Manifesto: Science, Technology, and Socialist-Feminism in the Late Twentieth Century" Donna J. Harraway primarily focuses on devising a metaphorical political platform that will contain all the fundamental contradictions, without being resolved, of the modern feminism and feminist identity. She uses the metaphor of ' Cyborg' to expose and explicate the self-contradictory bottom line of modern feminist theory and identity. She explains that rudimentary contradictions of feminism in the post modern era should remain conjoined with each other, instead of being resolved, in the fashion a Cyborg contains the fusions of mechanisms and organisms.

Indeed Harraway manipulates the concept of a ' cyborg' as well as a cyborg identity in order to deconstruct pre-colonial as well as colonial fashion of constructing gender and other social institution. Also by deconstructing the polar differences between control and lack of control over the body in Foucault's biopolitics, between subject and object, between reality and perception, and, between natural/biological gender and cultural/stylized gender, she vindicates that post modern feminist discourses requires to develop an unprecedented gender identity that will be both subjective and objective, containing all the apparent ironies of the postmodern feminist identity.

Harraway's use of the ' cyborg' metaphor enables her to conjure up a postmodernist feminist identity that necessarily ushers in an epistemological arena which appears to self-evident and exists on its own in the postmodern era. She says, " The cyborg is a kind of disassembled and reassembled,

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postmodern collective and personal self. This is the self feminists must code” (Harraway 163). Indeed Harraway puts a significant effort on making the cyborg identity of feminism free of the dependency on any ideological allusion for its legibility. According to her, gender as well as feminism is more of a social construct, continually being stylized and cultured, than a natural and objective one. Like the postmodern invention, Cyborg, the postmodern feminist theory and identity is also the postmodern social construct that is to be styled in the fashion, a Cyborg itself is stylized. Harraway believes that the Cyborg’s presence in modern political and scientific discourses has initiated a completely unprecedented perception of social relations and gendered existence, as she says, “ The new technologies affect the social relations of both sexuality and of reproduction, and not always in the same ways” (Harraway 168). Like cyborg culture, according to Harraway, post modern feminism must create a gender-neutral culture and social constructs that will necessarily stylized cyborg identity.

Like the creation of a cyborg, Harraway’s cyborg feminism does not necessarily include the Freudian pattern or Foucault’s biopolitical way of identity development. Rather like a cyborg, Harraway’s feminist identity is devoid of the hereditary legacy of the capitalist patriarchy and parental history. Harraway is also a potential feminist critique of capitalism, as it is evident in the following lines: “ 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” (Harraway 155).

Since Harraway believes that traditional feminist discourses often appear to be biological gender based discussion, her cyborg feminist identity develops

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its main-body on the basis of women's existence in the postmodern era. Unlike Foucault's biopolitics of keeping the body at the heart of an individual's sexual and sociopolitical identity, Harraway's cyborg identity defies to acknowledge the biological existence of female body, as she says, "There is nothing about being female that naturally binds women. There is not even such a state as being female, itself a highly complex category constructed in contested sexual scientific discourses and other social practices" (Harraway 155). But the irony of Cyborg feminist identity, which Harraway herself is aware of, is that this identity evolves from the bodily difference from other existence.

#### Works Cited

Haraway, Donna. "A Cyborg Manifesto: Science, Technology, and Socialist-Feminism in the Late Twentieth Century," *Simians, Cyborgs, and Women*. New York: P. Lang, 2003