

October 13th, 2021

The Cyborg Manifesto is a puzzle and a multidimensional piece that lacks a standard structure. Reading this piece, I initially deemed it chaos and absolute nonsense. However, with every rereading attempt, I realized that this chaotic piece that creates a path of confusion, surprisingly manages to integrate each reader's life experiences and perspectives within its lines. As a lover of reading and every medium of self-expression and creativity, I must acknowledge that Haraway's piece is unique, even if my impression of it is not a favourable one. The Cyborg Manifesto is confusion, frustration, and a bunch of life advice all camouflaged and hidden within complex words and philosophical references lost on many readers, including me.

"Our machines are disturbingly lively, and we ourselves frighteningly inert."
— (Haraway, 1991, p. 5).

With the above quote, I would like to bring my perspective coloured by my own life experiences as well. To me, this quote reads as a warning to what it means to become complacent, and to never question the world we live in. It is a warning of what it would be like to remain motionless humans within a whirlwind of motion that is our ever-changing technological world. Haraway's manifesto requires critical thinking and the ability to keep an open mind in order to understand it. This mirrors the real world where adaptability and critical thinking are crucial for a better quality of life.

I must admit that I've had a privileged life where I was never confined as a woman within misogyny disguised as cultural or social norms. Consequently, I've never really given feminism much thought. However, as an Arabic woman, I acknowledge the struggle of many women in my region. I acknowledge that my community, like many others, has still much room to grow and the potential to overcome many obstacles. This brings me to the cyborg or as Haraway describes it, the *"illegitimate offspring"* (Haraway, 1991, p. 5).

One of the most powerful and beautiful messages in Haraway's manifesto is the one where she encourages readers to take advantage of the cyborg and to simply, turn the tables around! In the end, cyborgs are *"exceedingly unfaithful to their origins. Their fathers, after all, are inessential"* (Haraway, 1991, p. 5). In other words, yes, there are many wrongs things that need to be fixed in this world generally. But you know what? We can absolutely create positive and constructive change using the very same cyborg that was born from malice. Afterall, we are not inert, but we are frighteningly and surprisingly adaptable creatures.

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Lastly, I would like to conclude this reflective piece by wishing that Haraway's delivery of The Cyborg Manifesto was more legible. I understand that I was never the intended audience to begin with, and that the chaotic nature of the manifesto was probably intentional. However, I still stand behind my initial unfavourable opinion of Haraway's delivery. There are great messages within the text that are sadly lost to many readers due to the overly complex writing style. You see, there are many problems in this world that we are not even aware of, and I truly believe that it's an author's duty to inform and create awareness when they can. But how do we fix world issues that we can't even understand? How do we create change from chaos? I believe that we write and read to make sense of a chaotic world and to share our understanding and vision with others. Thus, I don't believe that Haraway's delivery method was an ideal one, even if it had a few comprehensible messages here and there.

References

Donna Haraway: The Cyborg Manifesto from *Simians, Cyborgs and Women: The Reinvention of Nature* (New York; Routledge, 1991), pp.149-181.
