



# Post Humanism in Dystopian Fiction with Reference to the Novel *Feed* by M.T. Anderson

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**Abstract**— *The world is facing a lot of changes in recent decades. There is enormous development in every field. Everything is developing in one hand and on the other hand the entire world is reaching its grave position in terms of humanity and love. Many authors have shared their ideas on how the world is going to be in the mere future in the form of dystopian fiction. Dystopian literature is nothing but the entire story of the novel is set in the future. This research paper depicts post humanism and artificial intelligence taking its pace in dystopian fiction.*

**Keywords**— *Dystopian Fiction, Post Humanism, Artificial Intelligence, Humanity and Love, Global Changes*



The novel *Feed* depicts the life where the role of human beings is minimal when compared to the machines. Artificial intelligence acts as a central force which is the government. No importance is given to the emotions or feelings of the people. The novel possesses all the basic characteristics of post humanism. When environmentalism is considered the author depicts the earth in a distinctive way where machines, skyscrapers and flying cars take the major role where no much description or importance for nature is given. Home is considered a boring place as post humanism does not give importance to the emotions. People always feel null and void. For them “everything seemed kind of sad and boring so we couldn’t tell anymore what we wanted” (Anderson 31).

The very first chapter of the novel starts with the title ‘Your face is not an organ’ which signifies absurdism. Everything is null. The novel opens with a man playing with the un-insulated wires that were coming out of the wall and he was trying to ride shocks off them. This was considered fun. People do not have anything to think. For them ‘thinking’ is forbidden. As everyone in the planet was induced with the feed, no opportunity is given for them to think. Their only work is to listen to feed and act according to that.

Steve Titus is the protagonist of the novel but the author used the character of Violet to portray the significance of

human emotions through her literary words. The world faces enormous development in on hand as Titus and his friends goes to moon for vacation. They even bored of going often to space as Marty says “The thing I hate about space is that you can feel how old and empty it is.” (Anderson 4) and it is highly deteriorating on the other hand. Violet is the only character who understands the deadly life of human beings. She says “We enter a time of calamity!” (Anderson 38) which signifies posthumanism.

As artificial intelligence takes a role, human beings as fed with the feed in their bodies. It acts as a controlling factor in a human body. This shows how machines replace human beings. Feed actually replaces human brain. Wherever people go and whatever they see the information will be flooded through the feed.

“our feeds were going fugue with all the banners. The hotels were jumping on each other, and there was bumffrom the casinos...I was getting bannered so hard, and I kept blinking and trying to walk forward with my carry-on. I can’t hardly remember any of it.” (Anderson 8)

The impact of artificial intelligence in human bodies is heavier as their skin started to shed off. They tend to have heavy and unusual mood swings. Quendy buys some shoes but the minute she walks out of the shop she does not like

them anymore. This shows how bad the mood swings were. At the same time Marty could not think of what he wants so he just orders a really null shirt which he feels like ordering nothing. They also have fugue – joy which is loss of one's awareness and enjoying.

Emotions are given importance only in the absence of feed. The culture is to address friends as 'units'. This signifies how emotionless people were during that period. Human beings are treated as mere machines. "We're going to have to shut you off now. We're going to have to shut you off." (Anderson 40). The extremity is when lesions are considered fashionable in the novel. People possess weirdest character as well as appearance. Commonly people get lesions as a side effect of having feed in the body but they make it as a style statement. They even make artificial lesions by making an incision with latex in the desired part of the body. They even address it as beads of latex. They make artificial lesions as ornamental. "The girl's lesion was beautiful. It was like necklace. A red choker." (Anderson 22). Quendy makes lesions where muscles became visible and tendons and ligaments and stuff could be seen through the lesions. She became more obsessed with the lesions where she makes more and more artificial ones in her body. "I could see a lesion on her neck open and close like a fish mouth singing a country song" (Anderson 221). Friends of Quendy do not feel weird about the lesions except Violet. She considers these actions as a decline of civilization. "She's always looking for like evidence of the decline of civilization." (Anderson 184).

Though the world turns out to be more dangerous and mechanic, only books and literature makes the characters remain 'human beings' with reference to the characters of Violet and her father. Violet's father is a retired college teacher who teaches dead languages in the college. His influence is seen in Violet as well. Violet is considered weird as she writes. "She slid off the bunk, and went to get her bag. She opened it and pulled out something, which was pen. She also had paper. I looked at her funny. "You write?" I said "With a pen?"" (Anderson 65). Violet enjoys nature than living a life with feed. She understands the aesthetic quality of nature. She likes mountains, pine trees, going to the mountains and soothing breeze which no others could understand. This makes her look weird in front of others.

Violet is portrayed with powerful thoughts. She is the only character who hates feed. She also wishes to live a life without feed along with nature. She imagines a life without feed as happy living lives where there will be more of nature and literature, the idea of real life as complete human beings. Through the character of violet the author narrates how deadly the world has turned into.

"Do you know why the Global Alliance is pointing all the weaponry as their disposal at us? No. Hardly

anyone does. Do you know why our skin is falling off? Have you heard that some suburbs have been lost, just, no one knows where they are anymore?...We don't know any of that. We have tea parties with our teddies. We go sledding. We enjoy being young. We take what's coming to us. That's our way." (Anderson 273)

Artificial intelligence is absolutely helpful for human beings but the problem arises when we try to replace men with machines. Human beings never know how harmful to be dependent on the machines. At the end of the day men suffer even without realising it. Life with nature will be missed. The future generation will not even know what nature is all about. As Montag, the protagonist of the novel *Fahrenheit 451* written by Ray Bradbury runs away from the life of artificial intelligence. He runs in search of nature, literature and books. Ray Bradbury tries to signify the importance of nature and literature through the work.

As the world goes more artificial, the effects would be more in human body features. In the novel *The Dispossessed* written by Ursula K. Le. Guin, people are portrayed bald without hair, even men do not have beard or moustache. Having hair in the body is considered weird. In the novel *This Perfect Day* written by Ira Levin, people can live only with the help of memory banks. The novel *Brave New World* written by Aldous Huxley starts with the description of fertility centres. Having babies naturally is considered shameful. They mention human beings as viviparous. In the novella *Anthem*, Ayn Rand signifies how people live without any individuality. "We are one in all and all in one. There are no men but only the great we, one, indivisible and forever." (Rand 7). Most of the dystopian fiction showcases the effects of artificial intelligence in human beings. It is up to the current generation to act wisely in saving the nature and the world.

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