



Groundings Undergraduate Academic Journal
University of Glasgow | Glasgow University Union

Resistance Through Repurposing: An Analysis of Xenofeminism and the Evolution of Feminist Technologies

Author(s): Maia Appleby Melamed

Source: Groundings Undergraduate, May 2024, Vol. 15, pp. 215-230

Published by: University of Glasgow, Glasgow University Union Publications.

ISSNs: 1754-7474 (Print) | 1755-2702 (Online)

Licensing: This work is licensed under a [Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International License](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/).

The CC BY 4.0 license is a Creative Commons license. This is a non-copyleft free license that is good for art and entertainment works, and educational works. It is compatible with all versions of the GNU GPL; however, like all CC licenses, it should not be used on software. People are free to: Share — copy and redistribute the material in any medium or format; Adapt — remix, transform, and build upon the material for any purpose, even commercially. The licensor cannot revoke these freedoms as long as you follow the license terms. But they must conform to the following terms: Attribution — You must give appropriate credit, provide a link to the license, and indicate if changes were made. You may do so in any reasonable manner, but not in any way that suggests the licensor endorses you or your use. No additional restrictions — You may not apply legal terms or technological measures that legally restrict others from doing anything the license permits.

Resistance Through Repurposing: An Analysis of Xenofeminism and the Evolution of Feminist Technologies

Maia Appleby Melamed

This paper provides a historical overview of the contemporary philosophy of Xenofeminism, and assesses how it theorises the intersections between feminism, technology, and futurity. By approaching 21st century feminist theory through the central tool of ‘repurposing’, Xenofeminism is established through its ability to adapt past feminist ideology for use in the present day. This paper will firstly evaluate how technologies developed as part of second wave feminism and ideologies of 1990’s cyberfeminism can be seen as key precursors to Xenofeminism; the paper will also consider the value and adaptability of past movements for contemporary notions of feminism as an intersectional practice. An overview of the three central lines of enquiry of Xenofeminism – ‘techno-materialism’, ‘anti-naturalism’ and ‘gender abolition’ – shall be situated within Helen Hester’s indispensable and explanatory text, *Xenofeminism* (2018). Ultimately this paper will contribute to the slowly emerging academic enquiry into Xenofeminism, identifying it as a productive and inclusive philosophy which remains grounded to the prevailing enquiry into the potential technology has to liberate women from systems of oppression.

Introduction

Although historically excluded from narratives of technological development, feminists have for decades understood that a recognition and implementation of the connections between women and technology aids the production of a liberated feminist future. Xenofeminism, a 21st century gender abolitionist philosophy, is the most current ideology that theorises the intersections between feminism, technology, and futurity. The ethos of repurposing is a central tool of this philosophy, by which ideologies from the second wave feminist movement of the 1970’s and cyberfeminist ideologies of the 1990’s are redefined to develop the evolving connections between feminism, technology,

and futurity. Xenofeminism has been regarded by Paul B. Preciado as ‘the missing link between radical feminism from the 1970s and the contemporary cyborg’.¹ This contemporary philosophy fully realises the potential of technological development to abolish essentialist ideas of the human by repurposing existing ideology and technology, utilising ‘old means for new ends,’ in the words of its founder, Helen Hester.²

As feminist ideologies of technology adapt to become more inclusive, this paper shall analyse this predominantly Western trend by providing a historical overview of how Xenofeminism came to be. Firstly, by examining how feminist technologies in the 1970’s increased bodily autonomy and then continuing to address how the birth of the internet allowed female emancipation in transgressive cyber spaces. This historical progress has been enabled through repurposing, a Xenofeminist tool which seeks to prevent exclusionary feminist contexts from negating the use of the liberatory practices that evolved from these outdated frameworks. By appropriating past ideologies for contemporary understandings, Xenofeminism progresses past exclusionary structures and instead enable an emancipatory future for all by reevaluating existing practices.

Beginnings of Xenofeminism

It is the ability to repurpose ideologies from previous eras to enable their application in a current context that leads this paper to advocate for Xenofeminism as a framework that is able to provide a durable and critical analysis of how feminism may utilise technology as a tool for liberation, for the present day. Established in 2014 by the collective Laboria Cuboniks, Xenofeminism is the embodiment of a ‘post-third-wave trans-feminist school of thought,’³ assembled through its

1 Paul B. Preciado, referenced in Laboria Cuboniks, *Xenofeminism*, accessed November 30, 2023, <https://laboriacuboniks.net/books/xenofeminism-helen-hester/>.

2 Helen Hester, *Xenofeminism* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 2018), 98.

3 Saskia Huc-Hepher, “Queering the web archive: A xenofeminist approach to gender, function, language and culture in the London French Special Collection,” *Humanit Soc Sci Commun* 8, no. 298 (2021), 2.

central focus on repurposing the ideology of a ‘litany of influences,’⁴ such as the second wave feminist movement, and the philosophies of cyberfeminism. The core aims and beliefs of this ‘polymorphous’⁵ collective are outlined by one of the founding members, Helen Hester, in a short book titled *Xenofeminism* (2018) in which she critically engages with how technology of second wave feminism and ideologies of the cyberfeminism of the 1990’s directly influenced the evolution of Xenofeminism. Hester further describes how Xenofeminism works to forge an ideology conducive to ‘contemporary political conditions,’ whatever they may be, and inclusive of all who feel ‘alien’ in the present social formation, whoever they may be.⁶ This commitment to a permanent usability and universality reduces the likelihood of Xenofeminism becoming obsolete in a present-day context, as Hester instead grants it the ability to evolve alongside changing perspectives, a feature that previous ideologies have failed to account for. The success of Xenofeminism’s evolutionary quality hinges on a central strategy which celebrates ‘resistance through repurposing’.⁷ This guarantees ‘more durable forms of transformation,’⁸ for a futurity which is influenced by those who came before and seeks to fit those who come after. The outlines of this Xenofeminist analysis are defined by three lines of enquiry, central to an enduring contemporary presentation of futurity in relation to feminism and technology. These are described as, ‘techno-materialism,’ ‘anti-naturalism’ and ‘gender abolition’.⁹ This framework challenges the common narrative of reproductive futurism, a concept which has been heavily criticised in queer theory for the exclusive emphasis placed on having children as an essential component to an optimistic future.¹⁰ Instead Xenofeminism theorises how technology may be used as an ‘activist tool’ to disrupt these inherently naturalistic concepts of futurity.¹¹ Xenofeminists argue

4 Helen Hester, *Xenofeminism*, 1.

5 Macon Holt, “What is Xenofeminism?”, *Ark Books*, (February 13 2018) <http://arkbooks.dk/what-is-xenofeminism/>.

6 Helen Hester, *Xenofeminism*, 1, 66.

7 *Ibid.*, 148.

8 *Ibid.*, 149.

9 *Ibid.*, 3.

10 Lee Edelman, *No Future: Queer Theory and the Death Drive* (North Carolina: Duke University Press, 2004).

11 *Ibid.*, 7.

that repurposing existing technology will extend human freedoms and reject the ‘glorification of nature,’¹² with the ultimate aim of overthrowing the ‘oppressive socio-biological condition’ of gender.¹³ Hester emphasises Xenofeminism’s critical understanding of the simultaneity of gender, technology, race, and sexuality and develops a narrative that seeks to ‘strategically deploy existing technologies to re-engineer the world,’¹⁴ with an understanding of how a socially constructed bias may impact technology.

Feminist Repurposing

Looking to the influences of Xenofeminism and the technology it now seeks to repurpose, an early influence on Xenofeminism came in the second wave feminist movement with the development of the Del-Em menstruation extraction device by feminist campaigners Lorraine Rothman and Carol Downer in 1971. This device – used to perform abortions – is described by Hester as a crucial influence for Xenofeminist ideology. Hester describes how it physically illustrates the potential of feminist technological futures, as the Del-Em device is a ‘partial, imperfect, but hopeful example of what a Xenofeminist technology might look like.’¹⁵ This iteration of feminism intentionally repurposed scientific knowledge and capitalist commodity to reveal the potential that technology has to liberate women, physically demonstrating what would become a core principle of Xenofeminism.

Rothman and Downer’s device reclaimed female corporeal autonomy, from the ‘highly gendered and deeply unequal’¹⁶ medical context of the 1970’s. Women in this period were denied a right over their own body due to the misogynistic ideologies embedded in medical knowledge.¹⁷ In the US in the 1970’s almost two thirds of women underwent episiotomies in childbirth ‘without need or consent’, often followed

12 Ibid., 20.

13 Ibid., 7.

14 Ibid., 9.

15 Helen Hester, *Xenofeminism*, 70.

16 Sage-Femme Collective, *Natural Liberty: Rediscovering Self-Induced Abortion Methods* (Las Vegas: Sage-Femme!, 2008), 13.

17 Elinor Cleghorn, *Unwell Women* (New York: Penguin Random House, 2021), 12.

by an invasive and unnecessary ‘husband stitch’.¹⁸ In contrast, the Del-Em liberated the use of familiar medical technologies from the sexist context within which they were typically used, repurposing them to benefit the same women that these technologies harmed. The Del-Em device creates a manual vacuum aspiration technique for abortion: a thin plastic cannula is connected to a syringe with a valve which is joined via plastic tubing to a mason jar and used to collect the content of the uterine lining.¹⁹ By decreasing the skill level required to perform the extraction – the Del-Em only requires two people to operate it – women had an increased ability to take ownership over their reproductive rights.

The Del-EM device was patented two years before the U.S Supreme Court passed *Roe v. Wade* (1973), a decision which granted a woman’s right to abortion based on her right to personal privacy. The existence of this technology was therefore particularly significant in offering reproductive autonomy before a woman’s right to an abortion was ratified in law. Its use was taught in feminist ‘self-help’ groups which allowed women to perform abortions up to seven weeks of pregnancy.²⁰ These groups existed in opposition to the possible exploitation of women who were forced to terminate their pregnancy through unregulated backstreet abortions. Instead, self-help groups demystified the process of abortion through making knowledge accessibility, therefore increasing a woman’s reproductive agency. The existence of these groups allowed women to ‘seize the technology without buying the ideology’.²¹ Women came together through a technology that was invented to liberate them from a healthcare system which, at the time, functioned to do the opposite. The existence of these groups formed ‘a close community of women who educated each other’.²² The mutually supportive connections fostered in these communities

18 Molly Enking, “Women are being cut during childbirth without need or consent,” *CUNY Academic Works* 12, no 16 (2018).

19 Sage-Femme Collective, *Natural Liberty*, 40.

20 Helen Hester, *Xenofeminism*, 73.

21 Barbara Ehrenreich & Deirde English, *Complaints & Disorders: The Sexual Politics of Sickness* (New York: Feminist Press at The City University of New York, 1973), 156.

22 Sage-Femme Collective. *Natural Liberty*, 30.

echo Donna Haraway's calls to make 'kin'²³ connections as an ethical responsibility to create networks of care within a 'world that rips us apart from each other'.²⁴ Whilst Haraway's concept primarily relates to human and non-human expansive concepts of relation, the self-help groups of the 1970's enacted this process by manipulating existing technology for the benefit of those subjugated by society. In fact, the vital need for feminist technology which liberates those when political structures do the opposite has not lost its radical importance. Fifty years since the invention of the Del-EM, in June 2022 the US Supreme Court overturned *Roe v. Wade*, ruling that there is no constitutional right to an abortion. This ruling was described by President Joe Biden as a 'tragic error',²⁵ and the controversial event signals the deep divide that exists in America today on reproductive rights. In this current context of uncertain reproductive rights in the Western world, Downer describes how this practice of menstrual extraction has 'never stopped' with around '50 or 60' self-help groups running across America today.²⁶ Feminist technology therefore remains critical in circumventing the laws that negate their reproductive rights, as women are continually unable to entrust their reproductive autonomy with those who govern them.

The radical use of technology by Rothman and Downer to thwart healthcare systems which deny women autonomy over their bodies has been exceptionally influential to the central Xenofeminist principle of 'active repurposing'.²⁷ This is rooted in the 2nd wave feminist movement which proved that liberating the appropriation of tools is beneficial to those subjugated by technology. Helen Hester

23 Donna J. Haraway, *Staying with the Trouble: Making Kin in the Chthulucene* (North Carolina: Duke University Press, 2016), 102.

24 Steve Paulson, "Making Kin: An Interview with Donna Haraway," *Los Angeles Review of Books* (2019), <https://lareviewofbooks.org/article/making-kin-an-interview-with-donna-haraway/>.

25 "Remarks By President Joe Biden on the Supreme Court Decision to Overturn *Roe v. Wade*," WH.GOV, June 24, 2022, <https://www.whitehouse.gov/briefing-room/speeches-remarks/2022/06/24/remarks-by-president-biden-on-the-supreme-court-decision-to-overturn-roe-v-wade/>.

26 Carrie N. Baker. "Abortion How-To: The Ms. Q&A on Menstrual Extraction With Carol Downer," *Ms.* (2022) <https://msmagazine.com/2022/07/14/abortion-how-to-carol-downer-menstrual-extraction/>.

27 Helen Hester, *Xenofeminism*, 92.

praises Rothman and Downer for giving ‘concrete form to abstract discussions about disobedient tools’.²⁸ Complexities arise, however, from analysing the extent of the influence that the 2nd wave feminism movement had on Xenofeminism. Hester describes that ‘it may seem perverse to contextualise contemporary trans*²⁹ practices and activism in terms of a second-wave feminist movement not known for its hospitality to anybody but cis women’.³⁰ This remains a contemporary criticism of the 1970’s feminist movement. Trans exclusionary narratives amongst lesbian separatist and radical feminist groups were common in this period, appearing in books such as Janice Raymond’s *The Transsexual Empire*,³¹ and organisations such as the Lesbian Organisation of Toronto (LOOT), which voted in 1978 to exclude trans women from becoming members.³²

It is clear that the trans inclusive founding ideals of Xenofeminism are in opposition to the ideologies held by some feminist groups of the 1970’s. It is precisely, however, this opposition in which the essential tool of repurposing allows present ideologies to engage with the successful technologies of the past. Effectively, Xenofeminism is able to separate the successes of second wave feminism from the ideologically exclusive contexts from which they emerge. Therefore, similarly to Rothman and Downer’s seizing of medical technology from sexist medical ideology, Xenofeminism may draw on the successes of the Del-EM device without adopting the ideologically limiting contexts it originated from. In this way, Xenofeminism’s reappropriation of feminist technologies of 2nd wave feminism fortifies the productive uses of technology for contemporary and future feminist movements. It is through an exploration of historical links between differing feminist ideologies that technologies developed for different eras of the feminist movement can be ‘repurposed’ as a

28 Ibid., 98.

29 Trans* added to the OED in 2018, ‘originally used to include explicitly both transsexual and transgender, or (now usually) to indicate the inclusion of gender identities such as gender-fluid, agender, etc., alongside transsexual and transgender’, https://www.oed.com/dictionary/trans_adj-a?tab=meaning_and_use#1223026980.

30 Helen Hester, *Xenofeminism*, 92.

31 Janice Raymond, *The Transsexual Empire* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1979).

32 Other trans exclusionary texts published in this period include Mary Daly, *Gyn/ecology* (London: The Woman’s Press, 1978).

tool for the development of contemporary ideologies of emancipation. This repurposed technology would be more suited to reflect the current needs of populations previously excluded from outdated ideology.

A further instance of past feminist ideology that have influenced the present Xenofeminist principle of repurposing, comes from the 1991 Australian cyberfeminist collective, VNS Matrix. Authors of the *Cyberfeminist Manifesto for the 21st Century*,³³ the collective is a central precursor to Xenofeminist ideology as they emphasise the potential technology that has to propel women into a futurity that seeks to empower their emancipation. Sadie Plant describes the development of cyberfeminism as being rooted in the recognition that ‘women have not merely had a minor part to play in the emergence of the digital machines’,³⁴ which was relevant given the newly established World Wide Web. In this view, the relationship between feminism and technology is underlined by a techno-utopian narrative - machines have the potential to destroy restrictive gender binaries and liberate feminine expression in the transgressive space of the internet. The explicit and viscerally slimy text of the VNS Manifesto reinforces Plant’s understanding and suggests an inherent bodily connection between women and technology within the internet, thereby retaining a much more corporeal association than Xenofeminism’s overt rejection of the ‘oppressive socio-biological condition’ of gender.³⁵ Virginia Barratt, a member of the VNS Matrix, describes the power of their manifesto as a ‘linguistic weapon of mass destruction, the VNS Manifesto struck at the mass erection of the techno patriarchal order’,³⁶ therefore repurposing the exclusively male, sanitised view of technology held at the end of the 20th century. Instead, Barratt appropriates inherently masculine military language with reference to phallic imagery, highlighting the ironically satirical nature to their manifesto which simmers with the possibilities of liberated female sexuality within cyberspace. The bodily text utilises fleshy, sexually

33 VNS Matrix, “The Cyberfeminist Manifesto for the 21st Century,” *VNS Matrix*, accessed 25 November 2023, <https://vnsmatrix.net/projects/the-cyberfeminist-manifesto-for-the-21st-century>.

34 Sadie Plant. *Zeros + Ones*. (New York: Doubleday, 1997), 37.

35 Helen Hester, *Xenofeminism*, 7.

36 VNS Matrix, “The Cyberfeminist Manifesto”.

charged language to appropriate pornographic fragmentations of the female body as it is seen online, describing how ‘the clitoris is a direct line to the matrix’.³⁷ The shocking nature of this line observes the common aesthetics of cyberfeminism: the sexually liberated female body is coalesced with technology, due to the potential that the intangible nature of cyberspace has in redefining the socially restrictive norms of the female existence. The use of the word ‘matrix’ also essentialises the connection between the liberated female body and technology, as it translates from Latin to mean ‘womb’, whilst also being defined within mathematics and computer science as a rectangular array of numbers. This double meaning reveals the true possibilities of the virtual world according to VNS Matrix, in which the female body is not bound by the hierarchies or expected reproductive futurity of its physical reality, instead being sexually liberated in the virtual world. The manifesto itself acts as a permanent disruptor to accepted natural hierarchies and therefore this techno-utopian aesthetic and appropriation of the internet constructs a future in which female sexuality is empowered by the emancipatory space of the internet. Acknowledged by Helen Hester as some of Xenofeminism’s ‘most significant predecessors’,³⁸ VNS Matrix’s essential use of sexually charged language, in juxtaposition with sterile and militaristic imagery, overtly repurposes the assumptively male space of the internet. More recently, this has allowed the ideology of Xenofeminism to go further in encompassing not exclusively cisgender women, but all who have been rejected from the historical conception of the cyber-sphere.³⁹

Whilst this techno-utopian vision of female liberation, enabled by the internet, seemed radically liberating within the context of the 1990’s, Francesca da Rimini, a member of the VNS Matrix describes how this was because ‘informational capitalism hadn’t quite taken root. The internet was far less regulated, far less commodified ... There seemed to be endless possibilities’.⁴⁰ The endless possibilities she describes

37 Ibid.

38 Helen Hester, *Xenofeminism*, 151.

39 Felice Addeo et al, “The Self-reinforcing effect of digital and social exclusion: The inequality loop,” *Telematics and Informatics* 72 (2022), 1-13.

40 Claire L. Evans, “An Oral History of the First Cyberfeminists,” *Motherboard Tech by Vice*, (2014), <https://www.vice.com/en/article/z4mqa8/an-oral-history-of-the-first-cyberfeminists-vns-matrix>.

are removed in the context of the 2020's because, thirty years since the internet's invention, it has become clear that this cyber space virtually reproduces the damaging hierarchies of the AFK (Away from Keyboard) world.⁴¹ In the current context, the anonymity allowed online does not always contain an emancipatory quality for women and instead increases the risk for online abuse such as revenge porn and doxing, with no consequences for unidentifiable offenders.

85% of women globally have witnessed or experienced online violence,⁴² therefore the utopian image conveyed by VNS Matrix must be criticised. Ani Pheobe Hao continues to expose the limitations of cyberfeminism in the current political context describing 'its lack of intersectional focus, its utopian vision of cyberspace ... its whiteness and elite community building'.⁴³ When applied to an analysis of VNS Matrix's manifesto, Hao's critiques become explicit - even the most essential cyberfeminist notion of female liberation via the online space excludes the 37% of women globally who did not use the internet in 2022, the majority of whom were in the Global South.⁴⁴ This suggests a lack of inclusion on the part of the VNS Matrix, their narrow focus only empowering those already socially and economically privileged. The exclusive focus of the VNS Matrix's manifesto diminishes its relevance to contemporary feminist debate, and Xenofeminism's emphasis on intersectionality instead accommodates current feminist thought. What must not be dismissed however is the instrumental part that cyberfeminist thought of the 1990's played in the development of the inclusive framework of Xenofeminism. Hester reinforces this,

41 Devon Delfino, "What is AFK's meaning? The history behind the internet acronym and how to use it in a chat", *Business Insider* (2021), <https://www.businessinsider.com/guides/tech/afk-meaning?r=US&IR=T>.

42 "85% of women have witnessed harassment and online Violence", *The Economist Group*, March 3, 2021, <https://www.economistgroup.com/group-news/economist-impact/85-of-women-have-witnessed-harassment-and-online-violence-finds-new-research>.

43 Ani Phoebe Hao. "INTERNET FREEDOM IS NOT ENOUGH – CYBERFEMINISTS ARE FIGHTING FOR A NEW REALITY," *GenderIT.org* (2019), <https://genderit.org/articles/internet-freedom-not-enough-cyberfeminists-are-fighting-new-reality>.

44 Zia Muhammad, "37% of Women Still Don't Have Internet Access in 2022," *Digital Information World*, June 12, 2022, <https://www.digitalinformationworld.com/2022/12/37-of-women-still-dont-have-internet.html>.

describing how ‘there is still much to gain from engaging with pre-millennial cyberfeminist thought’.⁴⁵ What was ground-breaking and liberating content at the time of VNS Matrix’s conception remains a fundamental precursor for the comprehensive framework of Hester’s Xenofeminist thought. Repurposing is therefore an ongoing process in the continued development of feminist ideology, as demonstrated through the deeply influential impact the VNS Matrix had on the development of techno-utopian futurities. Paradoxically, it is both the influence and the limitations of the VNS Matrix which enable the relationship between feminism, technology, and futurity to be continually adapted and repurposed from the ideals of predecessors to fit the needs of those in the current moment. As a result, these modifications of past thought enable the ‘durable forms of transformation’⁴⁶ which remain essential to Xenofeminist thinking.

Looking to the Future

The Xenofeminist ideology advocates for a radically transformative technological futurity, which repurposes the liberatory technological developments of the 2nd wave feminism movement, and the unparalleled ideology of cyberfeminism, ‘in the spirit of a solidarity that aims for systemic political change’.⁴⁷ This modern philosophy produces a futurity that is situated in both the concerns of present, and the limitations of past ideologies. Xenofeminism remains able to reject the uncritical techno-utopianism of the VNS Matrix manifesto and the 2nd wave feminist movements inability to advance towards intersectionality, whilst maintaining an optimism with an insistence that the relationship between feminism and technology is not static. It can evolve to better facilitate a future that accommodates and is influenced by all those who require it. However, the idiosyncratic universalism which underpins this approach, attempting to encompass all identities past, present and future, has come under criticism as an

45 Helen, Hester, “After the Future: *n* Hypotheses of Post-Cyber Feminism,” *Res* (2017), <http://beingres.org/2017/06/30/afterthefuture-helenhester/>.

46 Helen Hester, *Xenofeminism*, 149.

47 Mareile Pfannebecker, “Long Read Review: ‘Repurpose your Desire: Xenofeminism and Millennial Politics,’” *LSE Review of Books Blog* (2018), <https://www.nature.com/articles/s41599-021-00967-8>.

unrealistic ambition. Annie Goh argues that the use of this technological feminist thought is limited as it ignores the individual and specific needs of marginalised groups. Goh describes Xenofeminism's 'tick-box' attitude to intersectionality which 'uses alienness univocally and performs the marginalised position of "being alienated" whilst it elides the differences implicated in the dynamics of marginalisation'.⁴⁸ Goh's analysis of this ideology suggests that the failure of Xenofeminism lies with its reluctance to appropriately define what, or who, they acknowledge as holding an 'alienated' status. Through the assumption of oppression as equally distributed across society, Xenofeminism is described by Goh to be 'cloaked in whiteness'⁴⁹ highlighting how a universal understanding of the reasons for individual oppressions, leads to ineffective methods of treating those who are oppressed. Goh therefore accurately acknowledges that Hester's book does not capture the full complexity of various experiences within marginalisation. The 'active repurposing'⁵⁰ that is central to Xenofeminist thought does however enable these challenges to be overcome and further develops the thinking on inclusivity in future analyses of how feminism can productively engage with technology. It is clear that Xenofeminism does more at fostering the intersectionality so central to 21st century feminism than its ideological predecessors, meaning that its limitations are potentially necessary glitches, enabling a productive attitude to failure which works at revealing modes of potential repair to go further than Xenofeminism in understanding how vital technology is as a tool to enable a liberatory future for all.

The enquiry into technology through its potential to liberate women from oppression and redefine narratives of the future may be outlined as an ongoing process of revaluation and reinterpretation in response to the increasingly inclusive political ideologies of the present. This allows the appropriation of past feminist ideologies and technologies to become crucial tools for progress towards an emancipatory future. The historical exclusion of women from narratives of technological

48 Goh, Annie, "APPROPRIATING THE ALIEN: A CRITIQUE OF XENOFEMINISM," *Mute*. (2019), <https://www.metamute.org/editorial/articles/appropriating-alien-critique-xenofeminism>.

49 Ibid.

50 Helen Hester, *Xenofeminism*, 92.

development has been challenged and reshaped by feminist thinkers, as the connection wrought between women and technology has been revealed by the ground-breaking feminist technologies of the 1970's and the liberatory cyberfeminist principles of the 1990's. This fundamental link has culminated with the contemporary philosophy of Xenofeminism which recognises that it is through the essential notion of 'active repurposing'⁵¹ emphasising the use of 'old means for new ends'⁵² which reflects the adaptability of feminist ideologies to changing historical and social contexts. This adaptability is described by Hester as she illustrates how Xenofeminism works by 'collecting, discarding, and revising existing perspectives – in stripping its myriad influences for parts'.⁵³ The revision of the exclusive and limiting feminist practices of the 1970's and 1990's, which failed to incorporate a transgender or racially conscious perspective, enables Xenofeminism to create a futurity that is not only influenced by past struggles but is also attentive to the complexities of the present. Yet, in the same way that Xenofeminism must remain open to a continued evolution, its own limitations will undoubtedly be exposed through the present and future progression of feminist technological thought.

51 Helen Hester, *Xenofeminism*, 92.

52 Ibid.

53 Ibid., 1.

Bibliography

Addeo, Felice & Ragnedda, Massimo & Ruiiu, Maria Laura. "The Self-reinforcing effect of digital and social exclusion: The inequality loop". *Telematics and Informatics* 72, (2022): 1-13.

Baker, Carrie N. "Abortion How-To: The Ms. Q&A on Menstrual Extraction With Carol Downer", *Ms.* July 14, 2022. <https://msmagazine.com/2022/07/14/abortion-how-to-carol-downer-menstrual-extraction/>.

Cleghorn, Elinor. *Unwell Women*. New York: Penguin Random House, 2021.

Delfino, Devon. "What is AFK's meaning? The history behind the internet acronym and how to use it in a chat". *Business Insider*. March 26, 2021. <https://www.businessinsider.com/guides/tech/afk-meaning?r=US&IR=T>.

Edelman, Lee. *No Future: Queer Theory and the Death Drive*. North Carolina: Duke University Press, 2004.

Ehrenreich, Barbara & English, Deirde. *Complaints & Disorders: The Sexual Politics of Sickness*. New York: Feminist Press at The City University of New York, 1973.

Enking, Molly Cora. "Women are being cut during childbirth without need or consent", *CUNY Academic Works* 12, no. 16 (2018): https://academicworks.cuny.edu/gj_etds/285.

Evans, Claire, L. "An Oral History of the First Cyberfeminists" *Motherboard Tech by Vice*. December 11, 2014. <https://www.vice.com/en/article/z4mqa8/an-oral-history-of-the-first-cyberfeminists-vns-matrix>.

Goh, Annie. "APPROPRIATING THE ALIEN: A CRITIQUE OF XENOFEMINISM". *Mute*. July 29, 2019. <https://www.metamute.org/editorial/articles/appropriating-alien-critique-xenofeminism>.

Hao, Ani, Phoebe. "INTERNET FREEDOM IS NOT ENOUGH – CYBERFEMINISTS ARE FIGHTING FOR A NEW REALITY". *GenderIT.org*. December 4, 2019. <https://www.genderit.org/articles/internet-freedom-not-enough-cyberfeminists-are-fighting-new-reality>

Haraway, Donna J. *Staying with the Trouble: Making Kin in the Chthulucene*. North Carolina: Duke University Press, 2016.

Hester, Helen. "After the Future: *n* Hypotheses of Post-Cyber Feminism", *Res.*(2017): <http://beingres.org/2017/06/30/afterthefuture-helenhester/>.

Hester, Helen. *Xenofeminism*. Cambridge: Polity Press, 2018.

Holt, Macon. "What is Xenofeminism?" *Ark Books*, (2018): <http://arkbooks.dk/what-is-xenofeminism/>.

Huc-Hepher, Saskia. "Queering the web archive: A xenofeminist approach to gender, function, language and culture in the London French Special Collection". *Humanities Social Science Communications* 8, no. 298 (2021): <https://doi.org/10.1057/s41599-021-00967-8>

Muhammad, Zia. "37% of Women Still Don't Have Internet Access in 2022." *Digital Information World*. June 12, 2022. <https://www.digitalinformationworld.com/2022/12/37-of-women-still-dont-have-internet.html>.

Pauslon, Steve. "Making Kin: An Interview with Donna Haraway". *Los Angeles Review of Books*. December 6, 2019. <https://lareviewofbooks.org/article/making-kin-an-interview-with-donna-haraway/>.

Pfannebecker, Mareile. "Long Read Review: 'Repurpose your Desire: Xenofeminism and Millennial Politics'", *LSE Review of Books Blog*. August 17, 2018. <https://blogs.lse.ac.uk/lsereviewofbooks/2018/08/17/long-read-review-repurpose-your-desire-xenofeminism-and-millennial-politics-by-mareile-pfannebecker/>.

Plant, Sadie. *Zeros + Ones*. New York: Doubleday, 1997.

Raymond, Janice. *The Transexual Empire*. Boston: Beacon Press, 1979.

"Remarks by President Biden on the Supreme Court Decision to Overturn Roe v. Wade". WH.GOV. June 24, 2022. <https://www.whitehouse.gov/briefing-room/speeches-remarks/2022/06/24/remarks-by-president-biden-on-the-supreme-court-decision-to-overturn-roe-v-wade/>.

Sage-Femme Collective. *Natural Liberty: Rediscovering Self-Induced Abortion Methods*. Las Vegas: Sage-Femme!, 2008.

"The Artists". *VNS Matrix / Merchants of Slime*. Accessed December 2, 2023. <https://vnsmatrix.net/the-artists>

VNS Matrix. "The Cyberfeminist Manifesto for the 21st Century." *VNS Matrix*. Accessed 25 November 2023. <https://vnsmatrix.net/projects/the-cyberfeminist-manifesto-for-the-21st-century>.

"Xenofeminism." Laboria Cuboniks, Accessed: November 30, 2023. <https://laboriacuboniks.net/books/xenofeminism-helen-hester/>.

"85% of women have witnessed harassment and online Violence", *The Economist Group*. March 3, 2021. <https://www.economistgroup.com/group-news/economist-impact/85-of-women-have-witnessed-harassment-and-online-violence-finds-new-research>.