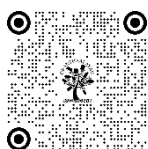


# THE IMPOSITION OF GENDER ROLES ON CHILDREN VIA FILMS AND GAMES IN POSTHUMAN TIMES

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## ABSTRACT

Men and women typically have different roles in society; when they live together, they share responsibilities and daily tasks. Eventually, women took care of the house while men went out to provide for their families. However these stereotypes no longer make sense because women are working on an equal basis with men, and are not less than them, the system has become too restrictive for women, gradually denying them of their freedom and portraying them as weak by keeping them in the kitchen. These stereotypes in society are often a major setback when it comes to women's freedom. We have come a long way, regardless of this technological advancement, we continue to stereotype men and women and how they should behave in accordance with social norms. More importantly, we are teaching this to the next generation in order to perpetuate gender bias and patriarchy.

**Keywords:** Gender Roles, Stereotype, The Posthuman, Gender Specific Genre for Children

## 1. INTRODUCTION

Posthuman embodiment encourages us to rethink the human body as a dynamic, relational, and constantly evolving system, influenced by power structures, social norms, and cultural expectations. By reimagining feminist subjectivities in Posthuman literature, we can develop new perspectives on feminist theory, challenge dominant norms, and create more inclusive and expansive understandings of feminist identity and agency.

Kate Millet's *Sexual Politics* gives me an understanding of the difference between sex and gender: Kate Millet quotes Stoller to have said that "sex is biological, gender is psychological or cultural rather than having biological connotations" (Millet 29). The question now is: How gender is psychological? The way society expects a woman to behave, dress, stay at home, be gentle, sweet, emotional, merciful, and above all obey the patriarchal society. Feminist politics is a movement that promotes gender equality, challenges patriarchal structures, and empowers marginalised groups.

## **1.1. STEREOTYPE IN THE ENTERTAINMENT INDUSTRY: THE IMPACT OF GENDER BIAS IN CHILDREN'S MEDIA**

Children are exposed to gender bias in movies and mobile games. Since youngsters are easily conditioned, the male-dominated system encourages them to conform to stereotypes in order to mainstream society's norms and ultimately pass them on to the following generation. In a time,

one can almost assume any identity while playing video games, it allows them to alter their appearance and define themselves in ways that go beyond gender norms. Is it intentional that some movies continue to force gender norms and biases on kids? It guarantees that children will grow up getting influenced. "There have been no significant studies on representation involving standard game play or intersectional identities, despite the fact that virtual character embodiment has been investigated as a mitigator of singular societal biases in fully immersive VR and empathy games." Stereotypical depictions of women are used in video games and movies to reinforce the patriarchal attitude that has been instilled in kids through games like Mario.

Mario is a well-known video game that sets up a damsel in distress scenario. Despite being primarily designed for children, the game enforces gender norms. It is common in Disney films to show female characters in challenging circumstances, and the male lead rescues them. Regardless of how strong the female character is, she ultimately needs a man's assistance to realize her dream. This is a problem the society needs to address because kids who watch this video will be motivated by it and think it's normal for women to be weak and constantly in need of assistance.

Disney princesses are presented as damsels. The plumber Mario must save Princess Peach after she is locked in the tower. After completing the adventures and finally facing the dragon, he saves the princess, which marks the game's conclusion. What message are we allowing our kids to take away from playing games like this? It's teaching them to accept patriarchy as normal. Our children grow up watching this and that is how patriarchy, hierarchy dominance is normalized no matter how strong they portray female characters to be at the end the male lead takes the spot.

This has received a lot of criticism because it shows how male dominant the princess stories are. The male always overshadows the female, even though the title and the story is of a princess it is always the hero that rescues the damsel. For instance, a wonderful story about a young girl Tiana who wants to pursue her father's dream of starting a restaurant, but circumstances prevent her from doing so, she is cursed and must kiss a Prince who has turned into a frog to break the spell, who then helps her achieve her goal, Tiana though is a talented capable young woman, she is depicted to be always under the shadows of the dominant male characters in the film. The representation of gender roles is complicated, and the shift toward more egalitarian gender roles is not a straight line. Analyses of content coding show that every film has some stereotypical depictions of gender.

Big Hero 6 is a fantastic movie, it is made for children but the movie is advanced. We can notice same issue here regardless of strong talented women in the movie the little boy saves the day. There is also a non-human entity that is portrayed to be male therefore strong independent emotionally stable. The robot named Baymax designed for health care, by the late brother Tadashi so his friends and his brother avenge for the unfortunate death of Tadashi. They form a super hero team of 6 hence the name Big Hero 6, Baymax is a health care robot, but this robot is clearly portrayed as a male character in the film as well as the comic books, generalizing that even where there is no biological difference the ultimate power is with the male. How gender stereotypes are portrayed in posthuman films where non human entities are assigned with gender norms.

## **1.2. CONSTRUCTED DIVIDES: GENDER ROLES IN SOCIETY AND STORYTELLING**

Assigning gender to the non-human, the robot, cyborg or even machines, the roots are guarded and it is making way to the future as well, for example: The Disney movie Beauty and the Beast. The plot of the movie is the unkind self obsessed king is cursed and while he turns into a beast all the people in the palace turn into talking objects and men are turned into candle sticks and clocks and women are turned into teapots mops and dusting cloth. Therefore it shows how male centric views work in the society.

The current argument that is gender is a constructed phenomenon, it is made up, philosophers argue that the barrier between a man and a woman is not affirmed but it is built by the normative structure the differences are deeply rooted

in the society since a very long time, women even today no matter how progressive they appear to be still have to finish her motherly duties and only then can she have the leisure.

### 1.3. WALL-E

To analyse its Posthuman and feminist themes. The film explores human-robot relationships and environmental issues, which align with Posthuman feminist concerns. WALL-E's character development challenges traditional gender norms though WALL-E is a robot it is portrayed to be male and EVE to be female therefore showcasing her to fail the mission, emotionally unstable, offering a unique perspective on Posthuman embodiment and identity. The relationship between WALL-E and EVE can be examined through the lens of queer Posthuman narratives, highlighting non-traditional forms of intimacy and connection. Additionally, the film's critique of consumerism and environmental degradation resonates with ecofeminist perspectives within Posthuman thought. By analysing WALL-E's themes and characters, you can illustrate how popular media engages with and reimagines feminist subjectivities in a Posthuman context.

Carol A Bernard talks about *Performing Gender, Performing Romance: Pixar's WALL-E* where it's assured that the gender identity is bestowed upon a non-human entity (Bernard, 53), and Carol talks about how Judith Butler's ideas of performativity allows for greater investigation she also addresses how hetero-normativity and romance is remodeled as straight. The way gender is assigned in these movies to non-human entities are rather very interesting to explore simultaneously it is only the present reflecting in the future too, which has to be concerning.

If you distinguish correctly which is the man which is the woman, you in effect reunite the enacted the represented bodies into a single gender identity the very existence of the text, however implies that you may also make the wrong choice.

The emergence of a posthuman world raises critical questions regarding its potential to foster a more favorable future for humanity. One must consider whether this posthuman society could

evolve into a utopian environment, characterized by the absence of gender discrimination and all forms of prejudice. Furthermore, the prospect of achieving a harmonious existence among all individuals within this posthuman framework invites contemplation on the feasibility of such an ideal scenario.

Films like *Big Hero 6* intensify the difference/divide that is set in the society. A deeper character analysis of the same film will lead us to the direct distinction of the stereotypical ways the characters are designed, First the robo medical assistant Baymax, helps the little boy fight the enemy who kills his brother but later the story develops into a bigger story line, although the interesting part of the movie is where the female characters are brilliant but at the end they are portrayed as gullible by default, all the female characters are given secondary position as the exactly as the society we are living currently.

The movies *Iron man* and *Mega Mind* has a similar pattern in their story as well, both the males are super smart and the women they like are successful in their careers, nothing less than any man, but they are portrayed as sensitive, feminine and at the end is saved by the hero again. Gender stereotype is very flamboyantly captured in these movies,

In keeping with the current appreciation for the sociomateriality of technology-enabled practice, we are now advised to de-center human beings and to situate them as but one component among many in complex networks of heterogeneous actors. More radical still, we are counseled to question the very premise of distinctive subjects and objects. Human actors and technological artifacts are increasingly seen to have no independent status of their own, but to emerge in a mutually constitutive way from the unfolding of ordinary practices.

This study explores the implications of this line of thinking for people's practical encounters with new information technologies. We begin by considering how the individual's engagement with spaces, materials, and technologies builds upon a fundamental embodiment of mind and then extends outward in a way that makes flexible and expansive the effective boundaries of the self.

On the other hand, we observe that the kind of fusion this implies is not ontologically given, but emerges through the active and disciplined engagement of the human practitioner. Acknowledging that the materiality of the post-human self is, in fact, a human accomplishment can yield a richer understanding of two opposed phenomena at the core of our discipline: the expert appropriation of information technologies, and user resistance to systems imposed by other interests.

## 2. CONCLUSION

Children remain under the gender specific bias by the effect of these movies and games. The patriarchal system traps them, and prevents them from escaping routines. It goes without saying that in this age of enormous technological advancement, there are robots and machines depicted in movies. These non-human entities are gender specific; for instance, if a male robot or machine (Baymax) is portrayed as strong, independent, and dependable, female robots (EVE from WALL-E) are frequently portrayed as feminine, unstable, and in need of assistance. Male supremacy is being confirmed even in the posthuman period because this stereotype is being carried over into the posthuman world.

According to futurologist Michio Kaku, the next stage of evolution will be the merger of the human and the machine/robot. This trend of giving gender roles to robots and machines should be alarming because it represents the future of artificial intelligence and robotic intelligence. Science fiction, he added, is the window to the future. These claims suggest that the games and films we expose our kids to have a significant impact on their character and future. Consequently, it is nonsensical to give gender to the machines, although it is done.

## CONFLICT OF INTERESTS

None.

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