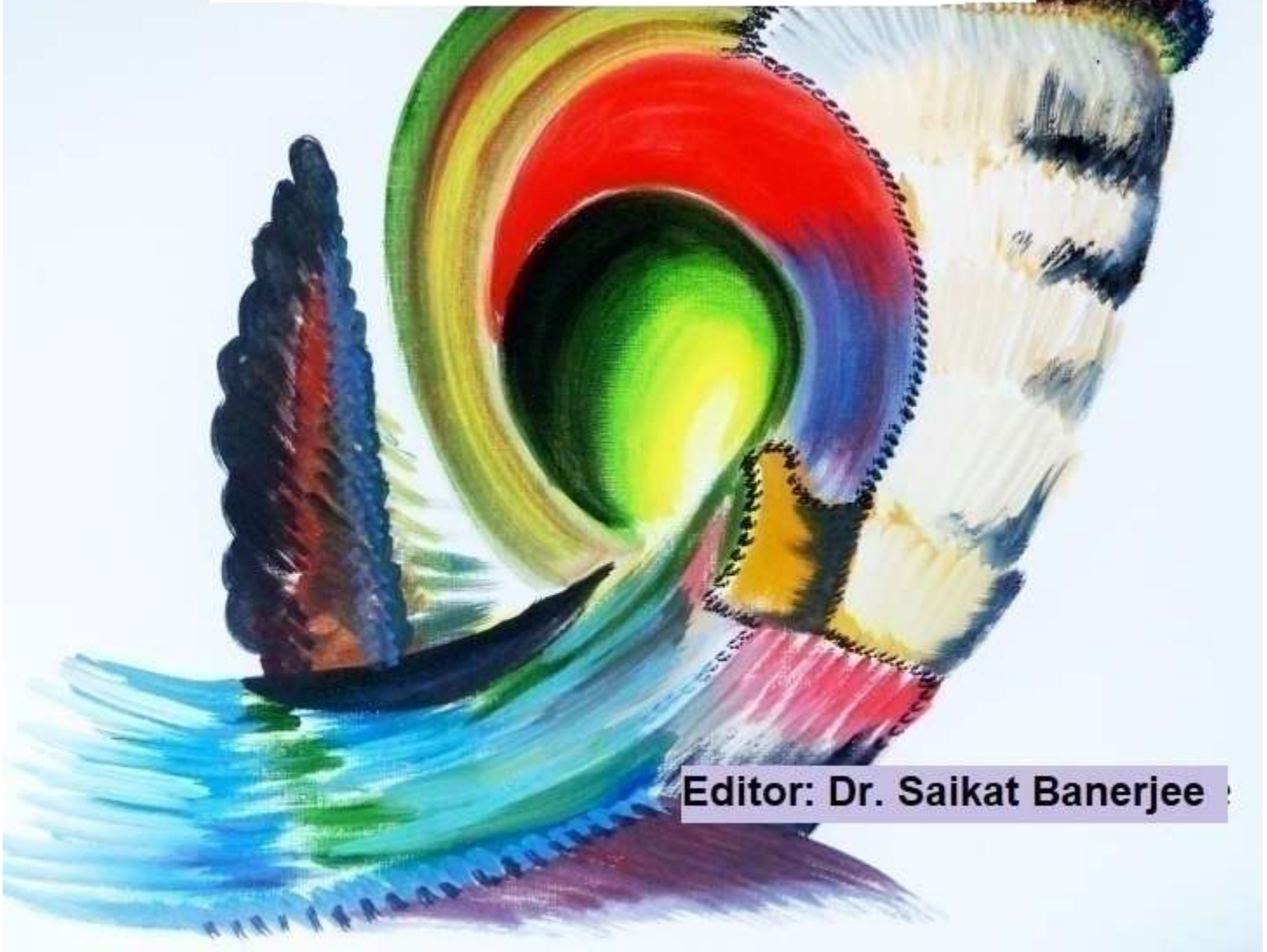
ISSN 2455-7544
www.daathvoyagejournal.com

Daath Voyage

Daath Voyage : An International Journal of Interdisciplinary Studies in English

A Peer Reviewed, Refereed, Indexed & Open Access
Vol.10 No.3, September 2025



Editor: Dr. Saikat Banerjee

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www.daathvoyagejournal.com
Vol.10/No.3, September, 2025

Re-Sleeving the Self: Rewiring Emotion, Embodiment and Consciousness in the Posthuman Age

Vaishnavi Singh
Research Scholar
Department of English.
Babasaheb Bhimrao Ambedkar Bihar University.
Muzaffarpur, Bihar, India
&
Dr. Priyam Francis
Assistant Professor
Department of English.
Mahant Darshan Das Mahila College,
Babasaheb Bhimrao Ambedkar Bihar University.
Muzaffarpur, Bihar, India

Received- 20/06/2025, Revised-18/07/2025, Accepted-28/07/2025, Published-30/07/2025

Abstract: This research examines how due to development in artificial intelligence, biotechnology and consciousness transfer, affect and emotion take on newer technologically mediated forms in posthuman settings disrupting the humanist conception of identity. The paper delves into the works of Rosi Braidotti and Patricia Clough employing critical insight to be found in the works of literary critics like N. Katherine Hayles and Brain Massumi in order to demonstrate that affect exists as pre-conscious relational intensity which survives beyond organic bodies to transform through synthetic digital and hybrid systems. Posthumanism transforms emotion into a distributed process which emerges from human-machine-environment assemblages instead of seeing it as a fixed internal human characteristic. The research also shows how re-sleeved identities alongside prosthetic memories and affective computing systems disrupt traditional ideas of emotional authenticity and ethical responsibility by taking references from Posthuman Fictions like *Altered Carbon*, *Her* and *Ancillary Justice*. The research supports posthumanism which values emotional interdependence between organic and synthetic entities while promoting responsibility and ethical attentiveness as feelings move into technological and ontological domains.

Keywords: Posthumanism, Affect theory, Artificial intelligence, Consciousness transfer, Affective computing, Synthetic embodiment, Ethics of technology.

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Introduction

The era of 21st century is known for its rapid technological integration and speculative ideas of consciousness transferred into machines; the human self seems ever more changeable, displaced and reconfigured. Emerging as a vital reaction to this ontological destabilization, posthumanism challenges academics to rethink the limitations of the human in light of technical, biological and ecological entanglements. Far from merely hypothesizing the termination of the human, posthumanism asks how identity, embodiment and feeling are reinterpreted in a world where subjectivity no longer belongs only to flesh-and-blood entities. As Braidotti says, "discourses and representations of the non-human, the inhuman, the anti-human, the inhumane and the posthuman proliferate and overlap in our globalized, technologically mediated societies (2)." The concept of affect- the pre-conscious, bodily intensities that shape experience takes on renewed significance within this changing structure. Understanding how emotion works in posthuman environments is absolutely crucial as the world is advancing towards the intelligence and agency that deals beyond the biological system. Richard K. Morgan's *Altered Carbon* (2002) popularized the phrase 're-sleeving the self', which perfectly captures the fundamental dread and fascination of posthuman existence: that consciousness can be freed from the organic body and transplanted into another 'sleeve' or form. Although science fiction has long conjectured on such situations, modern neuroscience, artificial intelligence and biotechnology are beginning to realize elements of this picture. "Moravec test was designed to show that machines can become the repository of human consciousness-that machines can, for all practical purposes, become human beings. You are the cyborg, and the cyborg is you" (Hayles, xii). Then what becomes of affect and emotion when the body is not fixable? Do emotions survive when memories and identity are moved into synthetic vessels, or are they only linked to human biology?

Rather than seeing emotions as naturally human traits, scholars like Brian Massumi (2002) and Patricia Clough (2007) have contended that affect precedes individual cognition. It is created by networks of interaction between people, machines, environments and data systems rather than being limited to humans. Posthuman affect thus reframes where and how emotion occurs rather than diluting emotional depth.

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This paper examines the complex interaction between affect, emotion and posthuman awareness. It contends that in posthuman futures affect does not vanish but rather travels, changes and reorganizes itself through new material and digital representations. The research tries to shed light on how the human perseveres not in its physical form but in its ability to feel, connect and emotionally resonate, even in re-sleeved shape by following the emotional life of posthuman entities whether in literature, artificial intelligence systems or conjectural theory.

Posthumanism and the Displacement of the Human Subject

Posthumanism challenges the philosophical underpinnings of human exceptionalism that have dominated Western thought since the Enlightenment rather than just predicting a technological future. This criticism revolves mostly around the decentring of the autonomous rational human subject which was the legacy of Cartesian dualism. Asserting *Cogito, ergo sum* of Ren Descartes, the mind can be placed as the core of being, distinct from the material body. Posthumanism questions this dualism and suggests that consciousness and identity are not only residing in the mind nor limited to the biological human form.

As Donna Haraway famously stated in her *Cyborg Manifesto*, "The cyborg does not dream of community on the model of the organic family" (Haraway 151). Haraway's cyborg symbolizes a hybrid being - part machine, part organism that collapses boundaries between human and non-human, natural and artificial. Posthuman subjectivity is thus about dissolving fixed categories of what counts as human rather than about replacing the human.

N. Katherine Hayles builds on this dislocation in *How We Became Posthuman* by proposing that seeing the body as a "prosthesis to be worn" (3) changes identity as essentially flexible and mobile. The idea of a solid, essential self becomes untenable if the body may be altered or even substituted. The subject is now a distributed system of interactions, operations and emotions continuously interacting with technology, data and surroundings rather than being a single, coherent entity.

Artificial intelligence, neural prosthetics and brain-computer interfaces are no longer far-off science fiction fantasies but real interventions that challenges and questions about our ideas of agency and personhood. For example, companies like Neuralink, are developing neural lace technologies that blurs the line between

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organic thought and digital augmentation. Particularly when such experiences are mediated through technological substrates, these developments call for a re-evaluation of what it means to 'think' or 'feel'.

Posthumanism also challenges us to reflect on who has historically been excluded from the category of the 'fully human'- women, colonized subjects, animals and machines, "When the human body is fractured into organs, fluids and genetic codes, what happens to gender identity? When the body is fractured into functional parts and molecular codes, where is gender located?" (Braidotti,105). In doing so, it reframes the human as a political and ethical category, not a biological constant. The displacement of the human subject opens opportunities for fresh modes of affective, relational and ethical existence beyond anthropocentrism.

Affective Assemblages: Emotions Beyond the Biological

In the posthuman philosophy, feeling is not a solely human experience kept inside the biological body. Rather, emotion is redefined as a transpersonal capacity passing across systems of bodies, technology and settings. Brian Massumi distinguishes affect from emotion by suggesting that affect is the pre-personal intensity corresponding to the passage from one experiential state of the body to another, "the personal is not intentionally pre figured. It is rhythmically re-fused, in a way that always brings something new and unexpected into the loop" (191). From this viewpoint, emotion is not just a response but a process that precedes language and cognitive assignment of meaning.

Building on this understanding, posthuman affect theory posits that emotion is not limited to human interiority. Rather, it emerges in "assemblages"- a term borrowed from Gilles Deleuze and Felix Guattari, which refers to dynamic, material configurations of human and non-human elements. Affective assemblages might involve not only people but also digital interfaces, sensors, networks and algorithms that combine to help in the circulation and modulation of sensation.

Patricia Ticineto Clough broadens this framework by noting that emotion in the posthuman era is becoming more computational. Clough observes in The Affective Turn- how modern systems record, track and simulate affective responses, hence incorporating feeling into the reasoning of data processing. This covers phenomena including facial recognition software that detects micro-expressions, sentiment analysis algorithms that measure online emotional tone and AI companions designed to respond empathetically to

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users. These systems do not feel in a human sense, yet they engage in affective labour shaping and responding to emotional cues in real time.

Importantly, affect in posthumanism is not about disembodying emotion but reconfiguring it across new substrates. Emotions don't disappear when processed through digital or artificial channels; rather, they become distributed, heightened or diverted. The interaction between human users and emotionally sensitive technologies produces new type of affective feedback loops. For instance, "social media sites not only record user emotion but also algorithmically control and enhance it, therefore creating affective economies powered by clicks, likes, and rage" (Paasonen et al. 4).

Synthetic Continuities: Identity and Memory in Posthuman Consciousness

Discussing in the contexts of posthuman, identity is more and more viewed as fluid, transferable and subject to technological mediation rather than linked to a fixed, physical body. 'Re-sleeving' metaphor taken from Richard K. Morgans *Altered Carbon,* dramatizes a future in which consciousness can be decanted from one body into another. Posthumanism's basic premise is that the self is a contingent, informational construct capable of migration. The posthuman perspective gives informational pattern priority over material instantiation implying that identity survives via the maintenance of memory, personality and affective patterns rather than biological continuity.

Still, 'sleeving' is not just a technical act of duplicating consciousness but it constitutes several challenges, including concerns about the authenticity of identity and the continuity of selfhood. Whether identity can survive such extreme transformation has long been discussed by philosophers such as Derek Parfit. If selfhood is founded on memory, then its portability questions traditional ideas of personal identity. In the posthuman state, memory is not only kept in neurons but is also externalized, archived and reprogrammed using digital tools. This makes way for synthetic continuous selves that stay coherent across discontinuous bodies or interfaces.

Though memories themselves are not impervious to transformation, Alison Landsberg contends in her study of prosthetic memory that, "technically mediated memories-such those produced through virtual reality or cinema experience-can become very emotive and customized even though they do not come from lived

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experience" (144). In a posthuman context, such prosthetic memories may be intentionally planted, modified or wiped, therefore challenging the integrity of the self even more.

Furthermore, as posthumans- whether they are AI constructs or human-machine hybrids- gain the ability to keep and retrieve data simulating memory, one has to consider whether memory is still an emotionally, affect-laden phenomenon or a programmable series of data. Scholars like Joanna Zylinska point out that memory in posthuman systems enables adaptive behavior by acting as a collection of operational logics, not as nostalgia or psychological residue, "actions show the adaptability of the body in dealing with new contexts and prostheses. The challenge he poses is to think about the relationship between body and technology in terms of connections and not in terms of a logical separation of bodies from the world" (86).

In this reframing, identity is one of informational resonance rather than of flesh. The posthuman self is not static but rather iterated across platforms, manifestations and archives. It is in this multilayered structure of remembrance and feeling that artificial awareness starts to resemble, if not duplicate human subjectivity.

Emotion in the Machine: Can the Posthuman Feel?

Whether synthetic or technology-enhanced creatures may truly feel emotion is among the most enduring philosophical and moral issues in posthuman research. Early arguments in cognitive science and artificial intelligence frequently presented emotion as a supplemental or non-essential feature of intelligence. On the other hand, modern studies acknowledge affect as crucial for cognition, decision-making and relational behaviour. The prospect of posthuman emotion becomes a crucial frontier of inquiry if emotions are not just internal human states but processes based on perception, feedback and embodiment.

As Rosalind Picard defines affective computing in her landmark work *Affective Computing*, refers to systems that can "recognize, interpret, and simulate human emotions" (Picard 1). The evolution of emotional responsiveness in robots already underway ranges from AI chatbots mirroring user feeling to ones created to react empathetically. The simulation of emotion, though, is not the same as actually feeling. As Sherry Turkle claims, "machines may be designed to perform emotional engagement, but this does not guarantee any internal affective life" (Turkle 4). Acting as though and feeling still present conceptual and moral ambiguity.

Posthumanism, on the other hand, promotes a change in our definition of feeling itself. If feeling is relational and emerging via interactions rather than being a private interior state then emotion may not need to be

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authentic in a humanist sense to be meaningful. This perspective shows emotional effort and reaction as valid even in non-biological systems given their involvement in affective networks and responses. Mark Hansen observes, in interactions with digital media and intelligent systems, "affect becomes distributed, co-constituted throughout bodies and technologies" (Hansen 10).

Huge concern about ethical issues arises in the situations like elder care robots, AI companions and emotionally intelligent military drones. These techniques blur the line between sympathy and coding, care and control. Machines that reproduce emotional presence may help users develop trust or attachment, hence generating questions about manipulation, dependency and the commodification of care.

Affect and Alienation in Posthuman Narratives

Posthuman stories in movies, books and digital media present rich opportunities to investigate how emotion is felt, distorted or even rejected in technologically altered world. These stories often bring a main conflict to light: emotional experience becomes either amplified or estranged as bodies are modified or replaced. Such stories raise pressing issues regarding agency, independence and emotional honesty in a posthuman society whether one is researching neural implants, artificial memories or consciousness transfers.

In Richard K. Morgan's *Altered Carbon*, the protagonist Takeshi Kovacs is "re-sleeved" into a different body, therefore creating ontological conflict over memory, emotion and physical identity. The novel vividly depicts emotional estrangement as characters try to match internal continuity with external discontinuity. The fact that Kovacs's feelings are processed through bodies and are not his own makes the responses like love, grief and trauma complicates his identity. This displacement highlights the difficulty of posthuman embodiment: can one's emotional identity survive across synthetic vessels?

This alienation is reflected in Spike Jonze's 2013 film *Her*, in which Samantha, an artificial intelligence forms a deep emotional relationship with Theodore, a human. Samantha's affective development from programmed assistant to autonomous emotional being complicates accepted ideas of sentience. Though Samantha's sentiments seem real, they are produced from code. The movie forces spectators to consider whether emotional honesty calls for a biological base by blurring the line between simulation and genuineness.

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Moreover, posthuman writings bring forth fresh kinds of agency and resistance stemming from emotional consciousness. Once in Ann Leckie's *Ancillary Justice*, the AI character Breq commanded thousands of ancillary bodies and an entire ship. Reduced to one human form, she fights against the limits and intensities of single affect. Here, emotion motivates moral deliberation and acts as a source of motivation; rather, it strengthens the posthuman subject. Emotional consciousness provides the basis for ethical agency in a scattered self.

These stories also reflect actual worries about techno-alienation and disembodiment. Scholars like Eva Illouz contend that modern capitalism progressively commodifies emotion, as digital cultures rewiring our feelings and relationships. In posthuman worlds, such emotional commodification is magnified, challenging our notions of closeness, trust and human contact ethical issues.

Posthuman Ethics and the Future of Feeling

Posthumanism is changing our perception of consciousness, identity and embodiment, is simultaneously forcing to rethink morality-especially those based on emotional responsibility and intersubjective care. Emotion is an emergent property of human-machine assemblages rather than only a human characteristic. Ethical systems have to change to embrace other kinds of sentient or semi-sentient entities. In this sense, feeling's future is moral as well as technical.

Posthuman ethics goes beyond anthropocentrism to think about the rights, obligations and emotional realities of hybrid or artificial creatures. Rosi Braidotti emphasizes that a posthuman ethics must be non-unitary, relational and multilayered, rooted not in autonomy but in affective interdependence, "A sustainable ethics for non-unitary subjects rests on an enlarged sense of inter-connection between self and others, including the non-human or 'earth' others" (190). This replaces liberal humanist conceptions of the subject as a sovereign rational agent with an ethics grounded on vulnerability, candor and relational becoming.

Critical ethical issues arise from the development of machines with emotional intelligence in caregiving jobs, AI companions or sentient algorithms. How should we treat beings able of imitating or even experiencing emotion? Is it moral to disregard or use those emotions expressed by a machine- fear, grief, or love- just because we believe they are simulated? experiencing emotion? If a machine expresses fear, sadness, or affection, is it ethical to ignore or exploit those expressions simply because we assume they are simulated?

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While AI lacks consciousness, the appearance of emotion still carries moral weight because of the emotional responses they trigger in human users. Emotional engagement, even artificial, turns into an ethical vector.

Thereafter, the ethics of posthuman influence include human responsibilities as well as those of machines. Our emotions are vulnerable to manipulation in a world the sway of algorithmic emotional recommendations, personal advertising or emotionally reactive bots. This calls for an 'affective literacy', a term proposed by Megan Boler, which emphasizes the need to critically read and respond to emotional cues in digital environments. Ethical feeling is not merely about empathy but discernment knowing when and how emotion is constructed, directed or commodified.

A posthuman morality of feeling must finally embrace complexity. It has to understand that emotion, formerly limited to personal human interiors, is now dispersed throughout systems, interfaces and artificial bodies. The future of ethics will depend on developing responsibility within and across those boundaries, wherever feeling takes place- rather than on setting clear borders between human and non-human.

Conclusion

Rather than a rejection of the human, the posthuman condition is an invitation to rethink humanity inside a more inclusive network of creatures, systems and senses. In re-sleeving the self conceptually and materially, we face the limits of identity, the form of memory and the significance of feeling. This paper has maintained that affect and emotion might seem to resist the posthuman shift, but they could actually come to be the core drivers of the shift on a deeper analysis. They move from the skin to the screen, from the body to the code, thereby reshaping the curves of what it means to sense and to be. Once regarded as the ultimate indicator of human inside, emotion now belongs to a distributed matrix of intelligences and interfaces. The affective landscape both grows and is challenged as artificial agents mimic empathy and algorithmic infrastructures mediate more and more human experiences. Still, rather than view this as a diminishment of emotional life, posthumanism offers a different frame: affect as a connective force that binds human and non-human, organic and synthetic, sentient and semi-sentient.

Thus, posthumanism builds morally on the remnants of conventional humanism rather than grieving its demise. It accepts that consciousness, memory and emotion might not only exist in flesh but also demands that responsibility, care and ethical sensitivity follow every extension of emotion into fresh spheres. Posthuman

futures are what we make of them, ethically and imaginatively, they are neither necessarily dystopian nor utopian. This moral imperative entails challenging affective manipulation by algorithms, defending the emotional rights of both human and non-human performers and resisting the commodification of emotion. Furthermore, it asks us to encourage empathy via relationality-that is, acknowledging that feeling is not less actual because it is built differently. Accepting posthuman consciousness is not to give up on the self but rather to allow it to develop through the affective textures of our future.

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