



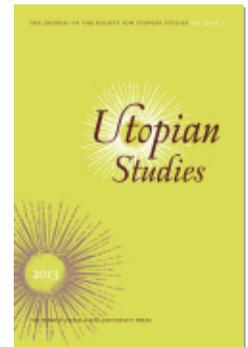
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Utopian Politics

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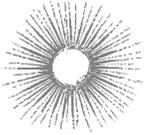
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The Critical Manifesto: Marx and Engels, Haraway, and Utopian Politics

Kathi Weeks

ABSTRACT

*The essay focuses on the manifesto as a utopian genre and presents the category of the critical manifesto as a way to understand some of its internal differences. The analysis centers on a comparison between a traditional example of the form, Marx and Engels's *The Communist Manifesto*, and a critical version that rethinks both the form itself and the content of its claims, namely, Haraway's "Manifesto for Cyborgs." Moylan's concept of the critical utopia will be borrowed to explicate Haraway's further development of the traditional manifesto's form and content.*

This essay focuses on the manifesto as a utopian genre. Some argue that the manifesto is passé: paradigmatically modernist, unrepentantly masculinist, and thoroughly authoritarian. They see the form as tethered by its foundational text, the *Communist Manifesto*, to a pre-Fordist political-economic formation and historical subject that are now irrelevant to the conditions of post-Fordist production. According to its critics, the genre is too closely identified with such politically and epistemologically suspect commitments as the vanguard, the party, truth, and the political efficacy of ideology critique. Thus, so the

story goes, the *Manifesto* helped to sow the seeds—in the form of an orthodox Marxism—of its own destruction as a genre. By this account, the time of the manifesto, that iconic futural genre, has passed, its capacity to propel us forward now overcome not only by the weight of ever more reified capitalist social formations but by the burdens of the form.

Nonetheless, despite—or really, because of—the manifesto’s embeddedness in a particular time and place, the form does change with the times. My aim is to set the genre in motion through a pair of comparisons that can serve at once to demonstrate the form’s plasticity and to illustrate some of its historical transformations. The first of these, a brief comparison between utopian socialism and the *Communist Manifesto*, is designed to establish the manifesto’s utopian credentials; the second, between Marx and Engels’s version of the manifesto and another famous manifesto, Donna Haraway’s “A Manifesto for Cyborgs: Science, Technology, and Socialist Feminism in the 1980s,” will serve as an occasion to consider some of the specific variations in the generic form over time. Tom Moylan’s category of the critical utopia will be used to think about Haraway’s further development of the traditional manifesto’s form and content. Whereas some understand the relations among these two pairs—Marx and Engels and the utopian socialists, Haraway and the Marxist tradition—only in terms of breaks and ruptures, I will also identify points of continuity that will enable a different story to emerge, a story centered on the *Communist Manifesto* as a utopian text and the “Manifesto for Cyborgs” as a Marxist project. In this way, the *Communist Manifesto* will serve as the linchpin for a chain of resemblances that might allow us to see the manifesto in general, and what I will describe as Haraway’s critical manifesto in particular, in a new way.

Utopian Manifestos

As attempts at “social dreaming,”¹ that is, as exercises in thinking collective life and imagining futurity, manifestos can be understood as a species of utopianism, in this case, as a particular example of nonfiction writing with an eye to an as yet fictive future. The *Communist Manifesto* may not be the first manifesto, but it has an iconic status, serving as the text that founds the genre.² Recognizing the *Manifesto* as a utopian text casts Marx and Engels’s famous dispute with the utopian socialists in a different light, reframing it as a quarrel about the proper contours and aims of utopian thought and politics

rather than a rejection of their value. The differences between the two utopian genres, the manifesto and the more traditional utopian modeling of the utopian socialists, can be located on three levels, in terms of their function, style, and aim. First, the two kinds of writing put the emphasis on different utopian functions. One way to get at this is to divide the key functions of the utopia into two: to generate estrangement from the present and to provoke hope for a better future. These two functions work along different temporal trajectories, one enabling us to detach cognitively and affectively from the present so as to produce some critical leverage vis-à-vis the status quo, the other encouraging the production of political desire for a better possible future—or, more accurately, for the possibility of a better future.³ At the level of function, whereas the detailed utopias of the utopian socialists could produce a powerful estrangement effect, the utopia of the *Manifesto* places the emphasis on the provocation function. The second point of comparison focuses on the different styles of Marx and Engels's *Manifesto* and the traditional utopian genre of social theory produced by St. Simon, Fourier, Owen, and the others. Consider, for example, the typical rhetorical register of the manifesto form. The voice of the *Manifesto* is brief and direct, declarative and self-assured. And above all it is urgent; think of the compressed temporality in the *Manifesto*, with its quickly encapsulated narrative of the relations between the past and the present, together with the message that we are now on the edge of the present, ready to step over the brink to a new future.⁴ As for the third and, for our purposes, most important distinction, the aim of the two utopian projects is different: The traditional utopia of the sort the utopian socialists produced sought to outline a new and improved social world; the *Manifesto* wants to call into being the political actors who could create it.

If the utopian credentials of the *Communist Manifesto* have often been overlooked, Haraway's "Manifesto for Cyborgs" has been even more peculiarly misremembered. Despite the origin of the essay as a response to a call for papers asking "for political thinking about the 1980s from socialist-feminist points of view,"⁵ a mandate listed in the essay's subtitle and repeated throughout the text, it is remembered more for its contributions to technoscientific theory and feminist poststructuralism than for its attempt to transform the theory and practice of socialist feminism, let alone one also committed to "the utopian tradition of imagining a world without gender."⁶ In fact, the text was the final installment in a series on the future of socialist feminism commissioned by *Socialist Review*. Unlike so many other contributions that offered postmortems, Haraway did indeed imagine a new

and, in ways I will go on to explain, better future for socialist feminism. She presented a mapping of a post-Fordist political economy from a feminist perspective together with a way to conceive the construction of a feminist personal ethic and collective political subject that might contest it.

The fact that she crafted her response to the call as a manifesto is telling. On one hand, it was perhaps an obvious choice. As Janet Lyon notes, “To write a manifesto is to announce one’s participation, however discursive, in a history of struggle against oppressive forces.”⁷ Here it is important to note that the *Communist Manifesto* was clearly a touchstone for Haraway’s effort to refashion socialist feminism. In later interviews she confirms the importance of the tradition of the manifesto in general and the *Communist Manifesto* specifically. And yet she describes her relationship to this lineage and inheritance in terms of an “on-going serious joke,”⁸ a reference to the irony that Haraway deploys as a way to negotiate a relationship to traditions that she both affirms and critiques. Drawing—again, ironically—on the language of religious faith, she likens her relationship with the socialist feminist tradition not to the disaffiliation of apostasy but to the ironic stance of the blasphemer who identifies with what she critiques (65). So, on the one hand, the manifesto form links her very clearly to a tradition of Marxist and later socialist feminist political theory and politics. On the other hand, the manifesto could also be seen as a rather odd choice for a project also committed to poststructuralism and feminism, given the form’s association with (to borrow another term from Haraway) the “god-tricks” of modernist epistemologies,⁹ its historical commitment to privileged vanguards and avant-gardes, and its notorious patriarchal authority and masculinist swagger—or, taken all together, in light of what Nicholas Thoburn disparages as the manifesto’s “pompous self-regard.”¹⁰ It is this disjunction between the citations of the form and its modes of elaboration that will serve as our point of entry into the text.¹¹

To help us understand the transformation of the manifesto through Haraway’s act of appropriation I want to draw on a notable contribution to another species of utopian writing: Moylan’s category of the critical utopia, which was developed as a way to trace some shifts in the genre of the literary utopia. Here I will approach the category as at once a periodizing tool and a methodology of writing and reading, a way of both classifying and interpreting utopias. There are three elements that contrast the critical to the traditional utopia, but only two will be addressed in the discussion that follows. The first aspect that Moylan identifies is something that the manifesto form already takes as part of its charge: to provide a more direct articulation

of the processes of social change.¹² “The manifesto form,” writes Felicity Colman, “wants to take action, to intervene, to re-imagine and re-member different forms of existence.”¹³ Indeed, this attention to the process of getting from here to there was how Marx and Engels distinguished their project in the *Manifesto* from the abstract utopias of the utopian socialists who relied solely upon their “propaganda” and “social plans.”¹⁴ The manifesto—whether traditional or what I am calling critical—is a piece of writing that, as Martin Puchner describes it, “is eager to stop talking and to begin doing,” an “active genre, one that wants to contribute to the making of the future.”¹⁵

The other two criteria of the critical utopia will prove more relevant to differences within this genre. Certainly this includes the second feature of the critical utopia, namely, the rejection of utopia-as-blueprint. To return again to the foundational text of the genre, the *Manifesto* was constructed to provoke the kind of critical and hopeful orientation that could support political action, a spark that an already-imagined blueprint could too easily smother. But there is more to this second element as Moylan presents it: beyond the critique of the traditional blueprint model, one finds in the critical utopia a more circumspect approach to the tradition of utopian speculation and writing.¹⁶ The utopian project is understood not as a matter of grand plans and final words but as a process that must be approached self-reflexively. Thus, the critical version includes not only the present social order within its critical purview but also the very methods of utopian conceptualization it chooses to deploy.¹⁷ The formal techniques of utopian speculation and representation include measures of self-criticism, self-reflexivity, and efforts to undercut the kinds of authority and conviction that are so typical of the traditional utopia. Finally, the third defining characteristic of the critical utopia is equally important. This one bears on the contents of its vision, specifically designating constructions of alternative worlds that are similarly cut down to size, visions of possible better worlds that are nonetheless imperfect, incomplete, and impermanent.¹⁸

The Manifesto Voice

So we have two criteria for a critical utopia that I will use to chart some of the changes in these two manifestos, one about form and one about content. I will begin with some formal concerns. The power of the manifesto comes from its distinctive voice—its register, tone, and style—as much as

from its claims and pronouncements. Indeed, perhaps the most definitive characteristic of the manifesto is the amplitude of this “loud genre,”¹⁹ which I take to include its “poetic certitude,”²⁰ its “agonistic mode of discourse,”²¹ and its “passional state.”²² Haraway reworks some of these aspects of the traditional form and adheres to others, with interesting results.

For examples of the traditional manifesto form, consider the first and last lines of the main body of the *Communist Manifesto*, which begins with what the text knows and ends with what it wants us to do. It opens with the boldest of universalizing claims about the history of the world—“The history of all hitherto existing society is the history of class struggles”—and closes with an exhortation to act, for the proletariat to “unite!” and forcibly win a new world.²³ The first of these passages exemplifies the epistemology of the traditional manifesto, encapsulated above as its poetic certitude. Rather than transmit carefully argued knowledge claims about the way things are, it declares truths that it confidently regards as self-evident. This is the source of the traditional manifesto’s agonistic stance, also noted above, illustrated in the call to act, fight, and win. The combativeness of the *Manifesto* is further demonstrated by its confrontational delivery and insistence on dividing its audience into “us” and “them,” or, more correctly, in the section in which they debate their bourgeois critics, “we communists” and “you”—the “you” who “reproach us for intending to do away with your property” and to whom they respond: “Precisely so; that is just what we intend.”²⁴

In both of these respects Haraway’s “Manifesto for Cyborgs” departs from tradition. As for the text’s epistemological apparatus, Haraway explicitly affirms the “permanent partiality of feminist points of view,” insisting that “the production of universal, totalizing theory is a major mistake” (99–100). What Haraway names “the dream of a common language” that would guarantee our collective unity is part of the problem (92). Stylistically, one could say that she disarms the manifesto, refusing to deploy it in the traditional manner as “a rhetorical show of force.”²⁵ Haraway’s claims are less insistent and more invitational; her authorial stance is situated rather than Archimedean. Whereas Marx and Engels ended the *Manifesto* with an order—“Workingmen of all countries, unite!”²⁶—Haraway closes with a reference not to what “we” should *want* or even *do* but to the more partial and modest claim that she, at least, “would rather be a cyborg than a goddess” (101).²⁷ The manifesto form in particular demonstrates that utopian hope can be elicited as much from the analytical arsenal and stylistic practices of a text as from its specific claims and explicit purposes. More elusive yet, slipping through the cracks of the boundaries of any specific

form or genre, utopian expressions may also inhere in the affective texture of a text²⁸—in, for example, the joyful rhetoric of Nietzsche philosophizing with a hammer but also in the dizzying creativity that generates and can be generated from Haraway's conceptual innovation and theoretical pastiche. Instead of the more typical manifesto's authoritative certainty and aggressive drawing of lines in the sand, Haraway persuades or even seduces the reader through her analytical agility and unexpected syntheses of ideas.

But in terms of the third element, the manifesto form's passionate rhetorical style, Haraway adheres more closely to the original generic disposition, even while writing in a different tonal register. There is, I would argue, a distinctive kind of manifesto affect that characterizes both the traditional and the critical versions, a combination of urgency, hope, and resolve. This can be seen in the typical manifesto's distinctive temporality, which seeks to shorten the distance between the narrated past, present crisis, and possible future. As Peter Osborne notes of the *Communist Manifesto*, with its brevity and breadth, "vast swathes of historical experience are condensed into single images."²⁹ Haraway deploys her own version of this, as in the example of the oft-cited double-columned table that seeks to capture the transition from an industrial society and modernist codes to a postindustrial and postmodernist society and code with a short series of contrasting concepts (80). The past and present, tamed by means of this narrative compression, are further neutralized by the focus on a future that is immanent. The lesson of this history is not "duck and cover" but, rather, "seize the day." Time is reduced to a human scale, a temporality in which we can act. Thus, manifesto time is characterized above all by a kind of urgency: "That is happening now," but "this could happen soon!"

Not only is the urgency of the manifesto form preserved in the "Manifesto for Cyborgs," so is its hope and resolve. Indeed, as Haraway herself notes in a later interview, "There is a kind of fantastic hope that runs through a manifesto,"³⁰ and this certainly includes hers. The alternative to what she claims is an unfounded belief in Truth is not, Haraway insists, "cynicism or faithlessness" (70); rather, "there are grounds for hope" in emergent "pleasures, experiences, and powers with serious potential for changing the rules of the game" (91). She treats truth ironically, as a way to cut the text's knowledge claims down to size, but never hope. Although Haraway works to moderate the epistemological and political authority of her claims, she does not mute their affective charge. Her modeling of "a feminist speaking in tongues to strike fear into the circuit-savers of the new right" (101) takes the reader on a tour through the catastrophe of the present, but always with

a sense of our power to take things in another direction. Irony enacts a distancing from aspects of the form, but these do not include the way the genre serves as a vessel and vector of the handful of political affects that Ernst Bloch named militant optimism and I am calling hopeful resolve. In this sense, the “Manifesto for Cyborgs” should be read not as an act of disavowal but as a critical reoccupation of the form.

Mapping Content: From Pre-Fordism to Post-Fordism

As was the case with Haraway’s adaptation and transformation of the manifesto style, her relationship to the content of the *Communist Manifesto* is at once remarkably close and utterly transformative. Indeed, the two manifestos cover very similar territory, albeit in a different order. After a brief introduction, Marx and Engels present four sections that cover the history of the present, a vision of the future, their relationship to other communist thinkers, and a critique of other oppositional political parties. After her introduction, Haraway outlines her relationship to existing feminist theories together with their models of oppositional collectivity, then outlines over the course of three sections the history of the present, and finally closes, not with a vision of a new future but with a model or, as she prefers, a “myth” of a future political subject—the cyborg—that points in that direction.

Perhaps the greatest achievement of Haraway’s “Manifesto,” and what warrants its status as a successor to the *Communist Manifesto*, is her updating of Marx and Engels’s history of capitalism. What the “Manifesto for Cyborgs” seeks to map is, Haraway explains, an “emerging system of world order analogous in its novelty and scope to that created by industrial capitalism” (79–80). To Marx and Engels’s story of the rise of modern industry and the establishment of a world market, an account that famously anticipates what would come to be an industrial capitalist system and an international division of labor, Haraway composes a similarly prescient analysis of the rise of postindustrial society in a globalized world. But although the *Communist Manifesto* is certainly a model, it is only proximately so, as Haraway’s analysis is also and more explicitly “indebted to socialist and feminist principles of design” (79). These precursors include socialist feminism’s dual systems theory, with its addition of patriarchal household relations to the model of industrial capitalist production, and socialist feminist standpoint theorists’ model of a singular revolutionary feminist subject modeled on Marx and

Engels's proletariat. Socialist feminists' 1970s mappings of the social relations of domination are, Haraway claims, obsolete; what had been coded as capitalist patriarchy in the context of the industrial period is now best approached in these new times as a "world system of production/reproduction and communication called the informatics of domination" (82). Comparable to the way that the *Communist Manifesto* was later hailed for its anticipation of the dynamics of, at first, industrial capitalism and, later, capitalist globalization, the power of the "Manifesto for Cyborgs" can be traced in large measure to the originality and acuity of this still remarkably relevant attempt to map from a feminist perspective a globalized post-Fordist regime of accumulation.

Under the informatics of domination, as Haraway describes it, the "dual" systems of capitalism and patriarchy are thoroughly interpenetrated. Women and men, she argues, are better conceived as integrated within a network than relegated to separate spheres (90). Indeed, "the old dominations of White Capitalist Patriarchy," Haraway observes, "seem nostalgically innocent now," with their normalization of heterogeneity (69 n.). To map the integrated circuits of global production/reproduction requires more complicated models that can attend to the way that hierarchies based on class, race, gender, and nation are fundamental rather than ancillary to contemporary strategies—mechanisms and ideologies—of surplus value creation. Thus, this reorganization of the gender order under the conditions of globalizing post-Fordism reveals the persistence of the gender division of reproductive work without the same patterns of solidarity and conflict that feminists once imagined and not in the form of a simple distinction between men and women, production and reproduction, masculinist standpoint and feminist standpoint. It is not that men and women are not engaged in different laboring practices, that labor is no longer divided by gender: women continue to hold primary responsibility for the (re)privatized work of social reproduction and are still often relegated to the gendered occupations that this domestic division of labor helps to maintain. Rather, it is that these differences cannot be mapped onto a binary gender model. All this requires rethinking both our models of feminist subjects and their political organization.

Revolutionary Subjects and Renegade Cyborgs

But like Marx and Engels in their *Manifesto*, Haraway is more interested in provoking her audience to imagine and struggle for a different future than she is in presenting a vision of an alternative. These are the questions that

energize the manifesto as a form and which lead Haraway to the figure of the cyborg: "Which identities are available to ground such a potent political myth called 'us,' and what could motivate enlistment in this collectivity?" (72–73). In fact, she takes Marx and Engels's concentration on activating agency rather than providing what they mocked as "grand plans" even further, leaving us with a kind of provocation without a program—even the preliminary ten-step program that Marx and Engels were willing to concede.

But how does the cyborg, as the political subject the "Manifesto" seeks to provoke, compare with Marx and Engels's revolutionary subject, the proletariat? Janet Lyon, for example, is critical of what she reads as Haraway's backing away from the manifesto form's central project, arguing that the ironic myth of the cyborg is not capable of provoking a political subject. The elusiveness of Haraway's addressee, she argues, "forecloses the possibility of an emergent, active 'we.'" ³¹ While I agree that the cyborg is elusive insofar as it departs from a traditional model of the revolutionary subject, in this instance too I think that we should read the cyborg less as a retreat from than as a reoccupation of the traditional model of political agency.

There are at least two points of similarity and one important difference between these two characters. First, like the proletariat, the cyborg is immanent to the social formation it would contest, at once its progeny and potential gravedigger. Like Marx and Engels, Haraway insists that possibilities for better worlds are born inside not outside the present relations of domination. Not only did the bourgeoisie, in calling up "the powers of the nether world," forge "the weapons that bring death to itself," but they "also called into existence the men who are to wield those weapons." ³² Haraway echoes this with her insistence that cyborgs are "the illegitimate offspring of militarism and patriarchal capitalism" (68). Although arguably both analyses imagine utopia, as Csicsery-Ronay describes Haraway's method, "by moving through the heart of dystopia," ³³ not only does Haraway claim that the dystopia of contemporary production "makes the nightmare of Taylorism seem idyllic" (66), but the dystopian taint on the cyborg's emergence is something she purposely and insistently highlights. Thus, in a later interview, she is critical of those who only celebrate the cyborg without acknowledging that it is "born as the cyborg enemy," that it issues from a "particularly unpromising position" within militarized industrial capitalism. ³⁴ The emphasis in the text is placed not only on a model of immanent resistance but on the claim that oppositional subjects are "completely without innocence" (67). The "we" that Haraway wants to address as cyborgs are "fully implicated in the world" (95). In other words, as cyborg subjects, we must recognize that, unlike Marx and

Engels's characterization of the proletariat, most of us have more to lose than our chains. The "Manifesto" argued, Haraway later noted, "that you can, even must, inhabit the despised place."³⁵ This, I submit, is a more rigorously immanent model of agency, a conception of resistance that teaches us that we can be both within and yet potentially also against the present.

The second point of similarity between these two political subjects, the proletariat and the cyborg, is that each is conceived as a process of becoming rather than something already achieved. According to Marx and Engels, political struggle was as much the cause of the proletariat as a class as it was its product: "The real fruit of their battle lies, not in the immediate result, but in the ever expanding union of the workers."³⁶ The development of the proletariat as an identity rather than a subject position must thus be grasped as a contingent process rather than something preordained. For Haraway too, the cyborg is our present reality—"We are cyborgs" (66), she tells us—and yet at the same time, "who cyborgs will be is a radical question" (70). Each of the manifestos sought to provoke and inform the process of an oppositional subject becoming political.

But Lyon has a point. Just who the cyborg is in Haraway's account is not exactly clear. It is true, as Lyon claims, that Haraway evinces in the text a "fundamental skepticism concerning collectivity and federation."³⁷ But even so, she does not, as Lyon claims she does, retreat from the possibility of a "we." Haraway's claim in the text that "one is too few and two is too many" (96) is not a necessary conclusion but, rather, a conundrum specific to the logics of identity politics that she was struggling to move beyond: Either we are the same, and so we can form a group; or we are different, and so we cannot. But these are not, Haraway notes later in the text, our only options; because while one is still too few, "two is only one possibility" (99). "We" the cyborg collective are not, in contrast to Marx and Engels's proletariat, called into being as either a vanguard party or an identity formation. Instead, Haraway attempts to open up our organizational practices and political imaginations to a model of political agency that depends neither on the unity of the party nor on an identity category to recruit members and provide them an agenda. As she explains in a later interview, the "Manifesto for Cyborgs" is "not just asking workers of the world to unite," it is "trying to figure out who they are."³⁸

But the cyborg as a "myth of political identity" can be read in at least two ways (92). One could interpret this myth as designating an ersatz identity or an *as if* identity; by this reading, all Haraway achieves is to put some ironic distance between the cyborg and the kind of identity politics she critiques but, in the end, continues to rely upon. But a different way to understand

this is as a claim that identity categories—woman, man, feminist, human, cyborg—are always mythic, or in Judith Butler’s vocabulary, “regulatory fictions” mistakenly posited as essences.³⁹ By this account, the cyborg may be an identity, but one that is radically refigured into something, as Haraway describes it in the essay, more like a hybrid, mosaic, or chimera, an identity “stripped of identity” (95, 97). In contrast to the traditional model of identity politics, just who might be called into this kind of feminist political collectivity remains throughout the text an open question. Unlike Marx and Engels, Haraway does not yet know who count as workers, let alone who it is they might together be able to become.

In contrast to the collective subject of the proletariat, the cyborg is less a common subject position claimed as an identity than it is a political-ontological project of becoming difference acting in common, or what Hardt and Negri name the multitude.⁴⁰ The cyborg is that which takes on the project of transforming its relationships with the social forces and practices—technological, scientific, economic, familial—that constitute it. In explaining why she draws on examples of cyborgs from feminist science fiction Haraway notes that the pleasures of reading such texts are not based on identification (97). Rather, she suggests, the pleasures of thinking these fictions—and we should include her science fiction of the cyborg as well—lay in their capacity to defamiliarize, to unsettle, and to challenge the categories through which we continue to define ourselves. The cyborg is, or, rather, could be, a subject that recognizes and embraces the constructed, partial, multiple, and contingent character of subjectivities. By pointing out that we are already not what we thought we were and by insisting that we could be different in the future, the text inspires our hope in part by recognizing and encouraging our willingness to become different.

Whereas it may have been plausible when Marx and Engels were writing to claim that the distinctive feature of capitalist development was that it had simplified class antagonisms, it is no longer a simple matter of “two great classes directly facing each other.”⁴¹ In sharp contrast to Marx and Engels’s heavy reliance on the two-class dialectical opposition between “us” and “them,” each side delimited by its parties and platforms, Haraway’s text leaves the possibility open as to who might be included in the political projects it hopes to inspire and inform. My point is that what Lyon criticizes as the “ambiguity of the addressee” in the “Manifesto for Cyborgs” does not foreclose but, rather, opens up the possibilities of an inclusive and expansive “we.”

Timely and Untimely Manifestos

In response to those who would claim that the time of the manifesto is over, I would say that it depends on what the time of the manifesto is. On one hand, the manifesto is a prime example of what Jacqueline Rhodes calls a “temporary text,” written to a particular audience and from a specific location.⁴² In that sense, its shelf life is likely to be brief. On the other hand, as the two manifestos we have been considering prove, a manifesto also has the potential to be long lived indeed. Perhaps the time of the manifesto is as long as it can function as a utopian provocation, that is, as long as its conceptual, anticipative, and affective arsenals remain able to reach some of their targets. One of the remarkable achievements of the two manifestos we have explored is the way they captured developments—modern industrial capitalism for Marx and Engels and post-modern postindustrial capitalism for Haraway—that only later could we come to read as mere empirical descriptions. But in that case, we could say that over time, these texts have evolved into good examples of futurism but not necessarily utopianism. What remains today evocative and provocative—and in that sense truly utopian—about the “Manifesto for Cyborgs” is, I would argue, the figure of the cyborg as an immanent and collective political subject, together with the ethic of political organization and action that it represents. Given the rather bleak political situation in which the text was written and first appeared, it would not be surprising if Haraway’s “Manifesto” did not have the same political—rather than conceptual—resonance that it might in another moment. That she was writing in decidedly nonrevolutionary times is illustrated in her prescription in the penultimate paragraph of the essay for “the *utopian dream of the hope* for a monstrous world without gender” (100; emphasis added)—a curiously timid and cautious formulation. In 1985 Haraway offered it as “a myth system waiting to become a political language” (100); if the manifesto form is primarily dedicated to provoking the formation of political subjects, perhaps, then, the “Manifesto for Cyborgs” has yet to come into its full power as a manifesto.

Conclusion

There are two ways to understand the category of the critical utopia that apply as well to what I am calling the critical manifesto. One could approach the critical manifesto as a periodizing category that marks a historical development in

the genre. Recognizing Haraway's "Manifesto for Cyborgs" as part of a lineage of utopian manifestos that extends back to Marx and Engels's *Communist Manifesto* offers an opportunity to consider how the form can be and has been transformed over time. But one could also read the category of the critical manifesto as something on the order of an interpretive protocol. Just as Phillip Wegner has read the critical utopia as other than a periodizing concept, noting that one can read even in traditional utopias critical elements,⁴³ Puchner suggests that we read every manifesto "as a series of iterations and displacements."⁴⁴ There are no pure manifestos, Puchner observes; even in the period of their maximum influence in the early twentieth century one can find in them elements of self-critique and self-reflexivity, displacement and intermixture—that is, elements that are always already critical.⁴⁵ By this reading, the category of the critical manifesto might also help us to read *all* manifestos differently, to find ambiguity in what looks like certainty, provocation in what at first encounter sounds only like pontification, joy in what might feel simply like rage, and open, hopeful speculation in what might be rhetorically packaged as command or prediction. By this measure, the critical manifesto might help to open the question of what it means for both author and reader when a particular manifesto declares what *we* must do *now*!

Notes

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1. Lyman Tower Sargent, "The Three Faces of Utopianism Revisited," *Utopian Studies* 5, no. 1 (1994): 1–37, at 3.
2. Martin Puchner, *Poetry of the Revolution: Marx, Manifestos, and the Avant-Gardes* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2006), 11–12.
3. I explore these functions in more depth in Kathi Weeks, *The Problem with Work: Feminism, Marxism, Antiwork Politics, and Postwork Imaginaries* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2011).
4. This notion of voice builds on Maurice Blanchot's description of the three voices of Marx ("Marx's Three Voices," *New Political Science* 7, no. 1 [1986]: 17–20).
5. Donna Haraway, "A Manifesto for Cyborgs: Science, Technology, and Socialist Feminism in the 1980s," in *Coming to Terms: Feminism, Theory, Politics*, ed. Elizabeth Weed (New York: Routledge, 1989), 173–204, at 173.
6. Donna Haraway, "A Manifesto for Cyborgs: Science, Technology, and Socialist Feminism in the 1980s," *Socialist Review* 80 (1985): 65–107, at 66–67; hereafter cited parenthetically in the text by page number.

7. Janet Lyon, *Manifestoes: Provocations of the Modern* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1991), 10. In another venue Donna Haraway responded to the claim made by a member of the audience that there are parallels between the *Communist Manifesto* and the “Manifesto for Cyborgs” with an unequivocal and—here I may be projecting—exasperated, “Absolutely!” (“Nature, Politics, and Possibilities: A Debate and Discussion with David Harvey and Donna Haraway,” *Environment and Planning D: Society and Space* 13 [1995]: 507–27, at 520).

8. See Nicholas Gane, “When We Have Never Been Human, What Is to Be Done? An Interview with Donna Haraway,” *Theory, Culture, Society* 23, nos. 7–8 (2006): 135–58, at 156.

9. Donna Haraway, *Simians, Cyborgs, and Women: The Reinvention of Nature* (New York: Routledge, 1991), 193.

10. Nicholas Thoburn, “Is There an Autonomous Model of Political Communication?” *Journal of Communication Inquiry* 35, no. 4 (2011): 335–41, at 337.

11. As Janet Lyon notes, “Haraway both invokes and plays ironically with the form’s status as a foundational text” (“Transforming Manifestoes: A Second-Wave Problematic,” *Yale Journal of Criticism* 5, no. 1 [1991]: 101–27, at 117).

12. See Tom Moylan, *Demand the Impossible: Science Fiction and the Utopian Imagination* (New York: Methuen, 1986), 10.

13. Felicity Coleman, “Notes on the Feminist Manifesto: The Strategic Use of Hope,” *Journal for Cultural Research* 14, no. 4 (2010): 375–92, at 380.

14. Karl Marx and Frederick Engels, *The Communist Manifesto* (New York: International Publishers, 1948), 40.

15. Puchner, *Poetry of the Revolution*, 926.

16. Moylan, *Demand the Impossible*, 10.

17. *Ibid.*, 42.

18. See *ibid.*, 10–11.

19. Mary Ann Caws, “The Poetics of the Manifesto: Nowness and Newness,” in *Manifesto: A Century of Isms*, ed. Mary Ann Caws (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2001), xix–xxxii, at xx.

20. Alain Badiou, *The Century*, trans. Alberto Toscano (Cambridge: Polity, 2007), 137.

21. Marjorie Perloff, *The Futurist Moment: Avant-Garde, Avant Guerre, and the Language of Rupture* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1986), 82.

22. Lyon, “Transforming Manifestoes,” 103.

23. Marx and Engels, *Communist Manifesto*, 9, 44.

24. *Ibid.*, 25.

25. Lyon, “Transforming Manifestoes,” 114.

26. Marx and Engels, *Communist Manifesto*, 44.

27. Yet Haraway’s departure from tradition in this instance should not be overstated. The claims she makes about the present order of things are grand in scale, and her ideas about what should be done are nonetheless prescriptive. Even here, Haraway’s distancing from the tradition is more like blasphemy than apostasy.

28. Sarah Webster Goodwin, “Knowing Better: Feminism and Utopian Discourse in *Pride and Prejudice*, *Villette*, and ‘Babette’s Feast,’” in *Feminism, Utopia, and Narrative*, ed. Libby Faulk Jones and Sarah Webster Goodwin (Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 1990), 1–20, at 5.

29. Peter Osborne, "Remember the Future? *The Communist Manifesto* as Historical and Cultural Form," *Socialist Register* 34 (1998): 190–204, at 198.
30. See Gane, "When We Have Never Been Human, What Is to Be Done?" 152.
31. Lyon, "Transforming Manifestoes," 117–118.
32. Marx and Engels, *Communist Manifesto*, 14–15.
33. Istvan Csicsery-Ronay Jr., "The SF of Theory: Baudrillard and Haraway," *Science Fiction Studies* 18 (1991): 387–404, at 397.
34. Haraway, "Nature, Politics, and Possibilities," 514. That a second-wave socialist feminist in the early 1980s would find utopian possibilities in the products of militarized technoscience is at least as improbable as Marx's interest in the potential of the joint stock market and Jameson's use of Walmart to illustrate a method that would be willing to imagine something in the despised present as a kind of foreshadowing of a different and better future (Fredric Jameson, "Utopia as Method, or The Uses of the Future," in *Utopia/Dystopia: Conditions of Historical Possibility*, ed. Michael D. Gordin, Helen Tilley, and Gyan Prakash [Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2010], 21–44, at 42).
35. See Gane, "When We Have Never Been Human, What Is to Be Done?" 156.
36. Marx and Engels, *Communist Manifesto*, 18.
37. Lyon, *Manifestoes*, 197.
38. See Gane, "When We Have Never Been Human, What Is to Be Done?" 156.
39. Judith Butler, *Gender Trouble: Feminism and the Subversion of Identity* (New York: Routledge, 1990).
40. Michael Hardt and Antonio Negri, *Multitude: War and Democracy in the Age of Empire* (New York: Penguin, 2004).
41. Marx and Engels, *Communist Manifesto*, 9.
42. Jacqueline Rhodes, *Radical Feminism, Writing, and Critical Agency: From Manifesto to Modem* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 2005), 1.
43. Phillip E. Wegner, *Imaginary Communities: Utopia, the Nation, and the Spatial Histories of Modernity* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2002), 99–100.
44. Martin Puchner, "Manifesto = Theatre," in *Serpentine Gallery Manifesto Marathon* (London: Koenig Books, 2009), 17–32, at 28.
45. *Ibid.*, 27–28.