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Revenge of the sexdroids: the robot-girlfriend experience

By Raven

Femputer: Have you any idea how it feels to be
a Fembot living in a Manbot's Manputer's world?

- Futurama

I have seen the future. It had rubber tits and talked about football. It came in five types of personalities. One of the most advanced pieces of technology on Earth. A sexdroid. The prospect of a full-contact, virtual “girlfriend experience” was finally within reach. And for 7,000 US, these 120 lbs of pure, unconditional love could be mine... pending regular tech support, of course.

Yes, I have seen the future, and it had three “anatomically correct” points of entry.

Recently unveiled in January 2010, the Roxxy-bot is being marketed as the World’s first sex “gynoid”. It was first presented at the AVN Adult Entertainment Expo by the good folk at TrueCompanion Inc. Like a nightmare straight from Mamoru Oshii’s manga *Ghost in the Shell II: Innocence*[\[1\]](#), the Roxxy-bot comes custom-made, so that every precious little snowflake unit is unique in its own way. These robots don’t hang around your local sexshop, though, that kind of refined material you can only buy online. The aspiring owner gets to choose hair and skin color, and more importantly, breast size. Plus, when you order, you fill out this form where you list your interests, and the techs at TrueCompanion will design a profile to fulfill your most existential passions (baseball, football, fast cars, etc.).

In fact, they’ve gone to such lengths to avoid objectifying women as mere sextoys with legs (every [pro]feminist is bound to fall in love with this one) they have elected to translate the wit and vitality of women into five additional archetypes, just like in real life: Frigid Farrah, Wild Wendy, Mature Martha, Young Yoko, and of course, S&M Susan (don’t worry, she’ll use a safeword if things get too rough).

But it’s not sexist, I assure you. And why? Well, because the male model is on its way, entitled “Rocky”.

Certified “Mad Scientist” Douglas Hines spearheaded the project, with a handful of other highly trained engineers and coders. In fact, some of the techs who did the animatronics used to work for Disney and the Jim Henson Creature Workshop, to name a few. Apparently, and quite

conveniently, Doug came up with the idea when a friend of his died on 9/11. He figured it would pretty neat to be able to keep a person's consciousness artificially alive. Some way to cheat death (and nobody's ever thought of that, clearly). Plus, it's patriotic, so you know it's right.

Allegedly, the plan was to use this technology (the AI, mind you) to help the elderly suffering from loneliness. Couldn't go through, though, too much red tape, Hines said. Guess his next move? The leap from Healthcare business to the porn industry was just a question of finding that marketing niche.

You have to admit, the Roxxy-bot is pure genius. Why? Because it addresses one of the most basic human needs. One is fight. One is flee. And one is to own a Roxxy-bot. Sure, she wouldn't pass a Turing test^[2], not even one designed for intellectually "challenged" sexdroids, but she comments on where and if you touch her, and she sleeps, snores even. Luckily, you can change the volume on her, and that is a feat in itself. Additionally, while coupling, she's programmed to experience simulated orgasms. So everybody wins.

"And Jesus wept" I believe is the next verse. Tears of joy, no doubt. That randy shmuck.

Now, just ponder the implications for a second. The potential is limitless. Order two Roxxies and you have... two Roxxies! Plus, no more pillow talk: just hit the switch and go to sleep! And say you and your buddies feel like a little swapping? No sweat, just uplink your Roxxies via WiFi and they can switch personalities! Yay!

For some reason I can't possibly understand, the good folk at TrueCompanion anticipated a fair amount of ridicule, so they set their story straight, and came up with a social statement. Hines insists the product is not mainly about sex, it's really about having someone to talk to, just to have some company, hence the name, TrueCompanion. The company goes as far as stating their machine should benefit people afflicted with sexual dysfunction. How very ticklish.

Because sexual dysfunction, as is widely understood, is nearly always symptomatic of deeper emotional problems. Albeit, the causes are deeply rooted in our increasingly estranged society, where we replace direct human contact by social mediations – telecoms, entertainment, IM, SMS, e-mails and some couple hundred thousand ads by the age of 20. We've lost contact with ourselves and each other. We've been imprinted with ready-made representations of desire, standards of unachievable beauty. The "dysfunctional" are just piling up, our basic human desires constantly baffled by competition, aesthetic violence and religious guilt.

But, for all intents and purposes, machines are the way to go. Sure. It won't screw us up even more, no sirry Bob.

Of course, the trap here is to focus on the "sexual scandal" hype. Hines' original intentions were to work on furthering AI, which is exactly what he's doing. The technology developed here can be put to other uses. And TrueCompanion Inc. has obtained as many patents as they possibly could, and there's a fuckload of money to be made, so to speak. The sex industry is a just a lever. One way or another, this is just another step in the technological direction.

And that's what I love about technology. It answers needs we don't have, but consumers are always on the lookout for new holes to fill, no pun intended. In the process, technology creates a hundred more issues, few of which are taken into account or even foreseen. The research, development and production stages waste resources on a biblical scale. The end-product disables people on various levels and irremediably fails to imitate life. But it's new, in that we've never been so fucken dumb before, so it's interesting, right?

So bring it on, I say! Bring on the smart phones and GPS toaster-ovens and the next-gen orgasmogiggers! We want to *own* things, things that start with the letter "i"! Yes, make more useless shit, you fuckers, until we all just fucken drown in that scum! Mine the earth and cut down all trees, then take it to the dump and burn it! Yeah, make sure there's nothing beautiful in this fucken planet and pile us up so tight we're become so fucken desperate we'll come *begging* for any distraction from our fucking cockroach lives. We can't get enough Hollywood flicks, reality competitions, glitter gloss and sexdroids! Let's mix 'em all together in a big room and make a fucken themepark!

"I can't watch TV for longer than 5 minutes without praying for a nuclear holocaust. Seriously, on my hands and knees, wishing it upon every one of you. That's how much I love TV. I think it's great." – Bill Hicks

"Those who still see technology as 'neutral', a mere 'tool' existing apart from the dominant values and social system are criminally blind to the nullity of a death-trip culture."
[3] – John Zerzan

[1] Incidentally, one sexbot that became infused with a sentient mind kept repeating "kill me!"

[2] The famous Turing Test, made by Alan Turing in the 1950s, is designed to evaluate Artificial Intelligences' ability to mimic human response. Hypothetically, an AI able to complete the Turing test would be indistinguishable from a genuine human mind. Needless to say, no AI yet has ever come close, and the most enthusiast technophiles don't see this happening until sometime 2030.

[3] Zerzan, John. 1994. *Future Primitive and Other Essays*, Autonomedia / Anarchy, p.156

