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Representations of Gender in Fantasy Miniature Wargames

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Abstract

In this essay I will investigate the representations of gender in the unexplored field of fantasy miniature wargames. Focusing on a few publications by the largest producers of these games, namely Games Workshop, Privateer Press and Wyrd Miniatures, I intend to shed light on the views of gender that permeate their productions. Drawing parallels to research conducted on gender in the field of video games, I intend to investigate their similarities to the representations that exist in the field of fantasy miniature wargames. Through these links I will investigate areas such as the literary representation of gender, the visual representation of gender in the miniatures and images produced, and also the simulations and manifestations of gender in the rules of the games. These representations have the power to shape our perception of the world around us, especially as some of these games' target audience are young adults. Identifying these messages is important for further studies in the field and will be a first step to understanding how the miniature wargame can affect our behaviors and attitudes.

Keywords: Feminist, miniature wargames, fantasy, critical reading

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1. Introduction

A. The Miniature Wargame, a Brief Synopsis.

Before delving into the heart of this essay, the topic need to be introduced, namely that of the miniature wargame. A miniature wargame is a tabletop game taking place between two individuals (or more) on a simulated battlefield laid out on a gaming board. Each player controls a group of miniatures representing anything from a real world force to a force from a fantasy universe, varying in size from an army to a band of brigands. The aim of the game is to achieve a tactical victory over your opponent, be it through the annihilation of the opponent's miniatures or the achievement of an objective such as holding a specific position. The modern miniature wargame is a game evolved from the military wargames of old. As early as 1644 the first military simulation game, *The King's Game*, was created by Cristopher Weikkman (Gray, par. 1). This game included representations of different military troop types that were deployed and maneuvered on a gridded board, following strict rules of play to simulate real life. Through the centuries, the basic concept of this game evolved, eventually being accepted by several nations' military headquarters as a form of exercise for war (Grey, par. 9). As the game system evolved it started taking place on actual maps of borders and the rules of the game started to simulate actual real-world facts to a greater extent. Dice were introduced into the systems to simulate various effects of chaos on the battlefield, and umpires were assigned to every game to rule how certain maneuvers in the game would pan out. At this time, all representations of troops in the game were made out entirely of markers of different forms and colours, representing different troops such as infantry, cavalry and eventually armoured vehicles and airplanes.

As for the miniature wargame, it was not until the late 19th century that the first forms of the game started appearing. Drawing inspiration from the military wargames, early rule sets and miniatures were created to further emulate the scene of war. Many miniature wargamers place the origin of their hobby in the book *Little Wars: A Game for Boys from Twelve Years to One Hundred and Fifty and for that More Intelligent Sort of Girl Who Likes Games and Books* by H.G. Wells, written in 1913 (Grey, par. 17). This book outlined a basic set of rules for use with metal cast miniatures of soldiers to be used on a tabletop battlefield, represented in 3D terrain with hills and forests being created to fit the scale of the models. As the game took this step into the full representation of every single soldier involved in a battle, the simulation neared completion.

The miniature wargame evolved as a hobby and grew in popularity, moving out into the homesteads of the non-military. As the hobby grew, great amounts of focus were put on making the simulation as close to reality as possible, hobbyists putting a significant deal of effort into casting and hand painting the models to represent the correct uniforms of the specific armies they represented, as way of earning prestige in the community. Through the years, the hobby was long held alive from home by amateurs, creating rule sets and miniatures for themselves and their friends, while also spreading the word of the hobby through magazines, such as the early miniature wargame magazine *The War Game Digest*, published in 1957 (Beattie).

But it was not until the advent of large gaming companies that the games took a solid hold. With the creation of companies such as the British Games Workshop in 1975, the mass-production of models and rules was now a possibility. It was also around this time that options to the historical focus of miniature wargames appeared in the form of the popular new genres of science fiction and fantasy¹. It was with the production of miniature wargames in these genres that Games Workshop were able to make a name for themselves in the market. The largest games in these categories were those of Games Workshop's *Warhammer Fantasy Battles* (released 1983, hereon referenced to as *WHFB*) and *Warhammer 40000* (released 1987).

It was with the creation of these universes that the concept of miniature wargaming literature was expanded. Vast stories and backgrounds were created to surround the miniatures being used in the game. Entire historical backgrounds were written for the different races created in the games, and stories of their heroes were found throughout the books. Eventually, books were released focusing solely on a single race or faction in the game, granting them special rules that only they had right to in the game and making their simulation on the tabletop entirely different from the rest. With this release of a fully imagined setting, the boundaries and restrictions set by historical miniature wargames were lifted.

Today, the hobby is thriving. In a rough estimate made in 2004, it is believed that 1.5 million people play/purchase products from Games Workshop and considering the fact that at the present time there are at least two dozen different producers of miniature wargames, among many the companies of Privateer Press and Wyrd Miniatures, even with overlap the amount of people in the hobby is staggering. In 2012, the Games Workshop group was valued on the stock market at a value of £154.7 million. As the

1. In this essay, the definition of a fantasy is that which is proposed by Lopez (2010) as "fantasy is defined ... as that which violates consensus ideas of natural law, without attempting to prove how these violations would be possible using these same natural laws." As such, a fantasy miniatures wargame is a wargame which takes place in a setting where this is the case.

companies become more successful, the models they produce become more and more detailed, further enhancing the simulation, and as the simulation becomes more convincing, the stronger the representations they bear with them becomes.

It is worth considering now, that in every step of the production of both the wargame and the miniature wargame, it has been a male dominated business. It is easy to see how the games' beginnings were male dominated, being chiefly made for the military, which only until recently allowed women to enter and whose inclusion in the military is yet to be fully accepted by the general public. But the fact is that the hobby is still male dominated, which is evident for all hobbyists. I believe that this is in part due to the skewed representations of gender that are prevalent in many fantasy miniature wargames.

B. Representations of Gender and Gender Stereotypes

The concept of the modern gender stereotype is believed to stretch back to the 19th century, with the appearance of the belief systems of the Doctrine of Two Spheres and the Cult of True Womanhood (Brannon 161). The Doctrine of Two Spheres posed the idea that female and male interest diverge, that they have their separate areas of influence. The female's area was that of the home and children, while the male's was that of work and the outside world. The Cult of True Womanhood presented the "Attributes of True Womanhood" from which women could judge and measure themselves and presented the four cardinal virtues which women were supposed to fulfill: piety, purity, submissiveness and domesticity, the achievement of which was posed as a guarantee for a happy life. These values were believed to be held by females to a higher degree than males, and as such also reflected negatively upon males, who were supposed to be lacking in these respects. Parts of these values linger in our society today and still influence our views and perceptions of gender roles (Brannon 162).

It was from the concepts of these gender roles that the gender stereotype arose. Brannon defines a gender stereotype as "consisting of beliefs about the psychological traits and characteristics of, as well as the activities appropriate to, men or women" (Brannon 160). She also notes that "Gender stereotypes are very influential; they affect conceptualizations of women and men and establish social categories for gender. These categories represent what people think, and even when beliefs vary from reality, the beliefs can be very powerful forces in judgments of self and others . . ." (Brannon 160). Brannon summarized a table of values belonging to the gender stereotyping originating from early perceptions of gender as the following:

TABLE 7.1 *Elements of Stereotyping of Women and Men*

The Cult of True Womanhood

Piety: True Women were naturally religious.

Purity: True Women were sexually uninterested.

Submissiveness: True Women were weak, dependent, and timid.

Domesticity: True Women's domain was in the home.

Male Sex Role Identity

No Sissy Stuff: A stigma is attached to feminine characteristics.

The Big Wheel: Men need success and status.

The Sturdy Oak: Men should have toughness, confidence, and self-reliance.

Give 'Em Hell: Men should have an aura of aggression, daring, and violence.

(Brannon, 162)

As can be noted, some of these values are very familiar and can be identified in our society, while some of them are of course aged. But the concepts introduced so far are still closely related to the sex of the individual, the biological background that was believed to grant an individual specific traits and attributes. There were only two options of gender, both ruled by a close connection to the (believed) only two sexes, and by definition you could only be the one or the other. As research advanced, the concept of androgyny appeared: The idea that an individual can be both masculine and feminine to a varying degree. Together with this, to further distance the concept of femininity and masculinity from the biological sexes, new denominations for the characteristics were laid forward. Instead of feminine and masculine, it was posed that more descriptive terms such as instrumental and expressive were to be used (Brannon 176). Through the years, many tests were created to measure the prevalence of instrumental or expressive characteristics in individuals, one of the more successful being that of the Bem Sex Role Index, published by Sandra Bem. By allowing the test subject to rate themselves to how much a descriptive word (being either an instrumental or expressive word) fit them, the test allowed for an androgynous result. By giving the individual a score in how expressive ("feminine") and how instrumental ("masculine") they were, the test was able to deduct what qualities a person held from both. Thus, it was proven that males and females can express both instrumental and expressive traits.

But the concepts of the gender stereotypes still linger in society today. As such, the investigation of further reinforcements of gender stereotypes through varying representations in today's society is an

important field of study. Through the identification of reinforcements of the gender stereotype, we can critically view and assess the messages that we are exposed to on a daily basis.

Much research has been done on gender representation in the media, focusing on fields such as television (Milkie 1994) and magazines (Carpenter 1998). Their research have found that representations of gender in the media play a role in socializing individuals to what can be perceived as “appropriate gender roles”. As M. Miller and A. Summers (2007) write: “Specifically, exposure to media images has the potential to influence an individual’s body image, self esteem, self-perception, and expectations of the opposite gender.” As such, the study of different forms of media and their representation of gender is an important field of study.

The particular field that this essay will draw parallels to is that of the research of gender representation in video games. Some work has been done in this field, like the work done by M. Miller and A. Summers (2007) on gender differences in video games and the work done by E. Downs and S. Smith (2009) on hypersexuality (in this case referencing to an extreme representation of overt sexuality) and its discrepancy between males and females. What they have found are results of an over representation of male characters in video games (Downs & Smith, 727) and a linked overall portrayal of females as both hypersexualised and placed in supportive and supplementary roles to males (Miller & Summers, 738). Their work confirms that through the medium of video games, gender stereotypes are still reinforced to this day. To be noted is also the point of view that many games take, granting us a “male gaze” in the game where we see the events unfold and how they are angled from a male perspective. As video games are being marketed towards a younger and broader demographic, the harmful effects of the support they give for gender stereotypes should be realized.

Before the body of the essay is reached, I need to acknowledge my position in the feminist debate concerning gender and representation. I am aware that this work is touching upon the field of performativity and gender, as discussed by Judith Butler in her work *Gender Trouble*, and as such I'd like to point out that there is a large basis for this kind of research to be found in fantasy miniature wargames. In this essay, I will focus more on finding proof of the ideas of patriarchal binary gender-norms, and the BSRI will be used a way of measuring this. An important note to make is that this essay's main focus will not be on the theoretical discussion of Butler's ideas of performativity and representation, but rather on presenting the existence of reinforcements of stereotypical patriarchal ideas of gender through a critical feminist reading. It needs to be noted that I am a recovering patriarchal white, middle-class male and that my academic life in gender studies is still in its beginnings.

2. Aim and scope

Very little academic work has been done on the representations of gender in the modern miniature wargames industry, thus making it a somewhat unexplored field. Considering the fact that the hobby is a multi-million dollar industry with an expanding customer base of over 1,5 million, it is a field worthy of study. As such, the aim of this essay is to attempt to shed light on how the modern fantasy miniature wargame represents gender by attempting to answer questions such as how the stereotypical masculine (instrumental) and feminine (expressive) personality characteristics as defined by Bem (1947) in her BSRI and summarized by Lopez (59) are supported/undermined in miniature war game literature, both through literary representations and manifestations in rules in the game. Furthermore, I will also investigate how these appear in sexless “monster” characters.

Also, does the miniature war game share any similarities in their portrayal of gender with video games, such as those found by M. Miller and A. Summers (2007) and E. Downs and S. Smith (2009)? For instance, are male characters overrepresented and are female characters often hypersexualised? Finally, do the representations of gender in miniature war games support or undermine patriarchal values? If they undermine, could the representations of gender in some way reinforce a feminist agenda?

3. Analysis

A. Literary Representations of Gender in Character Portrayals and Backgrounds

a. Female

The literary representations of female characters and the place of females in the background stories involved in the miniature wargames could be argued to be one of the more important and tell-tale parts of gendered representations in fantasy miniature wargame literature. As such, it is important to acknowledge the fact that the representation of females in fantasy miniature wargames vary greatly between the different wargames involved in this study. But there are a few similarities which they share.

Firstly, the fact that female main characters at times take upon themselves many of the attributes that in the BSRI are listed as masculine (instrumental). As such, many of the representations of female characters grant them a role that breaks them away from the gender stereotype. Examples can be found in most female main characters in Wyrd Miniatures game *Malifaux* (2009), for instance in their portrayals of the character of Mei Feng (*Malifaux: Storm of Shadows* 2012). Mei Feng, leader of a rail

crew and spy for the insidious group the Ten Thunders, is depicted as a woman of peerless athletic skill and aggressive behaviour. Consulting the BSRI, Mei Feng bears 11 of the traits listed as masculine (instrumental) and only two traits listed as feminine (expressive), marking her as holding a gender role closer to the masculine. Another example is Feora from Privateer Press' game *Warmachine* (2009) who is in her introduction described as being "... known for her iron will and temper" (*Warmachine: Protectorate of Menoth* 44), both traits belonging to the masculine (instrumental) side. Once again, consulting the BSRI shows us that Feora possesses ten traits on the masculine (instrumental) side, such as "acts as a leader", "ambitious", "competitive" and "dominant", while only possibly harboring a single from the feminine side, namely that of being "warm". There are of course, exceptions, such as Colette DuBois from *Malifaux* who as a character is often described as bearing more feminine traits, such as "compassionate" and "understanding". But it could still be argued that female main characters in fantasy wargame literature are more than not portrayed as being competent leaders and warriors. But an interesting note can be made on the representations of their physical fitness. Rarely are female characters noted as being strong or physically imposing, but they are instead described with words such as "lithe" and "agile," suggesting an idea that females are not strong and tough but are instead dextrous and quick, marking a difference between male and female.

Furthermore, a similarity existing between the games is that of the stronger sexual representation of female characters. Far more often than males, females are portrayed in a more sexual light. Be it Cryx' Warwitch Sirens from *Warmachine* who "...enjoy seducing their enemies before annihilating them" (*Warmachine: Cryx* 117), the Dead Doxies of *Malifaux*, nothing but re-animated beautiful women being used for the attractiveness of their bodies (*Malifaux: Twisting Fates* 177) or the Witch Elves of Games Workshop's *WHFB* (1983) who "...danced naked about the bodies of the slain" (*WHFB: Dark Elves* 39). What is clear through the representations found in fantasy miniature wargame literature is that it is females who are attractive, and it is upon them the creators seem to have created a form of gaze which more often than not presents the female in a sexual light. From this we could discern a concept of an implied "male" gaze penetrating the representations found in the literature. The worlds are described in such ways as to make them appealing to male (or persons who are sexually attracted to females) consumers, even in the cases when the story seems to be told from a female perspective such as the opening of the story about Colette DuBois (*Malifaux: Rising Powers* 136) where both her and her companion Cassandra are described in respect to how attractive they would be to a male onlooker. In instances such as this, the creators are clearly making assumptions about what the reader would find interesting. Also worthy of note in *Malifaux*, is the fact that all but one faction have at least one form of

character that is for all intents and purposes a prostitute. Be it the Showgirl of the Arcanists (*Rising Powers* 154), the Oiran of the Outcasts (*A Storm of Shadows* 115) or the Rotten Belle of the Resurrectionists (*Malifaux Core Rulebook* 138-139), most factions contain at least one form of female character whose main characteristic is that of their attractiveness or their sexual qualities. There is of course a discrepancy here, as male prostitutes are never presented, thus further reinforcing the concept of the world being portrayed for an audience sexually attracted to the female, presumably male.

Also, the concept of magic is something that is worthy of notice. In fantasy miniature wargames there seems to be a trend of magic being more closely related to the female. In *WHFB* we can find many examples of this tendency. In the representation of the magic wielders of the Wood Elves, female mages are pointed out as being more potent than their male counterparts, due to an affinity claimed to be held with their queen Ariel, who herself is an aspect of the mother goddess of the Elves, Isha (*WHFB: Wood Elves* 11, 21). It is suggested that their strong connection with the life force of nature is what grants them their superior powers. We can also in this example find the link between magic and an idea of biological essentialism. For to queen Ariel, there is also the king Orion, an aspect of the god of the hunt, Kurnous. While Ariel's domain seems to be that of healing and life, Orion is a representation of primal rage. Consulting the BSRI, we find that the traits Orion hold are those found on the masculine (instrumental) side, such as “aggressiveness” and “dominance”, while Ariel hold traits found on the feminine (expressive) side, like “warm” and “compassionate”.

Additionally, more examples of the discrepancy of magic can be found in other books in the *WHFB* setting, such as the Damsels and Prophetesses of the Bretonni. The Bretonni are presented as a people seemingly stuck in a feudal system similar to those found in Europe in the 12th-14th century. Here, mages are exclusively female. Due to their religion following the Lady (a deity very similar to the Lady of the Lake in Arthurian legends), it is to follow that only females are trained in the magic arts. It is described that both male and female children show signs of magic potential, and that both are taken by the Fay Enchantress (a servant of the Lady) to a place called the Otherworld. What follows though is that only female children return, then as Damsels and Prophetesses, while the male children are never seen again (*WHFB: Bretonnia* 47). As they return, much like the mages of the Wood Elves, the Damsels and Prophetesses specialize in harnessing the powers of nature, focusing on the arts of healing and protection. As to the role females play outside of the role of the mage, she is rarely portrayed as the exclusive member of a group, and rarely is she portrayed as a warrior, the times they are being more an exception than a rule. *Malifaux* and *Warmachine/Hordes* break this role somewhat, holding many female warriors in their ranks, in places having groups consisting solely of females. But these groups are

once again under the effect of the view that females are not physically strong, but are instead agile, only being broken in rare exceptions such as Grissel of the Trollbloods (*Hordes: Trollbloods* 34).

Moreover, it is worth to take special note of a phenomenon that occurs in the setting of *Malifaux*, where characters due to something called “the Event” transform into a truer form of themselves through a channeling of magic. As this event occurs, they are given descriptive names, such as “Perdita, Avatar of Revelation”. Summarizing these, they can be separated into a male and female category, which gives us an interesting view on how the descriptive words are used to describe an inner self of the characters involved. The female list is as follows:

Females: *Balance, Revelation, Conflagration, Vengeance, Deception, Famine, Nature's Malevolence, Insanity, Fate, Slaughter*

Looking through these descriptive words, it can quickly be seen that many of the words related to females are quite destructive and could be perceived as negative. Words such as Deception, Insanity and Vengeance seems to strike true with modern conceptions of negative gender stereotypes. Looking at the words describing female characters, we in fact find very few words that could be perceived as positive, namely Balance, Revelation and arguably Fate. However, the overwhelming amount of negative words associated with the female would seem to outweigh the positive.. An interesting note to add here is also the change in the literary representation of a character, namely Pandora's sidekick and close companion Candy. Candy, being a young girl of perhaps eight to ten years before the Event, is after the Event turned into a female in her teens. With this change also comes a change in character, as she before the event is known as the Woe of Innocence Corrupted, using her powers to destroy the minds of her enemies by making them believe they have done horrible acts to her. While there is a hint towards pedophilia in this earlier action, the sexual nature of it is greatly reinforced after the Event, as her sexual maturity seems to amplify her powers (*Twisting Fates* 26).

Finally, it is worth considering the position of females in the hierarchical structures found in the different fantasy miniature wargames. We find that the spread of which sex takes the higher place in the hierarchical structure is in fact quite varied in both *Warmachine/Hordes* as in *Malifaux*, while WHFB struggles in this area. We find that in *Malifaux*, while the overall spread of characters is weighing towards an overpowering male presence, in the higher ranks such as Masters (the leaders of the bands of miniatures you use in the game), the split of the sexes is quite even. It is worth noting though, that the

biggest presences in *Malifaux*, such as the Governor and the leader of the Arcanists, Ramos, are both male. They are counterbalanced by the presence of the leader of the Neverborn being Lilith, and the fact that two of the characters who appear hold the greatest amount of power in the game are female, namely Sonnia and Rasputina, but by sheer status in the setting of the human part of the represented society, males dominate. In *Warmachine* we find that while most countries are ruled by kings and individuals of similar positions (*Warmachine: Cygnar, Protectorate of Menoth, Circle of Orboros, Cryx, Retribution of Scyrah*), a fair few also hold females in the strongest (or at least stronger) positions of power, such as the Legion of Everblight (Hordes: *Legion of Everblight*) who are almost exclusively made up by female leaders (albeit serving under what could be argued as a patriarch), the Skorne Empire and the Trollbloods (Hordes: *Skorne, Trollbloods*). As such, the portrayal of females' positions in the hierarchical structures in these games seem to be somewhat evenly split. But in the hierarchical ladders of *WHFB*, we find that the structures are overpoweringly dominated by males, females usually taking positions such as advisers, mages or queens to the kings. On rare occasions, such as the Wood Elves, most of society, including the higher positions are described as being equally shared by both male and female (*WHFB: Wood Elves* 20, 22).

b. Male

Much like in the case of female characters, the representations of male characters vary somewhat between different games, but in difference to the female characters the variation is not as great as could be wished for. Just as important as the representations of the female characters found in fantasy wargame literature, the representations of males are also an important field. Through the representations we see of male characters and their place in the background, we can find several cues to a strong gendered view permeating fantasy wargame literature.

Firstly, unlike what we saw in the female characters taking upon themselves traits and characteristics that the BSRI identifies as masculine (instrumental), we do not see the opposite reaction in male characters portraying feminine (expressive) characteristics. Instead, we see a strong bias towards the masculine gender stereotype, with many male characters exemplifying the BSRI's masculine (instrumental) side. We have, for instance, the character of Wulfrik the Wanderer (*WHFB: Warriors of Chaos* 74), portrayed as a warrior of immeasurable skill, travelling the world constantly seeking challenge in duel. From the BSRI, we find that he holds ten traits from the masculine (instrumental) side, such as “competitiveness”, “ambitious” and “self-sufficient”, while not holding a single one from the feminine (expressive) side. This is a trend prevalent with most characters found in the selected

pieces of fantasy wargame literature, and thus male characters holding feminine traits are very rare. The few characters that probably come closest to expressing female characteristics to a larger degree, are the characters Prince Sigvald (*WHFB: Warriors of Chaos* 72) from and Baldur (*Hordes: Circle of Orboros* 32). Sigvald is described as beautiful beyond compare and vain to no end, giving a negative image to one of the few male characters slightly challenging the masculine gender role. Looking at the BSRI, we find that he bears five traits from the masculine side, but still only two from the feminine, being “childlike” and “flatterable”. Baldur is described as a somewhat gentle-hearted mentor of sorts, but is still bearing many masculine traits. Looking at the BSRI, we find that he holds eight traits from the masculine side, and five traits from the feminine side, such as “compassionate” and “understanding”. What is noticeable though is that male characters are overall represented as leaning more towards the masculine stereotype, hardly ever challenging stereotypical gender roles that are prevalent in society today.

Furthermore, considering the sexual representations of characters it is important to note that males are very rarely presented in a sexual light. Seldom are men described as attractive, and in the few cases they are they appear to be half-mockingly described, such as Prince Sigvald, who as an effect of his beauty also suffers from an extreme vanity which seems to negatively influence the character. As such, it would not be entirely amiss to suppose that this literature is aimed towards a straight male audience.

Thirdly, considering the topic of magic and the gender discrepancy prevalent there, we also find that males are instead portrayed as stronger warriors, and in some cases holding both the role of a warrior and a mage, such the king of the Dark Elves, Malekith, in *WHFB* who is described as a “... mighty warrior, a great sorcerer and a brilliant general...” (*WHFB: Dark Elves* 64), something that is unrepresented in female characters. This concept of males surpassing females in the aspect of war that concerns physical strength and skill of arms is something that pervades several of the worlds created. We can for instance see this in the transformation Seamus goes through in *Malifaux*, turning into a hulking muscular brute as he magically takes on his truer form. (*Malifaux: Twisting Fates* 69). In the cases that males do perform magic, they are also portrayed as being far more destructive in their magic. While females are often portrayed as working with life and protection, males are more often portrayed wielding a more destructive form of magic. Worthy of note though, is the fact that males are never portrayed as being the sole sex group in a field of magic, such as the Damsels of Bretonnia. As such, magic seems to not be as closely related to male characters as the role of the warrior, where they far outnumber the female presence. As noted earlier, while females are almost solely represented as being agile and lithe, men are more often described as being strong and burly

Also, as touched upon in the earlier part concerning females, there is the interesting phenomena in *Malifaux* where characters went through a magical change and transformed into something that was closer to the essence of the character. With this transformation, a descriptive word was added to their “Avatar form”. The results for the males were as follows:

Males: *Amalgamation, Athanasia, Decay, Dread, Instinct, Invention, Imagination, Contagion, Entropy, Indulgence*

While the results for the females were less than positive, the overall view of the words related to describe male characters are far from negative. Containing four words that could be viewed as positive (Athanasia Instinct, Invention and Imagination) and one that could arguably be viewed as positive (Amalgamation). The 50/50 split of positive and negative is far better than that found in the female examples.

Fourthly, characters of high position in fantasy wargame literature are in most cases presented as male, be it the Princes and Lords of the High Elves (*WHFB: High Elves* 44) or the Chaos Lords of the Warriors of Chaos (*WHFB: Warriors of Chaos* 52), they are all described as being male. As discussed earlier, there are many representations of female characters taking up positions of leadership, but sadly they are sorely outnumbered. *Malifaux*, as noted before, makes the biggest effort of evening the sex-scales by almost matching the amount of high-position male characters found in the game, but they still fall short due to the fact that most of the high-status positions are still held by males. Arguments could be made that the representations found in *Malifaux*, being loosely based on our own history, are just keeping true to the time-period. But the amount of times *Malifaux* have already challenged the gender-norms of the time it portrays, makes this argument moot. What is worth noting though, is that while many female characters hold high positions in *Malifaux*, many of them are accompanied by a male partner who seems to save them from all kinds of trouble, even though the female characters are represented as being more powerful. This is for instance true in the case of Sonnia and her partner Samael, and Lady Justice and her partner the Judge.

Finally, worthy of note is that through the use of male pronouns, different kinds of characters are often angled towards only including males. Many roles characters can take upon themselves are initially described as being available to both sexes, such as the High Elf levy (*WHFB: High Elves* 48) but are later angled using either gendered pronouns or visual frames. It could be argued that the male pronouns

are being used as inclusive forms, much like it could be argued that the term Lord in the world applies to both males and females, it feels as though the support the use of the male pronouns receive through the visual frames associated with the roles more than negates many arguments directed towards it.

c. Sexless

The concept of the sexless is an interesting part of gendered representations in fantasy wargame literature, showing us how the sexless is at times forced into the stereotypical binary gender roles our society has created. The concept of not allowing the sexless to form their own gender role makes for an interesting investigation, as will be clear below.

First of all, sexless characters need to be identified. One of the most prominent we can find is that of the Orcs of *WHFB*. The Orcs are described as being a humanoid race who are in fact closer related to the fungi, reproducing through spores growing in the ground. As such, Orcs are clearly a sexless race that does not include neither males nor females. Considering this, it could be expected that the results of an analysis of the race would yield on the BSRI would give them a somewhat even spread over the two characteristics, and that the race would in some form be referenced using either both the female and the male pronoun or a separate new pronoun. However, this is not the case. The Orcs are presented as being a warlike race, aggressive beyond compare and consisting entirely of males (even though the male sex does not exist in the Orc race). Through the descriptions of the Orcs, they are exclusively referred to by masculine pronouns and through the terms used to refer to groups of them, such as a group of “Orc Boyz” (*WHFB: Orcs & Goblins* 52) we see a further emphasis on this being an all male race. To further put forward the idea that this is an all male masculine race, the race exemplifies almost every single trait found on the masculine side of the BSRI, only missing the trait “analytical”. A final trait which is interesting to remark is how the Orc society is run, each group being ruled by a single Orc, chosen as a leader on the basis of his physical strength, size and his aggressiveness (4). As such, the Orc community is in essence run by the most masculine member of the all masculine race. As a final note on the Orcs, it is worth noting that as a concept this race has completely eliminated the presence of both the female and the feminine.

Furthermore, another sexless form of character present in fantasy wargames are the demons. The concept of the demon varies between different writers of fantasy, but in *WHFB* they are presented as being sexless (as they do not reproduce). The demons here are represented as being followers of one of four different patron dogs of Chaos, namely Khorne, Slaanesh, Nurgle or Tzeentch. For the purpose of this essay, it is Khorne and Slaanesh that we will focus upon most, as they share interesting

representations on gender. Through the basic descriptions of the lesser demons of Khorne, we find that the lesser demons of Khorne, the Bloodletters, are described without a clear gender or sex. They are referred to using either words such as “them”, “it” and “they” (*WHFB: Daemons of Chaos* 36), not displaying to gendered pronoun we found in the descriptions of the sexless Orcs. Slaanesh's lesser demons, the Daemonettes, on the other hand, are described as “... androgynous blasphemies...” (*WHFB: Daemons of Chaos* 39). What is interesting here is that while it seems as they are portrayed as being clearly sexed, being described as androgynous, it is important to note that demons do not reproduce. As such, the description of them as being androgynous must clearly be purely aesthetically, and thus the demons must still be defined as sexless. Also, much like the Bloodletters, Daemonettes are not described using any form of gendered pronouns. They do both bear qualities which we from the BSRI can identify as masculine, such as the Bloodletters strength and aggressiveness and the Daemonettes athletic prowess. In contrast to the Bloodletters, the Daemonettes are described in a sexual light, being both “seditious” and “attractive”, not to mention their name which implies the feminine, much like words such as bachelorette and majorette.

But something interesting arises when it comes to the descriptions of more prominent characters among the lesser demons. For while the lesser demons are described in a somewhat genderless light, while bearing some characteristics from the BSRI, we find that the characters among the lesser demons are in fact gendered. We see this in the characters of the Masque of Slaanesh and Skulltaker. While the Daemonettes were never described in a gendered light, the Masque is instantly recognized as a feminine creature by the use of gendered pronouns. She is also described as having more traits from the feminine (expressive) side of the BSRI, being both “caring” and “sensitive to the needs of others” when she dances to raise the mood of her lord (*WHFB: Daemons of Chaos* 58). Skulltaker, on the other hand is recognizable as a masculine character, being described using masculine pronouns. On top of this, he, much like the Masque bears many characteristics from his side of the table, such as “dominant” and “competitive”. In a way, this could be argued to reflect back on the lesser demons, granting us a gendered view of characters who were previously un-gendered.

Finally, before we leave the topic of the demons, it is interesting to make some observations on the chaos god Slaanesh. Slaanesh is known by the name of the Dark Prince, and is referred to using the masculine pronoun. He is portrayed as having the ability to freely switch between the form of male, female and hermaphrodite, but chooses to take on the image of a young man in most cases. The concept of actively picking the male role over the others is an interesting one, as through it all gods of Chaos (Nurgle, Slaanesh, Khorne and Tzeentch) are gendered masculine. Furthermore, Slaanesh is one of the

few masculine characters that are described in a sexual light. Being the essence of beauty and seduction, he epitomizes many of the sexual descriptions found in fantasy wargame literature (WHFB: *Daemons of Chaos* 13). But it is worth noting that he is described as being waited upon by beautiful handmaidens, and is as such somewhat reinforcing himself as a stereotypical masculine character.

B. Representations of Gender in Visual Frames

It is perhaps through the visual frames that we in fantasy miniature wargames find the strongest examples of hypersexuality, such as those found in video games (E. Downs and S. Smith 728). Holding the results from their research in mind, investigating the representations of gender in visual frames found in fantasy miniature wargames we will find many examples of hypersexualisation and the reinforcement of stereotypical gender roles.

a. Female

Considering the representations of female characters there are many similarities between the visual frames found in fantasy miniature wargames and those found in video games, perhaps the most prominent one being that of the hypersexualisation of the female. Rarely is a female character portrayed as anything less than attractive, often being represented wearing small amounts or very skintight clothes. Female body proportions are usually favored towards that which is deemed attractive by the heterosexual male and are in many cases exaggerated. Examples of this is found in all of the fantasy miniature games covered so far. For instance, the character of Mei Feng, whom was earlier noted as a character that took steps closer to the stereotypical masculine gender role, is in the visual frames related to her depicted as something far more sexualized than would be expected. Considering first of all the artwork presented of her (*Fig 2, Malifaux: A Storm of Shadows* 68), we find that she is portrayed wearing a quite revealing tight tank top and can easily see hints towards what is hidden underneath. The tank top is revealed due to the top of an overall having fittingly slipped off. She is portrayed as being of not exaggerated proportions, but very attractively proportioned to the stereotypical heterosexual male. What is important to note is that this character who in the literature is described as being a strong capable person, is in the artwork portrayed in a far more sexual light. Further examples can be found in the the second female character presented as having a a gender role closer to the stereotypical male, namely Feora: in the two pieces of artwork presenting her, she is portrayed as overtly sexualized in both. This is a feat, as she is in both pictures completely covered in plate armour (*Fig 2, Warmachine:*

Protectorate of Menoth 45, 47). We can in these pictures see that even though she is in fact covered from head to toe in metal plating, the armour has been sculpted as to enhance her female features, granting her fuller lips through the use of a metal mask and larger breasts, wider hips and a thinner stomach through her armour. In the case of both of these characters, their hypersexualised appearance continues in the miniatures made to represent them in their respective games, both trying to emulate their artwork as closely as possible (*Fig 1, Fig 3*). Looking at the visual cues given by E. Downs and S. Smith in their work, it is found that both of these characters confirm to many of the aspects presented there, such as “sexually revealing attire” (be it the sculpted nakedness of Feora or the revealing attire of Mei Feng) and the “inappropriateness of their attire”.

This pattern continues through most aspects of the fantasy miniature wargame where females are depicted. Characters described as being strong and fierce warriors are in their visual frames depicted as hypersexualised females. We can for example take the Tharn Bloodweavers (*Hordes: Circle of Orboros* 78) who were in the literature presented as a group of warriors to be feared on the battlefield and spiritual focal points in their communities. But when investigating their representations in visual frames, it is found that they to follow the visual cues representing hypersexuality. The Bloodweavers are depicted as wearing sexually revealing attire, voluptuous, a small waist and unrealistic body proportions as to the sizes of their hips. This carries on to the miniatures made to represent these characters, in their miniature form wearing slightly more clothes and holding better body proportions, but they are still clearly hypersexualised. Further examples can be found in the world of *WHFB*, where characters such as the Witch Elves (*WHFB: Dark Elves* 50, 51) or the Sorceresses (62) of the Dark Elves are both depicted following several of the cues of hypersexualisation, the same cues following them into the representation of them in miniature form.

There are a few exceptions where female characters are presented as being less than attractive. Such as Zoraida from *Malifaux* (*Twisting Fates* 5), who is depicted as an old crone or The Old Witch from *Warmachine* (*Warmachine: Khador* 48), also depicted as an old woman. Interesting to note is how both of these characters unattractiveness stems from their age. It could in the case of Zoraida be argued that she is in fact represented in a sexual light. Zoraida is in the visual frames shown as wearing sexually revealing clothing or is fact partially nude in some, which carries on from artwork to models representing her. There are other female characters that could be believed should not be presented in a sexual light, such as the undead. But *Malifaux's* Rotten Belles and Dead Doxies (*Twisting Fates* 177) are both represented as voluptuous and wearing revealing clothing, continuing the hypersexualisation of female characters even unto undeath.

Another interesting aspect of the representation of females in visual frames can be found in the previously discussed “Event” that occurs in *Malifaux’s* literature. As this event takes place, many female character are in fact represented in even more of a sexual light. As an example, Lilith is in her original form shown in the visual frames depicted as being a hypersexualised character, being depicted as voluptuous with a thin waist and wearing extremely sexually revealing clothing (*Twisting Fates* 202). But in the true form she takes after “the Event”, she is depicted as being entirely nude, save for the few parts of her being covered by bark (89). This transformation from hypersexualised to even more hypersexualised is seen in several of the female characters in *Malifaux*, further examples being found in the transformation of Colette Dubois (*Rising Powers* 142, *Twisting Fates* 73,75) and Zoraida (*Twisting Fates* 5, 96). Further evidence can be found in relation to the transformation of Pandora, namely in the transformation of her sidekick Candy. Before the event, Candy is depicted as a young girl of perhaps eight to ten years old, but after the event she sexually matures into an attractive female in her teens (*Twisting Fates* 94), showing several cues of hypersexualisation..

Finally, in some rare cases roles that are described in the literature as being open to both sexes are in fact only represented by females in visual frames. For instance in the case of the Witchling Handler (*Twisting Fates* 162) and the Sorcerers of the Dark Elves (*Dark Elves* 62), the roles are described as being open to both sexes, but are exclusively depicted in the visual frames as female. It is important to note that this is a rare occurrence in fantasy wargame literature, and is far more prevalent in the case of the male.

b. Male

When investigating the representation of male characters in fantasy miniature wargames, it is clear that much like the research done in video games, in comparison to female characters, male characters are far less often depicted in a sexual light and are more often depicted as being powerful and muscular, not to mention more often being depicted in commanding positions.

Finding representations of the male stereotype in the visual frames is a task easily accomplished. Many examples can be found such as those of *Malifaux’s* Marcus (*Twisting Fates* 182) and *Warmachine’s* Amon Ad-Raza (*Fig 4, Protectorate of Menoth* 43), both being represented as unnaturally muscular and powerful. To note, though, is that both of these characters are wearing sexually revealing clothing and are as such also some of rare occurrences of this event in the representations of male characters. Other characters displaying physical strength and power while not bearing sexually revealing clothing is far easier to find, such as Drake McBain (*Mercenaries* 37) or

Wulfrik the Wanderer (*Warriors of Chaos* 74). Something that is also interesting to note is the trend of portraying males as far more aggressive than females, often having males lunging towards something outside of the artwork, while females are more often depicted as standing still or engaged in some act not directly relating to combat, at times more or less posing as if for a picture. Consider Ashlynn (*Mercenaries* 35) compared to Magnus (39), or The Fay Enchantress (*Brettonnia* 76) and The Green Knight (74).

It is also in the visual frames that proof of the over representation of males in the fantasy miniature wargame is found. While the literature in many cases describes a role as being available to both sexes, such as the Wild Riders of Kurnous (*Wood Elves* 29) or the Trollkin Fennblades (*Trollbloods* 80), it is often found that none of the visual frames provided for them depict females in the roles presented, neither in the form of artwork or in the miniatures produced to represent them. This is further proved by additional examples such as the Ten Thunders Archers (*Storm of Shadows* 104-105) and The Illuminated (96-97). While this also occurs for female characters it is, as mentioned earlier, far more prevalent in the case of the male. This theme is also in a much higher degree prevalent in the case of commanding roles in the games, such as the Unit Attachments found in *Warmachine/Hordes*. Being made up of captains and leaders of the units, examples such as the Stone Scribe Elders (*Trollbloods* 75) or the Blighted Nyss Strider Officer and Musician (*Legion of Everblight* 81) can be found, and it is rare to find females leading groups of males, but even rarer to find males leading groups of females.

Looking to high ranking leaders the evidence we find of the higher male presence is quite concrete. Taking a look at the sex of the leaders of a faction in a game, such as the Wood Elves in *WHFB*, whose leader roles are in the literature described as being equally distributed between the sexes, are in the visual frames of the artwork presented in the book more commonly depicted as males (*Wood Elves* 20, 52). To further reinforce this, an investigation of the models created to represent the models was done in respect to what sex they had. Five of the ten models created by Games Workshop (Games Workshop, Wood Elves, Lords and Heroes) clearly represented the male, while three clearly represented the female. Two of the models sex could not be clearly perceived, but if looking upon them in the light of the classical portrayal of female miniatures in fantasy wargames, ergo hypersexualised, it could be argued that the two that are undecided would belong to the male. As such, the equal balance of sexes in the leading roles of the Wood Elves is broken by the visual frames provided by the miniatures in a 7/3 split.

c. Sexless

While investigating the representations of the sexless in visual frames, it is important to keep in mind the results found in the literary representations of the sexless. For instance, returning back to the first sexless form of character introduced, the Orc, the masculine stereotype is further reinforced through their representations in the visual frames. Orcs are depicted as wide shouldered, muscular, brawny and often in an aggressive or warlike setting (*Fig 5, Orcs & Goblins* Front cover, 5, 6, 11, 21, 35, 36, 46), fulfilling the criterion of being both muscular and powerful while also supporting the idea of the aggressive masculine trait from the BSRI. This carries on into the models used to represent the race, following the artwork quite closely. Through these visual cues we find that the idea of the all “male” race is further reinforced.

Concerning our second sexless group, the demons, it is once again important to keep in mind what the literature told us about the gender roles represented. Coming back to the lesser demons of Khorne and Slaanesh, further reinforcements can be found of the somewhat gendered roles they were attributed. As noted, the Bloodletters were described using many of the masculine traits listed in the BSRI and following suit the visual frames depicting them seem to grant them only a male visage. In the visual frames of the artwork it is found that they are portrayed as both big and muscular, while also reinforcing the concept of their aggressiveness (*Fig 6, Daemons of Chaos*: Front cover, 26, 36, 44, 50). No female features have been given to them, and as such the masculine gender stereotype is somewhat reinforced. Looking instead to the Daemonettes, we find the a similar trend. As the gender of the Daemonette was slightly shifted toward the female, we find that their physical appearance is weighing towards the female. While their forms are twisted in the depictions of them, we still find that the overall body shape and musculature is that of a female (*Fig 6*, front cover, 19, 39, 58). These representations continue in the models produced to represent them in the game. As such, the gender and the visually portrayed sex of the demons seem to share a close link.

Before we leave the demons though, it is interesting to note that some of the representations of the demons belonging to the Chaos god Slaanesh are in the visual frames portrayed as being androgynous, and the hints towards a represented sex is hard to determine, some of the better examples being the Keeper of Secrets (19, 35) and to some extent the Fiends of Slaanesh (47). These kinds of androgynous representations are not found in any of the other wargames studied and as such proves to be a unique representation of gender and sex, being the only example of at least true visual androgyny in the setting.

C. Manifestations and Representations of Gender in Rules

Investigating the simulations found in the fantasy wargame is an endeavour that could prove fruitful in many academic fields, such as gender studies. While examining the simulations in the game as manifestations and representation of views on gender, further proof can be found of the views of gender the game is trying to portray. By cementing the gendered traits as rules in the game, they are in turn portrayed as being very real, the rules being the final word in dictating how the game unfolds. As rules in miniature wargames are in a way the final representations of a character, deciding what a character can and cannot do, what they are good at and what role they will take on the battlefield, they can further reinforce and cement the representations found in the literature and the visual frames. It is in the rules that much of the work of Butler on performativity can be found, as in many places the rules do in ways act out and cement the gender of the character.

a. Female

While investigating the rules given to represent the female in the fantasy miniature wargame, we find many similarities with how females have been represented both in the literature and in the visual frames. While both sexes hold many rules to an equal degree, one of the most obvious and striking of results is the discrepancy found in which sex holds rules that are sexually related. A prime example here is *Malifaux*. In *Malifaux*, we find that rules that are of a sexual nature are only held by female characters. A quick summary has been made of some of the sexual rules found to belong exclusively to females, and is as follows: Seduction (with the follow-up effect Fatal Distraction), Undress, Inviting Approach, Flirtatious Wink, Strangely Attractive, Seductive Swagger, Come Hither (with the follow-up effects Not That Kind of Girl and Gentle Caress), First Taste's Free, Lure, Appealing, Special Charm, Irresistible, Mesmerizing, Siren Call, Dark Beauty, Impure Thoughts and Terrible Beauty (*Rising Powers*, *Twisting Fates*, *Storm of Shadows*). On top of this, there is also a trend in *Malifaux* of giving female characters rules that represent them as harmless and at times more emotional. This is found through rules such as Harmless, Sultry, Pitiful and in one occasion Uncontrolled Crying that are more often ascribed to female characters. These rules have the power to manipulate other characters represented on the tabletop, forcing them to make moves their controller would not wish them to do or limiting what the affected characters can do.

Further examples of ascribing only females rules of a sexual nature is found in *Warmachine*, where only females are allowed to hold the rule "Seduction", being entirely limited to the Warwitch Sirens

(*Cryx* 117), Wraith Witch Deneghra (42), Madelyn Corbeau (*Mercenaries* 70) and the lass of the Press Gang (105). Further reinforcements of rules of a sexual nature being ascribed to female characters in *Warmachine* can be found when we look at a weapon held by the character Skarre. Skarre is a female belonging to the race Satyxis, a humanoid race looking more or less exactly like humans except for a set of horns sprouting from their heads. In Skarre's rules profile we found that she is armed with three weapons, a dagger, a sword and a weapon that is simply named "Great Rack" (*Cryx* 54). Consulting the visual frames depicting Skarre (55) we find that she is in fact portrayed in a hypersexualised way with an ample bosom (and a set of horns). While the nomenclature of the weapon is in fact true, as she does possess a great rack (her horns), the double entendre of it is hard to miss. Another example is First Mate Hawk's special rule "Object of Desire" (*Mercenaries* 124), which makes her allied pirates fight all the harder. It is through these rules found that females are portrayed in a light quite different from the male, often emphasizing a sexual and emotional nature in female characters, while frequently giving them a role on the battlefield as manipulators.

b. Male

While looking at the rules created for fantasy miniature wargames, it is usually so that there are very few rules that are exclusively male. But discrepancies do exist and one worth mentioning is the Tough-rule that exists in *Warmachine/Hordes*. This rule is meant to represent an individual of extraordinary physical and mental fortitude, being able to stand back up after receiving damage that would cripple any other. Interestingly enough, this rule is in *Warmachine/Hordes* far more prevalent in male characters. Excluding the Trollkin race, whose racial trait is that they are all Tough (and thus including females, creating no discrepancy there), the results are that 19 named male characters hold the Tough-rule in comparison to the two named female characters that hold it. Moving onto units and characters that in their descriptions do not attribute the role as male or female, we find that in six cases where Tough appears in a unit, they are in their visual frames exclusively depicted as males, only being broken once by the inclusion of a female leader in one of these units. As such, it could be claimed that the discrepancy of this rule could in some way be representing a stereotypical view of gender and sex where masculine male characters are more likely to be given a rule representing toughness, the two cases where named female characters receive it being when the characters are quite masculine in their literary portrayal.

c. Sexless

Concerning rules that are commonly attributed to the sexless, no rules were found that were specifically common to the category overall. But on the topic of *WHFB's* Orcs and demons though, some rules were found to further reinforce the gender which they had been attributed. To further reinforce the toughness of the Orcs, and thus supporting their masculine portrayal, they have been given a statistical profile that grants them a toughness higher than that of ordinary men (*Orcs & Goblins* 18). In the case of the demons, the feminine Daemonettes hold a lower Strength statistic compared to the masculine Bloodletters, and instead hold a higher Movement value to represent their litheness. They are both represented as equally skilled in arms, but the Daemonettes have been granted a rule which allows them to strike before any opponent (due to their agility), while the Bloodletters have been granted a rule that lets them slay any opponent in a single blow. As such, through the rules (and through the ideas prevalent of feminine-female and masculine-male), the gender attributed to sexless characters can be, and are in this case, further reinforced by the creators.

4. Conclusion

The aim of this essay was to investigate the current representations of gender in modern fantasy miniature wargames, drawing parallels to current research finds in the field of video games and through this attempting to determine if the games reinforce or undermine patriarchal values. Through my analysis I have found proof that reinforcements of patriarchy, gender stereotypes and forms of biological essentialism can be found in the modern fantasy miniature wargame.

In the first part of my analysis, I investigated the literary portrayals found in the wargames. Of the three fantasy miniature wargames explored, I found that all three of them portray a world where females might be in positions of power, but there is always a male in higher position, be it the Governor or Ramos in *Malifaux*, or Thagrosh who leads the Legion of Everblight, or the rulers in *WHFB*, where only a single ruling queen, the queen of Kislev, exists among all the kings. In the literary portrayals, the female is often presented in a sexual light, their physical appearance described far more often than that of the male. In their roles, the female is often placed in the role of the prostitute, an area which the male is never placed in. Furthermore, the female seems through their literary portrayal to be attributed a closer connection to magic than the male, and through this is also often suggested to have a closer connection to nature and life, which could be interpreted as a way of linking the female to birth. In many cases, the female breaks free from the gender stereotypes and takes upon herself many masculine traits and as such challenge traditional normative representations of gender. This is sadly often contrasted by

their depictions in the visual frames. Males are in the literary portrayals often depicted in a stereotypical manner, rarely breaking the stereotype in the same way some female characters do. They are simply portrayed as strong warriors and leaders, who rarely seem to care for people around them. In the case of magic, they are in contrast to the female often depicted as being focused on the destructive part of magic. Through this, further reinforcement of gender stereotypes are found, the female being focused on the caring and passive side while the male is focused on the destructive and aggressive. We also find that the sexless are through literary representation often given masculine and feminine traits. This is in essence not a problem, of course, but when coupled with their representation in visual frames the gender seems to determine the visual sex more often than not, and the rules tend to further reinforce this. We find this clear in the example of the lesser demons found in *WHFB*.

In the visual frames, we find results similar to those found in video games, where women are portrayed as hypersexualised with revealing outfits and at times disproportionate bodies. The visual cues presented by M. Miller and A. Summers in their work are also found to apply to the fantasy miniature wargame, such as the fact that females are to a higher degree presented as sexy and attractive, while males are portrayed as muscular and powerful. The sexless are through the visual frames often granted a visual sex, looking a lot like the gendered traits they have been granted in the literary representation.

As for the rules, we find that they support the findings from both the literary representation and the representations found in visual frames. Female characters are exclusively granted rules that have sexual affiliations, while males are to a larger degree than females given rules that portray them as tough and more physically apt. The sexless are through the rules further pigeonholed into a sex their gendered representations appear to force them into.

Concerning Butler and her ideas on the ideas of patriarchal binary gender norms, it is found that they are reinforced through the representations permeating fantasy miniature wargames. Essentially, most characters can be put into relation to the BSRI and a masculine/feminine profile can be made. Very rarely do characters touch upon forming separate genders that are neither masculine nor feminine, and while the games create opportunities for this to happen very easily with the inclusion of such things as magic, it is often not the case. It needs to be noted the potential games such as this can hold for the acceptance and presentation of genders not found in the patriarchal views of gender, being limited only by the imagination of the creator. To consider is how in games consumers can be allowed to step outside of the patriarchal/heterosexual matrix by taking upon themselves roles that would not fit there, this is not as prevalent in games such as these where the role playing aspect is often low. But the potential for this to be the case still exists.

From this initial foray into the field of the modern fantasy miniature wargame, I have found that there is a lot of potential for further research, both from the perspective of literary criticism and gender studies. Statistical data can be gathered from rules and representations in visual frames to further support research, the layout of the games making this somewhat easy with the compiled lists of rules and characters already existing.

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6. Figures:

Fig 1:



Fig 2:



Fig 3:

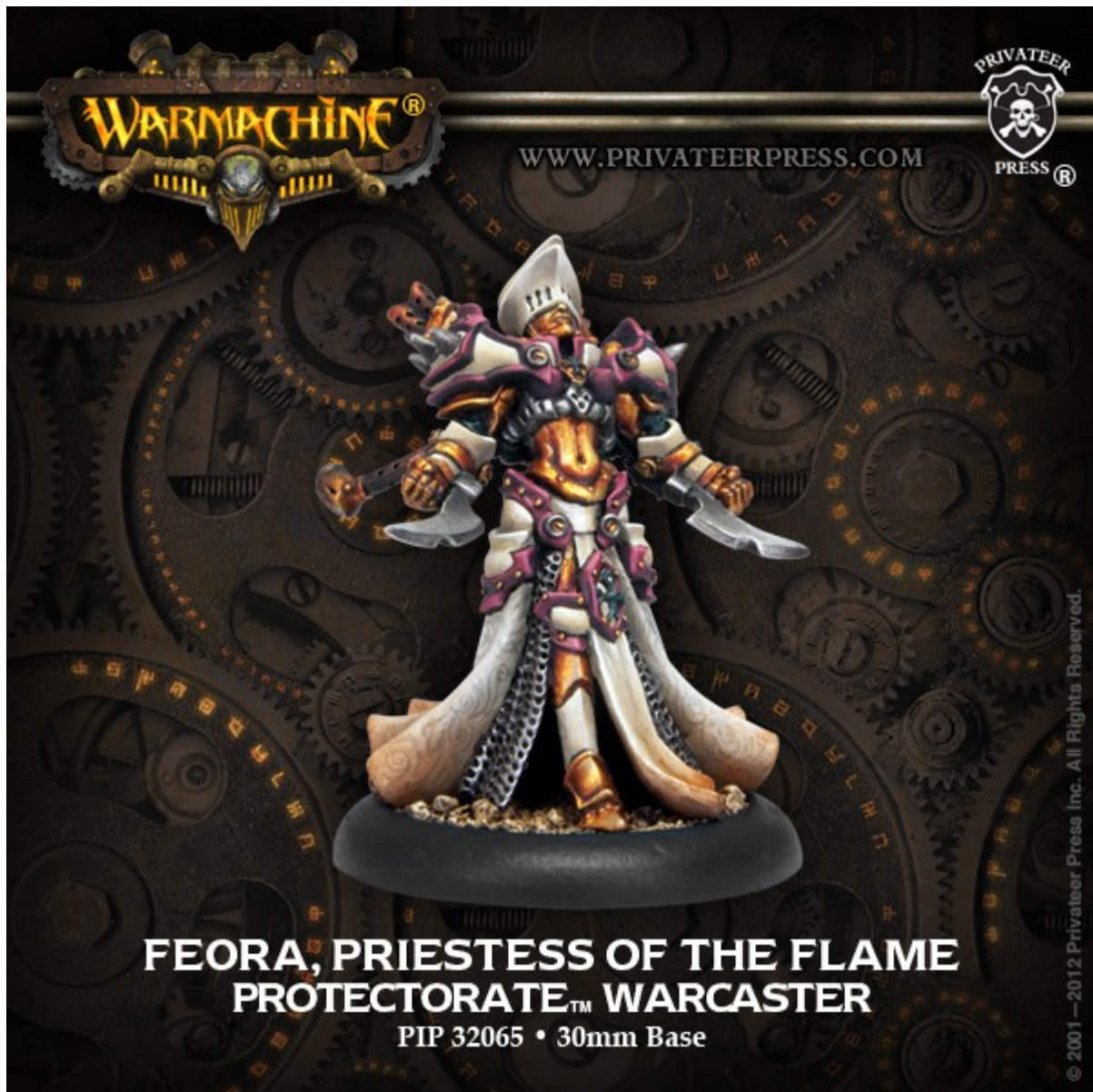


Fig 4:



Fig 5:

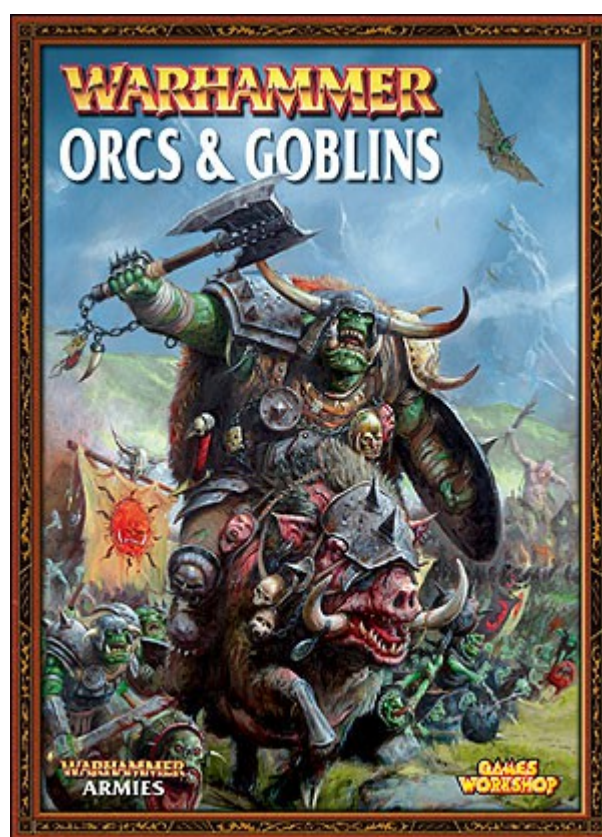


Fig 6:

