

ANARCHO-TRANSHUMAN IS A JOURNAL OF THE UNCONTENT, OF THOSE WHO REFUSE TO EVER SETTLE OR TEMPER THEIR DEMANDS.

IN THE WORDS OF ANARCHISTS THROUGHOUT THE AGES, WE DON'T WANT ANY ONE THING, WE WANT EVERYTHING.



ANARCHO-TRANSHUMAN

A JOURNAL OF RADICAL POSSIBILITY & STRIVING

ISSUE #1

FEMINISM + QUEERING ALL THE THINGS

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POINTS OF UNITY

Opposed to all power relations and social structures limiting or constricting agency; including but not limited to capitalism, the state, racism, sexism, heteronormativity, speciesism, and basically being a dick. Although technically if you want to become like a giant penis we suppose that's your own matter. For cognitive and morphological freedom.

Some works straight up borrowed when we could not contact original author.

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ISSUE 1

Contents

| | |
|--|----|
| On the Importance of Being a Cyborg Feminist Kyle Munkittrick | 1 |
| Technology Is Making Queers Of Us All Dale Carrico | 6 |
| The Floating Metal Sphere Trump Card William Gillis | 12 |
| Penis-In-Vagina Politics: Physical Realities & Social Constructions Summerspeaker | 15 |
| Vagina Dentata and the Annihilation of Rape Hyena | 18 |

solutions, however, are only slightly better than Rape-aXe, because the weaponry would inspire counter-weaponry.

Star Trek and Superman offer stronger resistance possibilities. If the “deflector shield” that protected the Starship Enterprise is scaled down for the human form, a bubble of security would be attained. The “Man of Steel” is equally invulnerable with his dense Kryptonian body and “force field” surrounding his flesh. Neither of these improvements is forecast for the near future, however.

What we can employ for safety, immediately or in the next decade, are the strategies below:

Already universally employed in airports, smart cameras could be installed, unobtrusively, in numerous public areas. Capable of analyzing what they observe, they set off alarms if they witness behavior that is programmed as “unsafe.” Micro-sensors (additionally equipped with auditory and olfactory abilities) could also be installed on anyone’s body, to record hostile behavior directed at them. The bionic eyeball “eyeborg”, utilized by Terminator and Canadian filmmaker Rob Spence, could serve as a safety enhancing “third eye.”

Obviously, employment of these options would result in drastically diminished privacy in public spaces. But that's only a danger while there are institutions in existence capable of acting like a “Big Brother.”

The security that Rape-aXe provides is similar to shooting intruders in your home. Isn't it far better to deny them interior access? Anyone with morbid imagination can visualize numerous situations in which Rape-aXe's "security" backfires, due to the equation of "violence begetting more violence." The same flaw exists in Haumann's penectomy tool, and in "FemDefense," a similar, Swedish design that features a sharp pin sticking out of a tube, waiting to puncture the glans.

It is interesting to note how defense against rape – or any physical assault – mimics strategies in animal behavior. The 15th century chastity belt resembles the hard-bodied protection of the armadillo, pangolin, snail, turtle, and mollusks like oyster and clam. The advice to "never walk alone" has been obeyed for epochs by ungulate herds. Pepper spray and mace owe a debt to skunks and the bombardier beetle (stink bug), as does the "Horberg Device" – an appliance the Rape-aXe website refers to, that expels a "crude odor." Tasers, now available to resemble cell phones, impersonate the cruel jolt of a scorpion or wasp. FemDefense, Rape-aXe, and the Haumann device are sharply linked to porcupines and sea urchins.

There's even a modern equivalent to the "invisibility" defense employed by squid and octopi that expel ink, and insects and reptiles that utilize camouflage. Michelle Leslie, a 25-year-old Australian model, was convicted of drug possession in Indonesia (two ecstasy tablets) and tossed into a prison for three months. After observing that another woman was regularly taken out of her cell for forced sex with the guards, Ms. Leslie donned the shroud-like Muslim burqa, and was summarily ignored.

Transhumanists need to devise self-defense mechanisms that transcend these techniques employed by lower life forms, and sci-fi offers some options. *Snow Crash*, by Neal Stephenson, presents a vagina dentata that narcotizes trespassers with a tiny hypodermic needle. If women installed this, the dismantling of it could be regarded as part of the foreplay process, like removing the last item of clothing. Female groins could also be implanted with micro-spray guns that have incapacitating fumes, similar to the gas Russians used to overpower Chechen militants in the 2002 Moscow theater-hostage crises. These

On the Importance of Being a Cyborg Feminist

Kyle Munkittrick

Transhumanism's relationship with postmodern philosophy and critical theory is a strange one. For example, Nick Bostrom's influential "A History of Transhumanist Thought" spans centuries, covering the gamut from Utnapishtim to the President's Council on Bioethics, but makes little mention of those who radically challenge the core Enlightenment narrative upon which he builds his history. Figures like Nietzsche, Marx, and Donna Haraway do all receive a nod in Bostrom's essay, including Haraway's cyberfeminist motto, "I'd rather be a cyborg than a goddess," but their ideas go unanalyzed. Of course, the context for these thinkers is often ignored and their works simply mined for epigraphs and potent, argument-punctuating lines such as Haraway's. Make no mistake: Bostrom's essay (indeed, his entire corpus of work) is essential reading for any serious transhumanist. But there are gaps in his history that are reflective of a larger dismissal of certain philosophers by transhumanist intellectuals. Among those neglected, I would list Jean Baudrillard, Michel Foucault, Judith Butler, Donna Haraway, Bruno Latour, Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak, and Jürgen Habermas. Clearly there is insufficient time and space to even begin to discuss all of these figures properly, so I would like to draw your attention to just one in particular, Donna Haraway, and her work with cyberfeminism.

Haraway's "A Cyborg Manifesto: Science, Technology, and Socialist-Feminism in the Late Twentieth Century" is the locus classicus of cyberfeminism. Published as an essay in 1985 and then redrafted as a chapter in Haraway's *Simians, Cyborgs, and Women: The Reinvention of Nature* in 1991, the manifesto has aged particularly well, remaining

relevant within feminism and cultural studies, and it is often quoted in transhumanist works. The manifesto was written as a rebuttal of eco-feminism, a philosophy that views technology as inherently patriarchal and advocates communism and deep ecology as a counterpoint to what they see as the Western capitalist patriarchy. Drawing partially upon Foucault (whom she also mocks), Haraway argues instead that the very forms of power used by hegemonic forces can be used for resistance and liberation.

Haraway co-opts hegemonic power through her figure of the cyborg. She begins by defining the cyborg as a blasphemous, ironic, rebellious, and incomplete entity that undermines the categories we so cherish in Western society: animal-human, organic-machine, and physical-nonphysical. Though a product of Western capitalist patriarchy, like all good science-fiction heroes the cyborg is disloyal and insurrectionary. Thanks to its heritage, Haraway sees the cyborg as capable of taking the West's concept of historical and intellectual progress, the capitalist drive for communication and cooption, and the patriarchal hierarchy and transmute all three into a postmodern socialist-feminist counter-force. Haraway's cyborg is a rhetorical refutation of both eco-feminism and Western capitalist patriarchy, acting as a kind of guerilla postmodern subject, able to take the potent qualities of its enemies and utilize them for its own purposes. In short, Donna Haraway's cyborg is rebellion embodied in a single techno-organic subject.

"A Cyborg Manifesto" helped to found cyberfeminism and cyborgology, the latter of which was expanded upon by Chris Hable Gray. The former, cyberfeminism, focuses on the ways in which science and technology interact with gender roles and their mutual constructions in society. In addition to Haraway's continuing work with companion species, technologically mediated communities and critical science studies, theorists like Judy Wajcman, N. Katherine Hayles, and Nina Lykke have all contributed significantly to cyberfeminism. The corpus of cyberfeminist literature reads like transhumanism through the looking-glass: an odd counter-perspective that parallels, contrasts, undermines and buttresses simultaneously. When Haraway says, "Monsters have always defined the limits of community in Western imaginations," she captures this counter-position perfectly. Transhumanists point to the

"Rape-aXe" was next. Unveiled in 2005 by medical technician Dr. Sonnet Ehlers, this simple latex sheath transforms the female orifice into a shark-like vagina dentata. 25 razor sharp barbs, facing inward, serve as a "rape trap" that painfully hooks the penetrator. The snared assailant, claims Dr. Ehlers, "cannot pee or walk when it is on, and if he tries to remove it, it will clasp even tighter." The vengeful fangs can only be removed surgically, a procedure that would alert police and imprison the rapist.

The munching mechanism costs only 1 rand (14 cents) and its potential was carefully researched – Dr. Ehlers consulted engineers, gynecologists, psychologists, and convicted rapists to determine its effectiveness. She sold her car and house to mass-produce the dick-chewing device and she reportedly distributed 30,000, for free, at the 2010 World Cup venues. Despite her efforts, South African women aren't all chomping at the bit to purchase her product. Instead – like Haumann – Dr. Ehlers was chewed up by pundits, especially women.

Charlene Smith fretted that Rape-aXe, "is vengeful, horrible, and disgusting. The woman who invented this needs help." Another critic – a rape victim who was stabbed twice – insisted that Rape-aXe, "will increase the danger to women... the government must not allow this to go on sale." I contacted Dr. Ehlers in late January 2010 to inquire about her sales volume, but I never received a response.

Dr. Ehlers presents, in my opinion, solid justification for her wiener-ripper. "It will help identify attackers and secure conviction," she tells the Johannesburg Star. "A medieval deed deserves a medieval consequence," she explains on her website, that lists numerous letters of support and endorsement. Unfortunately, the product's primary weakness is that it only provides past-the-threshold protection. The assailant is incapacitated only after a woman has been:

1. Terrified
2. Physically Assaulted (rape victims are often beaten)
3. Stripped of her Clothes
4. Penetrated

Vagina Dentata and the Annihilation of Rape

Hyena

Rape has been violating women since the dawn of humanity. Even before that, evolutionarily. Our Great Ape relations – chimpanzees and gorillas – are rapists, and approximately 50% of orangutans are the result of rape. Gang rape, war rape, prison rape, date rape, serial rape, spousal rape, incestuous rape... hundreds of millions of females have been terrified, humiliated, injured and scarred.

Rape has to be halted, but how? Is there a transhumanist remedy? A technological solution?

The “Rape Capital of the World” is currently South Africa, with a University of South Africa study estimating 2,777 rapes per day, for a total of 1 million a year. The South African Law Commission asserts the figure is considerably higher: 1.69 million per year. Journalist, rape survivor, and anti-rape activist Charlene Smith claims that a South African woman is raped every 26 seconds; 40% of the victims are children, and 65% are gang-raped, aka “jackrolled.” Human Rights Watch reports that 28% of South African males has admitted to sexual assault, in this nation where 16.9% of the adult population is HIV/AIDS infected.

To combat this atrocity, the citizenry invented two retaliatory devices. A “killer tampon“, developed by 72-year-old Jaap Haumann in 2000, sports a guillotine blade attached to a hollow cylinder that, if sprung, decapitates any intruding penile head. Haumann estimated that 1 million women would arm their crotches with his contraption, but he was ridiculed in the media and sales never materialized.

pinnacle of what it believes humanity could become; where it might be going, and asks, “why not?” and “how do we get there?” Cyberfeminists (and postmodernists in general) look at the abject, the debased, the grotesque and the marginalized and ask “why is it so? How did this become the fringe?” Transhumanism needs cyberfeminism because it functions to expose the way in which defining the “human,” and in turn, the “transhuman,” can repress, reject, and otherize those it claims to help.

Cyberfeminism takes as an axiomatic principle that, though technology is inherently neutral, the entire process of technological development, design, and engineering is influenced by society and culture and, thus, in part by normative forces such as patriarchy. While eco-feminists propose to fight fire with water, countering tech with nature, cyberfeminists champion fighting fire with fire. Feminism — and critical theory in general — provide tools and concepts necessary for transhumanists to understand how “the human” is socially constructed. “What makes us human” is constantly up for debate because the meaning of “human” changes through history and from culture to culture. The accepted or “normal” definition is the result of sociological power structures best described by French philosopher Michel Foucault. For example, Foucault noted in *A History Of Sexuality* that a “sodomite” was one who had committed the act of sodomy, perhaps once, perhaps on multiple occasions, while the later designation of “homosexual” was someone with a medically or psychologically diagnosed pathology. In short, a man having sex with a man went from a single act, a sin, to a condition, a problematic state of being. Furthermore, it is now largely recognized as one sexuality among a multitude. The implications for transhumanism are clear: if Foucault’s method of historical genealogy can be used to deconstruct what is seen as “natural” sexuality, then what other “natural” aspects of the human subject can be shown to be equally constructed and open for change, perhaps in the form of augmentation (of body, mind) or elimination (of suffering and death).

Judith Butler extrapolated Foucault’s genealogy to the level of identity, explaining that “normal” and “self” are things we perform and reiterate, such as gender norms or patterns of speech. Interestingly,

feminist scholar Elizabeth Grosz parallel's Foucault's theories with those of Charles Darwin. Both Darwin and Foucault expose the non-teleological progress of history and, concomitantly, that human progress, both biologically and socially, is determined in the retrospective. The transhumanist project, like any technological advancement, will place new tools into the hands of authorities to control and regulate life. Feminist and critical theorists have done immense amounts of work exposing these systems of control and demonstrating the methodology for changing them. The transhumanist model of political change should, unquestionably, be built upon the cyberfeminist model of political change.

For a specific example, we turn to reproductive technology. Be it birth-control, STD prevention, assisted reproductive technologies, abortion methods, ultrasounds, neo-natal care, or a myriad other technologies that are involved in birth, the politics and ethics around these debates are classic arenas of feminist thought and action. The main reason for this tight coupling is that despite pregnancy's obvious impact on women, women's voices are often silenced or manipulated in the heated political arguments. Transhumanists are liberal/progressive almost by definition, supporting as many options for the human body as possible, and tend to support many feminist issues, such as abortion rights, safe-sex education, and birth-control options. Politically, feminists and transhumanists are often in complete agreement. Why then, you might ask, should transhumanists make a concerted effort to embrace feminism when both philosophies seem to work together so well as it is?

The issue is one of the chicken-and-the-egg: does technology liberate society from norms or does political social theory liberate technology from norms? This question is, perhaps, the core issue of cyberfeminism. Judy Wajcman's "In What State is the Art?" explicates the debate and concludes that while the rise of cyberfeminism has given people the tools and understanding to better utilize technology for feminist goals, technology currently does more to reinforce gender roles than to undermine them. If we extend this conclusion from just gender to all societal norms, we are confronted of a picture in which technological advancement without accompanying social movements becomes a source of danger and repression instead of hope and liberation. Cyberfeminism

adherents of Abraham.

It should go without saying that there's nothing necessarily oppressive about any interaction of human bodies that can happen without significant physical injury. Radical feminists may well veer into essentialism and conflation of construct with material reality, but if so they do these things for a legitimate political purpose. We're talking about the lives of billions here. Reaction against so-called feminist extremists is exactly that: counterrevolutionary reaction that supports the status quo either explicitly or implicitly.

Transhumanism enters the debate offering both a belief in making PIV safe for those who desire it and deconstruction of that act's privileged position. The technofix doesn't interest me in this case, so I'll jump to number two. As tons of folks get off just fine from much less risky sex acts, rational reflection shows preference for PIV (and penetrative sex in general) to be based overwhelming in antiquated if not downright superstitious cultural narratives. Why should we respect irrationality in this matter? Current birth control debates sound absurd when you consider their foundation in a binary opposition between PIV intercourse and the much-dreaded abstinence. Pregnancy isn't likely for potential breeders engaging in anything other than PIV – and it's downright impossible for folks with the same genital configuration. It's a pity rationalists have given little attention to this subject. (Anyone care to guess why that is?)

I urge serious consideration of the critique presented by Dworkin, FCM, and company. We will never achieve genuine revolution without radically rethinking and remaking all of our personal relationships. At a minimum, PIV intercourse – and penetrative sex in general – has to lose its sacred status and pivotal place in dude supremacy for the project of sexual liberation to proceed. Despite popular opinion, sex doesn't require sticking a cock somewhere.

emotional and psychological harm; FCM goes so far as to describe the positive feelings often associated with PIV as a trauma-bonding.

Coming from a background in Shulamith Firestone's thought and transhumanism, FCM's insistence on the relevance of corporeal experience resonates with me. Reproductive biology matters; Firestone traces the origins of women's oppression to female status as the means of reproduction. Though ey made no critique of PIV intercourse, Firestone's materialist analysis lends itself to that position. PIV sex is what makes females undergo the process ey described as like shitting a pumpkin. The nightmare of compulsory pregnancy walks hand in hand with compulsory PIV intercourse. It's there hiding in the shadows whenever a parent pressures a child to produce grandchildren. Vast cultural forces demand heterosexuality, PIV, and breeding. We need attacks on this oppressive apparatus from every angle possible. In this sense, FCM and company contribute to the good fight. (Indulge, if you would, my vain hope that all ours sweat and tears constitute a collective struggle that can lead us to a better world.) I have difficulty imagining the patriarchy without PIV as an enshrined institution, though also a profound respect for its mutability.

At the same time, the self-styled pro-sex opponents of this perspective bring an important critique of their own. They rail against what they view as an attempt to code sex as a bad and regulate individual sexual expression, invoking the repressive sexual morality of organized religion. They remind us that no good would come from the policing of individuals' sex lives. While always something to watch out for as anyone who grew up under the spell of religion knows, I consider this fear mostly misplaced. The historical censorship alliances between anti-porn feminists and Christian moralists do give cause for alarm, but they strike me as marriages of convenience more than anything else. Moreover, the same affinity does not apply on this subject. The allegation of puritanism against PIV critics becomes strange when one considers the record: Who has greater respect for that act the Abrahamic religious hierarchy? For hundreds of years they've been the ones mandating PIV by divine decree and denouncing other sex acts as a diabolical or unnatural. Straightness has indeed been a narrow road to travel. Going after PIV intercourse strikes at the heart of the traditional family and is anathema to the

matters for transhumanism because we cannot overcome the limits of biology without overcoming the limits of society: the latter will always inhibit the former, not the other way around.

Of all the examples I could present, the most forceful is that of transgenders and intersexuals. Both communities are heavily dependant upon and subject to the medical, technoscience, and legal institutions that form our society in ways that uniquely highlight how interlinked transhumanism is to cyberfeminism. For a person to change biological sex requires trained medical professionals to both approve the procedure and to "diagnose" the reason for it, in order to ensure it is covered by insurance. The latest advances in technology and scientific know-how determine how "complete" the transition can be, not to mention how quickly, safely and painlessly the procedure is. In the legal realm, things are more complex. How does one corroborate a male birth certificate with a female driver's license? Can that person be drafted? Who can that person marry? For a person living between a socially constructed binary, the law can be a Kafkaesque labyrinth of contradictions, dead-ends and trompe l'oeil's wherein a person-in-between ceases to be a person at all.

For transsexuals and intersexuals, transhumanism is a real, visceral, day-to-day lived philosophy. Yet the technology, while liberating in that it allows better transitions every year and provides better medical support for those who have transitioned and those born in-between, has not changed the social norms that entrap and restrict trans and intersex individuals. Because of that failure, we need a philosophy of social change, one that is built upon the discourse of dissolving cultural norms, of countering social standards and undermining hegemonic power. Transhumanism can articulate the technologies, the potential selves, the unlimited beings we can be, but it needs cyberfeminism to prepare the way, to alter the politics and deconstruct the norms of culture and society that would bind technoscience to mindsets of the past. Transhumanism and cyberfeminism are complimentary philosophies that, when united, are capable of driving the technological development, political change, and societal progress necessary for both to be successful.

Technology Is Making Queers Of Us All

Dale Carrico

So long as lesbians and gay men are unable to legally marry, adopt children and serve in the military it is pretty clear that they will remain second class citizens in countries forbidding them these everyday rituals of conventional citizenship. They will be singled out instead for special discrimination, legally vulnerable to exploitation and attack, and constantly exposed to culturally sanctioned violence. These liberal arguments for lesbian and gay civil liberties are widely known by now and, thankfully, appear as well to be ever more widely affirmed.

But in this piece I mean to argue for a different and deeper queer politics than the liberal politics of lesbian and gay rights, a politics that connects the contemporary political struggles of queer people with the politics of disruptive technological change. Ultimately, I think that the efforts to secure lesbians and gay men the right to marry their lovers or to fight in wars (to the extent that these are separable activities) will come to be viewed as stepping stones along political and cultural paths that brought humanity to far more subversive places. Queerer places.

Assimilationist Straightjacket

I'm a gay man, I suppose, and so I stand to benefit, I suppose, from victories in the struggle for basic gay rights. And yet, I have to admit, I find it difficult to get too enthusiastic about these rights in anything more than a very abstract way.

The right to adopt kids? No thanks! My idea of parenting would

Penis-In-Vagina Politics: Physical Realities and Social Constructions

Summerspeaker

Over the last few days, I've found myself in a number of conversations that involved criticism of penis-in-vagina (PIV) intercourse on feminist grounds. Blogger lateralpazwalk recently came out as an anti-PIV man, which generated a fascinating radical feminist discussion on Facebook. After FCM's piece about Hugo Schwyzer exposed them to the critique, the folks on RevLeft employed the opportunity to dismiss it as feminism run amok and bemoan the horror of supposed puritanical extremists such as Andrea Dworkin (may the God who does not exist rest her soul). Even a rather knowledgeable and even-handed RevLefter had no compunctions against blithely proclaiming PIV right for the majority of human species.

So what's going on here? Why such noise and heat? What makes this one sex act so simultaneously sacred to Abrahamic religious fundamentalists, evolutionary biologists, and random straight people on the street? Radical feminists like Dworkin and FCM make a compelling case for its central role in patriarchal oppression. The responding outcry bolsters their point and shows the importance of PIV to straight identity – especially straight dude identity. I find the materiality of FCM's indictment particularly intriguing. While any self-respecting queer theorist should recognize the trouble in privileging PIV sex as the one true path, most would balk at suggesting inherent problems. FCM emphasizes the health hazards to females in the form of pregnancy, sexually transmitted disease, and injury. These dangers in turn generate

real damage that happens to be based on the assumption that such genders exist or should exist. Patriarchy is the enemy and I don't give a shit what it takes to bring the fucker down.

If gender actually conflicts with ethics, then we should chuck gender. If human biology actually conflicts with ethics, then we should move to chuck human biology. Those folks who argue that some bit of shitty social behavior is built in should be treated like someone admitting an unethical addiction, not someone on the verge of scoring an actual ethical point. You don't have to be a douche! There are ways out! Here, there are tools becoming available to help you can transcend your failing!

If our demands are currently less than fully actualizable then that's all the more reason to demand them, to pressure society into developing and accepting the tools to realize them.

Of course our demands are entirely actualizable right now. There isn't any ethically relevant substance to distinctions between sexes. Well besides the fact that one can have a factory inside it to make more people. People are statistically all over the place and growing more diverse as knowledge and technology empower them to make changes to their minds and bodies. But who knows maybe there's some utterly marginal way the bro-dude's thing really reflects a minor stastical bent in some fashion between the sexes or whatever. (Or maybe things are bent in a direction that would make the bro-dude horrified.) There's every reason to stay harshly skeptical of "scientific" evidence for such, but there's no reason to be terrified of eventually accepting proof of such. My feminism is stronger than that.

So the next time someone starts rattling on about their crackpot gender essentialist theory may I recommend countering with an Even if that were remotely plausible, why would it matter in the slightest to the basic ethics of how minds should treat one another? Fuck you, I'm a floating metal sphere. And then just pummel them with future-shock and uncompromising radicalism until they're in a fetal position.

My friends have come to swear by it.

more likely involve the little dumpling hibernating a couple of decades in a Borg maturation chamber. The right to blow up my nation's official foes on some foreign field? Count me on the side of the conscientious objectors. I'm more than half hoping the labcoats will soon discover some nice genetic or neurochemical tweak to meliorate the manly mania for war altogether.

Conventional gay politics is predicated on the assumption that lesbians and gay men represent a stable and recognizable minority population. Although this minority is unfairly and irrationally stigmatized its members are otherwise indistinguishable from a likewise stable and recognizable majority "straight" population. And so if we could simply eliminate the various legal and cultural stigmas that bedevil them then we could welcome these gay unfortunates into the fold.

There is, of course, a kernel of truth in this observation, but something about it just fails to inspire. Although this oversimplifies matters, I've noticed that in practice the vision of an "assimilationist" normalizing gay politics amounts altogether too often to little more than white gay men recognizing that the existence of homophobia is all that stands in the way of their enjoyment of the privileges to which racist patriarchal capitalism otherwise would "entitle" them.

Queer politics, on the contrary, are predicated on the assumption that what is not "normal" should nevertheless often be valued and celebrated. Queer sensibilities tend to be supremely suspicious of the gay vision of equality and normality, and are drawn instead to visions of diversity and proliferation. From the perspective of queer politics it is no surprise that gay assimilationist politics devotes almost equal energy to criticizing homophobia as it does to policing the bounds of "appropriate" expression within gay communities — castigating drag queens for their conspicuousness in pride parades, say, or gay youths for their promiscuity.

But while gay assimilationists may want to represent the latest in a long line of "natural" minorities demanding fair treatment before the law, there is something about a minority defined by the notorious restlessness and instability of desire, something that defies the easy assumption of the mantle of naturalness and normality. And this remains

true even if we manage to locate a disposition to certain desires and not others in just the right hormone balance or endocrine environment.

If queer politics self-consciously refuses to value normality over the proliferating forms that desire takes in the world, you see a grudging expression of the same impulse in the inability of the advocates of conventional gay politics to definitively designate the actual community in whose name they would presumably make their demand for natural equality.

The gay community is notoriously more than a "gay community," being as well the "lesbian and gay community," the "lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgendered community" and so on. The membership list is and remains provocatively open-ended, as does queer politics itself — ready to accommodate as well the sensibilities, problems and demands of sex radicals and "metrosexuals," body-modification communities and punks of every description.

In this open-endedness I see more than an inability of queer politics to comfortably locate itself within the frame of normal liberal identity politics. I see instead a successor to the ambitiousness of identity politics.

The Future's So Queer, I Gotta Give Shade

Donna Haraway, whose socialist-feminist "Manifesto for Cyborgs" is a key technoprogressive text, once quipped that she "would rather go to bed with a cyborg than with a sensitive man." Although the desire she expressed in this phrase does not necessarily amount to a "same-sex" desire, in the conventional construal (which is, let's face it, awfully misleading anyway -- as if the desires we call "same-sex" desires aren't usually driven by the sexualization of salient differences anyway) there is something unmistakably queer about it, something that begins to suggest an appealing convergence between where queer politics are going and where I think "posthumanisms" are going and, hence, what I think technoprogressive politics might be up to.

Technoprogressive posthumanisms tend to consist, in a nutshell, of two attitudes. One attitude is "negative," or critical, and the other "positive," or programmatic. As a critical project, technoprogressive

Imagine the situation. Bro-dude #1,459,005,410 has constructed some meticulous and elaborate set of bullshit anecdotes, his own evolutionary psychology fanfic and dozens of "social science" references. All to prove some ridiculously totalizing and conceptually hazy statement about women or men that they cling to as their own personal patriarchy-justification-wand.

They're expecting you to get bogged down in a fruitless quagmire contending all the things in order to avoid what is ultimately a really laughable appeal to the naturalistic fallacy. "Look, babe, this is just how the world works." But whether or not something's genetic or inherent to our bodies or "built-in" really shouldn't matter. And giving that assumption fuel by fighting it on its own terms is actually kind of reckless.

Transhumanists obviously don't have to put up with that shit. In fact we can slide directly into terms of "abolishing gender" from the get-go to directly negate MRA-era contortions around "equality" without even having to slog through a lengthy education process about distinctions between gender and sex. When they confuse the two we can be all, "yeah, that too." (And then feast on their googly-eyes of horror.)

In short it's well past time to reverse the feeling of vertigo. Basic notions of common humanity and equality are mainstream and they know it. Reactionary patriarchy-defenders have gone on the defensive with a whiney legalistic search for loop-holes and equivocations. Rejecting the entire notion of human nature or compromise with biology drops the ground out from underneath them.

Fuck you, I'm a robot. I'm a whatever. They're whatever. You don't get a say in it and there's no reason whatsoever for you to assume. I'm a mind with agency and that should obviously include agency in my self-construction. Even if your ridiculous totally unsupported claims about the best form of relations between two specific 'types' of people, those types of people don't exist anymore and it's insanely unethical to try and impose such assumptions. This is the future. We're all becoming cyborgs and queers and entirely new ways and forms of existing. We're self-altering, self-determining. There is no "women" just as there is no "men". What there are are douchebags and fucked up social systems doing very

The Floating Metal Sphere Trump Card

William Gillis

Radicals! Are you sick of being spontaneously overcome by blistering rage and horrified vertigo on a daily basis? Do you find yourself foolishly opening comment threads on gender issues thinking yourself desensitized to the mind-warping misogyny that invariably pops into existence like a quantum foam of entitlement underpinning the internet? Are you sick of wasting precious minutes standing slackjawed in front of some new twisting complex of deep psychological issues couched as grandiose social analysis? Do you find yourself humbled into quiet bitter despair while pondering just how long it would take to fight their misrepresentation of reality?

Are you sick, in short, of time-burglaring gender-essentialists?

Then Anarcho-Transhumanism might be right for you!

In all seriousness folks I'm actually kind of amazed at how much time gets wasted in the radical feminist milieu on citation wars with people spouting gender-essentialism. I mean, I've fallen for it too. But one of the nicest things about being a transhumanist is the ease by which I can chuck that shit out the door while also utterly confounding and further raising the hackles of my interlocuter.

I know there's a number of rhetorical trenches we're instinctively wedded to and what I'm about to propose may sound treasonous, but bear with me because I think you'll come to appreciate just how delicious this is:

Who the fuck cares?

posthumanism names a relentless refusal of the always antidemocratic politics of nostalgia and a deep suspicion of all normative and ideological claims made in the name of "nature" or "the natural." This suspicion is inspired, among other things, by a sensitivity to the destabilizing impact of radical technological developments on our sense of lived limits, capacities and standards. As a "positive" program, technoprogressive posthumanism names a hope that we can increase the sum of human freedom by embracing the emerging possibilities for the genetic, prosthetic and cognitive modification of our minds, bodies, and assumptions, so long as we struggle to ensure that technodevelopmental costs, risks, and benefits are all fairly shared by all the stakeholders to global technological change.

While it is easy to see that the queer suspicion of claims made in the name of "nature" is obviously correlated to posthumanist perspectives on the world, I think it should be just as clear that technoprogressive hopes for technologically deepening democracy and proliferating morphological freedom are also queer forms that desire is taking in the world.

For one thing, it is no coincidence that transsexuals represent the radical front line in both queer and technoprogressive political struggles. The radical genetic, prosthetic and cognitive modification of our bodies — whatever forms they take or will come to take — inspires both fears and fantasies that the anemic liberal tolerance of differences that don't really make a difference can never hope to accommodate. Pat Califia has said that "being a sex radical means being defiant as well as deviant." To the extent that every individual project of morphological freedom will be an essay in which we rewrite ourselves in the image of our desires, Califia's definition of sex radicalism is going to apply to posthuman practices of radical body modification far more generally.

I would hope that technoprogressive and posthumanist sensibilities will come to look to classic queer texts for inspiration as they confront the unique quandaries of the ongoing collision of new hopes and desires with inherited values and institutions, when sometimes they seem now to limit their reading to dry technical and philosophical manuals. You'll know technoprogressive culture is really getting somewhere when

Virginia Woolf's *Orlando* or Gore Vidal's *Myra Breckenridge* are as widely read by technoprogressive types as are policy papers on molecular manufacturing, peer-to-peer networks, longevity medicine, sustainable urban infrastructure, or space elevators.

Oscar Wilde's subversively satirical "The Soul of Man Under Socialism" and Valerie Solanas's parodic "SCUM Manifesto" are two more examples of texts that seem to me to speak exactly equally to queer as well as to posthumanist suspicions and hopes. These two raving rants share not only the immediately recognizable technoprogressive premise that only through radical technological development can humanity attain political emancipation, but also use (and subversively abuse) the language and impulses of science to create entertainments in which conventional categories begin to illuminate the world in profoundly unconventional ways. These texts pretend to be itineraries for the achievement of freedom, but actually they manage to create the vertiginous experience of freedom for just as long as the reader inhabits them, carving out literary spaces in which desire and self-creation can make their play for a time.

An Army of Lovers Can Never Fail

"I am scared of the unknown and I love it," writes Kathy Acker in her novel *In Memoriam to Identity*. "This is my sexuality." This profoundly queer attitude names something that will be familiar to many technoprogressives, I am guessing, in their attitude toward the futures opening up before us.

Sometimes the demands of political organizing can make the politics of stable circumscribable identity seem appealing or even inevitable. Perhaps queers and geeks and technoprogressives sometimes want to circle the wagons and ward off the ridicule of those whose imaginations fail to reach as far as our own sometimes do. Perhaps we are sometimes exasperated by the time and effort that attaches to interminably negotiating differences, especially when the struggle to resist bioconservative movements that would perniciously police technology and social forms back to predemocratic limits seems so urgent instead.

Perhaps we can sometimes acquire resources more easily or generate enthusiasm more readily in "movements" that offer their "members" a feeling of shared identity, of "belonging," rather than just a welter of specific campaigns and contingent political coalitions. But I think we learn decisively from queer cultures that the politics of desire never issues out in a sufficiently shared identity in whose name political claims can properly be made for long.

The suspicions and the hopes posthumanisms hold for the still unknown futures before us are too general to crystallize into a widely shared, stable identity and yet too specific to provide general guidance for living. There is no one way to be posthuman. There is no one shared specific posthuman project. There is no universally shared history, no inevitable conversion experience, no truly canonical text. Cyborgs, like queers, may well want to turn to more promiscuous models of public intercourse for their political inspiration.

For queers who are bored with a vision of politics limited to the provision of rights to marry, adopt children and do battle, I will recommend to your attention the fledgling politics of posthumanisms which unite technological development with human self-creation in the hope of unleashing varieties of desire queers themselves have rarely (but sometimes) dreamt of.

For technoprogressives and posthumanists who are looking for wider cultural contexts and connections to help make sense of your struggles, I will recommend to your attention a century or so of radical queer writing and activism, which helped carve the way for your efforts and provide you with probable allies you definitely need right about now.