

Oliphant in the Room: Identity, Desire and Social Media in Gail Honeyman's *Eleanor Oliphant Is Completely Fine*

Adil Hussain¹, Azra Akhtar², Dr. Khursheed Ahmad Qazi^{3*}

¹Ph. D Scholar, PG Department of English, North Campus, University of Kashmir Email: adil@kashmiruniversity.ac.in

²Ph. D Scholar, PG Department of English, North Campus, University of Kashmir Email: azraakhtar1995@gmail.com

³ * SG Assistant Professor & Coordinator, PG Department of English, North Campus, University of Kashmir

***Corresponding author:** Dr Khursheed Ahmad Qazi

* SG Assistant Professor & Coordinator, PG Department of English, North Campus, University of Kashmir,
Email: qkhursheed@kashmiruniversity.ac.in

Abstract

In an era characterised by constant surveillance, targeted advertising, privacy concerns, and the omnipresence of digital technology, the concept of digital minimalism has garnered increasing attention. While certain literary responses, such as in novels like *Station Eleven* by Emily St. John Mandel and *The Circle* by Dave Eggers, have portrayed worlds overwhelmed by technological collapse, a separate set of novels—including novels like *Eleanor Oliphant Is Completely Fine* by Gail Honeyman etc.—explore the transformative journeys of characters as they transition from an immersed digital existence to one characterised by self-reliance and digital minimalism. This paper seeks to delve into this latter novel by Gail Honeyman with an aim to examine how these works fictionalise the isolation, identity performance and desire for the unattainable while dealing with a world full of different means of communication. Beyond illustrating the practical aspects, opportunity costs and associated challenges of embracing minimalism in a digital age, these novels delve deep into the psychological motives, repressions, nostalgia, hopelessness, and individual traumas experienced by the characters. These portrayals stand in stark contrast to the trends found in self-help literature and the world of social media. Through a critical analysis of this novel, the paper will shed light on the nuanced portrayal of a postdigital picture of literature and the intricate interplay between technology, human psychology, and societal pressures. Moreover, this paper seeks to indulge in the character analysis of the main character of the novels to examine how she evolves or devolves against the entropic nature of social media communication. By exploring the character's journeys and the emotional landscapes they navigate, this study aims to contribute to a deeper understanding of the individual and collective experiences within an increasingly digitised world. The paper will utilise insights from theories ranging from postmodernism, psychoanalysis to media ecology to explore the themes in the select novels.

Keywords: Cybersocialisation, Cyberpsychology, Digital detox, Digital minimalism, desire, social media novels

Introduction

Digital communication in today's world leads to all sorts of invasive problems. While a 2020 research did not find a correlation between digital information and digital footprint, it can be safely assumed that internet communication or social media communication makes an individual vulnerable to privacy invasions. Notwithstanding these issues/problems, the internet as a technology continues to act as an addiction. As a consequence of this addiction, people have come up with their solutions. Several philosophies such as Neo-Luddism attempt to escape such effects of technology. However, digital minimalism is considered the most sustainable philosophy for reclaiming individual agency in the digital age. Digital detoxification (commonly known as digital detox) has evolved as an influential trend to counter these ill-effects of technology. Such a lifestyle is usually popularised by influencers on different social media platforms in terms of challenges of survival without technology and social media as such. Syvertsen and Enli show how digital detox creates a dilemma whereby the authenticity of an authentic experience becomes paradoxical. In this paper, we examine the asocial nature of characters in order to demonstrate that as a side-effect of exposure to the unhealthy communication patterns of social media. The search for the authenticity of existence and lived experience pushes these characters towards a resistance of social norms and rituals of communication.

Social Media Novels

The rift between the digital and the postdigital can be gauged with an example of a tongue-in-cheek comparison of the two in an 'imageboard meme' (Klok qtd. In Cramer). Not only does it depict an evolution in the lives of those who came to be known as digital natives, but also an anachronism that has always been seen as 'funny'. This transition ushers in a

culture that presupposes the existence of technologies that make the world a 'global village' – something that will be antagonised even using the same technology. As a subgenre of postdigital literature, "social media novel" represents a fascinating development in English literature that ushers in a unique response to the ever-changing landscape of digital response (Miller M). Writing stories that take place inside social media platforms has become a popular way for authors to capture the subtleties of human contact and connection as the virtual world has grown to be an essential element of modern life. Using text messages, tweets, status updates, and other digital artefacts to weave their narrative tapestry, these novels take a distinctive approach to storytelling. Social media novels reflect the impact of the digital age on identity creation, human relationships, and storytelling itself by capturing the immediacy and brevity of online communication. This subgenre illustrates how technology has become an integral aspect of the modern human experience, capturing the spirit of our linked society while also challenging readers to reevaluate established literary forms and conventions. Another facet of the genre of postdigital is the evolution of fan fiction which represents a fascinating dimension within the broader landscape of digital literature and modern storytelling. Social media has in a way democratised the realm by a conversion of the fans into 'followers' that indulge in the performance of multiple identities. There is thus a grey area between social media novels and fanfiction when compared as two branches of postdigital response: whereas one deals with narratives of experience structured by limitations (or limitlessness in terms of hyperlinking and embedding capabilities) of social media platforms, the other, often a pastiche, is authored by an amateur who takes all the material available to transform it into a 'funny' story. Fanfiction is an earlier example of this digital literary movement, as social media novels carve out a niche in English literature by embracing the immediacy of online contact. Traditionally posted on specialised websites or discussion boards, fan fiction enables fans to interact with their favourite made-up worlds by creating fresh stories, investigating alternative plotlines, and examining character dynamics in greater detail. The group dynamic of fan fiction reflects the cooperative character of social media exchanges, creating a feeling of camaraderie among enthusiasts. The progression from conventional fan fiction platforms to the more modern social media novels highlights a revolutionary change in the way that readers and writers interact with literature, highlighting the interactive aspect of narrative in the digital era. Fan fiction and social media novels together create a dynamic and changing environment where technology not only affects the medium but also changes the basic structure of narrative expression. Furthermore, by analysing the representation of disadvantaged identities and the effects of representation on readers, the article seeks to understand how the novel adds to the larger discussion on diversity and inclusion in literature. The result of a profoundly changing way of life that has been smoothly accompanied by technological breakthroughs is fandom. Along with changing how people live and interact, this cultural revolution has also given rise to a thriving and dynamic fan culture. Fan culture is essentially the result of the unique actions that influencers or superstars conduct, which introduces a new method of communication with their devoted following or community. Fanspeak, a specialised language of communication and the formation of in-jokes, are examples of how this particular type of engagement frequently takes shape. Fan culture, however, takes the form of a variety of artistic manifestations and goes beyond just verbal interactions. These include creating "dress codes" through costume design, creating fan-made "literature" like fan fiction, creating fan art, and delving into the world of music through filking. Additionally, formal venues for fandom, such conventions and fanzines, are vital spaces where fans may come together, express their enthusiasm, and add to the ever-growing fabric of fan culture (Gooch 3). This multifaceted involvement highlights the range and richness of fan culture, a phenomenon that is closely linked to the changing face of modern life and technology.

"The Oliphant in the Room"

Eleanor Oliphant Is Completely Fine, a debut novel written by Gail Honeyman, published in 2017 tells the story of eponymous character who is seen as asocial at best (sometimes bordering to an antisocial being); a socially awkward and solitary woman who works in an office in Glasgow, Scotland. Eleanor's rituals consist of a meticulously structured schedule as she leads her highly isolated existence: "*The Archers* on weekday evenings, two bottles of vodka at the weekend" (Armitstead). Her infatuation for the singer who is "known only to her through his Twitter feed" (ibid) depicts her reliance on social media that has become the only means of sharing her true nature and feelings albeit passively. Not only is social media a medium of sharing one's feelings, it also acts like a catalyst for 'sharing' (in terms of retweeting and quoting) emotions.

Stieglitz and Dang-Xuan in their paper demonstrate how posts that are emotionally charged tend to be retweeted more as compared to the ones that are written in a more objective and neutral language. Another point to analyse is the paradoxical nature of social media for Eleanor: even though digital world especially social media is generally perceived as distracting and something that disconnects an individual from the real world and all the interactions it entails, it is the only medium for her to connect to her real self:

I watered her, then got on with some other household chores, thinking ahead to the moment when I could open my laptop and check whether a certain handsome singer had posted any new information. Facebook, Twitter, Instagram. Windows into a world of marvels. (Honeyman 53)

Her desires are manifested and even performed on social media even though she is not comfortable doing the same in real life. This might be explained by the virtual nature of social media - a nature that makes its users feel safe so that their interactions are less restricted by factors that otherwise disrupt real-world communication. Research, as early as 1999, has demonstrated how internet usage can be linked to an isolated lifestyle. The individuals who are socially isolated owing to some reasons find social media as an escape to give their emotions a vent (Morahan-Martin). However, for the digital natives for whom social media and internet-mediated communication is a presupposed and unavoidable reality, this can also be understood in a different manner: for the digital natives, loneliness, work fatigue, sense of failure and existential crisis might be seen as their reasons they tend to spend more time on social media. In the case of Eleanor, social media provides her with a filter to engage in communication without ever having to participate in one. It almost provides her the control over her 'partner'. The fact that she can commence the conversation at any given point and end it at her whim gives her the control that she misses in real life:

I moved closer to the screen until my nose was almost touching it. I had neither imagined him, nor overestimated the extent of his beauty. The next link took me to his Twitter page. I allowed myself the pleasure of reading the three latest messages, two of which were wry and witty, the third utterly charming. In it, he was professing his professional admiration for another musician. Gracious of him. Next, his Instagram page. He had posted almost fifty photos. I clicked on one at random, a head shot in close-up, candid and relaxed. He had a Roman nose, perfectly straight, classically proportioned. His ears were also perfect, exactly the right size, the whorls of skin and cartilage flawlessly symmetrical. His eyes were light brown. They were light brown in the way that a rose is red, or that the sky is blue. They defined what it meant to be light brown. (Honeyman 28)

It must be understood that the communication that is being discussed is one-way. This nature of the communication further complicates the plot of the novel as the characters involved in it fail to practise it in a meaningful manner in a real world. Towards the end, Eleanor releases this and a sense of freedom ensues with the loss of the object she has desired all the time.

Social media is a portal of knowledge for Eleanor using which she feels she is capable of knowing everything about someone. Eleanor has adjusted her idea of self-knowledge as well as the knowledge of other individuals (especially the one she falls in love with):

I scanned the rest of the sites that Google had found. There were video clips of performances on YouTube. There were articles and reviews. This was only the first page of the search results. I would read every piece of information that I could find about him, get to know him properly... (Honeyman 28)

The disruption of the real world by the virtual world of the internet is the main theme of the novel. Whatever illusions she has harboured are seen later by her as "Stupidity, self-delusion, a feeble connection to reality?" (197). This is just a readjustment of her expectations as she had believed that his personality in real life would be at par with how he advertises himself on Twitter. The depiction of this disparity is the main feature of a social media novel. In fact, the narrative is disrupted, stalled, moved forward and even negated by the intrusion of social media through hashtags, tweets, mentions and other types of posts. In fact, novels like *No One is Talking About This* by Patricia Lockwood have their narrative in the form of tweets (at least in the first part of the book).

This disparity between what Eleanor is in real life and how she tries to move about in the virtual world is also manifest in her character. In fact, the way Eleanor is able to give vent to her desires of seeing people she likes or knowing more about them more freely on the internet shows how distant she has grown to her immediate reality. The insistence of Eleanor on her being "completely fine"- something that becomes her personal shorthand, a slogan, to dismiss any sort of indulgence in an evocative conversation- is the main motif of the novel. Throughout the novel, Eleanor's childhood trauma as well as some past events are hinted at. The gulf (or the lack) between her desire and her violent self-presentation (almost) which tries to negate her very nature thus give rise to jouissance. The absence of the father-figure is very disturbing to Eleanor:

Finally, I summoned the courage to enquire directly as to the circumstances of my creation, and to seek any available information about the mythical donor of spermatozoa, my father. As any child would in such circumstances - possibly even more so, in my particular circumstances - I had been harbouring a small but intense fantasy about the character and appearance of my absent parent. (33)

The fact that her father was a donor whose appearance or identity even her mother does not remember makes her long for him. She feels a lack in herself as she sees "too much of Mummy's face there" (32). The only things visible in the mirror are her scars and her mother's features. Her scar has replaced the other she has been longing for. Even this (small) other that is symbolised by her transformation, a little later, is what she wishes to do away with "'I look like a small Madagascan primate, or perhaps a North American raccoon,' I said. 'It's charming!'" (114). For her, the *objet petit a*, the unattainable object of desire is what brings all the transformation, willing or unwilling, in her. The "small" other (represented by the 'a' in Lacan) is the projection and performance of the other that she has hitherto avoided. Her father's absence might.

Freud gave the concept of “feminine Oedipus attitude” to explain the feelings of a girl child towards her parents. According to Freud, the girl child develops something called ‘penis envy’ and therefore develops a hatred for her mother as she cannot accomplish a sexual union with her. The girl child then transfers her feelings to the one who symbolises the phallus (her father). Needless to say, the theory has come under fire from all sides (Khan and Kamal). Carl Jung extended this concept with his concept of ‘Electra complex’. This explains her infatuation with the unreal figure of the musician and the repudiation of the same as he is seen in real life. Since Eleanor sees the musician as the symbol of phallus, an ordering principle that was missing in her childhood, she starts to come out of her phallic stage.

Cyberstalking and *Jouissance*

Lacan developed his concept of *jouissance* in his Seminar on “The Ethics of Psychoanalysis” as he stated that “there is a *jouissance* beyond the pleasure principle”. Taking Lacan’s term, Hélène Cixous gives *jouissance* a feministic turn to describe women’s sexual pleasure which forms a combination of the physical, mental and spiritual facets of their experience. This combination thus bordering on mystical communion leads to an “explosion, diffusion, effervescence, abundance” and thus exposes her to the limitless (qtd. In Ermath 160). This sense of pleasure is fostered as a way of like (just like the hedonists) by her mother: “Mummy said that we were empresses, sultanas and maharanis in our own home, and that it was our duty to live a life of sybaritic pleasure and indulgence” (Honeyman 59). Her idea of a sexual union is different from her friends that consist of “seventeen drunken women comparing the efficacy of a range of alarmingly large vibrators” (82):

Sexual union between lovers should be a sacred, private thing. It should not be a topic for discussion with strangers over a display of edible underwear. When the musician and I spent our first night together, the joining of our bodies would mirror the joining of our minds, our souls. His otherness; the flash of dark hair in his armpit, the buttons of bone at his clavicle. The blood scent in the crook of his elbow. (ibid.)

Moreover, *jouissance* as the desire that overruns the pleasure principle (in its simplest terms) can be seen in her attempts to ‘follow’ the Musician around the internet and read every piece of information that is available to her. In fact, Eleanor’s “research” borders on cyberstalking, something that becomes clear in her conversation with Maria Temple:

‘To be clear,’ I said, ‘I’m not some sort of ... stalker. I merely found out where he lives, and I copied out a poem for him, which I didn’t even send. And I tweeted him once, but that’s all. That’s not a crime. All of the information I needed was in the public domain. I didn’t break any laws or anything like that.’ (218)

According to March, Evita et al., “Although stalking has traditionally been conceptualised as a male-perpetrator/female-victim paradigm (Spitzberg & Cupach, 2007), recent research (e.g., Berry & Bainbridge, 2017; Smoker & March, 2017) has indicated women are just as likely, if not more so, to engage in more covert forms of stalking such as cyberstalking” (1). Interestingly, in the same conversation, she starts to realise how she has acted like a teenager by letting her guards down even though it was in the virtual world. However, Eleanor believes that she has fallen prey to the convincing nature of the online world. Her ‘research’ could never have revealed the ‘true’ nature of her crush’s nature:

‘I suppose on some level I actually felt the whole thing was real, and that, when we finally met, we’d fall in love and get married and so on. I felt, I don’t know, somehow ready for a relationship like that. People – men – like him don’t cross my path very often. It seemed only right not to let the opportunity pass by. And I felt sure that ... certain people ... would be pleased that I’d found him. When he and I were finally in the same room together, though, something that I’d worked hard to make happen, the whole thing just sort of ... dissolved. Does that make any sense?’ (Honeyman 219)

Her cyberstalking leads to her transformation which can be seen as her attempt to embrace the ‘other’ that she had avoided all her life. Her transformation is a self-inflicted punishment, a result of her stalking which has also been seen as “a sadistic urge to torment the victim” (Miller L). By tormenting herself through a transformation, she tries to ‘lose’ her old self. The loss can be seen as a death wish. This transgressive pleasure which leads to present suffering is an erasure of her identity which is complete with the revelation that Oliphant is not her real name: “They gave me a new identity afterwards, moved me up here ... it was meant to stop people recognising me, protect me. Which is ironic” (Honeyman 223).

As a narrator, Eleanor is quintessentially an unreliable one. As Wayne Booth notes, the use of unreliable narration can portray a narrator who is “profoundly confused, essentially self-deceived, and even misguided or malicious” (340). Her life is a lonely groove where loneliness permeates every part of her being. Her social, emotional, and psychological well-being are all negatively impacted by her isolation, which is more than just a medical condition. Eleanor’s current existence, which is characterised by a striking lack of deep social connections, is set against the backdrop of her traumatised past. Rimmon-Kenan also underlines the ways in which unreliable narration can be detected: “when the facts contradict the narrator’s views, the latter is judged to be unreliable” and “when the narrator’s language contains internal contradictions, double-edged images, and the like, it may have a boomerang effect, undermining the reliability of its user” (101). This analytical perspective aligns with Eleanor’s journey as an unreliable narrator, as her evolving self-awareness challenges and reshapes her narrative throughout the novel. At one point, Eleanor starts to identify and even confuse herself with Jane Eyre. The parallel between their lives is drawn with such care that the reader is made to believe that this is the case

of Jane Eyre being discussed. Finally, when the case meeting concludes in a decision after a thorough examination of Eleanor, the narrator declares all of them to be “Liars. Liars, liars, liars.” (Honeyman 58) The final realisation of being a literal nobody, of being someone who “contributed nothing to the world, absolutely nothing, and I took nothing from it either” (202) comes as her illusion of the Johnnie Lomond crash: “The singer retorted with an obscene gesture. I realized with uncompromising clarity that the man on stage before me was, without any doubt, an arse” (201-202). This realisation only comes with the loss of the symbolic phallus (and literal as well) and with the realisation that the “union” that she hankers after is impossible with a person whose private parts are a public display. It is interesting to see Eleanor’s use of synecdoche: for Eleanor, Johnnie Lomond in the act of publicly displaying his buttocks (mooning) becomes the thing itself so that she calls him an “arse”. With the clearing away of the fog (something that might be induced by the dry-ice stage effect), the father-figure’s absence transforms into his death and thus is rendered irrelevant to her. This is the negation of the transformation that she went through: the transformation itself being an act of suffering through embracing the other. And finally, she returns to her old self (the other that had been denied existence owing to her desire for another unattainable object): “If someone asks you how you are, you are meant to say FINE. You are not meant to say that you cried yourself to sleep last night because you hadn’t spoken to another person for two consecutive days. FINE is what you say” (203). Thus, being “fine” in itself marks a particular stage of her life.

Eleanor’s weekends are silent, both literally and metaphorically, representing the emptiness that permeates her life. She doesn’t have the comfort of company or the warmth of shared experiences on her days off from work. Even Raymond is sidelined and almost rejected for the most part of the story owing to her inability to overcome her prejudices that make her believe that Johnnie Lomond is the only person worth being with. Her lack of social interaction is a reflection of the boundaries she has placed in place around herself rather than just a lifestyle decision. These walls serve as the ramparts of a fortress built to keep her safe from the confusing and dangerous outside world. She regresses to her world of childhood as she faces the stark realities of the world: “I went into the little white room inside my head, the one that’s the colour of clouds. It smells of clean cotton and baby rabbits. The air inside the room is the palest sugar almond pink, and the loveliest music plays” (22).

Conclusion

Eleanor’s approach to life is marked by a rigid regimen as she “shores herself up with ritual” (Armitstead) that leaves little opportunity for spontaneity or joy, and her interactions—or lack thereof—with others are flavoured with alienation. Eleanor has a bleak emotional landscape. In fact, Honeyman meant Eleanor to depict the individuals of the present time. In an interview, Honeyman explains the necessity of the creation of such a character: “At the time it was something that wasn’t discussed much and when it was, it was usually in the context of older people who are widowed or whose families have moved away” (Armitstead)

She has built a strong emotional wall around herself, keeping others at a safe distance so she would not have to deal with rejection or vulnerability. She is protected from additional pain by this emotional distance, but it also keeps her from feeling the complete range of human emotions. Her dysfunctional childhood is the root of her incapacity to truly connect with people; it is a habit rather than a choice. Her emotional and physical scars from her past have a significant impact on her perception of the outside world. Her story is viewed through the prism of her subjective experiences, which frequently causes her to misread or ignore the nuances of interpersonal interactions and social cues. Psychologically speaking, her distance is a means of survival. One of the defence mechanisms is her slogan of being “fine”; it acts as her way of getting rid of any sort of connections that might start to develop. She feels in control of the internal turmoil that threatens to overtake her because she adheres rigidly to a scheduled routine and uses alcohol as a salve for the sting of loneliness. Furthermore, this control is evoked in her unhealthy reliance on the internet and social media. She struggles with her mental health all the time, and beneath her calm exterior are ghosts of depression and thoughts of unworthiness. Her relationships with the world are shaped by these inner demons, which frequently cause her to make choices that serve to further her sense of loneliness. Even though things are dire for Eleanor, she remains a dynamic figure. She is proof of the human spirit’s innate resiliency. Eleanor embarks on a path of transformation that begins with the arrival of Raymond, a kind and kind coworker. Her growing friendship with him exposes her increasingly to the restorative potential of human connection. Eleanor’s barriers are gradually broken down by Raymond’s compassion and tolerance, enabling her to start down a journey of self-acceptance and understanding. This is where the parallel between these characters in terms of their attitude to others is drawn. Raymond almost comes up as a foil to her. As Eleanor faces the ghosts of her past and the truth of her present as the story goes on, her path involves deep introspection, which eventually results in a more trustworthy self-report. Although the healing process is difficult and full of obstacles, there is optimism throughout. The narrative seems to point out that it is never too late to lend a helping hand or ask for assistance from someone in need. The book explores in great detail the crippling effects of loneliness as well as the healing potential of compassion and empathy. It serves as a moving reminder that interpersonal relationships are just as essential as access to food and shelter.

A compelling story is Eleanor's transformation from an unreliable narrator who is imprisoned by her own warped perceptions to a woman who starts to see the world and herself more clearly. It emphasises how crucial empathy and understanding are to closing the gaps that divide us from one another. Ultimately, her narrative goes beyond the boundaries of her solitary life. It turns into a global call to action, imploring readers to identify any Eleanor Oliphants in their own lives—those people who, for whatever reason, are on the perimeter and long for a connection. The narrative honours the ability of people to adapt and the unwavering spirit that enables us to triumph over even the most enduring isolation. Her journey from self-awareness to self-integration and from unreliability to self-awareness is a powerful story that highlights the transformational power of human connection and the resiliency of the human heart.

References

1. Armitstead, Claire. "Gail Honeyman: 'I Didn't Want Eleanor Oliphant to Be Portrayed as a Victim.'" *The Guardian*, 22 Feb. 2018, <https://www.theguardian.com/books/2018/jan/12/gail-honeyman-didnt-want-eleanor-oliphant-portrayed-as-victim>.
2. Booth, Wayne C. *The rhetoric of fiction*. University of Chicago Press, 1983.
3. Cramer, F. "What Is 'Post-digital?'" In: Berry, D.M., Dieter, M. (eds) *Postdigital Aesthetics*, 2015, Palgrave Macmillan, London. <https://doi.org/10.1057/9781137437204>.
4. David C. Giles. "How do fan and celebrity identities become established on Twitter? A study of 'social media natives' and their followers" *Celebrity Studies*, 8:3, 2017, pp. 445-460, DOI: 10.1080/19392397.2017.1305911.
5. Ermarth, Elizabeth Deeds. *Sequel to History: Postmodernism and the Crisis of Representational time*. Princeton University Press, 1992.
6. Honeyman, Gail. *Eleanor Oliphant Is Completely Fine*. Harper Collins publishers, 2017. E-book Edition May 2017, Version 2017-04-10.
7. Khan, Mahrukh & Kamal Haider. "Girls' First Love; Their Fathers: Freudian Theory Electra complex." *Research Journal of Language, Literature and Humanities*. 2, 2015, pp. 1-4.
8. March, Evita, et al. "Somebody that I (used to) know: Gender and dimensions of dark personality traits as predictors of intimate partner cyberstalking." *Personality and Individual Differences* 163, 2020, 110084.
9. Miller, Laurence. "Stalking: Patterns, motives, and intervention strategies." *Aggression and violent behavior* 17.6, 2012, pp. 495-506.
10. Miller, Michael F. "Why Hate the Internet? Contemporary Fiction, Digital Culture, and the Politics of Social Media." *Arizona Quarterly: A Journal of American Literature, Culture, and Theory*, vol. 75 no. 3, 2019, p. 59-85. *Project MUSE*, DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1353/arq.2019.0017>.
11. Morahan-Martin, Janet. "The Relationship Between Loneliness and Internet Use and Abuse." *Cyberpsychology & Behavior*, vol. 2, no. 5, Oct. 1999, pp. 431-39. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1089/cpb.1999.2.431>.
12. Rimmon-Kenan, Shlomith. *Narrative fiction: Contemporary poetics*. London: Routledge, 1990.
13. Stefan Stieglitz & Linh Dang-Xuan. "Emotions and Information Diffusion in Social Media—Sentiment of Microblogs and Sharing Behavior." *Journal of Management Information Systems*, 29:4, 2013, pp. 217-248, DOI: <https://10.2753/MIS0742-1222290408>.
14. Trine, Syvertsen., Gunn, Enli. "Digital detox: Media resistance and the promise of authenticity." *Convergence*, 26 2020, pp. 1269-1283. DOI: <https://10.1177/1354856519847325>.

About the authors

Adil Hussain is a research scholar in the Department of English, North Campus, University of Kashmir under the guidance of Dr Khursheed Ahmad Qazi. He specializes in digital humanities, especially the sub-genre of social media novels.

Azra Akhtar is a research scholar in the Department of English, North Campus, University of Kashmir, under the guidance of Dr. Khursheed Ahmad Qazi. She specializes in Epistolary fiction in Postmodernism.

Dr. Khursheed Ahmad Qazi (Corresponding author of this research paper) is a Selection Grade Assistant Professor and Coordinator at the Department of English, North Campus, University of Kashmir. He has published many papers on postmodern literature, psychoanalysis, ELT etc. in reputed journals (including web of Science & Scopus-indexed journals). He specializes in psychoanalysis and postmodern literature.