

*The Humanity and Feminism of Robots in Sci-fi Movies  
---Take Alita: Battle Angel (2019) as an Example*

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**Abstract**

The birth of the film began with the development of science and technology. As a new technology, a new medium, it began to be used for human creation and recorded human traces. As one of the types of movies, science fiction movies record the development of science and technology in the course of human history. It also shows the psychological state of people in the development of society at that time. Throughout the history of science fiction movies under the influence of computer technology, although the first electronic computer in human history was born in 1946, robots appeared in the movie *Metropolis* as early as 1927, followed by *The Day The Earth Stood Still* (1951), *The Invisible Boy* (1957), *Westworld* (1973), *Blade Runner* (1982), *Universal Soldier* (1992), *Artificial Intelligence: AI* (2001), *Chappie* (2013), etc., it is not difficult to see the changes in the psychological process of people's treatment of computer technology. The new film *Alita: Battle Angel*, which was released in 2019, is about a deactivated female cyborg who is revived, but cannot remember anything of her past life and goes on a quest to find out who she is. From the movie, in addition to the development of electronic computers and post-software technology, what we can see more is the sparkling humanity of this female robot Alita. Over the past hundred years, human philosophical attitudes towards machines have gradually changed.

Keywords: *Alita: Battle Angel* (2019); Feminism; Humanity; Robots; Sci-fi movies

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## **Introduction**

Robots appeared in the movie *Metropolis* as early as 1927, followed by *The Day The Earth Stood Still* (1951), *The Invisible Boy* (1957), *Westworld* (1973), *Blade Runner* (1982), *Universal Soldier* (1992), *Artificial Intelligence: AI* (2001), *Chappie* (2013), etc., it is not difficult to see the changes of the outlook of robots. And it is obvious to find that the early robots were male robots while more and more female robots appeared after 1980s. Comparing female robots after 1980s with the female robot in *Metropolis* (1927), we can tell that the humanity and feminism are more obvious in those after 1980s.

When looking into the history of modern western feminist movement, we find that there are four stages of waves. This is clearly related to the awakening of humanity in robots, especially in female robots in sci-fi movies. The fourth wave, from around 2012, used social media to combat sexual harassment, violence against women and rape culture. It is characterized particularly by challenging misogyny and further gender equality. And there are lots of wonderful sci-fi movies with a female robot, the *Machine* (2013), *Her* (2013), *Ex Machina* (2015), *Blade Runner 2049* (2017), *Mind and Machine* (2017), and *Alita: Battle Angel* (2019). The humanity and feminism of those female robots are very topical.

This thesis will mainly analyze *Alita: Battle Angel* (2019) to see how we can tell the humanity and feminism in *Alita*.

### **1 Plot of the Movie**

The story happens in the year 2563, three hundred years after the Fall. When trolling for cyborg parts, Alita's body part was found by Dr. Ido. And she was repaired but cannot remember who she is, or where she came from. But Dr. Ido knew the truth from her powerful heart part. She was the one who can break the cycle of death and destruction left behind from Tipharees. But to accomplish her true purpose, she must fight and kill. So, Dr. Ido decided to keep her secret himself and gave her the cyborg body which he designed before for his own beloved daughter who died in an accident.

But Alita wanted to remember the past. And she was brave to follow Dr. Ido the first night to discover that he was a hunter warrior. Even before, she is so upright and justice as to try to stop him by herself. When she fought against the bad guy to defend them both, she had a flashback memory when she was fighting and was called 99. And with time went by, she came to know whom the body she used belonged to. She knew she was almost 300 years old. And she found her real body in the battleship under water.

At first Dr. Ido refused to rejoin her with her body part found in the battleship until he realized she was born to fight with evil that it was only the body can support her will, especially after she lost her body in a fight with the giant cyborg, Grewishka. With this body, she became the battle angel.

## **2 Three-act Paradigm of the Movie**

The three-act paradigm is first stated out by Syd Field. In this structure, a writer sets the plot of a film within the first twenty to thirty minutes. And then the protagonist experiences a plot point, providing the protagonist with a goal. About half of a movie's running time focuses on the protagonist's struggle to achieve this goal. The second act is called the confrontation. Field also refers to the midpoint, a turning point around the middle of the screenplay, such as on or around page 60 of a 120-page screenplay. This turning point is often a devastating reversal of the protagonist's fortune. The third act depicts the protagonist's struggle to achieve or not achieve his or her goal, as well as the aftermath. In this film, the point one, middle point and point two are very clear to find.

Point one happens around thirty minutes on the night that Dr. Ido got out to hunt but to step into a trap by the giant, Grewishka. In the dangerous moment, it was Alita who saved them both. It was the first time Alita showed her talent and ability in fighting. It was the moment that occurred the flashback of her memory for the first time. She remembered the huge battle flashes.

Middle point happens around seventy minutes that she found her battle body in the battleship under water. And when she fought with Grewishka, she got flashback to remember the moment when she was training by her master.

Point two happens around one hundred minutes when she went to revenge to Victor. She fought with Grewishka. The flashback occurred again when she took part in the final fight before the Fall.

## **3 Humanity and Feminist in Alita**

In this movie, it is a world of iron, machine and cyborg. Cyborgs killed casually. Some human being murdered cyborg too. But it is Alita who makes this film full of humanity and female softness.

Alita has the strongest cyborg body in the world. But she has the softest heart in the world. Her humanity and feminist can be seen through those details in the film.

### **3.1 Dog**

The first time when she met the boy, Hugo. She saved a dog from the big walking machine. When she decided to get the certification for hunter warrior and step into the hunter club to unit all the other warriors, the little dog recognized her and followed her. When the giant cyborg, Grewishka, came in to challenge her, the other cyborg hunters did not defense for her, only the little dog stand in front of her to defend for her and lost its life for her.

### **3.2 Food**

Alita loved life. She liked eating oranges and chocolates. She liked playing with the other teens.

### **3.3 Clothes**

The director wants us to see her humanist and female softness through her clothes, too.

The first sweater she got from Dr. Ido was a rainbow colored one. And the other clothes were all pink, red, blue or purple. Being compared with the clothes of the others in the film, her clothes were more full of humanity and feminine taste.

### **3.4 Action**

Alita never be afraid of fighting with the bad guys. She always fought in face of evil. She got her memory back while fighting with bad guys. She fights with the bad guys to the last moment even using the only arm she has. She never killed or hurt people or cyborg casually. There were two times she got angry to the people she loved. She did not hurt them with her powerful body, but smashed the table or ground with her fist. She was strong but she did not refuse the help and love from Dr. Ido and Hugo.

### **3.5 Words**

Alita is emotional and humanist. She always said something full-heartedly. She could give her heart to the boy she loved and said, I will give you whatever I have. I will give you my heart. This is who I am. This was the word said to Hugo by her when she took out of her heart out of her body to Hugo to let him have to money to make his dream come true.

When Hugo told her don't just do things for people, no matter how good you think they are or how deserving they are. Alita replied then there will be nothing with me. this is who I am.

When she found Hugo went to find his way up to Vector, she ran to persuade him not to risk his life. She said, we don't belong anywhere, except together.

And there is another character, Dr. Chiren, whose humanity and feminine were aroused awakened by Alita at last. She had the chance to take Alita's heart but she did not do that, instead she saved her and Hugo. When being asked why, she replied, I am a doctor, and I am also a mother. I almost forgot that.

### **3.6 Tears**

So many times, she showed tears in her eyes. There were five times she cried. Her face design is typical for cyborg. The proportion of the eyes is too large for the face. But it did not stop the audience to see more humanity from her emotional face. Her tears even moved Dr. Chiren to change her mind to stop being in the same league with the bad guys. For this decision, she lost her life at last.

The first time was when she woke up in the next morning when being found by Dr. Ido. She cried because she could not remember who she was. The second time was when she took back the battle body of hers from the battleship under water to beg Dr. Ido to install the body for her. She wanted to arose the memory of her past through the body. The third time was the time when Hugo was killed by Zapan. The fourth was when Hugo was dropping from the high sky. The fifth was the time she joined the final champion game.

### **Conclusion**

After four waves of feminism, the status of women in modern society is also very different now. In the new social environment, women's definition of feminism may

have new contents. Women's rights do not require one gender to be superior to the other, but rather the harmony between the two sexes. The highest level of feminism, is a kind of self-confidence, self-consciousness, love oneself, love others, there is a little or big or small quality to affect others around. Alita is so humanity and feminist that her humanity moved the people around her and changed them. Just like Hugo said to her, you are the most humanist person I have ever met. And he loved her and changed for her.

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