

Research article

Post-Human Gender Transformation and Identity: Exploring Hybrid Identities in *Dreadnought* by April Daniels

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ABSTRACT

This research explores post-human gender transformation and hybrid identities in *Dreadnought* by April Daniels, focusing on how the novel interrogates traditional gender norms through a posthumanist lens. The study aims to address the challenge of understanding identity beyond binary gender constructs, offering a narrative that incorporates transgender experiences and the implications of technological transformation. Utilizing a qualitative, interpretative approach, the research employs close reading and thematic analysis of key passages in the text, examining Danny's journey from a transgender individual to a superhero, embodying a hybrid identity. The theoretical framework integrates posthumanism, cyborg feminism, and gender performativity to examine how identity, autonomy, and selfhood are constructed in the novel. The findings reveal that Danny's transformation challenges rigid identity categories and proposes a fluid, evolving understanding of selfhood, where gender is shaped by societal, technological, and biological forces. Additionally, the novel offers a counter-narrative to traditional superhero tropes, redefining heroism through emotional resilience and self-acceptance. The research recommends further exploration of hybrid identities in speculative fiction and encourages ongoing dialogue about the intersections of gender, technology, and identity.

Keywords: Posthumanism, Gender transformation, Hybrid identity, Cyborg feminism

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INTRODUCTION

The idea of post-human identity is contrarian to conventional gender, self, and physical change ideologies. With the domain of code separating us from passing on files and broadcasts from person to person, or remote communication in real without waves, speculation on the interface of tech with human embodiment is at a premium, and when we are frequently and without warning required to choose each new queerness in real time as tech is added to us, it turns to speculation on other divisions, such as gender, for both relief and exploration. This study looks at the theme of posthuman gender transformation and hybrid identity in terms of gender theory, posthumanism, and speculative fiction. While scholars such as Haraway (2013) and Braidotti (2013) theorize the post-human condition as being one that disrupts binary constructs of identity and welcomes fluidity, the stories and subsequent themes articulated within the study reflect a commentary on, the takeover of, so-called normality. Human exceptionalism is contested and ways to mediate human biological and technological transformations are discussed. In this light, transgender stories with superhuman or augmented bodies come off as thorough narration around one's identity, autonomy, and self-definition (Braidotti, 2024).

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To address this notion of hybrid identity, one needs to centralize the engagement with this notion within the subject area of posthuman and gender studies. According to Nayar (2022), hybrid identity is a liminal space of the subject being composed of various, sometimes opposing, identities. This hybridity then questions such a Cartesian distinction of mind and body and represents how identity is at once materially and socially constituted (Hayles, 2000). Additionally, transgender experience in the present day can be considered speculative fiction. According to Keegan (2018), studies relating to transgender representation in literature emphasize the significance of stories that deny pathologization and are real. By centering transgender protagonists who go through the euphoria of bodily alignment and the marginalization that exists in the structures of the real world, such works subvert the conventional hero narrative. Through a fantastical framework, these narratives challenge the essentialism of gender while illustrating the embodied realities of transgender individuals (Namaste, 2020).

Furthermore, interactive narrative as a narrative form may also possess a history of gender fluidity and transformation, and this is the case of feminist science fiction. As for the performative nature of gender and its speculation on speculative storytelling itself, there are scholars such as Judith Butler (1990) and Jack Halberstam (2005). The concept of gender performativity by Butler emphasizes the fight against the established expectation of the norm. While transformation might bring physical affirmation, it does not protect against the way people are discriminated against and the work of self-acceptance. Trans narratives in speculative fiction construct an alternate meeting place for trans embodiment and posthuman embodiment, where these intersections give rise to an alternative to the typical tragic trans narratives in mainstream media (Puar, 2017). In addition, historical heroes in superhero fiction have almost exclusively been hypermasculine representations of power and the recent works break from this trend to feature protagonists who have recently taken on the ability to check privilege as well as their gendered minority affiliation (Fingerroth, 2004). The narrative dismantles the idea that patriotism and heroism must be tied to conventional masculinity, instead proposing a new narrative to be read that is composed of femininity and strength together without contradiction (Schalk, 2022). It engages recent conversations of intersectionality and genre fiction inclusivity (Thomas & Stornaiuolo, 2016).

Through the lens of posthumanism, speculative fiction interrogates the boundaries of identity and technological embodiment. According to Hayles (2017), posthumanism is about the need to rethink what it is to be human in a time when biological and digital changes are shaping selfhood more and more. This distinction is further reinforced by the transformation of bodies caused either through the favor of superhuman forces or technological advancement, much like real-life experiences of gender transition showing that bodies are areas of negotiation and resistance (Haraway, 2016). The thematic engagement with technology, identity, and autonomy, thus, also corresponds with a large discussion in philosophy about the posthuman; a fantastic state of being (Badmington, 2010). The posthuman gender transformation and hybrid identity of the speculative fiction space is imperative to humans. This study contextualizes these narratives within post-humanist and transgender theories to show how speculative fiction provides a radical space for reimagining identity apart from the tyrannies of binary gender and human exceptionalism. By providing trans representation in literature, these works do not only authorize the reckoning within trans audiences with trans representations found within dominant superhero narratives, but they work to build within the growing discourse on trans representation in literature. Speculative fiction provides an important structure to understand future gender and selfhood in a posthuman world where these questions continually inform society's attempts to understand technological and biological advances in the formation of identity.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Lewis and Benschop's (2023) focus on how gender impacts leadership roles and as such how leadership identities connect to postfeminist ideology. Their qualitative research, based on interviews, highlights the fact that gendered leadership identities are fluid, complex, and flexible to the pressures of organizations and society. This study is compatible with the current research in which both give elucidation of how identities in leadership or personal settings are formed and are as a result of shifting societal norms. Barcaro (2024) studies the uprising of posthuman identities, analyzing how, amid technological and

cultural changes, the concepts of self in the ontological sense are old and outdated. Using philosophical analysis and literature read, the study proposes a framework of investigation on the influence of posthumanism on identity, with the result of hybrid kinds of selfhood. Both of these researches connect because although Daniels explores the more traditional sense of this dynamic identity in posthuman and hybrid contexts where technology plays the role of identity transformation, she actually mimics the process from earlier research.

Pembecioğlu (2012) explores the hybrid identities in a globalized world and how globalization, migration, and technology influence this process. The study demonstrates that these identities are as fluid and complex as the boundaries they cross: how people, often through a variety of voices, strategize their cultural, social, and political crossings. This research further reinforces the point of how identity formation is affected by global and technologically advanced things, highlighting the flexibility of personal and collective identities. MacCormack (2016) explores how queer posthumanism works in subverting the traditional identity categories, specifically in terms of gender, sexuality, and the body using posthumanist theory. The study shows how acts of resistance towards fixed identities, and figures such as cyborgs, animals, and monsters demonstrate new ways of understanding identity outside of traditional notions of gender and sexuality by analyzing cultural and philosophical texts. This study argues that non-normative identity primarily concerns technological and social forms and some of the radical possibilities for thinking about identity.

Bou Khalil (2022) probes the stages of pre-liminality, liminality, and post-liminality of the hybrid feminist identities in science fiction literature. The study concentrates on works such as *Neuromancer* and *Snow Crash* to demonstrate that feminist identities are fluid in reaction to changes in technology and society. The research also lines up with Daniels' inclusion of hybrid identities in the way that both re-define gender and technology intersect to create muddled and ever-changing identities that defy being and keep fixed. In the medieval French narrative of *Aucassin et Nicolette*, Pagès (2023) analyzes hybrid identities, especially gender roles in premodern Mediterranean society. The study asserts by literary means how gender roles were negotiated and transformed and provides an insight into the fluidity of gender identities in historical situations. In this line, this study is similar to the works of Daniels in showing how gendered identities randomly get shaped and transformed by the norms of a society in the present and the future.

Pakistani female students transitioning to the UK for postgraduate education are the focus of Sadia et al. (2022). They use qualitative interviews to show how students these students construct hybrid identities in negotiating cultural, educational, and gender-related expectations. This study offers significant insight into the process of how people adjust to a new society while still being associated with certain cultural backgrounds and characteristics. In this regard, this research also fits with Daniels' work on the fluidity and adaptability of identities to the new environment and pressure of society. Nigar, Kostogriz, and Hossain (2024) concentrate on the identities of NNESTs as hybrid professionals and their ways of dealing with expectations concerning culture, language, and profession. Qualitative methods, such as interviews, are employed by the authors to show how NNESTs develop hybrid identities in which their cultural heritage becomes mixed with English-language teaching demands. This study addresses hybrid identities, specifically in the educational and professional interest, because individuals must adapt and negotiate personal and professional identities.

The review deals with the hybrid identities that are fashioned by the transformations in society, technology, and culture. They make a point of exploring the fluidity and adaptability of identities when operating in leadership roles, posthuman contexts, or education, in their reaction to external pressures. While each study brings a different approach to how the issue of hybrid identities is being negotiated and transformed, they all share interests in the overlap of gender, technology, and influencing and integrating societal norms. All these works contribute to examining how selves and identities, professional as well as personal, are recomposed in a changing world.

METHODOLOGY

Nature of the Study

This study aimed to examine the posthuman gender transformation and hybrid identity of *Dreadnought* by April Daniels from the point of view of how the novel uses the post-humanist discourse and transgender identity. The study intends to understand the ways of challenging the traditional gender norm, and selfhood reconfiguration under a posthumanist framework, through a critical examination of the protagonist's transformation in speculative fiction. The research places *Dreadnought* with broader frameworks of feminist posthumanism, cyborg theory, and transgender studies, but dedicates most of its pages to situating *Dreadnought* concerning J.K. Rowling's prospective set of novels covering the Prequel era of Harry Potter. As the study employs a qualitative, interpretative approach, the analysis is based on textual analysis with the narrative's thematic use of gender fluidity, technology, and self-definition.

Data Collection

This study's primary data is extracted from *Dreadnought*'s textual content important lines and representations of the main character's change, clashes, and self-perception. The main data collection technique that is used is close reading and it allows us to take a closer look at how language, symbolism, and narrative structure contribute to the characterization of posthuman identity. Particular emphasis is laid on what the protagonist thinks to himself, what he says to other characters, and how his body changes. The study isolates and analyzes moments limited critical of the textual moments in the novel by capturing how the novel articulates hybrid social and cultural identity formation. Apart from the novel, secondary sources such as scholarly works on post-humanism, transgender representation, and feminist theory, are introduced to give it a relevant contextual distinction. By integrating these sources, this study does not aim to exclude *Dreadnought* as most answers come to academic discussions about posthuman gender and identity, but instead positions it within that environment with a variety of approaches.

Data Analysis Technique

The novel's investigation into gender transformation and hybrid identity is closely read and thematically analyzed. Close reading entails a close, careful examination of words, word choice, metaphor, and narrative structure to find further meanings to do with identity and transformation. This technique helps with a very clear idea of how *Dreadnought* constructs and challenges conventional identity paradigms. They identify recurrent motifs and concepts within the text ranging from bodily transformation, self-verification, rejection by the social context, and heroism. This study categorizes textual elements that mirror the protagonist's shifting selfhood as gender and posthuman themes come together. The comparative analysis of the study allows us to investigate in what way *Dreadnought* is related to or differs from theoretical concepts about posthuman identity.

Theoretical Framework

This research is based on posthumanist theory, cyborg feminism, and gender performativity. Braidotti (2013) and Hayles (2000) articulate a version of posthumanism that can be used to read *Dreadnought*'s destabilization of the very notion of a human unique, and its acceptance of fluid identities in which Danny turns into a superhuman body reflecting upon post-humanist critiques of fixed identity categories. The protagonist's hybridity as a cyborg is framed by cyborg feminism, in particular Haraway's (1991) *Cyborg Manifesto*, as a rejection of the traditional gendered binary used to define them, Danny as they are both human and that which can not be categorized in that way. The application of Judith Butler's (1990) gender performativity theory is used to explore how Danny's selfhood is performed through the discourse, their action, and external validation finding gender to be a performative construct rather than a source of essence. However, such theoretical perspectives are integrated, and the research indicates *Dreadnought* to be a radical narrative that reimagines identity outside of heteronormative and humanistic constraints.

Data Analysis

Posthuman gender transformation provides *Dreadnought* with a great opportunity to explore the

construction of identity; an opportunity Daniels does not disappoint. While Danny's transformation through the acquisition of superhuman powers isn't a solely physical one, it is also an issue of remaking selfhood and such an approach is consistent with identity theory and post-humanist perspectives. She transforms and subverts categorical identity norms while offering a hybridized self created out of both human and nonhuman forces. This section addresses the fluidity of identity through the mechanics of identity verification and utilizes post-humanist philosophy, feminist theory, and Danny's journey as a reading of the fluidity of identity.

The Moment of Transformation: A Posthuman Becoming

Danny's leap is instantaneous and total and represents a rupture with biological determinism and a rigid model of identity and its fixed categories as they tend to constitute the point of reference in the greater society. She then states as she looks down at her changed body, "I look down at my body and yeah, that is not the chest I woke up with" (Daniels, 2017, p.12). This is the moment where her past self is cleaved from her new hybrid identity. This new body is not a change of its own, but a change in her whole psyche. Here her posthuman becoming is a confrontation with the traditional cultural concept of identity which is so viscosly tied to biological markers. The transformation itself is an illustration of Cyborg Haraway's metaphor with bodily change exceeding the boundaries of male/female and human/machine etc. (Haraway, 1991). Danny's transformation shows that identity is not something rigid biological but an ongoing and constructed process that is affected by external forces, society's expectations, and one's self-concept.

Danny represents a post-humanist hybridity in which the identity is not fixed by biological constraints but is dynamic and constructed. During this metamorphosis, Danny physically and existentially changes himself. Her gender transition and her newly minted abilities highlight the point that identity can be very multivariate and ever-changing. This is a post-humanist vision that maps porous gender and selfhood boundaries and a body that is in a state of transformation and empowerment. By dressing Danny as a woman and making her into a superhero through this, she becomes at once a woman, but also a superhero that combines human and non-human characteristics and hints at what humanity may become in a post-human age. From the perspective of identity theory, how Danny's new body contradicts the standard self-verification process. Identity verification happens when the internal self-identity of an individual matches an external recognition by others (Stets & Burke, 2014). Before her transformation, Danny exhibited extreme identity incongruence, stemming from the fact that her internal self-did not align with her assigned gender. In transitioning to her true self physically, she verifies herself as she has always seen herself. In contemplation of this moment, she notes, "My hand kind of just recoils in my pants, it's nervous, scared." I just never have the nerve to feel around my legs — or not in my legs; rather I cry out in tears. Everything was so beautiful and wrong." (Daniels, 2017, p. 12). This is a moment of self-recognition of her internal and external identity, albeit, an unstable alignment at best, for, as long as the outside world insists, the alignment can only be told about like that.

This alignment, however, is not easily achieved since Danny's self-verification process is disrupted by both external and internal forces. Despite being liberating in some ways; the implication is that she must enter a new state of needing to get external validation from the world because it does not yet recognize her transformed self. She feels a discrepancy between herself and the way others perceive her. Therefore, this process sets her free and then forces her to prove her self-concept to others. She also learns that being worthy of herself does not come from internal awareness only, but also from the perceived value that people assign to her. "For the first time in my life, I am completely in charge of myself, she says of this complicated recognition. I'm free. I'm finally free." (Daniels, 2017, p. 226). The struggle between humanity and other entities defines a large part of posthumanist theory, which claims that a human being never exists in isolation from others and broader social systems, but exists between and within them.

Gender Identity and Role Conflict

Danny's transition extends beyond physical changes—it influences how she interacts with gender roles

and societal expectations. She notes, “These changes in my body—I don’t like them, and I’m constantly getting surprised at all the different ways I don’t like them, but the one thing I thought I could count on hating doesn’t bother me” (Daniels, 2017, p. 6). This hesitation is due to the conflict between the gender identity of the encountered object (female) and role identity (superhero). For instance, in traditional identity structures, gender roles are socially prescribed (Wood & Eagly, 2015) such as describing behavior, appearance, and even emotional expression. Yet Danny’s new identity does not follow conventional possible role expectations. She is a superhero and a woman, collating characteristics formerly accessible to its separate, gendered spheres.

Feminist post-humanist critiques of the gender binaries (Haraway, 1991; Braidotti, 2017) argue that the term gender should be taken in the context of gender evolving as a construct, not a category. Danny’s transgender identity questions the essentialist definitions of womanhood as she is hyper-empowered (as a superhuman) and also hyper-vulnerable (because as a transgender teen, she experiences societal rejection). It is this dual existence that mirrors the idea of the cyborg identity as described by Donna Haraway; opposites of humanness are eliminated and a new self emerges with humanness existing in connection to beyond humanness. Danny’s experience then reflects this idea as she becomes empowered through her new superhero identity as she passes through a gender transformation. Danny complicates the icon of the hero. Heroism in masculine-coded narratives has the connotation of physical power and dominance found in literature’s male characters. But Danny’s heroism is not attributed to any of these traits; she is defined by resilience and flexibility, her subversion of expectations. She says, “I am the first in my life where I’ve finally completely been in control of myself.” I’m free. I’m finally free” (Daniels, 2017, p. 226). She is a hero not of brute force but the courage to be the truest version of herself in a world that is against her identity.

As well as becoming a hero in the traditional sense she’s doing it on her terms, freeing superhero tropes from the stereotypes, rejecting the mold our world so willingly resists change from. Then, becoming aligned with feminist post humanism this subversion of the traditional superhero archetype is in principle based upon that when the fluidity of identity is allowed, this can enable more impedance as well as resistance. While Danny’s heroism does not necessarily mean overcoming superhuman strength or animals, it is the acceptance of her hybrid identity and integrating into a world that does not follow in the binary roles.

Identity Verification and Emotional Well-Being

Danny struggles with identity verification, particularly in how others perceive her. When confronted by her father, she experiences social invalidation, as he refuses to acknowledge her gender: “I’m sorry, but you need to leave; Danny shouldn’t have—” (Daniels, 2017, p. 20). In this moment, it is important to understand that identity distress has a component to it where an individual’s self-concept is not recognized by that social element so out the same basis, there is the emotional suffering as well as the conflict (Stets & Serpe, 2013). In addition to its categorical deprivation of female identity, Danny’s father’s rejection reflects traditional power structures into which gender nonconformity is perceived as a threat. His response has a strong emotional effect on Danny as he makes her confront her rejection of her true self. Compared to identity theory, which states, that success in self-verification increases emotional well-being (Burke & Stets, 2022). When Danny is validated by her friend Calamity, she experiences a moment of identity reinforcement: “Calamity looks at me like I belong. Like I make sense” (Daniels, 2017, p. 14). It is important because this recognition helps to create a constant identity; it links the inner Danny with external affirmation. Danny can relax in the acceptance of Calamity, sensing the emotional validation of it and the recognition it bestows, helping to restore her broken sense of self. However, this validation cannot be said for Danny, since Danny is still shunned and rejected in other parts of her life. Therefore, her work can be regarded as a continuous struggle to verify her identity, despite the outer pressures of her society and her superhero role.

Personal identity and social validation become the central theme of Danny’s development. According to identity theory, an individual endeavors to validate his or her self-concept through the interactions

he or she has with other people (Stets & Harrod, 2004). Danny's need for validation is an emotional requirement in her sense of worth and how she believes people perceive her. She is also psychologically restless because she is rejected by her father and accepted by Calamity. This psychological pressure of identity verification reminds you that there is a challenge that seems to stay until today for her and that— this is an intense one in a world that does not accept her as anything but as she is —and it leaves a mark on emotional well-being. “I'm sorry. Really. And, thanks” (Daniels, 2017, p. 50) begins Danny's emotional journey where she deals with her father's rejection as she continues fruitlessly looking for external validation for her identity.

The Posthuman Body: Beyond Gender Norms

As one of the hybrids of humans and beyond humans Danny's transformation made her one. Daniels (2017) observes, ‘My body knows what it's missing’ (p. 50). This statement indicates that an implicit biological memory exists which indicates that identity is not only a social construct; it is found within the body itself. In 2013 Braidotti explored post-humanist thought where the body is not a fixed object but a changing structure thrown into collaboration with technological, economic, social, and ecological forces. Danny's transformation to a superhero resembles transhumanist (Vita-More, 1983) enhancements comprising artificial modifications of the body and in this case, challenges the very definition of what it takes to be human. In her cyborg theory (1991), Haraway contends that technology unhinges the closure of gender and the human; it disorders the bodies, dismantles the given dichotomy of mind and flesh, and intermingles ‘backward and forward, as the mulatto (the African and the European) moves to the vanishing point of intersection, [and] the Chippewa and the Invader may make love’ (The Unbearable Weight of Masking: The Deconstructive Dynamics of Feminisms as Shifting Masquerades). This posthumanist vision of Danny's superhuman abilities extends this idea—Danny is not confined by her past body and is not even completely fixed in her gender. However, she is not a model of identity, she exemplifies a new model of identity that does not reject hybridization and transformation as basic elements of selfhood, but instead, it embraces them.

Rather than affirming gender binaries, she changes into a superhero who disorients conventional understandings of the human body. Danny embodies a post human form that therefore necessitates a disruption of traditional metaphysical boundaries that separate humans from not humans. Danny merges biological and technological elements beyond the boundaries of both her assigned gender and her original human body. But this hybridization becomes a powerful metaphor for how lived contemporary identities are being formed by changing technologies and cultural narratives.

Social Transformation and Gender in Heroism

Traditionally, the superhero genre upholds male-dominated power structures, in which the second trait of masculinity: strength and heroism is synonymous with masculinity (Wood & Eagly, 2015). Danny disrupts this paradigm. She states: “Oh. Great. A superhero fight. Just friggin' wonderful” (Daniels, 2017, p. 8). Her sarcasm shows her refusal to fit into the typical superhero mold populated by the rubric of male aggression and dominance. Danny's initial unwillingness and eventual willingness to become the hero signifies a larger transformation in the role of gender in culture. She is not forced into the traditional masculine interpretation of a superhero and yet she redefines power in her terms. Particularly, it echoes feminist critiques of hegemonic masculinity, which claim that true empowerment does not happen when men become similar to heroes, but when they bright new ways based on feminized, that is, empathetic and emotionally intelligent characteristics (Braidotti, 2017).

It also reflects social changes in the way we conceive of gender power dynamics in general. Danny's transition rewrites the narrative of the heroic figure as the severest and ultimate figure of masculine strength, joyful to redefine being strong. She is a prime example of strength, not only physical power but being resilient, having the qualities of emotional intelligence and ability to transform under the circumstances. Challenging and reconfiguring how society perceives heroes and women, Danny takes this new form of strength to be an opportunity.

Hybrid Identities and the Future of Selfhood

The story of Danny's transformation in *Dreadnought* shows the relationship between identity theory, post-humanism, and gender transition. Her experience is a challenge to traditional identity verification processes, not just because of her unclassifiable identities, but because she is learning to model herself, her friends, and other post-human identities found on the internet. Through introducing the cyborg work by Haraway, feminist post-humanism, and Identity Theory, *Dreadnought* lays a new set of norms introducing the hybrid gender identities. The change is not only a private one; this transformation of her (re)configures meaning to exceed that of artists who've explored the construct of the self (beauty, power, gender,) by releasing themselves into a future that does not so clearly demarcate markers for us to navigate. Danny is a transgender woman and also a superhero, which symbolizes the rise of other identity paradigms wherein humanity is no longer a fixed state, but an active process of becoming.

Using both identity theory and post humanist lenses to analyze Danny's transformation, *Dreadnought* serves as a story of resistance, redefinition, and transformation and puts hybrid identity as the basis of the future self. The novel's interest in gender fluidity, hybrid identities, and post human transformation leads to a concept of the future in which identities continually mutate – never fixed, always mutating. Danny provides us with a model of self-becoming in a hybrid and even post human age in our rapidly changing world.

CONCLUSION

Finally, *Dreadnought* by April Daniels offers an in depth analysis of post human gender changes and hybrid identities, as Danny in his process of change moves away from human gender and sex categorizations, and into spaces where new forms of genders and genders not existing are created. Seen through the posthumanistic prism, through the lenses of cyborg feminism and gender performativity, the novel concerns itself with subverting traditional prescriptions of gender, identity, and heroism, in a nonconventional and rather inspiring way. Danny's transgressions from a transgender person into a superhero is the fluidity and multiplicity of selfhood, which is not a static concept or a fixed category, but something that evolves, or is in process, in relation to self concept (Danny being transgender transforming into a superhero, which is one category of sex and gender) and also in relation to other, particularly interlocking social and economic, categories. Her journey to self verification demonstrates the dichotomy between how one views herself and how the society perceives her while she struggles to merge the two in a society that wants no change. The other element to the novel that complicates traditional frameworks of gender identity is technology, gender fluidity, and posthuman embodiment.

This research interrogates these intersections between transgender identity, posthuman transformation, and speculative fiction in order to better understand how hybrid identities can disrupt normative gender roles in this increasingly posthuman world and expand the possible possibilities of selfhood. Danny's story subverts the connection between power and masculinity and provides a paradigm of heroism that is based on emotional resiliency, self definition and courage to accept oneself. She represents a personal metamorphosis but also a higher scale socio statement of having a world where gender and identity is fluid, interconnected, and never ending transformation. The study additionally makes use of speculative fiction as a place that to imagine new displays of gender variation and selfhood when technology is concerned and when society is changing. This research therefore positions *Dreadnought* into the wider field of post-human and feminist theory to draw out the novel's contribution to such conversations about the future of gender and the role of fiction in the construction of cultural understandings of identity. Given that society still has to address the consequences of post-humanism and technological transformation, *Dreadnought* provides many insights about how gender, identity, and selfhood might change in a world of post-humans.

Further research is encouraged in developing how speculative fiction presents opportunities for marginalized voices to exercise their narratives in the platform, and to the radical revisioning of the status quo. Future studies may be expanded to other works of speculative fiction that discuss such parallel

intersections of posthumanism, gender, and identity, and can do so in other logics within different genres and contexts. Finally, more research could be conducted in the direction of the real effects that gender transformation with posthumanism brings, in order to understand how the technological developments and societal changes impact transgender persons' everyday lives, as well as the ongoing debate on the gender identity themes. These are crucial frames of reference for understanding the changing character of self, and continue to be such whether operating through more or less insidious methods – we must continue to entertain them.

Competing Interest

The author declared no conflict of interest.

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