

GENDERED SURVEILLANCE IN THE DIGITAL AGE: A FEMINIST POSTHUMANIST ANALYSIS OF SANDRA NEWMAN'S *JULIA* (2023)

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ABSTRACT

*The present study examines the reconstructions of the concepts of surveillance, embodiment, and agency in *Julia* (2023) by Sandra Newman, guided by the theoretical perspective of Feminist Posthumanism as developed by Rosi Braidotti. The paper examines how Newman reimagines the dystopian world of George Orwell's *1984* through a feminist lens, articulating the gendered experience of being surveilled in the twenty-first century—an era characterised by algorithmic visibility, digital surveillance, and affective regulation. Specifically, the study anticipates the way modern regimes of digital surveillance selectively and systematically regulate women and their bodies, emotions, and virtual presence, and replicate patriarchal structures of control using technology. In examining such dynamics, a close reading of the novel has been conducted based on the framework introduced by Braidotti, focusing on the posthuman aspects of *Julia*'s character as she navigates power through her body, emotions, and relational networks (Braidotti, 2022). This discussion reveals that surveillance, as practised by Orwell, was both institutional and ideological; however, Newman predicts twenty-first-century controls based on data, emotion, and connectivity. Furthermore, the study reveals that surveillance in *Julia* functions as a form of domination where care, embodiment, and moral resistance are redefined. This research contributes to feminist Posthuman scholarship and surveillance research by demonstrating how *Julia*, in Newman's work, critically engages with gendered forms of algorithmic and affective government, shedding new light on agency and resistance in the monitored realities of the twenty-first century.*

Keywords: *Surveillance, Feminist Posthumanism, Big Data, Algorithmic Visibility, Digital Surveillance, Affective Regulation, Embodiment, Agency, Resistance, Gender.*

1. INTRODUCTION

In contemporary digital cultures, surveillance has become one of the most critical means by which power, identity, and social behavior are governed. Scholars like Lyon (2018), Zuboff (2019), and Noble (2018) argue that the

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mechanisms of algorithmic systems, platform infrastructures, and datafication practices have a significantly greater impact on people's lives than traditional state surveillance. Feminist scholars have further shown that such technologies disproportionately target women, whose bodies, emotions, and online visibility are tracked, commodified, and disciplined through digital systems that reproduce patriarchal hierarchies (Banet-Weiser, 2018; Dobson, 2015). Despite these insights, research on Orwell's *1984* has rarely examined the gendered dynamics of surveillance, thereby leaving a significant gap in understanding how control operates differently across gender in both literary and digital contexts. This study addresses this gap by analyzing Sandra Newman's *Julia* (2023), a feminist rewriting of Orwell's novel, to understand how contemporary forms of algorithmic, affective, and data-driven surveillance reshape women's agency in technologically mediated worlds.

The present study fills this gap, returning to the world of Orwell's dystopia through the lens of a female character, Julia, who was marginalised in the original story. Building on Orwell's *1984* (1949), in which surveillance is described as a centralised and totalitarian model represented by the figure of Big Brother, Newman reinstates this framework by creating systems associated with the modern digital age. The pervasive telescreens of Orwell's world are replaced with decentralised but ubiquitous infrastructures, including Big Data predictive algorithms, biometric tracking, and emotional analytics, that govern behaviour not by physical force but by digital immersion and affective manipulation (Zuboff, 2019). The bodies and feelings of women become extremely significant objects of control in this renegotiated landscape, reflecting the modern discussion of gendered online visibility, hate speech on the Internet, and the sale of affective labour (Banet-Weiser, 2018). By dramatizing the narrative perspective in this way, Julia reveals the gendered aspects of surveillance which are highly gendered. The novel portrays how spaces that initially appear to offer a sense of connection and empowerment can, simultaneously, serve as a territory of vulnerability, where care, intimacy, and emotional expression are monitored, tracked, and manipulated. These processes align with the actual digital cultures in the real world, where networks of technology form dependencies and expose individuals (Dobson, 2015). Literature has long reflected social fears, including industrial change and feminist dissent. Newman continues this tradition by placing twenty-first-century forms of digital and emotional subjugation within an Orwellian frame.

In questioning these practices, this paper will draw on the theoretical approach of Feminist Posthumanism, particularly as developed by Braidotti (2013, 2022). Feminist posthumanism is dissatisfied with binary oppositions between the human and machine, as well as the male and female; it

foregrounds a relational, embodied, and technologically mediated type of subjectivity. The concept of the cyborg, as created by Haraway (2016), further emphasises that bodies, technologies, and power are intertwined, providing a key to exploring Julia's behaviour in surveillance not as an individual, but as a posthuman subject who is affected, embodied, and part of a network. Such a theoretical angle can help one carefully analyse how the novel rewrites the surveillance model of Orwell in the digital era, and predict how the gendered experience of being studied, watched, and categorised occurs. Although *Julia* has been considered a feminist retelling of *1984*, it has yet to be analysed through a feminist posthumanist perspective, and how it restructures Orwellian surveillance in ways familiar to modern algorithm cultures. This study bridges that gap by combining feminist surveillance theory with posthumanist analysis to demonstrate how Newman foresees the gendered relationship in twenty-first-century digital surveillance. This paper attempts to analyse how Julia by Newman takes a reformulation of the centralised Big Brother by Orwell into the decentralised, data-driven surveillance systems of Big Data cultures and how the novel attempts to demonstrate the subversion of care, emotion, and connectivity as a means of resistance in a place that is strictly monitored and digitised. This research is important because it contributes to modern debates on literature, gender, and digital culture by expanding feminist surveillance studies through Julia's illustration of how gender-specific workings occur within digital visibility, affective surveillance, and datafication. It also extends feminist posthumanist theory by subjecting it to a contemporary reworking of a canonical dystopian text, examining how embodied, affective, and relational agency is formed in technologically mediated contexts.

1.1 Research Questions

1. How does Newman's *Julia* reframe the Orwellian Big Brother into the decentralised surveillance of Big Data?
2. How does Newman's *Julia* portray care, emotion, and connectivity as subversive acts within a monitored digital world?

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

Surveillance in dystopian novels has always been a rich area of investigation of the interfaces of control, power, and social order. Since the publication of George Orwell's *1984* in 1949, the novel has become a landmark text for understanding political oppression through surveillance, as exemplified by a totalitarian state's efforts to eliminate human freedom through comprehensive, all-encompassing observation. Orwell's imagination was shaped by the mid-20th-century geopolitical situation, most notably the

emergence of totalitarian regimes in Stalinist Russia and Nazi Germany, where surveillance by the state was an effective instrument of tyranny. Surveillance is broadly defined as the systematic collection, monitoring, and analysis of individuals' actions, behaviors, or data for governance, prediction, or control (Lyon, 2018). Scholars, including Michel Foucault, have traced the origin and development of surveillance as a contemporary disciplinary technology, highlighting how the state has increasingly relied on technology and institutionalized procedures aimed at observing, normalizing, and punishing (Foucault, 2012). The panopticon, as described by Foucault, is a metaphor for widespread observation that induces self-regulation through the potentially omniscient gaze, illuminating both the technological and psychological scope of Orwellian domination. Recent feminist analysis has endeavored to reassess surveillance to encompass embodied and sexualized modes of control, contending that surveillance concerns ideological conformity but further concerns the disciplining of gendered bodies in patriarchal frameworks (Lyon, 2001). Technologies of surveillance, from the peering eye of the masculine observer to internet monitoring, typically impose gendered disciplinary effects in the form of the policing of sexuality, looks, and socialization. These aspects reveal the shortfalls of androcentric dystopian techno-literature concerned with political ideology at the expense of women's bodily and affective experiences of surveillance (Haraway, 2016)

Digital surveillance has changed the landscape of gendered vulnerability: the hitherto blunt political practices of coercion have been transformed into diffuse, market-friendly surveillance that transforms the bodies, feelings and messages of women into a kind of extractable value. The move towards algorithmic knowledge of centralized surveillance is documented by scholarship not only in communications and gender studies but also in human rights, which yields returns through gendered attention and sexualisation, as well as affective labour. Recent empirical research has shown that online harms affect women and men equally. However, women are disproportionately burdened with intensive, gendered abuse, targeted exposure, and privacy impacts that translate to offline harms (Pew Research Center, 2021). Large-scale surveys show the magnitude and effects of such harms. Indicatively, Pew Research Centre (2021) established that women are more prone to report sexual harassment online (16% vs. 5%) or being stalked (13% vs. 9%) and found that women under 35 were particularly prone to cyber-bullying. The online reported sexual harassment was 33% among young women below the age of 35, and 11% among men below the age of 35. Also, 47 percent of women who reported harassment thought that it was based on their gender, which is opposed to 18 percent of men (Pew Research Center,

2021). These statistics suggest that digital harassment is a pervasive issue rather than an isolated incident.

The public revelation of investigations highlights the impact of state and corporate surveillance in intensifying risks to women in politics, journalism, and activism. The Pegasus spyware exposures have brought to light disturbing facts targeting journalists, activists and dissidents around the globe with surveillance devices that provide attackers with access to personal information on their phones and computer devices at close range, the tools frequently used to intimidate, undermine or otherwise silence female opponents. These practical examples illustrate how surveillance and gendered power are united to create new vulnerabilities. Another dimension can be seen through platform-level analysis: platforms can be highly concentrated locations of gendered violence. To take an example, according to a 2017 study by Amnesty International, female politicians and journalists received abuse on Twitter about once every 30 seconds. The abuse was based on gender, race, and sexuality (Axois, 2018). This demonstrates the effects of social media spaces, which intensify sexism and negate the voices of the marginalized. The most obvious example is non-consenting distribution of intimate images (so-called revenge porn) and image-based sexual abuse, which depict how online visibility becomes gendered violence. In accordance with the research conducted by the Cyber Civil Rights Initiative (2017) and other related studies, it was observed that most victims are women, and the emotional, financial, and social damages begin to unfold after the non-consensually circulated intimate materials. Such instances demonstrate the collusion of surveillance and sharing technologies and gendered power to reprimand women who violate intimacy.

Journalists and female public figures face targeted campaigns of harassment that operate like coordinated surveillance and intimidation. A global survey by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) and the International Center for Journalists (ICFJ) found that 73% of women journalists surveyed had experienced online violence in the course of their work; 25% had received threats of physical violence; 18% had been threatened with sexual violence; and 20% had been attacked offline in connection with online violence (UNESCO, 2020). Such data illustrate how the facets of surveillance extend far beyond mere observation into physical and psychological domains. However, the literature also traces counter-mobilisations that reuse the same digital affordances to resist. The #MeToo movement of 2017 transformed social media into a powerful mechanism for collective resistance and accountability, demonstrating how digital platforms can amplify the voices of survivors. Taken together, empirical research and documented incidents converge on the stark conclusion: Big Data

does not merely extend surveillance; it differentially configures risk along gendered lines. Women's encounter with spyware, mass harassment, image-based abuse and targeted campaigns is shaped by platforms' extraction logic and by existing patriarchal structures translated into digital realms. (Enock et al., 2024).

3. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The current research employs a qualitative case study design, situating *Julia* (2023) by Sandra Newman within the context of a modern adaptation of the dystopian model created by Orwell and interpreting it through the theoretical framework of Feminist Posthumanism. Single-text case studies are a long-standing methodological approach to literary scholarship that has been applied since the 1980s to explore how specific narrative worlds are negotiating anxieties of ideology, culture, and technology in a focused manner (Belsey, 2013; Tenen, 2024). Through theorising the novel as a limited case, it is possible to thoroughly investigate the construction, challenge, and reimagination of posthuman subjectivity, surveillance, and gendered agency in the story, its themes, and its discursive structures. According to Braidotti (2013), the posthuman condition is characterised by distributed subjectivity, in which agency is distributed between human and nonhuman forces, algorithms, interfaces, and data networks that construct experience. Particularly, this framework is applicable in the analysis of *Julia*, which recreates the totalitarian regime of Orwell in light of Big Data and algorithmic surveillance, where power is not exercised by any visible authority but rather by invisible processes of prediction, categorisation, and affective modulation.

The posthumanism of Braidotti provides a critical perspective on understanding the restructuring of embodiment and subjectivity in individuals, particularly women, through digital surveillance. Although Zuboff (2019) highlights that twenty-first-century surveillance is no longer the prerogative of the state, it has been transferred to platforms that measure human emotions, desires, and interactions. This paper views the body through *Julia*, as a location where surveillance is intimate and affective, practised not on the telescreens but through the emotional and algorithmic surveillance built into social connectivity. This subjectivity of *Julia* relays, in this sense, what Braidotti (2019) calls a relational ontology, in which the technological and the social intersect to shape our identities. She is exposed, defenceless and emotionally expressive, which is her control and the strength of her opposition.

The idea of *becoming*, at the centre of the theory developed by Braidotti, helps to understand the nature of *Julia* and her identity as not fixed and constant, but constantly being shaped by the apparatuses that control her.

It is analogous to the way people nowadays bargain over their digital presence: building identities on interfaces as they are constantly monitored and processed by data infrastructure. Surveillance can therefore be both productive and oppressive through the posthuman feminist prism of creating a zone of negotiation in which meaning and resistance can be created through embodied and affective interactions with technology.

Braidotti's posthuman ethics continue this discussion by reconceptualising agency as distributive and collective, rather than individual and autonomous. In *Julia*, agency is not produced by opposition to technology, but by being involved in it—through care, emotional reciprocity, and the moral transformation of relational networks. The algorithmic gaze of today, where attention, feeling and affect are commodified, is a reflection of the digital gaze that controls *Julia*'s world. However, in this gaze, *Julia* does what Haraway (2016) and Braidotti (2019) call for: she shifts surveillance from a place of isolation to one of consciousness and connection. This framework has contributed to describing surveillance as an affective, gendered, and posthuman phenomenon by uniting feminist posthumanism with digital surveillance studies. The decentralization of Big Data to the centralized Big Brother signifies a historical change in the ideological control to an algorithmic one by Orwell. Newman's *Julia* enacted this change by employing a female consciousness that conceives surveillance not as an external power, but as ordinary intimacy—in data, emotions, and network relations. By applying the framework suggested by Braidotti, this study proposes that resistance to digital surveillance is not merely the preservation of privacy, but rather the reinstatement of visibility: learning to be ethically and relationally present in the systems that observe, document, and anticipate.

4. DISCUSSION AND ANALYSIS

4.1 Reframing Orwell's Dystopia: *Julia*'s Decentralized Surveillance in the Age of Big Data

In *Julia* (2023), by Sandra Newman, the technology of surveillance developed in George Orwell's novel *1984* is revisited with a more feminist and posthuman perspective. This omnipresent Big Brother of the dystopian world depicted in Orwell's mid-twentieth-century novel is, in Newman's twenty-first-century reconstruction, a decentralized, programmed, and embodied form of control. Newman describes Oceania as a system consisting of an ecology of sensors, telescreens, and social affect, no longer just watching systems but also interpreting and monetizing emotion, gesture, and bodily presence. The *Julia* universe is indicative of the state of Big Data surveillance, where women,

especially, are not only monitored but also modelled by technologies that create their identities as datafied subjects. The protagonist of Newman exists in a posthuman terrain—a place where digital and ideological constructions intersect to render gender a programmable phenomenon. As Julia reads Rosi Braidotti's experience in feminist posthumanism, twenty-first-century surveillance is not merely political and institutional, but also corporeal and affective: it is enacted on bodies, through emotions, and even the internalization of visibility itself.

According to Braidotti (2013), the posthuman condition can be defined as a condition in which human subjectivity is reorganized in networks of technology, power, and ecology—an assemblage where agency is distributed between human and nonhuman actants. In this context, Julia of Newman is a paradigmatic posthuman subject, the embodiment and identity of which is mediated by surveillance technologies continuously. At the beginning of the novel, the place where Julia works in the *Ministry of Truth* symbolizes not only a place of political propaganda but also a machinic network, a place that combines labor, gender, and visibility. Newman begins the text with Julia standing on the walkway, hoping futilely to see the yellow flags, which indicate the need for some repair (Newman, 2023, p. 5). The yellow flags serve as a visual indicator of work requests, enabling Julia to prioritize and manage her tasks effectively. The fact that the flags are scarce in this particular scene suggests that the machines are functioning correctly, or perhaps everyone is too busy showing off to report any issues. The description is a combination of human alertness and machinic automation. The body of the woman technician is a part of the surveillance apparatus she is in charge of. This gaze is, in fact, the gaze of the telescreens; Julia has internalized the disciplinary optics of the state, but her work as a laborer provides her with a close understanding of the mechanical and affective mechanisms of the system.

The surveillance regime presented in the novel is not limited to the physical extent of telescreens; it also penetrates the emotional existence of those under surveillance. Unlike in *1984*, when the gaze of Big Brother signifies the bi-directional flow of power, Newman expresses a networked and recursive surveillance where citizens police each other's affective expressions. At the *Two Minutes Hate*, Julia realizes that she also is emotionally automated. Julia was feeling her usual anxiety, this time fearing that it would not work out, that they would try to rage and give up in embarrassment or burst out laughing (Newman, 2023, p. 15). The fact that she is scared to show any emotional inadequacy when she is being watched points to the gendered surveillance that demands that even emotion must be disciplined and productive. The

concept of the so-called affective economies of control, as proposed by Braidotti (2019), is relevant in this case, where power operates through the intensity of emotions exchanged between bodies and technologies. The fact that Julia is afraid of not playing the role of rage right shows that surveillance not only invades the public space but also the most private spheres of emotionality and self-identity.

Shoshana Zuboff (2019) suggests that the concept of surveillance capitalism transforms human experience into behavioral data, enabling the prediction and monetization of behavior. The story that Newman tells, although it takes place in the Orwellian Oceania, speaks to this contemporary economy of visibility, where the body and emotions of Julia are extracted by the Party to provide a steady supply of allegiance. Her involvement in the rituals, such as the Hate or the games of the Spies, reflects the reproduction of surveillance by socializing the emotion (Newman, 2023, p. 33). These scenes remind us of the recursive loop of digital cultures, where outrage, shame, and spectacle perpetuate, contributing to ideological unity.

Banet-Weiser (2018) notes that the visibility women are required to have in the digital culture is necessarily ambivalent; where, on the one hand, they are encouraged to present themselves as subjects of empowerment, and on the other hand, they are criticized because they are overexposed. Newman explores this paradox in *Julia*. Her womanhood, which the Party questions at all times, is both the object of suspicion and of possible action. It is mentioned that her male coworkers see her as a danger due to her sexuality. His eyes went to the red Junior Anti-Sex League sash at her waist, then darted away hastily, as if he had had an electric shock (Newman, 2023, p. 5). The red sash, which is a sign of chastity, ironically identifies her body as hyper visible, a visual code which is both disciplinary and erotic. According to Braidotti, this icon represents the culmination of the posthuman's involvement in both material and symbolic power. The sash is a false supplement of ideology etched on the body. This makes the feminized body a dual target of surveillance, a possible disorderly zone of the state and a self-integrated policing of conformity.

In addition, the description of surveillance technologies by Newman, telescreens, microphones, and even the supposed watchers behind the screens conforms to the feminist posthuman criticism of the so-called male gaze as an infrastructural effect. A good comparison can be made to cyborg feminism, as proposed by Donna Haraway (2016), who suggests that the connection between women and technology is neither entirely enslaving nor liberating, but rather associative and relational. The fact that Julia has been used to machines and can crawl around inside without causing any harm makes Julia not the subject of surveillance but a subject of its activity (Newman, 2023, p.

7). This technical intimacy, however, also supports her complicity in supporting this objectifying system. This paradox resembles the modern digital labor, in which the visibility of women online is a source of survival and a means of exploitation.

The reproduction of class and race, as well as gendered hierarchies through surveillance, is also unveiled in the novel, which is again echoed in the intersectional aspect of posthumanism by Braidotti. The "Nationalities," such as Comrade Atkins, illustrate a distributed network of watchers (Newman, 2023, p. 42). This radicalized delegation is analogous to modern-day algorithmic systems, in which bias is programmed into the facial recognition technology and predictive policing tools that unfairly focus on racial minorities. Thus, Newman transforms the totalitarianism of Orwell into a bio political system of datafied control, in which the power operates in forms of diversity, inclusion, and influence instead of brute force. This is the ultimate irony of the Big Data era, which is analyzed through the feminist posthuman lens. Instead of ruining individuality, surveillance makes it quantifiable and commodified.

The bodily surveillance experienced by Julia culminates in the most literal scenes in the hostel, when even changing clothes is done under scrutiny. The narrator explains that the locker rooms were dominated by telescreens directed downwards at the corners of the lockers, creating an effect that prevented anyone from undressing when they were in sight of these screens (Newman, 2023, p. 49). The intrusion that the screens make into the female body changes it into an object of obedience, a place of constant visibility. The ironic gesture of Julia, who, when they are watching her, tells them, "And if there is a comrade of the male gender on duty, I should ask him, please, to turn his head away" (p. 50). This proves that she is aware of the voyeuristic aspect of surveillance. Her comedic approach evolves into a subversive strategy, which momentarily reestablishes control through her acting. This resistance-complicity swapping substantiates Braidotti's claim that the posthuman subject is not a self-governing entity but a processual one, bargaining its power through strategies of affect and relationship rather than direct opposition.

Such scenes redefine surveillance in Orwell as a mechanical gaze of the authoritarian state, but as a dynamic and networked, gendered ecology of control, one that resembles the culture of twenty-first-century Big Data. Julia lives in a world where no privacy remains, not because some central figure requires obedience, but because every action of life, every expressive gesture of affection, is a potential source of this data. It is the light of the telescreens that surrounds them with comfort (Newman, 2023, p. 20). This foreshadows the glamorous glow of smartphones and social media feeds—media that aim

to draw you in under the guise of connection. The posthuman ethics of sustainability proposed by Braidotti (2013) require fresh subjectivities that recognize these entanglements without necessarily succumbing to them. Surveillance in *Julia* serves as a prism and a membrane, as both patriarchal and technocratic authority are reflected there, and the individual is contained through self-regulation. The feminized body of Julia, situated between the visible and the invisible, thus becomes the quintessential posthuman location, representing the contradictions of living in the era of Big Data.

Overall, Newman's reinterpretation of Orwellian dystopia reveals the transformation of surveillance in the era of data capitalism into a non-coercive mechanism for self-production. The life of Julia is an allegory of the algorithmic woman of the digital century who is observed, desired and datafied at the same time. It is not just her body that is the object of surveillance, but also its infrastructure—the work of visibility that makes the system possible. Braidotti's feminist posthumanism enables the reading of Julia as both the target and carrier of this new surveillance paradigm, as an entity in a hybrid state of being both human and machine, agentic and subjected, in the dystopia of the twenty-first-century era of Big Data.

4.2 Posthuman Resistance: Emotion, Care, and Agency in Newman's *Julia*

Sandra Newman, in *Julia*, reveals the colonization of affect and embodiment through surveillance. Julia's resistance is not heroic or openly radically antagonistic in the Orwellian sense. However, it arises as a result of care, relationality, and emotional intelligence—aspects that have been undermined in patriarchal systems, but which have been the primary concern of feminist posthuman thinking. Rosi Braidotti (2013) defines the posthuman subject as a subject in process, continuously entangled with others and with technology. In this system, resistance is based on interdependence, rather than autonomy, i.e., the capacity to exist within systems without being completely integrated into them. Julia, through acts of care, humor, and embodied intuition, engages in micro-political acts that disrupt the logic of disembodied rationality and emotional homogeneity of the Party. Newman also reinvents rebellion as posthuman ethics of care—an insurgency based on the affective networks that Big Data tries to capture but is incapable of fully controlling.

This relational awareness of Julia, her ability to read and react to emotional spaces despite being saturated by surveillance, is one of the most dramatic expressions of this kind of resistance, which Newman expresses. At the beginning of the novel, she is aware that emotional conformity is the only way to survive. Julia was feeling her usual anxiety that this time it would not

come off, that they would try to rage and give up in embarrassment or burst out laughing. Whenever she imagined this, she saw herself standing up and scolding the mockers righteously. In reality, she would be the first to laugh (Newman, 2023, p. 18). However, it is this awareness that also enables her to recognize instances of breakage in the system, instances of losing control over her emotions. Her improvised gesture throughout the Two Minutes Hate, of throwing the dictionary at the telescreen, is not only an outburst of emotion but also a kind of embodiment of an outburst that briefly reveals the performative aspect of group affect. She screams, Swine! Swine! Swine! and throws a heavy book at the heads of everyone! (p. 22). In that gesture, Julia breaks the automation of emotion, rediscovering the ability to experience and to perform beyond ideological choreography. According to Braidotti (2019), affect is a location of control and resistance at the same time: "The energies that power the biopolitical apparatus can be directed to a collective change (p. 112). The action of Julia momentarily diverts affective power away from the emotions that the Party controls, into a more visceral, uncontrollable connection with the body — a moment of posthuman agency bursting out of flesh and sound.

The rebelling, though, is not just confined to such acts of physical resistance by Julia as her daily efforts at maintenance, repair, and care are also a counter-discourse to the mechanistic order of the Party. The episodes where we see her working in the plot machine of the Ministry of Truth are not merely descriptions of labor, but contemplations of the morality of mending. She knew how to navigate indoors, never making a mess (Newman, 2023, p. 7), a simile that describes how she was sailing through systems of power. This is the sustainability ethics of feminist posthumanism that Braidotti (2013) demands: the embodied sustenance of coexisting with technology without imitating its violence. Julia is technically dexterous; she can maintain the machines because she understands their delicate nature, which is a relational approach to dealing with the posthuman world. She is not against technology as its outer adversary, but enjoys it as something close to her; she feels its guts and understands its rhythms. The way she cares about machines is similar to the way she cares about other people, such as Vicky and the women in her hostel. It is important to note that in a world of surveillance, empathy itself can become a radical form of resistance.

The gendered stakes of surveillance and care are further enhanced by the subplot of Vicky being pregnant. When Julia finds out about the aborted fetus: a bulbous, misshapen head with blank instead of eyes (Newman, 2023, p. 57) the hideous image is an embodiment of the literal violence in a system that governs reproduction and sexuality. The fact that the Party promotes such

concepts as artificial insemination (AI) as the only acceptable form of procreation makes the female body obsolete and hyper-regulated. However, the response to the unbirth that Julia shows is more than disgust or fear; she experiences a combination of compassion and horror. This bodily compassion is an indication of her acknowledgement of the common vulnerability of embodied existence, which Braidotti (2013) defines as *zoe*, the nonhuman element of life. This vital component cannot be instrumentalised. Although low-key and secret, Julia's way of taking care is a denial of the full absorption of the dehumanizing logic of the Party. In this regard, her opposition is strongly posthuman: it recognizes the interconnection of all forms of life and denies the hierarchical dualism of forms of domination, such as human/machine, man/woman, and purity/contamination.

Julia has been emotionally subverted by rejecting the Party's policing of desire. The affair of Winston and Julia in 1984 was a rebellion against the repression of sexuality; in retelling it by Newman, sexuality becomes a place of negotiations between control and autonomy. The chastity of feminine sexuality as a threat and a commodity in the Party is reorganized into the discourse of chastity represented through the sash of the Junior Anti-Sex League. However, Julia takes ownership of this symbol and wears it with a spanner in hand, blending the erotic and the mechanical (Newman, 2023, p. 5). Her sexuality is not submissive or even revolutionary in romantic terms, but self-aware, adaptive, and performative. She borders the realms of surveillance, using humor and irony as a safeguarding affective practice. She reveals the ridiculousness of the voyeurism in the system when she tells the telescreen, when there is a male comrade at work, I would ask you not to look at me (p. 50). It is a kind of posthuman irony, similar to the one adopted by Haraway (2016), cyborg laughter, that ironically supports patriarchal systems. It is this playfulness that enables Julia to turn her hypervisibility into agency by making observation a performance and a form of commentary on control.

In addition, Newman reformulates the meaning of love as a possible site of posthuman solidarity. The note that Julia finds out, which is anonymous and says: I LOVE YOU (Newman, 2023, p. 50), plays the role of a coded message of emotional possibility in a world where genuine emotion is tabooed. In contrast to the use of love as a tragic act of defiance, which, along with betrayal, is bound to fail in Orwell, Newman treats it as an undecided signifier, one that Julia views through the prism of suspicion, interest and desire. The anonymity of the note disrupts the very definition of identity: it might be one of Winston, a laborer, or an unknown observer. Its indefiniteness resembles Braidotti's concept of relational subjectivity, in which affect is circulating without any definite source, forming temporary points of interface. The

intractability of the note is a radical expression of love in the era of Big Data, when emotions are algorithmically measured and commodified for sale. The fact that Julia did not report the note, despite being aware of the risk, indicates that she was committed to an ethics of care and trust, rather than one of fear and compliance. This is a silent act of resistance, one that is preserved in the form of rationality, which Braidotti (2019) refers to as the affirmative politics of interdependence.

The theme of mending recurs in the final movements of the story about Julia, serving as a metaphor for mending oneself within surveillance networks. Since she cleanses the consequences of Vicky's tragedy, washing her hands with caustic soap that makes her skin crimson (Newman, 2023, p. 59), it is a cleansing and a form of penance. Her hands, instruments of work and of tendance, are signs of embodied endurance. The redness evokes the sash of the Anti-Sex League, which has been redefined as a symbol of work and love, rather than oppression. Newman reinvests the female body with its role as a surveillance object, thus making it a site of ethical action through such embodied imagery. The cleaning that Julia herself engages in, just as she maintains machines, is a kind of reparation: it is a way of recovering order, not to the Party, but to herself, to establish a tenuous continuity of life amid systemic dehumanization.

Posthuman feminism, as presented by Braidotti (2013), demands resistance in the era of technology, shifting the focus from the humanist illusion of individual self-determination to a collective, embodied, and affective politics. In the story of Julia, this change is visible. Her resistance is scattered into small acts of micro-interactions: a smile, a repair, a joke, a denial to denounce. Acts are seemingly minor, but as a whole, they constitute what Haraway (2016) refers to as "staying with the trouble": the art of living morally in corrupted systems. According to *Julia* by Newman, in the era of Big Data, there is no possible resistance beyond the surveillance but instead through its circuits, which recode their affective logic. Julia transforms her body, feelings, and associations, turning them into tools for reworking the script of obedience into one of care and persistence.

In this manner, Newman's reimagining of Orwell's world aligns with Braidotti's posthuman ethics, envisioning a politics of affirmation rather than negation. Whereas Winston in Orwell attempts to find the truth through the process of destruction and revolt, Julia in Newman attempts to find life through the process of connection and mending. It is not that she is more than capable of escaping the gaze, but instead that she is redefining the aspect of being looked at. It is an individual act of radical becoming to be visible in a world where visibility is a weaponised thing. When Julia wanders around London, she

is monitored by the ever-present telescreens, which put up the slogan BIG BROTHER is watching you onto every wall (Newman, 2023, p. 31) she turns into the living paradox of said slogan: a woman who is observed and at the same time is observing back, seeing the manhood that remains in the cold machines of the system. Her posthuman strength does not conceive resistance as revolution but as relation - an ethics of care that prospers in the same networks that are meant to overpower it.

In this way, Julia transforms the dystopian surveillance depicted by Orwell into a twenty-first-century Big Data state, where control is facilitated by emotion and visibility algorithms. The protagonist of Newman is a feminist posthuman response to such a world: she does not oppose it by disappearing. However, she occupies it differently, making exposure empathetic and viewing it with understanding. Her embodied, affective, and relational gestures restore Julia's ability to live with meaning in systems of total observation. Her narrative suggests that, although we live in the datafied present, where surveillance has lost its face, but only a code, it is still the human, or rather the posthuman, ability to care that is the most subversive of all.

5. CONCLUSION

In conclusion, the fear of being watched in the twenty-first century has become the silent comfort of being recorded. Big Brother is no longer required in the twenty-first century. The telescreens are being replaced with touchscreens; the fear of being observed has given way to the need to be observed. What was once envisioned by Orwell as a totalitarian nightmare has gradually become the design of our electronic lives. Surveillance is no longer carried out by a superior force, but is an element deeply ingrained in our day-to-day interactions. Big Data has taken the place of Big Brother, and the gaze traditionally assigned to the Party has now been spread across networks, platforms and algorithms that succeed through our involvement. Such a new order of looking is not enforced, but welcomed with lust: lust to relate, to communicate, to be a member. This transformation is hauntingly exact in *Julia* by Sandra Newman. In retelling this story of Orwell through the consciousness of a woman who has always been a mere footnote in Winston's rebellion, Newman highlights the new lines of control that are the hallmark of our era. Julia resides in a place where power has lost its face, where surveillance is not enforced but predicted. Twenty-first-century technologies do not simply observe, but predict, imagine, and capitalize on emotions. The self has been broken down into bits in this digital ecosystem—a scroll, a heartbeat, a moment of affect—all being turned into measurable value. What was once a political tool of surveillance has become an economic tool, driven solely by

profit. Still, it is women's bodies, feelings, and digital corporations that are most often subjected to the laboratory of this algorithmic government. The patriarchal logic has not vanished; it has been reprogrammed.

Big Data takes the eyes of Big Brother into the private lives. The individual ceases to be separate from the collective; the inner self is an object of study. Such a constant transfer of emotion into information forms a state of affective exposure—an act of control based on empathy, rather than oppression. The social media account, the biometric scan, the dating application, and the fitness watch—each of them offers personalization, but each also allows the network to learn more about us. This is the paradox of *Julia* as portrayed by Newman. She lives in a regime where her gestures and feelings are documented, and she requires being greater than the computer can compute. Her insubordination does not express itself in invisibility but in embodiment. She claims that she has a right to feel, to take care of, to love, and to live, not merely in the scale of numbers. This way, she repossesses what surveillance is trying to usurp—independence of feeling. Feminist posthumanism enables one to see *Julia's* struggle beyond the personal. She is an embodiment of a reorganization of the human, no longer tied to the Cartesian dichotomies of mind and body, subject and object, or observer and observed. The philosophy of the posthuman, as presented by Rosi Braidotti, encourages us to understand that agency is no longer opposed to technology, but rather a repositioning within it. The posthuman subject is not powerless before machines; she is entangled in them and can redefine relationality as an ethical and creative power. This change can be seen in Newman's *Julia*, where she does not want to move out of the system but transform it. Her body, patrolled and listed, is a place of re-possession, a land where emotion and tendance are a revolutionary intervention.

The supremacy of Big Data is based on consent, but not the active consent of an agreement, but the passive consent of participation. Each click and image enforces economy of surveillance. However, it is the same connectivity that creates circles of consciousness and activism. Women have been taught to commodify themselves with the same technologies and use them to become vocal to express newer forms of solidarity. It is this malleable negotiation between the control and the creation that is at the core of Newman's reinterpretation. The voice of *Julia*, long suppressed in the narrative power of the Orwellian world, has finally found its voice, and in doing so, it resembles that of the women who navigate the algorithmic mazes of the modern world to make their presence felt in a world intended to measure people. The fact that there is no Big Brother in the twenty-first century does not imply that surveillance has outgrown it; instead, it has simply become more

sophisticated. That eye which had been dominating above has been divided into a thousand lenses that enclose and pierce. Big Data is all-present yet unseen; participatory yet coercive; intimate yet detached. It controls not by fear, but by seduction, by the assurance of relevance, association and security. However, as Julia in Newman's narrative demonstrates, there is still a way out of this networked subjugation, which is ethical resistance. The feminist posthuman subject does not annihilate the system; she reinterprets the systemic logic by reinstating a different relation to power, based on the principles of empathy, interdependence and embodied consciousness. Furthermore, the research contributes to the Orwellian literature by illustrating how the infrastructures of Big Brother have evolved into diffuse, algorithmic networks that shape identity and behavior in the twenty-first century. The analysis indicates that the study asserted that Julia not only reveals the gendered nature of surveillance in digital space but also reinvents possibilities of agency, resistance, and relational power in the age of ubiquitous algorithmic surveillance.

This work has significant value as it demonstrates how Julia predicts the modern surveillance regimes dictated by Big Data mining, biometric surveillance, and AI, thereby connecting literary analysis with the contemporary world of digital culture. It demonstrates how gendered surveillance in the novel reflects contemporary surveillance, like algorithmic profiling, predictive analytics, and platform-based visibility economies that regulate women's bodies and feelings disproportionately. The study also adds value by exposing the role of affective surveillance, which is currently part and parcel of wellness applications, social media analytics, and behavior forecasting platforms, in the oppression of Julia, providing a literary template for the transformation of emotions into data. The work presents a fresh theoretical approach to agency in contemporary, diffuse, automated, and networked regimes of control through feminist posthumanism. It also provides a new understanding of Orwellian power, stating that Big Brother has transformed into a centralized power into a network of algorithms controlled by algorithms. Finally, the research contributes to the modern discourse on surveillance studies by demonstrating how the gendered nature of surveillance, datafication, and technological embodiment in the twenty-first century can be critically examined through literature.

Consequently, the conclusion that arises from this study is not one of despair, but rather one of critical enlightenment. Surveillance has changed, so has opposition. Rebellion in the era of Big Data no longer relies on secrecy and invisibility but seeks visibility once more as a gesture of consciousness and relationship. The symbolic character of this change is Julia from the novel by

Newman. She is the woman who does not want to be reduced to her algorithmic shadow, but instead turns her surveillance into a story of consciousness and independence. Digital gaze can be omniscient, although it is not omnipotent. Between the data points, there is a gap, momentary, delicate, yet at the same time infinite, where human care and post-human agency intersect. In this space, the future of resistance—and perhaps even the future of feminism—is still being created.

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