



RESONATING CYBERFEMINIST MANIFESTO WITH REFERENCE TO THE WITCHER 3: WILD HUNT

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Cite This Article: Dr. G. Surya, "Resonating Cyberfeminist Manifesto With Reference to the Witcher 3: Wild Hunt", International Journal of Interdisciplinary Research in Arts and Humanities, Volume 7, Issue 2, Page Number 4-8, 2022.

Abstract:

Cyberfeminism is a postmodern concept that emphasizes the relationship between cyberspace, the Internet, and technology. It describes an international, unofficial group of female thinkers, coders, video gamers, and media artists who began connecting online. The rationale of this research paper is to examine how women are treated in video games and to examine the perspectives of Cyberfeminism in *The Witcher 3: Wild Hunt*. Gender stereotypes and intensive gender normative policing are common in online games, which are often characterised by gender preconceptions and intense gender normative policing by both players and developers. It follows the Cyberfeminist idea, which sees technology as a liberating force for women. Technology empowers women by allowing them to express their ideas and assisting in the development of new business models that require them to be rational, visionary, and practical to succeed. In cyberfeminism, the type of net utopianism declares that women have the freedom to be who they want to be.

Key Words: Cyberfeminism, Cyberpunk, Cyborg, Postmodern, Video Games, Net Utopianism

Cyber Feminism is a postmodernist term that refers to the ideologies of a modern feminist group concerned with cyberspace, the internet, and technology. Sadie Plant invented the word in 1991 to describe feminists' work conceptualising, analysing, and exploiting the internet, cyberspace, and new-media technologies in general. The mainstream Cyberfeminist viewpoint sees cyberspace and the internet as a utopian way of liberation from societal conceptions such as gender and sex difference. Cyberfeminism sees technology as a vehicle for sex and gender breakdown, as well as a way to connect the body to machines. The purpose of this research paper is to examine how women are treated in video games and to examine the perspectives of Cyberfeminism in *The Witcher 3: Wild Hunt*.

On May 19, 2015, *The Witcher 3: Wild Hunt* was released. *The Witcher 3: Wild Hunt* is an action role-playing game developed and published by CD Projekt Red. It is based on Andrzej Sapkowski's *The Witcher* series of fantasy novels. It is the third main instalment in *The Witcher* video game series, and the sequel to the 2011 game *The Witcher 2: Assassins of Kings*. It is set in an open world with a third-person perspective. The game is set in a fantastical realm inspired by Slavonic mythology. Players take control of Geralt of Rivia, a hired monster slayer known as a Witcher, as he searches for his adoptive daughter, who is fleeing the otherworldly Wild Hunt. Players use weapons and magic to fight the game's many enemies, interact with non-player characters, and complete tasks to earn experience points and gold, which can be spent to improve Geralt's powers and buy new gear. The tale of the game features three different endings, which are influenced by the player's decisions at important points in the story.

The Witcher conjures up images of a devout developer and an immersive setting in which players can take on the role of a monster-slaying hero. The book series sends forth a humbling message to readers, as well as a critique of humanity's desire for power. *The Witcher* lacks female characters capable of carrying the tale on their own. *The Witcher* may be a better fantasy franchise for women than others. Yennefer's character has been dubbed a "feminist icon" by fans of *The Witcher*, but they ignore the serious ways in which she plays into harmful female stereotypes. That is not to say that Yennefer is without substance. Her character is deep, multifaceted, and undeniably important to the plot. She defeats an army of enemy warriors with a single spell towards the end of the first season. Her character, however, makes it plain that all of her power was not worth sacrificing her fertility. She defeats an army of enemy warriors with a single spell towards the end of the first season. Her character, however, makes it plain that all of her power was not worth sacrificing her fertility. Yennefer's underlying ambition throughout the season is to leave a legacy, and children were her only chance at doing so.

Moving on to Princess Cirilla (Ciri), who is disguised as a boy and playing knucklebones in her first scene. She is clever, has a good sense of humour, and can fight with a sword. Throughout the show, though, she demonstrates an inability to make rational decisions without the assistance of men. Queen Calanthe, her mother, has also been lauded as a feminist figure. Tissaia de Vries, another mother figure, and Triss Merigold, who appears to fall in love with Geralt at first sight, are two more prominent ladies. Of course, a series' feminism isn't limited to how it treats female characters. Ladies outweigh men in *The Witcher* game series in terms of importance to the plot, however, most of the men are unrelated to the plot and have their storylines, and whereas the women revolve on Geralt or other male characters. *The Witcher* fandom itself reinforces the harmful representation and objectification of women in fantasy and gaming.

Gender stereotypes and intensive gender normative policing are common in online games, which are often characterised by gender preconceptions and intense gender normative policing by both players and developers. Gender in these studies is taken as biological sex rather than a range of performative possibilities (Butler, 1999) that defy, play with, and “trouble” gender norms. Typically, studies of online games become studies of male players, or else studies of a specialised group of female players. There is a significant gender disparity when it comes to online gaming: women report playing online casual games, while men report playing Massive Multiplayer Online Role-Playing Games (MMORPGs) (MMORPGs). Casual games are those that are frequently played for short periods, have simple rule systems, and are enjoyed by a wide range of people, as opposed to “hardcore” games, which are thought to demand significantly more skill, effort, and investment. Female players make up between 12 percent and 20 percent of the player bases in both World of Warcraft and the EverQuest franchise (I and II) MMORPGs at any given time.

Women also face far higher levels and types of workplace misogyny, sexism, and sexual harassment, video game feminism, and they face the same kind of harassment in online gameplay contexts, game forums, and user-generated “news” sites like Reddit, 4chan, Kotaku, and IGN, according to Gender and the Video Games Industry. Whether one is a player, a producer, or both, the culture of video games has recently become anecdotally evident that it is misogynistic. While online gaming harassment has long been anecdotally a part of gamer culture, 2011 saw the start of more thorough and detailed documenting of this long-standing phenomenon, demonstrating how and in what ways women, in particular, are threatened and ostracised in online game environments.

The multifaceted theories of gender and identities produced through post-modern, post-structural, feminist, and feminist technology studies inform a feminist perspective in online gaming. Despite best efforts to break stereotypes, everyday expectations about what boys and girls, or women and men, can and should do are just as gender delimited when it comes to digital games: they are the domain of boys and men, just as technology professions, in general, remain male-dominated. The feminist study aims to document the whole variety of gender-based play options, including the identification of feminised male and masculinised female play, for example. The work of feminists to disentangle sex and gender is beginning to loosen that grasp, allowing marginalized players to breathe easier.

The characters are young, imaginative, and have created the identity they have assumed. Feminist energy is combined with technology in the characters. It follows the Cyberfeminist idea, which sees technology as a liberating force for women. It had lofty goals for the internet. It provides opportunities for self-expression and identity reinvention, as well as new opportunities. It is a place where women can not only consume new technologies but also actively participate in shaping their own identities. Technology empowers women by allowing them to express their ideas and assisting in the development of new business models that require them to be rational, visionary, and practical to succeed.

Furthermore, information and communication technology helps women to break free from constraints that formerly limited their activities and identities. They can start over, develop new languages, programmes, images, and fluid identities using this platform, which is also recorded, redesigned, and reprogrammed to fulfil women’s needs and desires to transform the feminine situation. Initially, technology was dominated by men, and feminism was viewed as an anti-technology movement that was irrelevant to women’s situations in the new technologies. However, cyberfeminism has already incorporated many feminist movement techniques, including feminist social, cultural, and language theory and analysis, and has generated new representations of women on the Internet to oppose stereotypes. In 1996 Plant claims, “As technology becomes more advanced, and full societal access to information technology becomes more widespread, women are becoming liberated from the traditional patriarchal power structures that surround and engulf them. In gender roles, gender identity is breaking down, where our societal notions of being human, feminine, and masculine are in transition”.

Cyberfeminism is also a fight to raise awareness of the impact of emerging technologies on women’s lives, as well as the subtle gendering of technoculture in everyday life. The international cyberfeminist aims to bring together women from various fields of knowledge and interest from all over the world to begin working together on increasing women’s participation and visibility in the evolving policies and economies of electronic communications technologies and networks. Finally, cyber feminists need to broaden their critique of media hype about the “techno-world”. Previously, women were discouraged from using computers; however, the internet pushes them to overcome their worries. Women are already creating thousands of websites, allowing them to express themselves in a new interactive way.

The fourth wave has also focused on women’s rights, including sexual harassment, body shaming, and violence against women, rape culture, assault on public transportation, and campus assault, among other issues. In the 2016 presidential election in the United States, Donald Trump defeated Hillary Clinton, who had made several incendiary remarks against women. The day after the election, a grandmother proposed a march on Washington, D.C. on Facebook; the idea quickly gained traction and became a social movement for gender equality; it was the country’s largest single-day demonstration in history. A new wave of feminists is speaking up in unprecedented numbers against prejudice, fueled by the internet’s continual connectivity and the

popularity of the #MeToo movement. Tarana Burke established the movement as a way for survivors of sexual assault to express their anguish and stand in solidarity with other survivors. Victims of sexual harassment began using the hashtag #MeToo to share their stories on social media. Feminism has entered a new period, one marked by passion, social strength, and a desire for change. Trump, who has been accused of sexual misconduct several times, derided the #MeToo movement's standards at a midterm election rally in Pennsylvania. Cyberspace, according to cyberfeminists, gives up new opportunities and liberates old religious, intellectual, theoretical, and philosophical discourses from many parts of their inherent violence. In a new science, it is an arena where knowledge is decentralised and authority is challenged.

Cyberfeminism is a postmodern concept that emphasizes the relationship between cyberspace, the Internet, and technology. It describes an international, unofficial group of female thinkers, coders, video gamers, and media artists who began connecting online. "Cyberfeminism is a myth," says Cornelia Sollfrank of the Old Boys Network, and Mia Consalvo defines it in two ways. The first is as a label for women, particularly young women, who may not want to align with feminism's history not just to consume new technologies but to actively participate in their creation. The second is a critical examination of new technologies and their links to power systems and systemic injustice. Barbara Kennedy, for example, is believed to define a distinct cyborgian consciousness idea, which signifies a mode of thinking that breaks down binary and oppositional discourses. There's also the renegotiation scenario. There's also the rebranding of artificial intelligence, which is regarded as top-down masculinists, like artificial life programming, which is a bottom-up feminine alternative. Both Firestone and Haraway had aspirations predicated on making people androgynous, and they both wanted society to progress beyond biology through technological advancements.

Cyberfeminism is a forerunner of networked feminism, as well as having a connection to feminist science and technology studies. Bruce Grenville in *The Uncanny: Experiments in Cyborg Culture* mentions, "The dominant cyberfeminist perspective takes a utopian view of cyberspace and the Internet as a means of freedom from social constructs such as gender, sex difference and race. For instance, a description of the concept described it as a struggle to be aware of the impact of new technologies on the lives of women as well as the so-called insidious gendering of technoculture in everyday life". Many people have criticised cyberfeminism for its lack of intersectionality, utopian vision of cyberspace, including cyberstalking and cyber abuse, whiteness, and elite community formation. Unconscious biases have been found in the coding of Artificial Intelligence in various studies. The virtual world is merely a reflection of the real world. The AI coders are humans as well. If these coders are unintentionally biased or are not made aware of their unconscious gender prejudices, the artificial intelligence, computers, robots, and algorithms they create will inevitably have biases of their own. Even in this digital age, if this is not taken seriously, the optimism that people had for a world devoid of gender bias would be gone.

Cyberfeminism can connect feminism's philosophical practices to current feminist projects and networks, both on and off the Internet, as well as the material lives and experiences of women in the new world order, however, they manifest themselves in different countries, among different classes and races. The real concept of cyberfeminism is open, fluid, and has yet to be identified as a new feminist theory by those involved in its creation. "Cybergirlism" is one of the most popular feminist avatars currently available to young women on the Internet. As Rosi Braidotti has pointed out, many of these current "female" groups' work is an important manifestation of new feminine subjective and cultural representations in cyberspace, as it is often satirical, parody, hilarious, passionate, angry, or aggressive. In the present, there appears to be a wide range of articulations of feminist ideas and activities in these distinct groupings, ranging from "anyone" to "everyone." In these various groups, there appears to be a wide range of articulations of feminist ideas and practises, ranging from "anyone female can join" chatty mailing lists to sci-fi, cyberpunk, cyborg, and fem-porn zines; anti-discrimination projects; sexual exhibitionism; transgender experimentation; lesbian separatism; medical self-help; artistic self-promotion; job and dating services; and just plain mouthing off.

In general, cyberpunk is concerned with the marginalization of people in technologically advanced cultural "systems." Whether it's an oppressive government, a consortium of enormous, paternalistic corporations, or a fundamentalist church, a system governs the lives of regular people. Information technology has improved this system, allowing it to better retain those who are part of it. The "Cyborg Manifesto" is a socialist-feminist study of "women's predicament in the advanced technology age." The term "cyberspace" could be used to describe the non-physical environment created by computers. If we look at the realm of the internet or cyberspace, we can see how technology is enabling female emancipation (Colley & Maltby, 2008). Women can utilise cyberspace to exchange and/or swap information, socialise, engage in recreational activities, and participate in conversations in social forums, as well as do business and a variety of other activities. "The information galaxy, the cyberspace and the Internet...are no longer viewed as a masculine space and tool as women have not only embraced but also used the cyberspace to negotiate and reframe themselves within existing social structure" (Kuah-Pearce 11).

Men controlled the content, men earned the profit. Similarly, a gender gap emerged in how women and men accessed the internet: men surfed, hopping from site to site; women went directly to certain sites or

searched for information on specific topic. (Richard & Schnall 26). As technology becomes more advanced, and full societal access to information technology becomes more widespread, women are becoming liberated from the traditional patriarchal power structures that surround and engulf them. In the gender roles, gender identity are breaking down, where our societal notions of being human, feminine, and masculine are in transition (Plant, 1996). This technology gives women the power to express their ideas to develop new business models, which has to be rational, visionary, and practical in order to get things done. The e-media are completely new technologies which give women a chance to start afresh, create new languages, programs, platforms, images, fluid identities and multi-subject definitions. This e-media can be recoded, redesigned, reprogrammed to meet women's need and desire to change the feminine condition (Wilding, 2006).

Cyberfeminism has already adopted many of the strategies of feminist movements, feminist social and cultural, and language theory and analysis, creation of new images of women on the Net to counter sexist stereotyping. Cyberfeminists have the chance to create new formations of feminist theory and practice which address the complex new social condition created by information and communication technologies. (Wilding, 1998) An initial feminist idea in information technology was simply to get women online. At first, there were relatively few women's sites on-line, the National Organization for Women (NOW) and the Feminist Majority Foundation among them. One of the feminists to recognize the absence of feminism in cyberspace was Marianne Schnall, who became fluent in cyberspace through her experience in 1994 co-founding EcoMall.com, a portal for environmental information and resources. Marianne realized feminism needed this same type of one-stop central location, registered the domain name "Feminist.com", and contacted friends and colleagues - in feminist activism, law, television, journalism, music, marketing and communications - to elicit their input about what Feminist.com should be.

Despite the undeniable contributions of women to the invention and development of computing technology, the Internet today is a contentious zone that began as a system to support war technologies and is now a component of patriarchal institutions. Any new possibilities envisioned for the Internet must first accept and properly consider the consequences of the Internet's founding structures and current political situations. As a result, inserting the word feminism into cyberspace, interrupting the flow of masculine codes by publicly expressing the goal to bastardise, hybridise, provoke, and infect the patriarchal order of things by politizing the Internet environment, can be considered as a radical act.

As a non-transcendental decentralised communication system, cyberspace renders questions of origin, authenticity, and genuine knowledge unimportant. The claim to authority has no place in this framework, which also deconstructs the author's or legitimate interpreter's claim to patriarchal-oriented transcendence, which is typically used to subvert women and others while speaking on their behalf. According to cyberfeminists, however, cyberspace opens up new options and liberates old religious, intellectual, theoretical, and philosophical discourses from many parts of their customary immanent violence. Many cyberfeminists believe that e-media are completely new information technologies that have given women the opportunity to start over, create new languages, programmes, platforms, images, fluid identities, and multi-subject definition—that the e-media can, in fact, be recoded, redesigned, and reprogrammed to meet women's need and desire to change the feminine condition. In cyberfeminism, this type of net utopianism declares that women have the freedom to be who they want to be.

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