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Imagine the Internet a flexible blob of sparkling slime, everything passing through it, and everything being engrossed, symbolized, and spit back out. This paper imagines the Internet as a potentially utopian girl-space by looking at how girls, and pop-cultural depictions of girls, use the language, signs, and symbols of the Internet, an inherently patriarchal system, in transgressive ways. I propose the 1990s media representations as the touchstone moment when the conditions of possibility for imagining the hacker as a weaponized girl emerged visually in popular culture. The girl, exemplified by various figures within popular television and film culture, is a precursor to and postulates an entry point into the ways Internet today is used in transgressive nature.

The quotidian space of the girl has been her bedroom. Adorning four walls with posters, photographs, newspaper clippings, and memorabilia, the girl projects an idealized world for herself as a way to extend her reach from her own bodily limitations to the lived-in environment. In a contemporary setting, this decorative motion has been transferred to the computer. I aim to shed light on both what liberates and what represses the girls who transgress into male-dominated positions in the technological realm in popular culture, and how intrinsic it is that these actions are subversive. My analysis focuses on 90s youth hacker culture as a particular model of intervention for girls in the cyber sphere.

I will first start with films *Hackers* and *The Net*, and follow with television shows *Buffy the Vampire Slayer* and *Sailor Moon*, as a way to compare and contrast conventional scripting of female rather than male characters in dominant roles and consider what this communicates visually and culturally. These reference points reveal young women using technology in tandem with togetherness in order for sparks to fly—and men to fly out of the way. Girls are subsequently not hijacked but hijack culture and technology for their own chosen means to an end in these narratives. By using well-known media, my hope is to examine further how urgency and access have transformed girls' self-authority online from collaging their bedroom walls to adorning their Tumblr pages. I believe the transgressive girls queer our understanding of power and digital realms by making space, taking up space, and hacking space.

Through technology, not only has the negotiation of bodies—and an understanding of what a body is—changed for the girl, but also the voice of the transgressed in general. She is a weaponized unit that uses the tools obtainable to tell the world what she thinks, how she feels, what she looks like. The computer has become a prosthetic feminized weapon for the girl, making her scarier than ever to society. Not only has this machine stimulated and fossilized memories into our shared consciousness, it has served as a divining rod, which pulls out and mediates all that is aggressively appealing and pink. I believe the girl online is cyborg, and her writing as sharing as posting as pixels has carved out a new bedroom, a new community for her to live in.

Cyborg writing is about the power to survive, not on the basis of original innocence, but on the basis of seizing tools to mark the world that marked them as other (Haraway 1991, 175). Let us build out instead of up. It is with this idea that the utopian community New Ponderosa Year Zero was formed. NPYZ is the work

of artist Mai-Thu Perret, who uses nonlinear narrative and documentation to explore art objects and theory. Beatrice Mendell, a key figure of NPYZ, journals:

> We believe we can construct our own personal Eden, here and now, through a return to both nature and craft. We believe that the rejection of craft in our post-industrial society is also a rejection of the part women play in this society. We refuse to be instrumentalized operators of man's machines. Disembodied voices of automated clocks... Until they came to this community they were already in fact machines, sophisticated extensions of computers and automated devices. We feel we were closer to the machines we operated than to CEOs up there who harnessed our power. (quoted in Perret 2013, 195)

Though NPYZ rejects connections to the machine in order to create a society from the ground up, their attempts and actions are in line with Donna Haraway's notions of cyborg writing. The horror of the cyborg at once encompasses the ominous death of modernity and the birth of opportunity, a destruction that becomes a construction, that is a deconstruction—similar to the punks' physical tearing of clothing in order to turn around and pin it all back together as a new form. This death as rebirth as revolution serves as a stand-in for the connection between mainstream popular culture and girl culture—they converge and implode while being hacked and reblogged into a new form with new life.

The liberty to discard one's origins and embrace an identity that has no palpable source is a crucial way in which a cyborg can forge anew. "To recognize 'oneself' as fully implicated in the world frees us of the need to root politics in identification, vanguard parties, purity, and mothering. Stripped of identity, the bastard race teaches us about the power of the margins" (Haraway 2004, 34). The girl is at the margins due to age, gender, and location. There is great power in being able to craft one's own identity, and not rely on the identities assigned by others. There is a strength in joining this "bastard race"—cyborgs, who have decided to determine their own singularity, apart from the expectancies and conventions that come with history—in the girl as cultural cyborg, hacking male-gendered built systems with cyberspace as her bedroom.

What constitutes a girl in this case? Here, the girl is not only such but presented as a stand-in for all "othered" bodies: women, people of color, the disabled, the queer. Though visually coded in semiotic tropes understood as those of a young person gendered female, the girl presented as girl online can be anyone who identifies as such. She skims, pontificates, puts up a fight against, and gives birth to media. Girls are the cultural producers of girl content. The emotions of the girl on the Internet become aesthetic products, created and built in a constant state of flux, always unpredictable and always active. Many of these emotions mature on social platforms, where one can spend days combing image files, adorning text with glitter, and liking posts. This content is burdened with problems and potentials, and voyeurism has hit an all-time high. The girl makes with urgency, collects with urgency, builds new appendages with urgency. Artist Wynne Greenwood's project, *Tracy and the Plastics*, was the result of her writing:

> The Plastics were a group of girls who ran a pawn shop and replaced parts of themselves with hyper-colorful pieces of plastic. Their town was never-ending, gray, drab, surrounded by super-tall mountains that people lived on top of. Bits of plastic debris would fall down the mountains, and the Plastics (Nikki, Cola, Tracy) would find and use the debris, like a red toothpaste cap for a tooth or something like that. (Charbonneau 2006)

Greenwood spoke of Tracy originally being a cyborg in early renditions of her performances—she went on to perform live as Tracy with projections of herself as Nikki and Cola. The images of Nikki and Cola layered over Greenwood as Tracy, stitching together multiple personas, stitching dialogues between them all in a cut-and-paste aesthetic similar to photocopied zines with a techie synth-pop twist—Greenwood as a conduit for self-discovery and implementation. A new study suggests humans should be able to fall in

love with computers in under fifteen years. As humanity wanders closer and closer to a *Her* reality, there have been findings to become one's authentic selves through self-made utopias, and augmented physicality. Girls are all cyborgs on the Internet as they amass more information, creating their own cyborgness by downloading, uploading, scrolling. Click. It is not through the bodies and history that have been given that truth is found. For the girl, her people are a web page away. In fact, it is more through a tent that becomes a house, which becomes a village that becomes a city. The Internet is her jungle, harnessed into a frenzied ball of mobile messaging. She is a significant cultural maker through her hacking of accessible bits and pieces. She can do what she wants, when she wants, with what she wants.

Oriented from a feminist and queer perspective, in an effort to unite such political positions with hacker ethos and cyborg living, these connections function as an expansive conceptual, practical, and experimental framework for refusing the control logic of technology/Internet while building alternatives to its infrastructure. The Internet expands the expressive possibilities for girls that were in prior times isolated to their bedrooms, with no opportunities to find their own girl gangs. I aim to connect these moments in popular 90s culture as a way to transition into showing the cyborg as a model for thinking about who the girl is and characterize the relationship between the girl's material body and the computer as bedroom as screen.

The dramatic rise in public cognizance of the Internet in the 90s overlapped with increasing public fear and attention to the computer programmers known as hackers. The developing media attention was augmented by the release, in the same year of 1995, of three motion picture productions featuring hackers. Their narratives, however, contested the representation of hackers as felons and instead depicted the lead hackers as champions. One of these productions was Hollywood's *The Net*, starring Sandra Bullock. The film *Hackers* was also released in 1995. It was a thriller about a clique of teenaged hackers and featured Angelina Jolie as the sole female member of the group.

Feelings are more potent online because they become visual things, and it becomes easier to share with a wider audience inside a simple formatted stage that is customizable—more authentic—to the user. What was simply too difficult for the girl to verbalize can now be said with images, pop-cultural collages. In this domain, the user is not only presented as a subject but can create the images she wants you to see as you gaze at her. Tucked into every website, microblogging platform, and social media tool, girls have made private spaces, which are ultimately public, that have spawned a cosmos of thriving subcultures. This is the desire to be heard, the desire to exist, the desire to access, the desire to be: compliant techno-space. The Internet gives the user the ability to go beyond the limitations that reality enforces. Digital space is a powerful tool for a teen girl still living under her parents' roof, coming to grips with her identity. Limits can be transcended and networks can be built between bodies feeling and thinking the same thing all over the world. The girl created a rhizome of comrades when she signed online.

The potential for girls to perform for themselves and their emotions are an upload and click away. There is pleasure in shouting into the ether—and with this tree falling, there is always someone to hear the crash. Is everyone a teen girl in the age of social media? Is there a collective yearning to share multifaceted emotional states in order to find one's true girl gang? Tumblr users can see what has always been the authentic teen girl feeling in a blinking, pink, multidimensional reality. These tools allow users to tell people how they feel and what they aspire to be. This era holds the capacity for the teen girl to become a fully faceted entity for society to see live and raw.

Many feminist researchers have identified the symbolic association of technology with discourses of masculinity as fundamental to the problematic relationship of women to technology. Women's interaction

with technology is constant and significant; however, much of the difficulty associated with women in their relation to new technology arises from the male control over its definition and production.

The main character of *The Net*, Angela Bennet, traverses the boundary of the traditionally all-male territory of hackers. How do such portrayals fit into a greater conversation on gender and technology? With a deficit of women in high-powered technology-related professions, what part do films such as this play in making innovative possibilities visible to viewers? I look at the elements that make up Angela Bennet and her fate in *The Net* to provide one approach to answering these questions. The portrayals in relation to the social construction and duplication of gender, in tandem with to what level they defy or strengthen male hegemony over technology and how they illuminate our understanding of technology as a symbolic system, are ways to start decoding Angela Bennet's identity.

The word "technology" is used most in orientation to functional objects, to machines and implements that modify physical surroundings. Yet technology more broadly understood is a cultural phenomenon that encompasses systems of knowledge, methods, and practices. Technology is thus inextricable from the discourse in which it is embedded, defining not only the tools but also the relationship of humans to them. Discourses are systems of language, behaviors, and beliefs; they convey meaning through the production and circulation of texts that become collective social currency and through which we negotiate changing values and customs. Discourse often serves the philosophical welfares of the section of culture from which it is born: "Discourse is a social act that may promote or oppose the dominant ideology…. When they become institutionalized, discourses are structured by a socially produced set of conventions that are tacitly accepted by both industry and consumers" (Fiske 1987, 14). Conversations of gender are surveyed in relation to conversations of technology to perceive how assumptions about the place and use of technology in people's lives shape our concepts of masculinity and femininity.

Speculations and promotions become part of the public discourse when both the nature and the consequences of technological innovation surpass the comprehension of even the expert. The introduction of electric communication devices and of the Macintosh personal computer (Stein 2002) are two cases in which fictional representations intertwine with allegedly objective technical and social observations to maintain control and authority over one's identity and identification of users, defining appropriate behavior and negotiating disruptions and challenges to existing social and political structures. By creating one's own structure and finding like-minded individuals through this web, I propose girls can work around and against systems that have not been entirely created for them in the first place.

The anecdotal nature of popular media provides the masses with equipment for living, symbolic resources to cope with life. Views of reality are shaped through heavy exposure to media messages—when these messages are directly being created by female-identified beings, the communication line, or loop, is altered. Popular media play a key role in individual and mass identity formation in contemporary culture. The discourses that are formed around these Internet platforms and technology in general are as critical as the technical innovation to their development and dissemination. Media representations play an important role in the upkeep, preservation, and negotiations of bodies—both physical and digital bodies, or physical as digital and vice versa—and the configurations of power that constitute cultural politics. New technologies and the people who use these platforms pose a challenge to social norms and political structures that are both opposed and accommodated.

Popular cultural representations of technology and the Internet, and female-identified bodies connected to wires and sparks, comprise a significant element in the discourse of technology, reflecting both a utopian and dystopian thought process. The myths, metaphors, and images conveyed by popular culture combine

with scientific and professional commentary to become the ground for our understanding of technology and how the female fits into a conversation. Popular culture can play a pivotal role in mediating what is unknown in new technologies, particularly in the form of science-fiction or dystopic narratives. These stories are part of a digital discourse accompanying the rise of the computer and the social, economic, and political impact of rapid change in our contemporary climate.

Portraying women as computer hackers, or as hacking or even using technology in a masterful way, goes against the tide. Dominant representations of technology continue to project femininity as technologically inept or apathetic for the most part. The expansion of interest in the Internet after the introduction of the World Wide Web in 1993 brought a growth in advertising rhetoric promoting women as computer users. The potential for the information age to be an economic boost for women in the high-tech industry was often extolled. Visibility of hackers, hacker culture, and women joined with technology provides clues as to why women hackers, both fictionally and in reality, are at the margins of the understood and binary view of women.

The hacker is a more technically advanced and overtly masculine-defined role than many others related to the computer industry. MIT professor and writer Sherry Turkle defines hackers as "young programming virtuosos" who "dominate the computer cultures of educational institutions from elementary schools to universities [and are] visible, dedicated, and expert" (1988, 44). She offers a psychoanalytic explanation for the adolescent emergence of their hacker personae:

> They come to define themselves in terms of competence, skill, in terms of things they can control. It is during adolescence that the "hacker culture" is born in elementary school and junior high schools as predominantly male—because, in our society, men are more likely than women to master anxieties about people by turning to the world of things and formal systems.

We look to these reports of hackers and must ask: What happens when female-identified bodies penetrate our prior understanding of the hacker and the control they have on information and navigating systems? What happens when the transgressive girl "hacks" into the hackers' system, into our World Wide Web?

The 1995 film *Hackers* exerted significant influence in its transformation of hacker culture and its reflection on the change in public positions on the issue of hacking as well. In this film, a small group of high school students, alienated and marginalized, keep themselves busy by hacking pay phone lines and running cyber mischief. When one of their youngest members inadvertently hacks into a confidential corporate financial database, they discover that a highly complex computer virus has been implanted in the company's financial data and is methodically cheating the corporation out of millions of dollars. The crook is an old-school hacker himself, and the film becomes a high-speed cyber race to see if the kids can outcode the villain before they are framed for the crime and apprehended by the police.

Hackers were originally the spirit and soul of computing itself, inhabiting a place "where every man can be a god" (Levy 2010, 176). Steven Levy notes early hackers' lack of understanding of women:

> You would hack and you would live by Hacker Ethic, and you knew that horribly inefficient wasteful things like women burned too many cycles, occupied too much memory space. "Women, even today, are considered grossly unpredictable," one PDP-6 hacker noted, almost two decades later. "How can a hacker tolerate such an imperfect being." (79)

The Internet is a space that was created without the understanding of the female-identified body and therefore is a space that women and girls hack into aggressively and subversively with each click and scroll and hit of "enter." The frontier metaphor of "cyberspace," for example, suggests a hypermasculinized space

in which "cyber cowboys" push themselves to the limits, not unlike the troupe of the American West only giving birth to bodies like Clint Eastwood and other testosterone-filled explorers ready to colonize and kill, pushing the limits of physical stamina in all-night programming sessions fueled only by Monster Energy drinks, Taco Bell, and Domino's pizza. Turkle notes that MIT hackers call the form of violent risk-taking that characterizes the hacker's relationship with his computer "sport death" because it involves "pushing mind and body beyond their limits, punishing the body until it can barely support mind and then demanding more of the mind than you believe it could possibly deliver" (1988, 45). Psychosexual theories of hacking hypothesize that it is the enactment of penetration and subliminal sexual drives by primarily adolescent boys who use computers to enter into forbidden and unknown spaces.

Ultimately, 1990s youth hacker culture is a space of intervention for girls in the digital realm. The visibility of female hackers in popular movies and television shows produced around the year that the Internet was first made public is used to explore the dominant and oppositional perceptions of the relationship of girls to the Internet. It's essential to view this as a way for girls to use the inherently patriarchal language of the Internet to their own transgressive ends.

Angela Bennet in *The Net* earns a living by scoping out computer viruses and uncovering security flaws in clients' software. A thirtysomething woman, she lives alone, shuns all physical contact with humans, and works for a business whose offices she has never set foot in. Her only friends are other online hackers, three people altogether, and she only knows them by their screen names. Angela Bennet is a manifestation of gender transgression into the traditionally male hacker space. She provides one way of imagining what this intervention looks like. I look to *The Net* as a framework for discussing hegemonic approaches to perspectives on technoculture and cyberculture—especially the deeply patriarchal character of the culture Angela participates in.

In a manner true to the authenticity of a hacker occupation, Angela makes her livelihood while sitting at home, her hair uncombed, draped in a hacker "grunge" flannel shirt, t-shirt, and loose-fitting, shapeless pants. She orders pizza through her online browser—her only physical interaction is with the pizza man who makes regular deliveries to her house. When the delivery is complete, without exchanging names or niceties, Angela locks her door, turns her computer screen to a simulation of a fireplace, and eats her meal in front of it. In keeping with the hacker subculture's self-definitions, computers are Angela's salvation. The computer poses an intellectual and creative challenge that none of the men or women in her life provide.

Interest in and mastery of technology serve as important signifiers of hegemonic masculinity. Within the narrative, Angela's hacking abilities sabotage her male adversaries' goals. In the culture at large, such depictions of self-sufficient, technologically fearless women pose a threat to male superiority. The woman's and girl's online access is a point of danger for the status quo. The access is a threat. Angela's intense fascination with machines rather than romantic relationships shifts males out of the centrality they occupy in heteronormative characterizations of femininity. In doing so, it exposes the social construction of masculine and feminine signs of identity that are commonly treated as natural and as a part of the genetic coding that makes human beings male or female. These depictions of hackers as women provide long-awaited alternatives to absolutely male images of computer maestros, featuring women who are well educated, devoted, and skillful.

Partaking in the advancements of technology exercises different pressures for men and for women in regard to identity. When males sublimate their wishes for sexual relations into fixations with machines, including the improvement of complex computer-based tools, they may be considered as socially incompetent and perhaps sexually repressed, but they do not lose their essential maleness in the eye of an

onlooker. If anything, since proficiency and engagement with technology have been coded masculine by discourses of systematic gender politics, and given the current premium placed on technical expertise, male computer designers and hackers may affirm their maleness by their technological obsession. For women, the contrary is true. Their very existence as traditionally defined women is challenged by their dedicated interest, and seen as foreign (Margolis and Fisher 2002).

In *Hackers*, Angelina Jolie's character Kate is originally indiscernible from her androgynous all-male counterparts in the hacker gang. Her focus is on her computer, and during the engagements in technical pursuits, just as the other characters, Kate is essentially without gender in her group. The queerness of Kate's body is proven when male character Dade bets Kate he can beat her at a hack game. If she loses, she must wear a dress. A feminine object of clothing as punishment to the androgynous hacker is indicative of how she maneuvers through her cohort. This is problematic in that Kate vacillates between a normative and "other" status within her hacker gang due to her gender, but is ideally a counter image to the status quo. The danger she represents does not precisely reside in her winning a bet and making a guy wear a dress, but in her power as a figure who moves between performativity modes of masculinity and femininity.

Deep paradoxes and conflicts such as those discussed above are the standard of illustrations of transgressive women and girls in our contemporary culture. The love and skill of pushing the limits of computers are rarely visualized. At the same time, such accounts rupture these representations by also visualizing a coded femininity. This association is reinforced through the fear of the uncontrolled—viruses and hackers in fact work to validate and fortify power metaphors in computer culture (Owen, Stein, and Vande Berg 2007, 63–87). As viruses and hackers remain unstable in cultural consciousness, so does the female.

Willow Rosenberg from Joss Whedon's series *Buffy the Vampire Slayer* (1997–2003) serves as a character that is not only the girl on the verge of becoming something else in her queerness and witchyness, but is portrayed as a person who was integral to the Scooby Gang due to her computer knowledge and hacking skills. Willow started out as a submissive and largely unassertive computer nerd but eventually grew to be a powerful and authoritative individual through witchcraft and computing. Early on, Willow would make herself useful by aiding Giles, the school librarian and watcher of Buffy, in combing through volumes of ancient monster lore in search of prophecies, material on demons, tales of vampires, and more substantial information that the Slayer could require at any given moment. Willow's computer expertise was used for hacking into government databases.

In the first two seasons of *Buffy*, Willow was an average teen girl and thus had no powers of her own. However, her computer skills and snarkiness made her a major asset to the team. In seasons five and six, Willow demonstrates enough comprehension of robotics to fix and program the Buffybot on multiple occurrences. She aids in the preparation of magical materials, making her first potion to detect a witch in the episode "Witch," and this first connection with witchcraft came out of necessity. Buffy's vampire boyfriend, Angel, had lost control of his soul and thus became Angelus, a malicious homicidal vampire. To stop him, Willow conjured a spell to curse the vampire again with a mortal soul. Willow does not completely choose to practice witchcraft until the death of Jenny Calendar, one of her high school teachers. She is asked to take over conducting Calendar's class because of her high aptitude, and one day comes across a floppy disk holding a spell that Calendar had successfully translated into English, which can restore a vampire's soul. Willow's initial interest in Wicca lies more in the spell-casting portion than in the faith itself—she sees magic as a way of hacking the universe and as an extension of her fine-tuned computer hacking skills. Her

bond influenced this point of view with Jenny, who identified as a "technopagan" and was connected to an online pagan complex (Driver 2007).

Willow is a manifestation of what happens when the girl takes hacking outside the possibilities that the dominant culture appears to present to us. She manifests the connection between hacking and other collective, adolescent, idiosyncratic girl cultures, i.e., Wicca. When the hacker is a girl, the language used to describe her ability to subvert and/or navigate patriarchal cyberspaces is coded in terms of witchcraft. The girl hacker, then, is figured as "unpredictable," "unstable," or "uncontrollable"— the technopagan whose technological sorcery is divested of intellectual agency and centered on the transgressive and illogical desires of the girl.

The witch as heroine hacker of Mother Nature, her do-it-yourself ethos mixed with the contemporary interest in mysticism, can be read as an acknowledgement that the world is not ideal. Witches and dystopian imagination can be a counterweight to the trope of "good conquers all." The witch as a shameless avatar of vice may be the flame to the moth, as well as to a younger generation that models itself on self-possessed, candidly subversive heroes, Katniss Everdeen of *The Hunger Games* or Lisbeth Salander of *The Girl With the Dragon Tattoo*, whose long, hooded trench coat, fire-rimmed eyes, and feral metal appendages (making her not unlike a cyborg) bring to mind a hybrid of Satanist and street urchin. As a gendered demon, the witch lets chaos reign, be it as bringer of bad luck, social scapegoat, or seductress.

Much of the world's paranormal history can be looked at through the lens of adults being horrified of teenage girls. Before there was *The Craft*, there were the Salem witch trials, which started as a result of female youth making their villages fearful with tween high jinks like throwing tantrums. Yes, the sort of things no kid would do, especially if you were stuck in Puritanical colonies where pastimes included making soap and sowing oats. Parents took a quick look, were convinced their daughters were possessed by the devil, and swiftly took charge of taking out the demons. Folklore perpetuates the idea that something spooky is lurking within girls; for, once they reach a certain age, girls start tapping into something mighty and forbidden and are not too innocent anymore.

Society has read this story over and over again. Why are girls engrossed in it? Why is it repeated time and time again on television and in films? There are differences between these stories. Girl A gets possessed by Satan, and then is whacked and screamed at until evil departs. In the 90s, though, stories with witches actually made girls want to do magic. *The Craft*, Willow on *Buffy*, the sisters on *Charmed*: the electricity comes, in some essential way, from togetherness, unearthing something singular within. Somehow all fears could be controlled together by calling the corners or swishing a wand.

In the connections of disparate elements, there is a reinvention of nature. The girl uses agency on the Internet as a way to cobble and congeal her own form of communication: the fight for language and against infallible communication. There is liberation in being able to create an identity that is uniquely one's own, outside of strict binary gender, which is precisely why ideas of cyborgs and utopia resonate so strongly within a queer dialogue. The *Cyborg Manifesto* functions as a call to action, to transcending the strict identities of gender, for as humanity moves into a perhaps bodiless realm, much is manipulated. The lines are blurred between the human and the machine—a singularity can occur. The ship of Theseus, also known as Theseus's paradox, is a thought experiment that inquires whether an object that has had all of its components substituted remains essentially the same object. At what point is a human not a machine as it is slowly adding techno-limbs and cyber data? At what point is the machine human? A tween cyborg girl reborn as the guardian of death brings the conversation to *Sailor Moon*, where we see 90s hacker culture as an appropriative remix culture that I believe is a precursor to the Tumblr feminisms activated online today.

Sailor Moon is a hyperfeminine Japanese shojo manga series written and illustrated by Naoko Takeuchi. Sailor Saturn, also known as Hotaru Tomoe, is a Japanese schoolgirl who is a member of the Sailor Soldiers/ Scouts, female supernatural fighters who protect the solar system. Hotaru possesses powers associated with destruction, death, and rebirth, with the ability to obliterate a planet and even an entire star structure, as well as resetting their evolution to zero. In my comments on *Sailor Moon*, I explore the interventionist tactics of the girl hacker with the language of the witch and the parallel between the temporal specificity of Hotaru Tomoe as a sister to the activity on the social microblogging platform Tumblr: death, rebirth, revolution.

Hotaru is an important character who is a loner as a result of of her strange seizures and powers—as well as behavioral changes due to her being the host of an evil entity that lived within her after the age of five. She is described as gentle, silent, precocious, and unresponsive. In the manga, a laboratory catastrophe kills Hotaru's mother and critically injures Hotaru. Hotaru's father salvages her by making her body cybernetic and making a deal with a demon in hopes of resuscitating her. In exchange, she loses all her humanity. Hotaru/Sailor Saturn functions as the dangerous tween cyborg girl, linking a precarious technological talent with a female-bodied entity as transgressive to the world.

Sailor Saturn often involuntarily uses her powers, including a force field and energy beams that arise when she is in danger. In her story arc, when she is reborn as an infant but is needed to fulfill old tasks, she is able to grow to her former age in a matter of days. Eventually, she is visited by an image of herself in Soldier form, who bestows power on her again—from now on, Hotaru Tomoe is capable of saving herself and does not need to be saved. She has visions of coming events, especially of peril, and can project these visualizations onto other people. She frequently raises her fellow Sailor Scouts up by giving them transformations and powers they originally did not have, upgrading them and herself to superhero forms.

Despite Hotaru's powers, her transformation into Sailor Saturn is rarely shown in the television series or manga. Her powers are based on Roman mythology, in which Saturn is the god of the harvest. As such, her primary role is that of the destroyer, railing against notions of tween girl weakness and fear. Her coming is greatly feared by many of the older Sailor Scouts. Hotaru's weapon of choice is the Silence Glaive, a bladed weapon that is referred to as "the scythe of the Goddess of Death." The choice to give the second youngest girl in the series the role of death and destruction is not happenstance, and the act of lowering the glaive's point to the earth is all that is needed to "bring ruin to the world." No incantation is spoken, and this action is separate from her transformation chant of "Death Reborn Revolution." In the manga, Saturn deliberately allows herself to be sucked into the dimension of Master Pharoah 90, an evil demon, killing herself in the process. She makes the sacrifice in order end the vicious cycle of Pharoah's torments inflicted on the universe. The trope of the dangerous girl is used in many narratives, especially regarding witches, and here we see Sailor Saturn fulfilling this role while still uplifting others and protecting her pack.

I see the cyborg as a stand-in for the current presence of the girl on the Internet and her relationship between her physicality "in real life" (IRL), in her bedroom, and her body spatiality within the screen connected to a cosmos of other girls (URL). Tumblrs are digital spaces to worship and revel in the authenticity of a life butted up against others on the dashboard (the dashboard is the main page of Tumblr where all followed users coexist on a singular page). The emotive possibilities of the teen girl become materials of influence for her and documentation for spectators. Pulled off bedroom walls and posted onto Tumblr pages, these foundations become performative tools to unite and stitch together new beginnings. It is at this point that the diaristic compendiums of creativeness become communal (White 2009).

The Internet is an opening for girls seeking avenues into realistic and fantastical hopes and dreams—which functions as a political tool. There has not been a time where the girl has had this much agency over content creation void of corporate, male coaxing. Freely appropriating cultural forms, revised and redacted, means originality is not the goal but pilfering, remixing, montage, and copy/paste to thrive as true self—living vicariously through every song lyric, meme, animated GIF, and movie watched. Girls, as producers, are creating the pictures they want to see for themselves and their friends and anyone else who wants to look. Although these products become absorbed by mainstream culture, they are always being invited back into "the goo" to be posted with more panache and more frames per minute. It does not matter who the maker is anymore (as long as it is 72 dpi) but what the image suggests the maker feels, thinks, and looks like, prompting viewers to imitate and act out personal scenarios. These makers are well on their way to becoming their tailor-made avatars without the prerequisite of computational methods of graphic generation. Digital tools are available to all, which means the novice and the young can within minutes make language visible and posted for all to see. What is also possible in the digital realm for the girl are multiple identities, a queered or subverted postmodern presence. The girl is not "just" what her parents see, what is physically possible, anymore. This gives way for the girl to negotiate her own body in society in a variety of ways, possibly different on every platform she interacts with. She can be a multitude of things for herself, in contrast to the ways she negotiates herself in the "real" world every day. She can in fact be *realer* that she has ever been.

> When an individual in a marginalized group talks to a recorded image of themselves, it empowers the individual to open the door to the understanding and celebration that she/he/it can be deliberate. It is an interaction with a fragmented self. By fragmented, I mean a cohesive identity that's constructed from different, often conflicting, parts of society, culture, and life that we relate to because popular culture has no whole identity to offer its audience other than one that resembles the ruling class. We can come out. And then come out again. We can rearrange our world how we want it. (Greenwood 2006)

Hacker girls use precoded programming language and the tools available online, which are deeply patriarchal and heteronormative, in ways that are subversive. The preexisting images and icons created by "the man" and "the machine" are mutated in ways that can shift to their girl code. These subversions create a radical space of girls' expression and creativity that is not relegated to their bedroom anymore.

As Haraway suggests in *Cyborg Manifesto*, body politics in the digital space change when the physical body is removed. What is more, body politics shift when the muse is the creator and can be in charge of their own image projected to widespread audiences, and doubly shifted on the Internet. The possibility of breaking free from gender bias arose, imagining femininity defined not in opposition to technology, but engaged with it. The patriarchal masculine identification with technology, however, continues to pose an opposition between the cultural dictates of femininity and technical proficiency in women (Grebowicz and Merrick 2013). One of the most intriguing aspects of portrayals of girls as hackers or cyborgs is that they constitute magnified infringements on society: the hacker/cyborg itself is a transgressive role, and compounding the transgression is the female-identified person as hacker/cyborg. How mainstream representations, from the mid-1990s to now, have discussed these tensions is the subject of this analysis. These examples provide groundwork for the transgressive girl today who summons her squad through social platforms and lifts up her persona through self-authored content. She steals from the mainstream patriarchy that has told her time and time again what to buy, how to look, and what to aspire to, and she spits it back out as a radical image of her authentic life imagined on the screen for others like her. The act of posting is the act of yelling. She is the rebel grrrl—the queen of our world.

What was once private, is now public with the click of a button. There is something scary about being a teenage girl. There is something startling about any part of life that contains so many mysteries and momentous metamorphoses. The aspect that society finds the most terrifying—which we see running through witches, hackers, and teen girls alike—is the idea that there is an urge in women and girls that does not follow the rules and cannot be "tamed." Girls transforming into women, or the act of transitioning in any sense, becomes an action outside of authority's control. Ideas of girls and women can be packaged in pretty boxes with pretty ribbons. Then the wrapping gets ripped off. I see this as a reason for why the witch is feared. These girls could be sneaking off and building something new, something unknown and surprisingly strong, and not for others—this could be happening behind the doors in bedrooms all over a nation connected to the Internet. This is not the stuff of horror films. The witch and her coven learn to be self-spiritual.

By casting women and girls in roles of cyborgs, hackers, techno-pagans, and witches—the uncontrollable and the threatening—conventional limitations of female representations are ruptured. But the uncontrolled nature of these women and girls is simultaneously reined in and effectively forced back into the realm of the body left behind when they enter highly abstracted mindscapes of the hacker world. Fundamental tensions over identity arise whenever gender borders are transgressed. I propose the connections between hacker culture and youth culture—it is important for me to suggest that, in contemporary times, the bedroom has become the Internet. As this transition ultimately unfolds at a pace humans cannot keep up with, the parameters of cyberspace not only expand but blur simultaneously. The girl is online. Her emotions are potent weapons visualized and intimacy is intimidating. As she both genders and penetrates a space that was not built for her, she opens the door to her bedroom for all to see. The audience can watch, but essentially look into a world they cannot belong to—just as she feels when she navigates her physical space.

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