



# Artificial women in science fiction film

Mujeres artificiales en el cine de ciencia ficción

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*Start of the research: February 2022 - End of the research: May 2023.*

### How to cite this article / Standardized reference:

Molina García, Berta; Franco, Y. G., & Tajahuerce Ángel, I. (2024). Artificial women in the science fiction film [Mujeres artificiales en el cine de ciencia ficción]. *Revista Latina de Comunicación Social*, 82, 01-24. <https://www.doi.org/10.4185/RLCS-2024-2257>

**Receipt Date:** 06/11/2023

**Acceptance Date:** 26/12/2023

**Publication Date:** 26/01/2023

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## ABSTRACT

**Introduction:** This paper aims to study the gendered representations of robots, cyborgs, ginoids, clones, holograms, and female artificial intelligences in science fiction film. It is hypothesized that the sexist stereotypes widely studied in female film characters are perpetuated in female artificial creations in science fiction film.

**Methodology:** A sample of 83 characters was taken from the IMDb database. After their classification, we proceeded to carry out a qualitative analysis on representation, gender roles and stereotypes of the characters.

**Results:** The results obtained confirm that the science fiction genre is intensely masculinized and vertical occupational segregation is the dominant note. In addition, gender roles and stereotypes that are common in

other film genres are also replicated in science fiction. **Discussion:** The representations do not manage to get rid of sexist precepts that are maintained over time as a result of the persistence of a male gaze. **Conclusions:** This study confirms the need to establish tools that allow women to access a highly masculinized cultural industry as well as the need to carry out a representation of female fictional characters far from the gender stereotypes traditionally associated with women.

**Keywords:** AI; Robots; Science fiction; Film; Gender representations; Gender stereotype; Communication and gender.

## RESUMEN

**Introducción:** El presente artículo tiene como finalidad estudiar las representaciones de género de robots, cíborgs, ginoides, clones, hologramas e inteligencias artificiales femeninas en el cine de ciencia ficción. Se plantea como hipótesis que los estereotipos sexistas, ampliamente estudiados en personajes cinematográficos femeninos, se perpetúan en las creaciones artificiales femeninas del cine de ciencia ficción. **Metodología:** Se ha tomado una muestra de 83 personajes extraídos de la base de datos IMDb. Tras un análisis cuantitativo y clasificación de los datos, se procedió a realizar un análisis cualitativo sobre representación, asignación social y estereotipos de los personajes. **Resultados:** Los resultados obtenidos confirman que el género de ciencia ficción está intensamente masculinizado y la segregación ocupacional vertical es la nota dominante. Además, roles y estereotipos de género habituales en otros géneros cinematográficos se reproducen también en la ciencia ficción. **Discusión:** Las figuras no logran desprenderse de unos preceptos sexistas que se mantienen en el tiempo como consecuencia de la persistencia de una mirada masculina que impide romper con los parámetros de género socialmente establecidos. **Conclusiones:** Este estudio confirma la necesidad de establecer medidas que permitan a las mujeres acceder a una industria cultural altamente masculinizada para fomentar una representación de las figuras femeninas de ficción alejada de los estereotipos de género tradicionalmente asociados a las mujeres.

**Palabras clave:** Inteligencia artificial; Robots; Ciencia ficción; Cine; Representaciones de género; Estereotipos de género; Comunicación y género.

## 1. Introduction

The technological developments disseminated through mass media play a fundamental role in shaping thought. The emergence of large platforms contributes to amplifying the message that media such as cinema convey to society. For this reason, the study of the image and representation of women on the big screen is essential. As mechanisms of social and cultural control, both are conveyors of behavior patterns and roles that people internalize and assume (Castejón-Leorza, 2004; Tajahuerce-Ángel et al. (2018); Aguilar Carrasco, 2008; Bernárdez-Rodal and Padilla Castillo, 2018; Franco and Tajahuerce Ángel, 2022).

This work examines artificial female creations in science fiction film to determine how gender representations are constructed and to what extent women participate in the artistic creation in this film genre. Vertical gender segregation, the theory of the male gaze, character construction, and the analysis of gender stereotypes are the analytical tools used to address this study.

### 1.1. The male gaze in feminist film criticism

*Visual Pleasure and Narrative Cinema* by Laura Mulvey (1975) is the first text where the concept of the "male gaze" is introduced to refer to how women are represented within the patriarchal system and how they have been cinematically constructed as sexual subjects. Mulvey (1988) focuses her analysis on scopophilia, as it considers others as objects of sexual stimulation through observation. This is how women are relegated to the role of objects capable of being looked at ("to be looked-at-ness").

"Use the figure of the woman-machine (in all its representations) as an erotic lure for the male audience."

This concept provides an analytical framework upon which authors like Ann E. Kaplan (1983), Ruby Rich (1978), Julia Lesage (1979), Annette Kuhn (1991), or Judith Mayne (1993) base their analyses that reflect how, in cinema, patriarchal myths place women in a silent and marginal position (Kaplan, 1983).

The classical gaze compels the female spectator to identify with roles of victim, seductress, or objects of desire. The fetishistic representation of the female body ensures a masculinization of the viewer's position (Doane, 2012). Society has been structured according to Western cultural norms that relegate women to a secondary role, subordinate to men (Capra, 1996). The world operates as a marketplace of symbolic goods where women appear as "perceived beings" within a system of male domination that tends to keep them in a constant state of bodily insecurity (or symbolic dependency) as they "need the gaze of others to construct themselves" (Bourdieu, 2000, p. 87). This visual scrutiny to which women are subjected is one of the primary sources of oppression (Colaizzi, 1990). In this sense, in patriarchal culture, women remain "prisoners of a symbolic order, permanently linked to their place as carriers of meaning, not as creators of it" (Mulvey, 1988, p.1).

## 1.2. Women in the Film Creation

Numerous studies on the presence of women in the film industry highlight how male participation is predominant in every aspect of film creation. From directing to production, including roles in filmmaking and cinematography (Núñez-Domínguez, 2010; 2012; Zecchi, 2013; 2014; Simelio-Solà and Forga-Martel, 2014; Álvarez-Hernández et al., 2015), historically, the most significant categories related to film creation have been in male hands, while women have been relegated to performing roles considered secondary, such as makeup and hairstyling or costume design (Bernárdez-Rodal, 2006; Rodríguez, 2006), where economic compensation is often lower, and gender-based vertical segregation is the norm (Conor, 2021). In addition to this, there are other obstacles that hinder women's participation in the film industry: financial barriers, the masculinization of the sector, stereotypes on film sets, work-life balance, and exclusionary hiring decisions (Smith et al., 2014; Aguilar, 2017; Arranz, 2017; 2020)

In the genre at hand, women barely represent 10% of the personnel involved in the fundamental areas of film development (directing, writing, music, cinematography, and production). This situation is caused by a lack of recognition, the absence of role models, and a budget-to-gender relationship that leads to the exclusion of women in certain areas (Molina, 2021).

The limited job opportunities for female directors in this genre reflect two facts: a cinematic legacy dominated by men and an industry, primarily Hollywood, resistant to risk. So much so that the pressure of box office performance and the traditional formula "male director-science fiction film that generates revenue" (Stone and Flores, 2019, p. 18-19) continues to be exploited in pursuit of economic interests and sexist beliefs that persist to this day: that men can make films that generate substantial amounts of money, but women cannot. As Stone and Flores (2019) denounce, the studios' adherence to the model of male artists monopolizing science fiction films boils down to an economic issue.

## 1.3. Stereotypes and Representation in Science Fiction Cinema

Stereotypes are models that play a fundamental role in the reconstruction of mental worlds (Lippmann, 1922). They involve assigning common traits to a group of individuals to facilitate their social adaptation (Tajfel, 1984). According to Martínez i Surinyac (1998), they are common and practical in audiovisual media for simplifying the psychological attributes of characters by highlighting their most relevant characteristics. Stereotypes constitute a very important form of categorization since the audience must be able to identify with them and with the stories told in audiovisual narratives (Galán-Fajardo, 2006).

In patriarchal cinema, women are not just characters; they are often present as objects. Even if they have a name, their configuration is more akin to something belonging to the environment than that of a subject (Guarinos, 2008). According to Iadevito, they are constantly constructed cinematically through memory, fantasy, narrative, or myths (2014). In this sense, despite being protagonists of the stories or at least having relevance in them, their characterization often employs a series of stereotypes that persistently force them to construct themselves socially (Quin and McMahon, 1997). In the way they are exhibited, certain constants persistently undermine them as symbolic subjects. Lacking ideological or political criteria, they appear marginal to the narrative, presented as capricious, incongruous, absurd, clumsy, and useless characters, often possessing a truncated (Aguilar-Carrasco, 2008) or highly stereotyped sexuality, where heterosexuality is the general norm (Bernárdez-Rodal and Padilla-Castillo, 2018).

Typically, in commercial cinema, the stereotypes that women are imbued with are organized around a binary model of good and bad, which tends to reinforce the idea of inferiority (Bernárdez-Rodal, 2015). From these patterns, the following stereotypes emerge: the good girl, angel, virgin, spinster, the bad girl, warrior, *femme fatale*, saintly mother, sorrowful mother, castrating mother, stepmother, monster's mother, childless mother, Cinderella, *turris eburnea*, black queen/witch/black widow, villain, superheroine, and dominatrix (Guarinos, 2008). In addition to these, there are also the damsel in distress and *token* stereotypes, which represent women symbolically and are considered secondary in the narrative (Vainikka, 2018). Bou (2006), when addressing female archetypes in classic cinema, concludes that female characters can be grouped into two major categories inspired by Greek mythological tradition: the daughters of Pandora and Athena (warlike and strongly pro-patriarchal) and the descendants of the silent spirits of Demeter and Persephone (reserved in character with traces of gynocratic tradition).

Focusing on science fiction cinema, since the late 70s, there have been criticisms of the stereotyping and treatment of female characters in these films (Telotte, 2002; Kac-Vergne, 2016; Lech, 2010; Stone and Flores, 2019; Zafra, 2010; Yaszek et al., 2023; Falcus and Oró-Piqueras, 2023; Fox, 2023). One of the reasons for this stems from the male authorship of these creations, which can be categorized into two opposing groups: hypersexualized active characters and asexuated passive characters (Clute et al., 2023).

While the feminization of real robots and AI systems has been a source of inspiration for film creation (Mavridou, 2016), studies addressing the representations of artificial female figures in cinema (Dos, 2010; Pedraza, 2000, 2001; Lech, 2010; Huyssen, 1981; Wosk, 2015; Novell, 2005; Merás, 2014; Escudero-Pérez, 2010; 2013; Abad-Vila, 2016; Zumberge, 2018) point out that the stereotyping observed in "artificial women" is not significantly different from that of non-artificial women. As objects of discourse, they are among the most desired creations. Being the receptacles of fantasies, their bodies are objectified, their voices silenced, and their behaviors controlled (Escudero-Pérez, 2010). Regardless of the type of emotions machines may convey (love, tolerance, hatred), their images perpetuate a feminine ideal that has persisted in Western culture since Romanticism (Pedraza, 2001). This underscores the fact that creators operate within cultural models "characteristic of sexism, concealing their desire to conceive the perfect, efficient, and dominant being, to the point of making it sexually desirable" (Sala, 1997, p. 57). The objectification of these figures is ultimately a consequence of the society that creates them. For this reason, when conceived as feminine, "sexual intention" is common (Escudero-Pérez, 2010). Their feminization brings up the old stereotype of the woman-machine whose human creator is a white, heterosexual, middle or upper-class man who seeks to maintain strict control over and manipulate sentient machines for personal gain (Mavridou, 2016).

In the logical evolution of the robotic and mechanical representation from the early creations to new images, the figure of the cyborg emerges (Morientes, 2016). This figure, which serves feminist theorists to address how technology challenges existing notions of subjectivity in the modern world (Haraway, 1995; Phelan, 1993; Ruido, 2004; Grosz, 2020; Braidotti, 2013; Parker-Starbuck and Mock, 2011), is transferred to cinema in the form of representations that have not always remained monolithic, although in many cases, they respond to their equating with their male counterparts (Merás, 2014). In this sense, it doesn't matter whether the robot/cyborg is conceived as male or female. The only reason they are constructed as such is to perpetuate sexist clichés. As destructive machines (Zumberge, 2018), the only difference lies in them being portrayed as

more evil, more voyeuristic, and more sexual, as seen in the female version of Terminator, Terminatrix (García-Adánez, 2010).

These same narratives systematically dehumanize cyborgs by categorizing them as "robots." As a result, men can justify the murder of female cyborgs and feel morally unburdened. Meanwhile, the audience can empathize with the character because they don't see the female robot as a human being being killed but as a "thing" that needs to be disconnected. In this sense, by destroying the female cyborg, the threatening and transgressive figure ceases to be a threat to the social order (Seaman-Grant, 2017). Furthermore, in many of these films, sexual violence committed by men against cyborgs is used to illustrate their vulnerability. Sexual assault is either used to punish "bad" cyborgs or to demonstrate that they are controllable, thus eliciting sympathy from the viewer towards the "good" cyborgs (Seaman-Grant, 2017, p. 73). In their more ethereal forms, such as holographic representations or disembodied artificial intelligences, male control over them is essential. While in some cases they are "inserted" into other bodies to become visible and for men to have "access" to them, in others, there is a clear preference for these creations over real women because they can not only be programmed and controlled but also "turned off" (Wosk, 2015, p. 101).

#### 1.4. Characters in cinematic storytelling as units of study

We start with the consideration of a "character" as an autonomous being composed of a series of traits that make them unique (Chatman, 2013). Sánchez-Escalonilla (2001) addresses their construction from the perspective of personality psychology. He relates the Hippocratic Theory of temperaments - sanguine, phlegmatic, choleric, melancholic - to the two natural tendencies of human behavior, extraversion and introversion. Furthermore, through Jung's four behavioral tendencies- thinking, feeling, sensing, and intuiting (Jung, 2008) - he establishes eight common psychological archetypes in characters: extraverted reflective, introverted reflective, extraverted sensitive, introverted sensitive, extraverted perceptive, introverted perceptive, extraverted intuitive, introverted intuitive. The combination of archetypes and temperaments forms the complete psychological profile of the character.

Egri (1947) proposes the construction of characters from three dimensions: physical-physiological (gender, age, height, weight, hair and eye color, skin, posture, appearance, health, birthmarks, defects, and heredity), sociological (class, occupation, education, home life, religion, position in society, political affiliation, hobbies, readings), and psychological (sexual life, morals, ambitions, setbacks, temperaments, attitudes, complexes, superstitions). Meanwhile, Pérez-Ruffí (2016), based on Galán-Fajardo's work (2006), formulates a methodology for analysis focused on studying characters as narrative categories that, in turn, result from a combination of traits (physical, psychological, moral, or sociological characteristics). Grossocordón-Cortecero (2019), on the other hand, presents a qualitative model based on features, behaviors, and peculiarities of fictional figures.

## 2. Objectives

The objective of this research is to analyze the representation, social assignment, and stereotypes present in various artificial female creations in science fiction cinema. We start with the hypothesis that the sexist stereotypes widely studied in female film characters are perpetuated in artificial creations. As a secondary hypothesis, we have considered that science fiction cinema is a highly masculinized genre where the presence of women in film creation is very scarce, which promotes a representation of artificial female figures based on stereotypical precepts.

## 3. Methodology

To carry out this analysis, a database of films featuring artificial female entities has been created. The sample selection was conducted using references extracted from the IMDb database based on the keyword search "*artificial females in movies and television*." The choice of this tool is due to its high degree of reliability, as recognized in the majority of works in the field of audiovisual studies (Simelio and Forga, 2014; Arranz, 2017; Lauzen, 2020; Smith et al., 2020; Pérez Morán, 2022). It is specifically suitable for the research presented

here due to the large amount and variety of data it contains, which are organized and normalized, making it possible and relatively easy to extract and analyze them by keywords. The sample includes movies and television programs featuring anthropomorphic machines, artificial life, or computer-generated creations with a female appearance: female humanoid robots (*fembots*), female humanoid cyborgs, female humanoid androids, computer-simulated female humanoids with physical form, female humanoid clones, holograms, female humanoid statues, mannequins, or mechanical dolls that have become sentient. After excluding TV series and films with the last three forms of representation (as they are not the subject of our study), the sample results in 62 films and 83 characters. In cases where a film featured more than one representation, all of them were added to the analysis. Once this data was obtained, two analytical sheets were prepared, which were completed after viewing the films. The first sheet contains the technical data of the films, and the second sheet contains the characteristics of the characters. Subsequently, a quantitative and qualitative analysis was conducted, and the results are presented below.

### 3.1. Technical information about the movie

The technical data of the films is used to identify the number of women present in them and subsequently determine their involvement in the film creation. For its elaboration, we have based it on the studies of Lauzen (2020), Smith et al. (2014), and Arranz (2017), resulting in the following analytical table:

**Table 1.** *Movie technical details.*

TITLE:
Year:
Direction:
Production:
Script:
Cinematography:
Music:
Country:

**Source:** Author's own work.

### 3.2. Character analysis sheet

The second sheet has been prepared following the literature on character characterization processes mentioned in section 1.4 and has been adapted to the needs of the study. It includes a specific section on types of artificial beings following Moriente's proposal (2016); a category to analyze the presence of characters with disabilities following the parameters established by the WHO (2011), and another on violence against women following the classification established by the UN. For the analysis of stereotypes, we have based it on Guarinos' proposal (2008). From all of this, the following classifications would result.

**Tabla 2.** Ficha técnica de los personajes

Physical dimension	Psychological Dimension	Social Dimension
Nombre	Personality	Marital Status
Age	Behaviour	Family context (children)
Gender	Ambitions	Studies
Type of creation*		Profession
Race		
Clothing/nudity		
Disability**		
Physical appearance		
Sexuality		

**Source:** Author's own work.

These tables are further broken down into subcategories, resulting in the following:

**Table 3.** Physical dimension of the characters.

Age	Sex	Type of Creation	Race
Young (15-24)	Female	Pure machines: robots, automatons	Afro-American
Young-Adult (25-44)	Male	Humanoid machines: cyborgs	Asian
Adult (45-64)	Other	Mixed machines: gynoids	Caucasian
Older (+64)		Soft machines: replicants, clones	No data
No date		Supra Machines: artificial intelligence	

Clothing/Nudity	Disability	Physical Appearance	Sexuality
Yes	Physical or motor	Attractive	Heterosexual
No	Sensory	Not attractive	Lesbian
Semi-naked	Intellectual	Ambiguous	Bisexual
	Psychic	Without appearance	Not described

**Source:** Author's own work.

**Table 4.** Psychological dimension of the characters.

Personality	Behavior	Objectives/Goals
Extroverted	Individualist	Professional promotion
Introverted	Intuitive	Economic
	Reflexive	Economic/Career advancement
	Sensitive	Not described
		Other

**Source:** Author's own work.

**Table 5.** Social dimension of the characters.

Marital status	Children	Education	Profesion
<b>Married</b>	Yes	Primary	Describe
<b>Divorced</b>	No	Secondary	
<b>Single</b>	No data	Higher education	
<b>Widow</b>		No education	
<b>No data</b>			

**Source:** Author's own work.

**Table 6.** Gender roles and stereotypes.

Rol	Social Class	Scope of action	Hipersexuality
<b>Active</b>	High	Public	Yes
<b>Passive</b>	Middle	Private	No
	Low		
	Not specified		

Physical care or	Violence	Stereotypes	
<b>Make-Up</b>	Physical	Good girl	Step Mother
<b>Hair</b>	Verbal	Angel	Mother of the monster
<b>Make-up/Hair</b>	Psychological	Virgin	Single Mother
	Other	Devout/Spinster	Cinderella
		Bad Girl	Object of desire
		Warrior	Black queen/witch/black widow
		<i>Femme fatal or vamp</i>	Vilain
		<i>Mater amabilis</i>	Superhero
		Castrating mothe	<i>Dominatrix</i>

**Source:** Author's own work.

#### 4. Results

First, the counting of the number of women behind the cameras in the selected films is carried out; secondly, the characters are analyzed based on the defined variables.



#### 4.1. Women behind the cameras

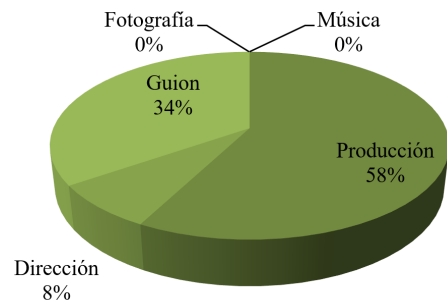
In the selected sample, only 25 women hold the analyzed positions individually (without sharing roles), distributed as follows: the area with the highest presence of women (58%) is production, followed by screenwriting (34%), and direction (8%). It is worth noting the complete absence of women in the fields of cinematography and music.

#### 4.2. Characterization and stereotypes of the characters

The results shown in Figure 2 indicate that 92% of the creations have names, although it is worth noting that in several films, they are referred to using acronyms (VIKI, *Virtual Interactive Kinetic Intelligence*; EVE, in its original English, *Extraterrestrial Vegetation Evaluator*), serial numbers (Diana, No. 11, Kay-Em 14, Sonmi-451, Nimani 1345, Julie/J2), or based on the type of creation (Tx/Terminatrix, *Alienator*). Judeo-Christian references can be seen in names like María, Rachel, Sarah, Salomé, or Eve. It's worth highlighting the explicit reference to the actress Brigitte Bardot (and her sex symbol connotations) in the character with the same name in the film *Hot Bot*. Nominations like Borg Queen, Red Queen, virtual girlfriend, Machine, or unnamed creations, as seen with the artificial intelligence in *A.I. Rising* and two characters in *Cyberspace*, convey the idea of "non-humanity" that *fembots* represent most prominently.

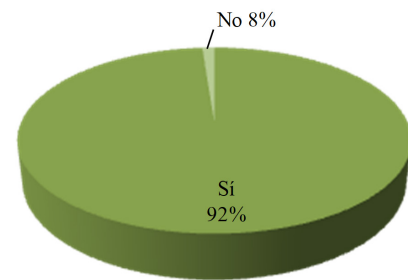
More than half of the creations fall into the young-adult category (54%), followed by young (33%). It is worth noting that in most characters, there is no explicit reference to their age. Age is only mentioned in the cases of Casella Reese (22 years old), all the creations in *Blade Runner* (four years), Alita (300 years), and Morgan (five years). The "unknown" category reflects characters who are incorporeal (VIKI, EVE, Samantha, and the artificial intelligence character in *A.I. Rising*). It is worth highlighting the invisibility of the categories "Adult" or "Elderly" in favor of a "youth dictatorship" (Gordillo, 2010, p. 98) that excludes old age as a "positive" value (Zurian et al., 2019; Medina and Zecchi (2020). This is especially concerning in the case of women because, in patriarchal society, becoming an older woman is seen as transforming into a "non-entity" (Bolen, 2003, p. 7).

**Figure 1:** Presence of women behind the cameras: distribution by professional role.



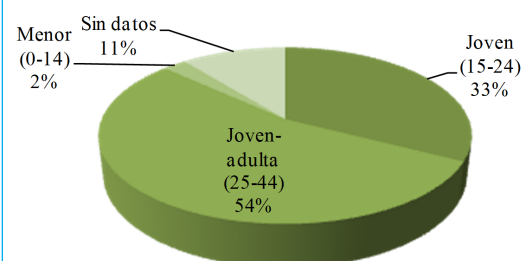
Source: Author's own work.

**Figure 2:** Name.



Source: Author's own work.

**Figure 3:** Age.



Source: Author's own work.

Gynoids are the most common creations among the analyzed characters (55%). In this regard, we should not overlook the undeniable sexual connotations associated with this type of creation. The higher number of gynoid figures, therefore, is not innocent or naive but reflects a predominantly heterosexual male imagination, as we have pointed out in section 1.2 of this article, where it is predominantly men who create these types of films.

Far behind are the second most represented category, replicants/clones (13%), followed by cyborgs (11%). Artificial intelligences represent 10% of the sample, a percentage very similar to that of robots (9%), while holograms have the least presence (2%). It is worth noting that, despite the data extracted for this sample, in many cases throughout the films, these creations are often referred to with the generic term "robot," thereby reducing them to merely mechanical subjects (Seaman-Grant, 2017).

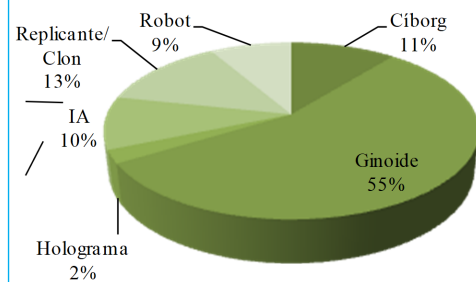
With the exception of two Asian characters (Sonmi-451 and Kyoko), all the creations with physical and holographic presence are Caucasian (92%). This seems to confirm the findings of several studies on representation that highlight the "erasure" of races such as African American (Smith et al., 2020) and the dominance of Caucasians over others (Lauzen, 2020). The five creations categorized as "No data" correspond to characters without anthropomorphic appearance. It is noteworthy how these characters are reduced to mere sexual objects, as we will see later, by assigning them professions linked to prostitution, thus emphasizing the race-profession association within a Caucasian male erotic imagination.

The results reflect a predisposition for characters to appear partially dressed (49%), usually in underwear or a bikini. Second, there are characters with clothing (39%), and finally, those who appear without it (12%).

The latter data includes incorporeal creations (VIKI, EVE, Samantha, the artificial intelligence in *A.I. Rising*) and those with metallic coverings (María, Galatea, Machine, Cleo, and Julie/J2). In one instance, nudity is observed in one of the characters when they are human, but not in their transformation into an artificial being (Tina).

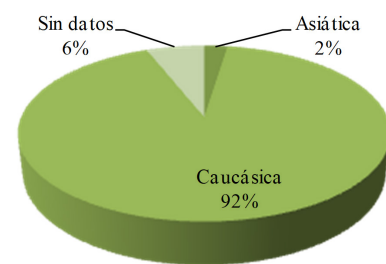
It's worth noting that, as pointed out by Dos (2010), the way characters dress reflects the influence of the social context in which the films are set. Thus, since the mid-1960s, these creations have not been immune to the influence of pop culture, the sexual revolution, or fashion, which is evident in the clothing worn by the protagonists. This can be seen in the use of iconic garments such as miniskirts or bikinis in films like *Dr. G y su máquina de bikinis*, *Más peligrosas todavía* or *Austin Powers*.

**Figure 4:** Type of creation.



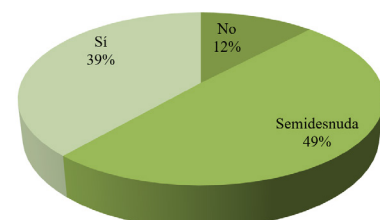
**Source:** Author's own work.

**Figure 5:** Racialization.



**Source:** Author's own work.

**Figure 6:** Clothing.



**Source:** Author's own work.

It's noteworthy to mention the use of leather outfits, influenced by cyberpunk, and military aesthetics that align with the character's role, as well as the transformation that occurs when human characters become machines. In these cases, clothing considered more traditional in neutral tones (Eve, Bobbie, Carol, Charmain, Sarah, Maggie) transition to incorporate elements such as miniskirts, leather jackets, high heels, or brightly colored high boots, which accentuate the sexualization of the characters, prioritizing physical appearance over intellect (Gaily, Kelly).

This variable appears to be underrepresented among the characters analyzed in this sample (2%), and explicit reference to this condition is made in only one case, the film "*Comando Kill*." The character Lieutenant Mills has a physical disability that is "resolved" with brain surgery to implant a chip. Therefore, disability is not presented as a representation option in these figures. It's worth noting, however, that this film genre often uses the use of implants and various devices, which are common among people with disabilities, as a resource to "revive" deceased individuals, usually for military purposes.

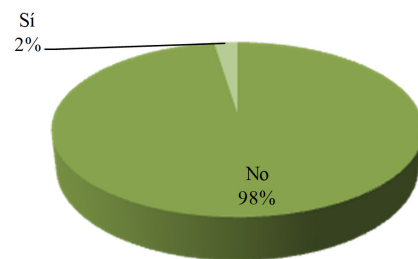
Regarding the perception of these characters and their physical attractiveness in the development of the story, the majority of the creations have an attractive physical appearance (86%). There are also two cases where this could not be determined due to the lack of representation in two characters (Samantha and the artificial intelligence character in *A.I. Rising*).

It's important to highlight the model of thinness assumed from the 1960s onwards, which was popularized through the media with the "Twiggy phenomenon" and became the predominant aesthetic standard in North American and European societies. This is notably evident in a large number of characters in these films. Furthermore, the doll-like and infantilized appearance (primarily through clothing) observed in the characters Alsacia and Leonore should also be noted. This reflects a clear intention to associate women with dolls and, therefore, objects for men's amusement.

Heterosexuality is the sexual orientation assigned to the majority of characters (73%). However, it should be noted that Stacy (2003) suggests that the characters Ripley and Call in *Alien: Resurrection* engage in a type of relationship that this author considers lesbian.

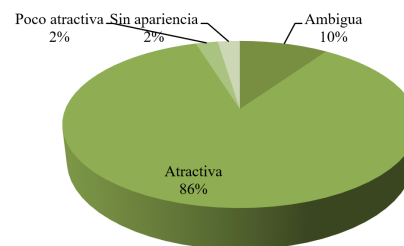
In the "undescribed" category, characters are quantified whose interactions with other characters do not allow for the deduction or determination of their sexual orientation

**Figure 7: Disability.**



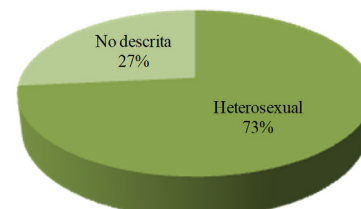
**Source:** Author's own work.

**Figure 8: Physical Appearance.**



**Source:** Author's own work.

**Figure 9: Sexual orientation.**



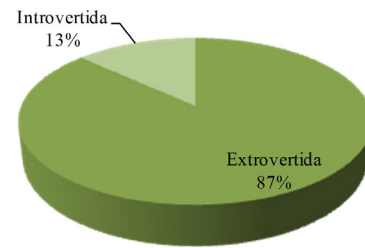
**Source:** Author's own work.

There is a predominant tendency to portray characters with an extroverted personality (87%), characterized by socialization with their environment and fluent communication with others. In the cases where introverted behavior has been observed (13%), it is often linked to the type of relationship they have with their creators, the performance environment they operate in, and their role in the plot. A transformation from introverted to extroverted personalities and vice versa is observed in characters who transition from real beings to artificial ones. It's worth noting that this transformation is also associated with the physical changes they undergo. This is evident in the cases of Eve, Gaily, Kelly, Joanna, Bobby, Carol, Iliá Ava, Maggie, Agent Peters, and Galatea.

Following the principles of Jung (2008) used for this analysis, the results indicate a prevalence of sensitive temperaments (39%). These characteristics are linked to the ability to feel empathy and make distinctions between right and wrong. They are ahead of intuitive temperaments (27%), which are not based on sentimental conceptions or reactions; individualistic temperaments (20%), characterized by the character's autonomy and independence; and reflective temperaments (14%), characterized by rational decision-making.

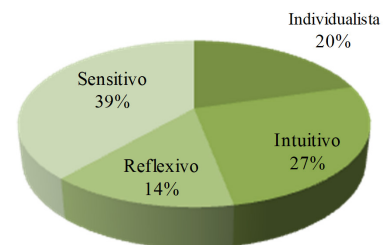
The results show that the "others" category prevails over the rest (78%), reflecting the variety of objectives assigned to the characters. In this regard, the most common objectives detected have a clear predominance of everything related to destruction and murder. These objectives include murder, revenge, compliance/servitude (in several cases of a sexual nature), message transmission, world salvation, search for one's own identity/unity with others, escape from self-destruction, research, maintenance of order on a ship, replacement of a deceased woman, and subjects of research. The "undescribed" category includes those creations in which a specific purpose within the plot is not evident. Regarding the other categories, it is worth noting that "Professional Advancement" (4%) is observed in both versions of *Las mujeres perfectas* among real women. However, when these figures are transformed into artificial creations, this objective is not evident.

**Figure 10: Personality.**



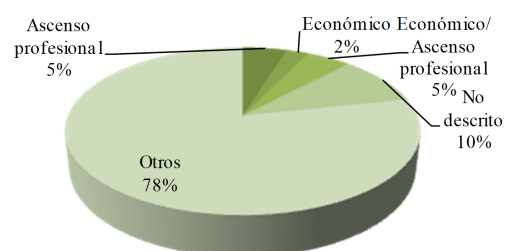
**Source:** Author's own work.

**Figure 11: Temperament.**



**Source:** Author's own work.

**Figure 12: Objective.**



**Source:** Author's own work.

The most common marital status among the analyzed characters is being single (71%). The lack of information about marital status or its non-disclosure is reflected in the "No data" category (19%). It's worth noting that out of the eight married women, six belong to the same films: Joanna, Bobbie, Carol, and Charmain in *The Stepford Wives*, and Sarah and Bobbie in *Las mujeres perfectas*. The other two characters with this marital status are Maggie (*The Surrogates*) and Leonore (*Serenity*). There is a notable absence of widowed or divorced women, reinforcing the portrayal of singleness as the ideal marital status for the represented women.

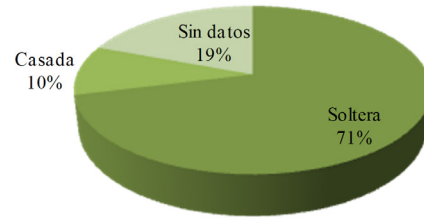
Motherhood is not a state considered for these creations. The figure of 8%, resulting from the analysis, refers to those children who were part of the human form (in the characters from *The Stepford Wives* and *Las mujeres perfectas*) and two cases of artificial characters (S1m0ne and Rachel). Therefore, the portrayal of the woman-motherhood connection is not present in the representation of these figures.

The results indicate a predominance of characters with professions over those who do not have any occupation. If characters do not have a profession, it is usually because their existence is tied to the creator who seeks professional gain through their creation. It is common for the professions they engage in to be related to murder, in a clear assimilation of the concept of a sexual machine being a killing machine, or to prostitution. Additionally, assistant/maid figures are often linked to fulfilling their creator's directives. The idea of a robot-slave is so deeply ingrained in our collective consciousness that we accept it so naturally that it is hardly perceived as reprehensible (Córdoba-Guardado, 2007).

Other professions mentioned include waitress, hunter-warrior, scientist-spy, writer, photographer, complex guardian, hairdresser, or recruiter.

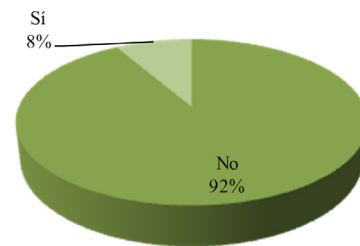
As indicated by the results, this variable provides significant data regarding the value of education in these creations, as in 79% of the cases, the level of education could not be determined. Among the counted cases, 10% have university education, another 10% have secondary education, and only 1% have primary education.

**Figure 13: Marital status.**



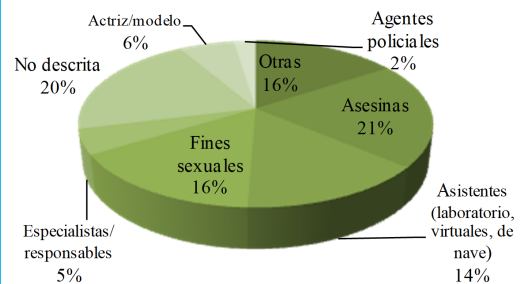
**Source:** Author's own work.

**Figure 14: Family environment (children).**



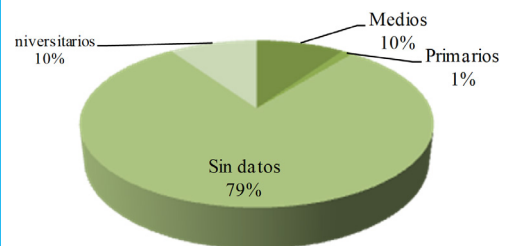
**Source:** Author's own work.

**Figure 15: Profession.**



**Source:** Author's own work.

**Figure 16: Studies.**



**Source:** Author's own work.

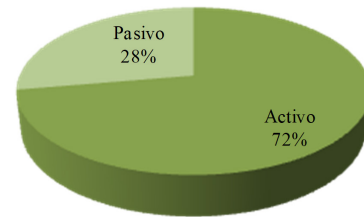
In this sample, the majority of these characters play an active role within the narratives (72%). This is motivated by their participation in the action or their fundamental importance to the plot. In cases where this does not happen, and they are characterized by playing passive roles (28%), it is because their involvement in the storyline is limited, and their character development is constrained. This occurs as a result of the interplay with other variables, such as the acting environment.

Social class is not a characteristic that is explicitly manifested but rather deduced from the context in which these creations exist. When conducting this analysis, it has been considered that certain characters lacked sufficient descriptions to categorize them into any other category than "Not specified," which accounts for 54% of the sample. Based on the results obtained, we can determine that the middle class is the social class category in which all the categorized characters fall.

The results show a slight advantage of the public acting environment (57%) over the private environment (43%), which often takes place indoors in rooms, family homes, or spacecraft. These actions are typically linked to serving or fulfilling tasks for human beings.

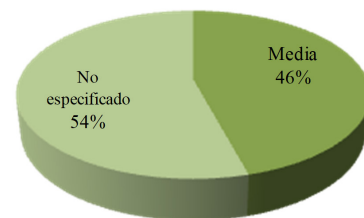
As can be seen, this is a predominant feature when it comes to shaping these creations (70%). They utilize means such as the use of tight clothing, images of fragmented bodies (usually legs), as well as close-up shots of features that accentuate the sexualization of the characters, such as lips, nails (usually red), legs, and cleavage. It's worth noting the use of the imagery fragmentation technique, which, in terms of representation, implicitly persuades the viewer by conveying the message that women are not whole beings but "parts" of a body (Arranz, 2020; Bernárdez-Rodal and Padilla-Castillo, 2018; Aguilar-Carrasco, 2018). Emphasizing the eroticization of several characters in contrast to their "human" form, which highlights one of the fundamental aspects that are repeated throughout this theme over time: the robot has the ability to seduce, deceive, and convince (Escudero-Pérez, 2013). As in other cases, this field is closely linked to other variables such as clothing and physical appearance.

**Figure 17: Role.**



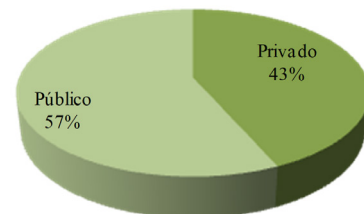
**Source:** Author's own work.

**Figure 18: Social Class.**



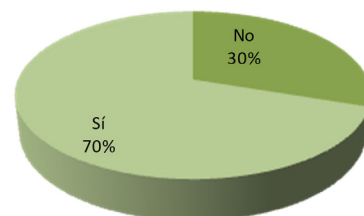
**Source:** Author's own work.

**Figure 19: Scope of action.**



**Source:** Author's own work.

**Figure 20: Hipersexualidad.**



**Source:** Author's own work.

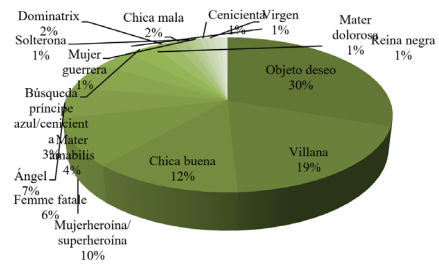
The stereotypes reflected in these characters do not differ from those traditionally associated with real women. In this regard, the stereotypes of "object of desire" (30%) and "villain" (19%) predominate. The latter, as noted by Huyssen (1981), solidifies the association of women with machines, facilitating the conception of these creatures (cyborgs) as mechanical entities distinguished by a specifically feminine degree of perversity (García Adánez, 2020; Zumberge, 2018). The stereotype of the "perfect woman" is still present in several cases, although it is not as prominent in recent decades. It is common to observe more than one stereotype in the same character, emphasizing the multiplicity of behaviors and attributes that can be assigned to artificial creations. Additionally, it should be noted that some stereotypes may not be reflected due to other variables associated with the characters, such as age. In this regard, Guarinos' proposal (2008) includes five stereotypes that could only be represented by characters over the age of 50. In our sample, there are none, highlighting the cinematic trend of overlooking a significant portion of women, as we discussed when analyzing the "Age" category. The presence of stereotypes related to motherhood refers to the human form of the represented women and two cases of artificial women (S1m0ne and Maggie).

Physical care focused on makeup and hair is observed in more than half of the analyzed characters (60%). The cases labeled as "Not Apparent" are determined by the absence of corporeality in the representations (Samantha, VIKI, or the AI from *A.I. Rising*), the robotic appearance of these creations (María, Dot Matrix, EVE), or the lack of a clear perception of this variable (Niya, Alienator, Morgan, Julie/J2).

In 71% of the cases, physical violence is observed against these representations. It tends to be presented in an extreme manner and often leads to the definitive "death" of the character. It's important to emphasize that in many cases, this physical violence is accompanied by verbal abuse in the form of insults or derogatory remarks towards these characters. The ultra-violent nature of these actions only confirms the creators' need to appeal to a male audience eager for violence (Dos, 2010; Zumberge, 2018). In this regard, the different ways in which they are killed always involve extreme violence: murder, shooting, drowning, burning, fighting and beating, neck dislocation, disconnection, system failure (short-circuit), hanging, or the introduction of nuclear cells into their bodies.

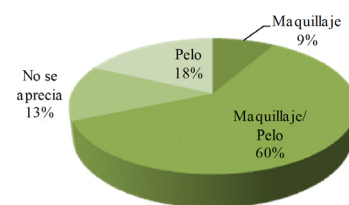
It should be noted that the exercise of violent actions by these creations is triggered when they experience episodes of extreme violence, such as sexual abuse by men, as is the case with Eve, Jessica, or Cassandra.

Figure 21: Stereotypes.



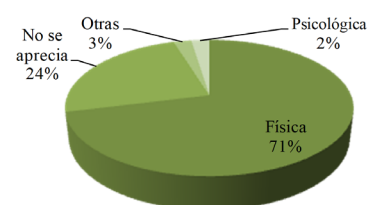
Source: Author's own work.

Figure 22: Physical care.



Source: Author's own work.

Figure 23: Violence.



Source: Author's own work.

## 5. Discussion

The results confirm that the science fiction genre is heavily male-dominated, vertical occupational segregation is the dominant feature, and the presence of women is very limited (7%) in our sample. The presence of women has been restricted as a result of traditions and social norms that have forced them to act as "useful others" within the stories (Conrad, 2011), rather than as content creators.

Secondly, we conducted an analysis of the representation of 83 artificial female figures. After examining the resulting data, we can conclude that these creations reproduce stereotypes and sexist roles that perpetuate the image of women as hypersexualized subjects, which contributes to maintaining inequality between women and men. The quest for that idealized image of the perfect woman, consistent with femininity mandates, is evident in the construction of these artificial creations in the way they have been imagined.

In their psychological dimension, there is a predisposition to depict extroverted characters, capable of establishing relationships with the people around them by adapting their character to the external reality. Sensitivity in their temperament is also observed, which generally stems from the emotional deficiencies of the characters and their need to be loved, as they explicitly express. Lastly, there is a clear tendency to present two aspects of objectives: those linked to committing murders and those related to servitude.

In their social dimension, we identify a tendency to portray single women without offspring. This is despite the fact that science fiction is a genre inclined to explore processes of procreation through genetic engineering (Telotte, 2002). Therefore, women are separated from this function. As for the assigned professions, we see a predominance of those linked to extreme violence or of a sexual nature.

More than half of the characters play an active role within the stories. Social class is not an explicit variable in this type of creation, so in terms of representation, this characteristic is not noteworthy when characterizing the characters. There is a slight tendency to present these creations in public settings rather than private ones (interiors of spaces, ships, or family homes). This characteristic of appearing in public spaces is highly linked to the "objectives" variable, as we have observed in our analysis.

In their physical dimension, virtually all representations have a name, giving them their own identity and making them more akin to humans. They tend to be depicted as young-adults of Caucasian race, heterosexual, attractive, and without disabilities. The ideal of a young attractive woman, so prevalent in cinema, only underscores a clear tendency towards ageism in film representation, a form of violence that, when combined with other forms of discrimination (sexism, racism, xenophobia), amplifies the degree of segregation of certain groups. The fact that all creations are of Caucasian race suggests that their creation is in the hands of heterosexual Caucasian men, who tend to reproduce their sexual preferences in artificial representations. There is also a propensity for these creations to appear semi-nude. Regarding the type of creation, it is not coincidental that the majority are presented in the form of gynoids, as sexual connotations and the status of sexual objects are inherent to this type of figure, as is the case with cyborgs (Merás, 2014). Something similar occurs with virtual characters. Despite the creative freedom that this practice should entail, the context does not favor a "reimagining" of figures but tends to reproduce models and myths from each culture and idealize sexual stereotypes (Zafra, 2010). This hypersexualization is the predominant trend in presenting these creatures. This variable is linked to appearance and physical care, primarily centered on hair and makeup, elements that visually accentuate the degree of hypersexualization.

As a result, the usual trend in cinematic creations continues to showcase and exhibit women to create a strong visual and erotic impact (Mulvey, 1988). These women are seen and represented through the eyes of heterosexual men and are created as passive objects of female desire (Colaizzi, 1990). The representation of these figures is the ultimate expression of the objectification of women. They end up as sex slaves for whom

"The image of women as hypersexualized subjects, which contributes to maintaining inequality between women and men."



violence is condoned because they are non-human artifacts (Córdoba-Guardado, 2007; Delicado-Moratalla, 2021), hence the high degree of physical violence reflected in the analysis.

This male gaze is a result, among other factors, of the fact that the filmmaking process in science fiction continues to be predominantly male-dominated. The discourses generated from these representations not only reflect the fantasies of their creators but also fail to break free from gender stereotypes and use the figure of the woman-machine (in all its representations) as an erotic lure for the male audience. Therefore, while the cyborg figure as a paradigm of the hybrid human-machine being represents the ultimate expression of the performativity of bodies, both Haraway's emancipatory cyborg figure and Braidotti's nomadic subject, as well as the transgressive potential of this figure proposed by posthumanist authors (Angela Carter, Theresa M. Senft), are diluted in favor of perpetuating deeply rooted patriarchal roles in modern societies where the disruptive precepts once raised by various feminist voices have no place.

The connection between woman and robot, along with the proliferation of visual proposals based on fetishism and pornography, has normalized agalmatophilia (or Pygmalionism), moving from the objectification of women to "the feminization of the thing": fantasies of a lover devoid of control, passive and obedient, are thus linked with the robot. This leads to a subordination of a woman-robot associated with domestic and sexual subordination (Escudero-Pérez, 2013; Delicado-Moratalla, 2021). Sexual violence is even used as a plot element to make a female character vulnerable and generate sympathy from the male viewer (Zumberge, 2018).

Throughout the research, several narrative elements specific to this film genre have been identified and are of great interest to highlight:

- In several analyzed films, these artificial women "die," although sometimes they are later revived through technology. In any case, their deaths usually result from extreme violence against them.
- The physical transformation from real women to artificial women is common, as indicated in our analysis. The clothing, hair, and attitude of these characters tend towards extroversion and sexualization, which takes a backseat when they are real women but is accentuated in their artificial version.
- There is also a creation of female artificial beings resembling real women. In the sample, for example, there are characters who emulate deceased wives, faces resembling other women, daughters who are identical to other deceased ones, women created according to the pornographic preferences of the male character, or with implanted memories of a female relative.

## 6. Conclusions

The symbolic value attributed to these bodies in science fiction audiovisual narratives is subject to change. However, to change the way we imagine the future, it is necessary to question how different types of bodies, desires, and notions of normativity are thought of, so that they can help us reflect on precepts that are taken for granted.

It is important to be aware that cinema, along with other mass media, lays the foundation for societal thinking as a whole and creates a symbolic world through which meanings are generated, shaping our thoughts and feelings. In this sense, the importance of its study lies in the possibility of constructing representations that align with paradigms that diverge from normative conceptions. Especially considering that we grow and develop through audiovisual content whose values we assimilate from a very young age. Characters from television series and movies that we idolize from childhood become visual role models. As a result, cinema in general, and science fiction cinema as a highly popularized genre, significantly contribute to the socialization process: how women are and what they do—or what they can do—, how men are and what they do.

In these forms of expression is where identities, conflicts, and power struggles are made visible, and therefore, it is from here that transformations can begin to take shape. However, there is still much work to be done

in raising awareness to change the way women are represented in mass media. Popular culture is the ideal platform from which to advocate for representation free of sexist stereotypes, a place from which to explore new ideas and challenge traditional representations.

Finally, the research carried out opens up a series of proposals for extension, which consist, on the one hand, in studying how masculinities are addressed in science fiction cinema, using the same methodology adapted to masculine stereotypes; secondly, in establishing comparisons between the treatment of femininity in science fiction cinema and in other genres. In this regard, we also aim to study the racial and cultural diversity of female and male characters in science fiction cinema, delving into them as primary variables of critical analysis.

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**Fundings:** This research has been carried out within the framework of the Research Project: "Identification of gender biases in artificial intelligence. Technological, scientific, and media practices and discourses / PID2019-106695RB-I00 / AI-GENBIAS" funded by the State Research Agency; and as part of the research activity of the Interdisciplinary Group of Feminist Research (971671) and the Institute of Feminist Research at the Complutense University of Madrid.

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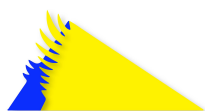
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