

Dear professor and fellow classmates,

This is the final draft of the research essay I wrote which is based on the topic of gynoids and the ethical and moral issues these robotic technologies have in society. how they objectify women in today's society. The process to develop this research essay was the toughest one I have ever encountered through the course of this semester as a I had to go through a countless number of drafts and revisions to get to this final draft. As I stated before, creating this essay was really difficult as a lot had to be made in order to obtain the necessary and useful evidence that would support my claims. Comparing with previous essays I had written in class, this research essay was challenging due to the requirements the research essay had to meet. First of all, the length for this essay was from 6-8 pages which I found it sort of difficult at first because I felt that I was going to run out of ideas and to not fulfill the requirement. Along with this challenging part of the essay, I was afraid that I might make my essay repetitive in a way that I would state the same idea throughout the essay, so I would meet the require length for it. I attempted my best to not cause this issue for that I had to read my work several times to ensure my ideas were strong, concise and reflected what I was trying to convey in my topic sentences and main thesis. In addition, this essay required an exhaustive research and reading, however, I found this the most gratifying part of developing this research essay. Not only had I found a significant amount of sources to tackle my essay, but I also learned a lot of interesting facts about my topic that I did not know before. I actually enjoyed doing some research because, as a passionate and quick learner, my topic was interesting, yet I did not know that much about the topic which motivated more to extend my research and be able to share this findings to my fellow classmates. Personally, I found this essay very productive and helpful as I learned a new concept from the science fiction genre. Sure enough, it took me a while to write the final draft of this essay as I had a lot of good arguments that I wanted to point in my essay. At first, the thesis statement of my essay was sort of general, however, thanks to the several meeting discussions provided by prof. Belli and the positive and useful feedback provided from my fellow classmates, I was able to get in the right track and obtain a more specific and strong thesis statement. It also took me a while to get this final draft, and I am so thankful to the professor for making us write proposals and create presentations about the topic of our research. All the great feedback provided to me had helped shape my essay in the right path. Prior, the final essay, I went through a lot of stages of editing to make sure that my grammar syntax and arrangement of sentences were adequate. I might have some grammar mistakes but that does not discourage me from writing the best essay and reflect the best of my capabilities as a writer. I will working on it and giving to become professional at it. I am so thankful that professor Belli had the time and dedication to meet up in conferences and discuss my final project. Personally, this helped me a lot since at first I did not have a good proposal and, although the second proposal was approved, it still a long way to work on as I needed to do more research and provide more sources to back up my topic. I received some good ideas on where to find helpful resources, and believe it or not, this significantly helped me a lot. Before the final peer review, I had the opportunity to meet with prof. Belli to get some feedback in my essay. I found it very productive as I realized that I needed to work on making my thesis statement more concrete and strong. This encouraged me a lot as I spent more time and dedication to my essay. At this point the questions I would like to ask is if my thesis statement seems more clear and reflect the main point I want to convey and if the paragraphs do a good job at explaining my thesis. Overall, after doing countless but countless drafts I feel confident of the final outcome of this essay and I am sure my essay will be delightful for those who will read it.

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Final Draft

Prof. Belli

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Gynoids And The Objectification Of Women

Many of the science fiction literature, films and movies depict artificial intelligence that resembles a female figure. Over the past decades, these women-appearing robots have gained popularity in the sci-fi genre as it has been shown through old films such as Metropolis, to earliest films such as Ex-Machina. But these female robots not only form part of the science fiction genre, they also have become reality as many of today's robots possess female attributes and a resemblance to the woman body. But the idea of developing female-like humanoids comes from the science fiction term genre known as gynoid. The concept of gynoids has sparked new areas of debate and controversy in today's society as a surprisingly amount of the robotic artificial brains depict female bodies and personalities. While some people argue these robotic gynoids can be used for caretaking, teaching, and as an incentive to get women interesting in robotic careers, the clear majority oppose this argument by stating that the development of these female robots bring problems that significantly affect the female gender. Although this essay shows the positive points female robots can create to society, by analyzing how gynoids appear in the science fiction genre and how they have translated into reality, the essay's main focus is to explore how these robotic gynoids contribute with the objectification of women, creating these false stereotypes that affects the female group.

To understand how these sexualized female robots have cause the objectification of women, it is necessary to analyze their origin and portrayal in the science fiction genre. In science fiction history, the term for these female androids has evolved through the years. For

instance, robotess is the original term that appear in 1921 and is considered the first female term to describe these robotic machines. Then in 1976, the term fembot appears in the television series the Bionic Woman to refer to a “line of powerful gynoids with the form of the female protagonist” (Browne). At that time, fembots become so popular that they are also shown in the movie “Austin Powers” in which stereotypical women robots are designed to seduce the protagonist and kill him. In modern science fiction, the term gynoid is used to represent a robot with a female form. The term is coined by Gwyneth Jones in her 1985 novel *Divine Endurance* to describe a female robot slave from futuristic China that is judged by her beauty, an issue of relevance when examining the view of society towards the female gender. Gynoids not only appear in science fiction literature, but they also appear in the film industry as well. Since the earliest ages, films such as Metropolis (1926) to the most recent movies such as Lucy (2014) and Ex Machina (2015), reflect a similar feature: the creation of robots with beautiful and sexy female features.

But the concept of gynoids not only form part of the science fiction genre, they have also become part of today’s reality as many robotic designs clearly portray the female human form rather than a simply robotic machine. With the advances in technology, the development of gynoids have become possible and this is shown through today’s artificial intelligence resembling the woman body. Yet, as many other technological advancements, these female-appearing robots have arisen a topic of controversy and debate among roboticists and the public in general as they portray various perspectives about the creation of these robotic gynoids. While there exist arguments that claim that female robots can be helpful to perform women roles such as caretaking, teaching, babysitting, etc., there also exist counterarguments to this idea in which these female machines can cause issues such as gender identity and the objectification of the

female gender, as women are displayed as objects that satisfy male tendencies and desires.

Whether these female robots are or are not helpful technologies that benefit society, these moral and ethical issues gynoids bring to society are the main points of discussion developed throughout this essay.

An argument that has been formed among technologists, robotic developers, and supporters, is that female-appearing robots are helpful to interact with humans compare to simple machine robots. A study on human-robot interactions states that “gender plays a major role in how people perceive, communicate with, and treat robots, like it occurs with humans” (Dattaro). This makes easier to introduce female robots that can interact with other humans. In 2009, for example, Julie Carpenter, a social science researcher at the University of Washington, conducted a test in which 19 students watched videos of two robots, one that was modeled after an adult woman and another that looked like a taller Wall-E with arms. Then, the students were asked questions about how friendly and humanlike the robots seem, and if they feel comfortable being and interacting with them. The results reveal that most students express their empathy towards the female robot since a feminine-form robot seems more inviting, warming and interactive to them. This reveals that women robots are more helpful compared to male robots since humans feel more at ease when interacting with a female robot. In addition, according to Laura Dattaro in her article “Bot Looks Like a Lady: Should robots have gender?”, she believes that in the future, robots will have an active role in human society as they will work along with humans to accomplish a particular task just as some of them are doing in the present time. “Already, robots are helping with tasks like caring for the elderly and teaching both fields traditionally associated with women” (Dattaro). For this reason, she thinks that female robots can easily perform task as caretakers since a more feminine home health care robot could put patients at ease.

Additionally, these woman-like humanoid robots can be utilized as helpful tools to incentive real women to get more involved in robotics and other technological fields. As stated by Nicolaus Radford a former NASA roboticist and creator of the NASA robot Valkyrie, “giving a robot a female role might be a great opportunity to reach out to women and girls who might one day built their own robots.” To prove his argument, he points to one person he knows who particularly appreciates the female creation of Valkyrie, and this is his 7-year-old-daughter. “She absolutely was in love with this robot. It was a major source of inspiration for her. She talked about it all the time. She drew pictures of Valkyrie” (Dattaro). This example reveals that female robots can utilized as a tool to reach women of young ages and encourage them to participate in activities of the technological field.

Although these robotic gynoids demonstrate they can be helpful for tasks that only the nurturing women presence can accomplish, they also portray major issues that involves the female gender. These problems not only concern to the public, but, they also concern to the female gender group whose seem to be attacked by the creation of female androids. For instance, people react to these woman-like machines in ways that may be attributed to gender stereotypes. According to a publication by the International Journal of Social Robotics, “there have been research that has been used to elucidate gender cues, clarifying which behaviors and aesthetics elicit a stronger gender-induced response” (Carpenter). Based on the results obtained, the majority of females depict a strong discontent towards these feminine artificial intelligences. They consider these robotic entities as a serious offense and insult toward the women gender as many robotic gynoids have been depicted as erotic machines that satisfy men’s lust and desires. An example is Aiko, a robotic gynoid that “include sensitivity sensors in their breasts and genitals to facilitate sexual response” (Stratton). Through this example, it is clearly shown the

issue around these robotic gynoids as they provide a reflection on how society views women, showing them as sexual objects as well.

Not only these woman-like appearing robots cause the gender identity issues to women, they also contribute with the sexual objectification of the gender as well. In few words, sexual objectification means viewing a person as an object of sexual desire rather than a whole person. All robotic gynoids created and displayed to the public are shaped with bodies that resembles beautiful, sexy and famous women, so besides being female they also follow an aesthetic that is emphasized by media. An example is reflected in Tabi Jackson's article "Female robots: Why this 'Scarlett Johansson' bot is more dangerous than you think", in which the female robotic design is just the same as the famous actress Scarlett Johansson. However, this robotic design only possesses the capabilities to respond questions like 'you are very beautiful' and 'you are so cute' with a "little more than a coquettish smile and a wink". This example reflects the devastating stereotype that society have towards women as it is portrayed as a flirting and sensual type of machine.

Another issue involving the creation of female robots is that these robotic technologies have created depictions of a certain kind of perfect woman, contributing to the objectification of women as well. Beginning in the science fiction genre, robotic gynoids have been portrayed by their creators as some sort of ideal woman as it shows in literature and film of the genre. An example of this type of perfect woman is shown in the first gynoid film *Metropolis* by Fritz Lang. In the film, a robot that shapes the female body is given life so she is no longer a robot and possess all the attributes of the main protagonist Maria to successfully attract the male gender. Other works of the sci-fi genre that depict examples of male creators attempting to recreate a perfect woman in their robot creations are seen in the novel *Tomorrow's Eve* and films *The*

Perfect Woman, The Stepford Wives, Mannequin and Weird Science in which the creators' ideas of the perfect woman becomes one "who is unquestioningly subservient and/or sexually obliging" (Rose). In the real world, female robots have also been designed by their male creators basing upon their desires of a kind of perfect, dreamed woman. Their robotic designs reflect the stereotype of a perfect woman, being considered as "sexy, dumb, and obedient, and reflect the emotional frustration of their creators" (Dinello). This becomes an issue towards the female gender and reveals a sad reality of how people, specially men, perceive women as they objectify the female gender as the servant, obedient and stereotypical type of women who is always compliant and sexually used when they are needed.

In conclusion, the term gynoid not only has increased in popularity in the science fiction genre, but it also appears in many of the robotic technologies that form part of the real world. As technology has advanced, the development of female humanoid robots has also become possible and nowadays they form part of today's reality. These robots perfectly resemble the female body that they can be utilized as helpful tools to interact with other humans and perform tasks that require the nurturing and warming feeling that only a human female figure can offer. In addition, woman-appearing robots can be used to incentive women to become involved in robotics and computer careers. However, the creation of these female robots has also brought issues that have affected society but mostly the female gender. Among these issues, there is the fact that female robots contribute to the way in which society views women, creating gender stereotypes, and the objectification of the female gender.

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