Abstract

This thesis examines the phenomenon of hyper-realistic sex dolls and robots, perceived as modern social and emotional partners. The study focuses on how users on The Doll Forum shape and interpret the gender identity and subjectivity of these artificial companions. The main objective is to determine whether interactions between users and these entities lead to the subversion of traditional gender norms or, conversely, reinforce the heteronormative paradigm. The research employs digital ethnography methods and poststructuralist discourse analysis. Results suggest that despite some tendencies towards subversion, prevailing discourses on the TDF still strengthen conventional gender roles and norms, with a group of users attempting to challenge these norms. This work thus reveals the complex dynamics between technological advancement and social norms in the context of modern intimate and interpersonal relationships.