PARASOCIAL RELATIONSHIP AS A FORM OF INDIVIDUALISM IN THE GLOBAL ERA IN GAIL HONEYMAN'S NOVEL *ELEANOR OLIPHANT IS COMPLETELY FINE*

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Abstract: In the context of today's global media culture, Gail Honeyman's *Eleanor Oliphant Is Completely Fine* portrays how individuals develop emotional attachment to mediated figures, as the main character forms a parasocial relationship with a musician. Although not fully explained in the narrative, this reflects a common phenomenon in the global era. This research aims to investigate the connection between mediated intimacy and the global era, as well as its impact on the development of individualism. Employing a descriptive qualitative method and drawing on Jean Baudrillard's theory of hyperreality, this research also explains how reality has been replaced by simulation via the media. The analysis reveals that the main character forms an emotional attachment based on media representations rather than fundamental interactions, symbolizing the shifting meaning of reality in modern life. Such attachment encourages the main character to withdraw from social situations and to prefer to live in an imaginary world. This reflects the rise of individualism in a global society influenced by the media. Beyond previous studies that primarily emphasize the psychological dimensions of parasocial ties, this research contributes by highlighting their cultural implications and significance in understanding contemporary social dynamics.
Keywords: *global era, hyperreality, individualism, media, parasocial relationship*

INTRODUCTION

The explosion of social media in the digital era has made it easier to access information and engage with others worldwide. It has given rise to new terms that describe emerging social phenomena, including parasocial relationships. This term refers to a person's imaginary attachment to an unknown media figure they do not know

(Sanborn & Harris, 2013). This is a one-sided relationship in which only the fan is emotionally invested, while the favorite character is unaware of their presence (Adam & Sizemore, 2013). Horton and Wohl (1956) in Li et al. (2023) introduced the concept of parasocial relationships, which are defined as a close and one-sided relationship between the audience and media characters, referring to a sense of connectedness. Stever (2017) further elaborates on parasocial relationships as a type of social attachment with no reciprocal response. The emergence of media figures who control digital platforms adds to this phenomenon (Brunick et al., 2016). Gannon (2018) notes that parasocial relationships can be platonic or romantic, indicating a strong emotional attachment despite their one-way nature. However, comprehension of parasocial phenomena remains limited because each individual interprets them differently (Giles, 2010). He underscores that parasocial relationships still evolve in today's technologically advanced societies. In line with this, Khairi et al. (2024) state that digital connectivity opens up numerous opportunities to form parasocial relationships. Schramm et al. (2024) have reported a significant increase in the study of parasocial relationships, particularly through social media and non-fictional characters. According to Jarzyna (2021), over the last two decades, parasocial relationships have emerged as an alternative method of meeting social needs. Hoffner and Bond (2022) emphasized that social media enables anyone to form emotional connections with public figures without the need for in-person meetings. These diverse perspectives demonstrate that, while the term has been widely theorized, the analysis still needs to bridge the global social phenomena with their literary representations, where fiction often dramatizes abstract theories into lived narratives.

Beyond their social implications, parasocial relationships not only have a social impact, but they are also linked to positive emotions. Angela (2024) explains that idol figures have a significant impact on fans' mental health and happiness, providing encouragement and hope, particularly during difficult times. In some cases, parasocial relationships can resemble fundamental interactions (Tukachinsky, 2010). According to Stein et al. (2024), parasocial relationships can improve fans' moods, much like friendships. Lotun et al. (2024) demonstrate that parasocial relationships can more efficiently satisfy emotional demands in some situations than typical social interactions. Parasocial relationships influence not only emotional aspects but also consumption behavior. Hwang and Zhang (2018) discovered that emotional attachment to an idol figure

can influence purchasing decisions, particularly for products promoted by the idol. This finding is supported by Dibble et al. (2016), who found that feelings of closeness make fans believe they have a genuine relationship with their idols. Syawal (2023) adds that continuous digital content consumption strengthens emotional attachment. In contrast, Safwan and Ali (2024) claim that parasocial relationships have a significant impact on the intention to shop online via social media platforms. These insights reveal that parasocial attachment is not merely personal, but also tied to larger patterns of global consumer culture and identity construction, mediated by the media.

Despite their benefits, parasocial relationships can have negative consequences. Farrar (2023) warns that if parasocial relationships replace fundamental interactions, it can lead to psychological issues like anxiety, loneliness, and social isolation. Giles (2002) discovered that fans' reaction to Princess Diana's death caused significant emotional confusion, implying that parasocial relationships can cause emotional transfer from media figures to their followers. Before discussing this further, it is important to note the connection between mediated attachment and broader social risks. According to Schnarre and Adam (2017), overexposure to media can elicit feelings of worthlessness and alienation. In contrast, Tatem and Ingram (2022) emphasize that the degree of parasocial ties is frequently connected to social media reliance.

The phenomenon of parasocial relationships has also attracted attention in the literature, as Eve (2017) stated that literature reflects social conditions, including the nature of parasocial attachment. Some works that reflect this phenomenon include Goldy Moldavsky's *Kill the Boy Band*, Paula Hawkins' *The Girl on the Train*, Stephen King's *Misery*, and Anne Tyler's *A Slipping-Down Life*. Each novel features characters who form a fictitious or obsessive bond with another character not directly known. Furthermore, Gail Honeyman's novel *Eleanor Oliphant Is Completely Fine*, which is the focus of this research, delves into the theme of parasocial relationships. The novel, published in 2017 and winner of the Costa First Novel Award, tells the story of Eleanor, a character who has experienced trauma and develops a one-sided attraction to a musician. She believes the musician is her soul mate and begins changing her behavior and lifestyle to get closer to him. The novel has reached a wide audience, with over 2.5 million copies sold, although the story's use of parasocial relationships is often overlooked. This narrative detail complements the earlier discussion of parasocial attachment by showing how

trauma and emotional vulnerability intersect with global media culture to shape Eleanor's perception of intimacy.

Studying how these themes operate within specific narratives becomes important given the global rise of parasocial phenomena and their manifestation in literary texts. In this sense, fiction functions as a cultural mirror, translating abstract social concepts into lived experiences through character development. As a result, conducting an in-depth analysis of the novel is required to uncover its social meanings. This research is significant for several reasons: parasocial relationships are a social topic with a broad impact, the novel has gained widespread recognition and awards, the author, Honeyman, has received a prestigious award, and the phenomenon of parasocial relationships is closely related to media images, so Jean Baudrillard's theory of hyperreality is a relevant approach to use. This research focuses on three main aspects: the story's depiction of parasocial relationships in the global era, the connection between parasocial relationships and the global era, and the implications of parasocial relationships in the global era.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Several prior studies investigated Honeyman's novel *Eleanor Oliphant Is Completely Fine*, focusing primarily on trauma, social identity, and emotional development. These studies highlight three dominant themes in the story. The first theme is the impact of past trauma (Tiansyah et al., 2021; Macmillan, 2021; Azizah, 2022; Pratiwi, 2023; Quesada, 2023; Pandit, 2024). Tiansyah et al. (2021) discovered that the main character's tendency to be alone, as well as her difficulty with social interaction, is the result of her previous traumatic experiences. Macmillan (2021) explained that the main character's social isolation and emotional disturbance are closely related to her inability to let go of her mother figure and cope with the trauma she experienced. Azizah (2022) found that the main character experiences three sorts of anxiety as a result of trauma: reality anxiety, neurotic anxiety, and moral anxiety, all of which influence her thinking and behavior. Pratiwi (2023) concluded that the main character's betrayal trauma caused mental disorders such as delusions and a desire to isolate herself, which eventually led to depression. Quesada (2023) emphasized that the main character's distress due to trauma created opportunities for her healing process. Pandit (2024) also discovered that

traumatic experiences in the past cause psychological damage in the form of emotional loneliness, which influences the main character's behavior.

The second theme is the role of social media in identity (Hussain et al., 2023; Sihvola & Polvinen, 2024). Hussain et al. (2023) argued that the main character's traumatic experience led to alienation from social interaction, prompting her to use social media as a means of escape and an alternative form of communication. Sihvola and Polvinen (2024) concluded that the main character's unique way of thinking can elicit sympathy and empathy in readers. The third theme is human identity and emotions. Rahmadanty and Subianto (2021) made this statement after analyzing the novel's language structure to investigate the main character's characterization. The study's findings revealed that the main character was portrayed through physical actions, such as independence, hard work, and liveliness, as well as mental aspects, including feelings and memories.

According to these studies, a significant gap remains: the discourse of parasocial relationships, as represented in *Eleanor Oliphant Is Completely Fine*, has not been adequately examined. This is not a trivial omission, because parasocial relationships are increasingly relevant in the global media age, where mediated intimacy shapes patterns of social behavior. Therefore, addressing this gap is necessary to understand how the novel reflects broader cultural and social phenomena, particularly the negotiation between media influence and individual identity. As a result, this research highlights parasocial relationships that develop in the main character's interactions with the musician, providing new insights into the narrative structure and character dynamics.

Parasocial relationships are one-way interactions between individuals and media characters, both real and fictional, that occur without reciprocity. Horton and Wohl (1956) in Godulla (2022) first introduced the concept when they investigated how viewers feel a sense of closeness to television figures despite the absence of mutual recognition. In the novel *Eleanor Oliphant Is Completely Fine*, this parasocial form is evident in the main character's attachment to a musician who serves as an idealized figure for her.

To analyze this phenomenon, the research employs Jean Baudrillard's hyperreality theory. Hyperreality refers to a condition in which the boundaries between reality and simulation become blurred, making it increasingly difficult to distinguish between the two. According to Baudrillard (1981), reality is replaced by simulacra,

representations without direct reference to objective reality in postmodern society. He describes four stages of representation: (1) reflecting a fundamental reality, (2) masking and distorting reality, (3) masking the absence of reality, and (4) bearing no relation to reality, thereby becoming its own simulacrum. Eleanor's character exists within this fourth stage, as her emotional reality is shaped more by the musician's symbolic projections than by actual social experience. Thus, her parasocial attachment exemplifies hyperreality in which imagination and media construction substitute genuine social interaction.

In this regard, Streefkerk (2023) emphasizes that qualitative research aims to understand words, descriptions, or behaviors. This perspective strengthens the methodological choice of using textual analysis to explore mediated intimacy in the novel. Moreover, the focus on parasocial relationships aligns with the analysis's broader objective: to examine the impact of parasocial contacts on individuality in the global era and to reveal how media and technology generate unreal realities that influence social involvement in the real world.

By explicitly connecting parasocial relationship theory with Baudrillard's concept of hyperreality, this research demonstrates how mediated intimacy in literature can be read as a cultural critique of modern identity formation. Consequently, the research fills the gap and contributes to broader discussions on how literary works dramatize media-influenced social dynamics.

METHOD

This research employs a descriptive qualitative approach, emphasizing textual analysis from a cultural and media theory perspective. This research also relies on a library study that provides supporting references to enhance contextual understanding and strengthen the discussion. The primary data source consists of passages from Gail Honeyman's *Eleanor Oliphant Is Completely Fine*. At the same time, the secondary data includes relevant academic literature that discusses parasocial relationships, media culture, and hyperreality. In this process, the researchers serve as the primary instrument, conducting close readings and critical interpretations of the novel.

The theoretical framework applied in the analysis is Jean Baudrillard's concept of hyperreality, which is used here not in its full philosophical elaboration, but as an

analytical tool to interpret how the novel represents mediated intimacy and blurred boundaries between imagination and reality. By positioning the novel as the primary object of research and situating it within cultural or media theory, the chosen method is justified as the most suitable for examining how literary narratives reflect global media phenomena and individual responses to them.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

In this section, the researchers delve into the novel *Eleanor Oliphant Is Completely Fine* to investigate the topic specified in the research introduction. The focus is on describing social relations in the global era, the connection between parasocial ties and the global era, and the implications of parasocial relations in the global era. The entire analysis uses Baudrillard's hyperreality perspective.

Representation of Social Relations in the Global Era through Stories

Gail Honeyman's *Eleanor Oliphant Is Completely Fine* portrays shifting patterns of human interaction in the global era. Its narrations depict social ties through the characters' daily routines, particularly those of the protagonist. The interaction patterns created in daily activities reflect global social relations. The first one is limited social interaction. Eleanor's social relationships are restricted to professional settings with no emotional closeness.

> No one's been in my flat this year apart from service professionals; I've not voluntarily invited another human being across the threshold, except to read the meter. (Honeyman, 2017, ch. 1)

This statement highlights that Eleanor never invited anyone to her home except service personnel. It demonstrates that her social connections are limited to technical and administrative requirements, with no emotional bonds. This state symbolizes the shrinking intimate space for human connection in a fast-paced, individualistic global society. Before elaborating further, it is crucial to note that Baudrillard's concept of simulacra suggests that intimacy itself is increasingly displaced by signs and images of relationships rather than genuine bonds. More functional partnerships have replaced emotional connections, and the house, which should be a place to share and communicate, has become a symbol of social isolation and alienation.

> I don't talk to anyone—by the time I've bought my Meal Deal, read the paper and finished both crosswords, the hour is almost up. (Honeyman, 2017, ch. 1)

As shown in the passage, Eleanor's daily routines are characterized by individualization and repetition. Activities such as eating fast food, reading newspapers, and solving crossword puzzles become means to pass the time and avoid social interaction. It reflects a trend in global society, where social participation is often overlooked, particularly in familiar settings such as offices. Efficient and private routines are chosen over the willingness to engage in meaningful interpersonal connections.

Second, social media serves as a substitute for authentic interactions. Eleanor perceives television and social media as a bridge connecting her to the outside world. However, these linkages are frequently based on artificial imagery rather than genuine experience or emotional engagement.

> Facebook, Twitter, Instagram. Windows into a world of marvels.
> (Honeyman, 2017, ch. 6)

The quote, as mentioned above, exemplifies how social media in the global era serves as a window that provides access to an astonishing world full of wonders and breathtaking imagery. Despite the one-sided and indirect relationship, Eleanor believes that social media is the most important way to feel connected to the singers she admires. This indicates a shift in the pattern of social relationships in the global era, from direct interactions to parasocial relationships formed in digital domains. From the perspective of hyperreality, social media no longer serves merely as a medium of communication but as a simulation space that presents life as more real and perfect than reality itself. Baudrillard's simulation stages illustrate the third stage, where signs mask the absence of reality and produce self-sufficient representations. Eleanor interacts not with real-life situations but with media images, which suggests that social ties in the global era are increasingly shaped by simulation.

> I sat down and watched television alone, like I do Every. Single. Night.
> (Honeyman, 2017, ch. 22)

This statement illustrates her repetitive pattern of watching television alone, reflecting the monotony of her life and her lack of interaction. In this context, television serves as a substitute for social presence, becoming a companion that fills her emotional void without requiring genuine commitment. Based on Baudrillard's concept of

hyperreality, television depicts a curated and entertaining reality. The protagonist does not simply consume shows; she lives a life dominated by media narratives that create the illusion of emotional connection without necessitating genuine human bonds.

Third, human existence has been standardized. The story's depictions of modern life are typified by monotonous rituals and consumptive tendencies, frequently substituting proper social ties.

> From Monday to Friday, I come in at 8:30. I take an hour for lunch. I used to bring in my own sandwiches, but the food at home always went off before I could use it up, so now I get something from the high street. I always finish with a trip to Marks & Spencer on a Friday, which rounds off the week nicely. (Honeyman, 2017, ch. 1)

The passage above indicates that Eleanor's schedule is highly structured, beginning with her arrival at the office, followed by lunch and weekend shopping. It represents people's lifestyle in the global era, which is both productive and consumerist. She performs her daily tasks in a social atmosphere, yet there is no meaningful participation in interpersonal connections. This illustrates how social relationships are frequently replaced by repetitive and practical routines such as working and shopping in today's global era. These habits appear to be productive but leave a sense of emotional emptiness. This pattern demonstrates how human relationships have been reduced to mechanical operations in modern life, a state consistent with Baudrillard's notion that reality is increasingly mediated through systemic repetitions and cultural codes.

> I had spent an obscene amount of money on a small selection of women's magazines, flimsy and lurid ones, thick, glossy ones, all of them promising a range of wonders, simple but life-enhancing changes (Honeyman, 2017, ch. 3)

The example above illustrates Eleanor's consumptive behavior, as demonstrated by her habit of buying magazines. The narrative reflects her willingness to spend much money on publications that promise rapid life changes. This reflects her attempt to discover meaning and identity through cultural items that are visually and emotionally appealing. In today's society, social interactions are increasingly shaped by media depictions of lifestyles rather than genuine encounters. Magazines provide access to idealized images of happiness and success, not because the material is essential but because of their symbolic value.

This implies that consuming images and promises of rapid gratification frequently substitutes social relationships and personal existence. From the standpoint of

hyperreality, such consumption represents the final stage of simulation, where signs and symbols no longer reference reality but exist independently as self-reinforcing truths.

The Connection Between Parasocial Relationships and the Global Era

Eleanor, the protagonist of the novel *Eleanor Oliphant Is Completely Fine*, develops a parasocial relationship with a musician she meets at a concert. Media consumption influences her experience with parasocial interactions, reflecting the widespread phenomenon of parasocial ties in global culture. As a result, Eleanor attends a music concert without knowing why. Her arrival is motivated more by social pressure than by her desires. She did not buy the ticket; it was a reward from a raffle at her office. However, everything changes when a musician performs before her, altering her perception of the event. As can be seen in the following passage:

> You never know if you'll be bearing witness as a new star emerges, never know who's going to walk onto the stage and set it alight. And then he did. I stared at him. He was light and heat. He blazed. (Honeyman, 2017, ch. 1)

After returning from the performance, Eleanor begins a journey to learn more about the musician she had just encountered. She uses social media to discover everything about the individual who has impressed her.

> Next, his Instagram page. He had posted almost fifty photos. 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, 2017, ch. 2)

The passage illustrates how Eleanor develops a strong emotional connection while researching the musician's social media. She searches, evaluates, and shows intense enthusiasm for his physical appearance, which is only visible in digital images. This example exemplifies Baudrillard's notion of simulacra, where digital representations replace direct experience. Eleanor has never personally engaged with the musician, yet she feels she knows him and assesses his demeanor based on his social media posts. Furthermore, she assigns significant meaning and value to the visual symbols created by social media, resulting in the person she admires becoming a constructed persona that appears more perfect than reality. This phenomenon resonates with a global culture in which emotional connections can be created unilaterally and deeply through exposure to

digital images, leading to a sense of intimacy that is never grounded in authentic human interaction.

> When the grim engagement presentation was over, I zipped up my jerkin and turned off my computer, excited at the thought of switching on my personal laptop at home as soon as possible. There might be some useful information online about his school days. (Honeyman, 2017, ch. 5)

Eleanor appears unwilling to communicate with those around her in her office. Instead, she rushes home, determined to learn more about the musician, as if what she already knows is insufficient. Her passion for learning more about his past demonstrates that digital traces and imagination may substitute for real proximity in a globalized culture. This state symbolizes the shrinking intimate space for human connection in a fast-paced, individualistic global society. In other words, hyperreality creates a paradox: although people are constantly "connected" through media, the connections themselves may fragment genuine intimacy. In the story, Eleanor grows accustomed to the constant online surveillance of the musician's life. Thus, when there are no updates, she becomes anxious and overreacts.

> I conducted my usual online checks for any updates from the musician—there was nothing new on Facebook, Twitter or Instagram, sadly. It made me feel anxious when he went quiet. I suspected it meant he was either very sad, or, perhaps more worryingly, very happy. A new girlfriend? (Honeyman, 2017, ch. 19)

The passage exemplifies the link between parasocial interactions and the global era, in which emotional attachments to public figures are created via digital presence rather than direct encounters. Eleanor grows concerned when the musician does not post anything on his social media, interpreting the silence as a sign of emotional change. She deduces his likely emotional state, assuming he may be in love or have a new partner.

From Baudrillard's perspective, this is a precise instance of hyperreality: Eleanor has no real contact with the musician, yet she generates sentiments solely based on mediated signs. Social media updates or the lack thereof become a system of signs through which she interprets his life, as if reality itself could be accessed only through representation. This aligns with the third stage of Baudrillard's hyperreality, in which signs mask the absence of reality and create meaning independent of any objective referent. Eleanor's attachment is thus produced entirely in a hyperreal space; it feels real, but it never existed outside of signs and images.

Implications of Parasocial Relationships in the Global Era

The novel *Eleanor Oliphant Is Completely Fine* explores the consequences of parasocial interactions in the global era by having Eleanor stalk the musician on social media. Her intense interest in the musician's figure traps her in a parasocial relationship that encourages individualistic conduct.

> "Tell me, are you courting at the moment, Eleanor?" she asked. How tedious. "Not presently," I said, "but I have my eye on someone. It's only a matter of time." (Honeyman, 2017, ch. 10)
> "Oooh," she said. "Interesting." She took in another lungful and expelled it with a sigh. "Who's this 'he'"? "He's a musician, Mummy." "And he's handsome and clever and, well, I think he's the perfect man for me, really. I knew it as soon as I saw him." (Honeyman, 2017, ch. 12)

The passage shows that Eleanor is starting to get caught up in a parasocial relationship with a musician. She admits that she admires someone and feels confident they will have a relationship in the future, even though they have never interacted directly. The musician is entirely unaware of her existence. This phenomenon illustrates how representations spread on social media have shifted reality. Eleanor is lulled by the musician's ideal image, believing that he is the right person for her. Her perfect partner is the outcome of popular culture's global influence. She envisions a partner who is both physically attractive and intellectually stimulating, a criterion that prioritizes physical appearance over character or personality compatibility. In truth, compatibility in a relationship should be considered in terms of personal characteristics, ideals, and physical attractiveness. It illustrates how people in the global era live in an atmosphere dominated by a created culture, often missing the substance and authenticity of genuine relationships. As presented in the novel, Eleanor's parasocial interaction with the musician has shaped her personality, causing her to become more individualistic in her daily life. She frequently indulges in the fictional scenarios she develops, displaying an uncaring attitude toward her surroundings. She prefers to focus on the musician while ignoring genuine social contact.

> I stood at the sink while I waited for the kettle to boil, trying not to listen to their conversation. I gave my little teapot another hot rinse, just to be sure, and drifted into pleasurable thoughts, thoughts of him. (Honeyman, 2017, ch. 5)
> I am not interested in the petty tittle-tattle of quotidian office life unless it's gossip about a confident singer. (Honeyman, 2017, ch. 19)

The quotations aforementioned exemplify how parasocial interactions have overtaken genuine social relationships in the global era. They allow individuals to form one-sided emotional ties that stem from the world of imagination. Eleanor deliberately isolates herself from her social environment and becomes obsessed with her thoughts about the musician. She imagines the musician's daily activities, although they have never interacted directly. Her imaginative process is more than just admiration; it has evolved into intense emotional participation, although one-sided. According to Baudrillard's theory of hyperreality, Eleanor lives in a simulated world where the musician she admires is idealized, filled with hope, and a source of dreams. This corresponds to the third stage of hyperreality, where signs no longer reflect reality but instead mask its absence.

From this state emerges a crucial implication: Eleanor's immersion in parasocial ties highlights how simulated connections can erode the space for authentic human interaction. This state symbolizes the shrinking intimate space for human connection in a fast-paced, individualistic global society. The novel implicitly critiques how modern life increasingly substitutes mediated fantasies for real intimacy, leading to emotional isolation that feels natural within hyperreality.

> The pizza was excessively greasy and the dough was flabby and tasteless. I decided immediately that I would never eat delivered pizza again, and definitely not with the musician. (Honeyman, 2017, ch. 2)
> No, wait−for Valentine's Day, the most special, romantic day of the year. He'd write a song for me, something beautiful, and then play it for me on his guitar while I sipped perfectly champagne. No, not on his guitar, that was too obvious. He'd surprise me by learning the … bassoon. (Honeyman, 2017, ch. 7)

The passages above demonstrate how Eleanor's imagined relationship with the musician is based on imagination and popular culture rather than genuine experience or engagement. In the first quote, she imagines herself and the musician eating pizza together. This demonstrates how, even in this basic task, she incorporates the figure of the musician into her life narrative, creating an idealized scenario complete with sensational details that she develops herself. Inserting the musician into ordinary activities illustrates Baudrillard's notion of simulation, where signs and fantasies are experienced as more real than reality.

Similarly, when Eleanor envisions Valentine's Day with the musician, she portrays a beautiful scene while simultaneously exaggerating the romanticism. She imagines a love song performed on an unfamiliar instrument, such as a bassoon,

accompanied by luxury drinks and a romantic setting. This suggests that her imagination is based on the simulation of romance in popular culture. Regarding hyperreality, her state indicates that reality is being replaced with simulation. She does not have a real person, but a picture she creates. At this point, the musician has transformed into a simulacrum, a constructed reality that feels more genuine than reality itself. This aligns with Baudrillard's fourth stage of hyperreality, where signs bear no relation to reality and become pure simulation.

> I had not been in a public house for years, and Raymond could hardly be described as engaging company. I quickly concluded, however, that it would be helpful for two reasons. Firstly, it would be good practice, as, if things went well, Johnnie Lomond would probably want to take me to a public house during one of our dates. So, I should familiarize myself with the general environment and required behaviors in such establishments. (Honeyman, 2017, ch. 7)

The quotation represents Eleanor's willingness to go to the beer shop with Raymond, her coworker, to train herself to go with the musician one day. This behavior illustrates how her parasocial relationship begins to influence her real-world decisions. She alters her behavior, interests, and even her surroundings to prepare for an encounter with someone she has never met. This is a strong illustration of the impact of parasocial interactions in the global era, when fictional relationships can replace actual social functions, motivating people to act out their imaginations as if they were real. Parasocial relationships in the global era have a significant impact on emotions, life decisions, self-perceptions, and identities, which are shaped in a hyperreal world of representations and simulations.

CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTIONS

Conclusion

Based on an analysis of Gail Honeyman's novel *Eleanor Oliphant Is Completely Fine*, it is possible to conclude that this novel portrays social life in the global era in various ways, including limited social interaction, the role of social media as a substitute for genuine relationships, and the standardization of life. One of the research's key results is the link between social ties in the global era and the phenomenon of parasocial relationships. Social media platforms like Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram, which are prominently mentioned in the story, serve as a means of communication, enabling users

to obtain information and form emotional connections with public figures they admire. Despite its one-sided interaction approach, social media can have a powerful emotional influence on users.

Excessive usage of social media can lead to dependency, particularly among persons who have parasocial ties with public figures. This dependence could strengthen individualistic qualities because virtual contacts can satisfy emotional needs without forming genuine social relationships. The relationships formed are often one-way and occur in the digital realm rather than through direct interaction. In Jean Baudrillard's hyperreality perspective, the image of prominent personalities on social media has been edited and symbolically manipulated to the point where their figures no longer represent reality. Eleanor, the main character in the novel, exemplifies this condition: She ignores her social life and prefers to envision scenarios with the musician she admires. This suggests that the parasocial relationships between media and popular culture influence emotional characteristics and a person's identity, attitudes, and social relationship patterns. Parasocial relationships in the global era can lead to social alienation and a reality dominated by representations and simulations.

Suggestions

Parasocial relationships are a phenomenon that many people may not comprehend the impact of. Many individuals engage in this form of parasocial relationship deliberately without realizing that a one-sided attachment to a public or media personality can affect their psychological and social status. This research examines parasocial contacts as a type of individualism in the global era. However, this research topic is still open to further exploration of its cultural, psychological, and literary dimensions, particularly in international media and postmodern society. Future researchers are encouraged to delve deeper into how media and imagination influence people's perceptions of reality and examine their effects on the identity development, social interaction, and emotional well-being of modern life from different perspectives. They may also analyze how hyperreality blurs the boundary between Eleanor's imagined intimacy and actual social life, or how simulacra construct her sense of belonging and alienation. Furthermore, scholars could explore how different characters in the novel respond to media or compare Eleanor's parasocial attachment with that of other literary characters to illustrate the broader cultural critique embedded in Baudrillard's concept of hyperreality.

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