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REVIEWER'S REPORT

Manuscript No.: IJAR-59471

Title: Desire in Transition: Understanding Human Desire for Sex-Dolls in Jeanette Winterson's Frankissstein: A Love Story.

Recommendation:

Accept with Minor Revisions.....

Rating	Excel .	Good	Fair	Poor
Originality	✓			
Techn. Quality		✓		
Clarity		✓		
Significance		✓		

Reviewer Name: Faheem Abdul Muneeb

Reviewer Comment:

The manuscript examines the representation of sex dolls and technologically mediated desire in Jeanette Winterson's *Frankissstein: A Love Story*. It attempts to interpret the novel through posthumanism, humanism, consumer culture, feminism, Freudian psychoanalysis, behavioural psychology, and Baudrillard's concept of simulacra. The discussion of Ron Lord's sex-doll enterprise provides a relevant entry point for exploring the commodification of intimacy, the relationship between technological innovation and consumer desire, and the changing boundaries between human and non-human forms of companionship. The manuscript addresses a subject of contemporary literary and cultural significance, and its engagement with the novel's technological and ethical concerns has potential. However, the argument would benefit from a more focused theoretical framework, closer textual interpretation, and greater critical balance. Several claims currently extend beyond what the literary evidence establishes,

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while the number of theoretical approaches employed makes it difficult to identify the study's central analytical contribution.

The first major concern is the conceptual scope of the paper. The section titled "Framework of Research" introduces humanism, posthumanism, feminism, biology, behavioural psychology, Freudian psychology, technoculture, consumerism, and simulacra, while the subsequent discussion also invokes ideological state apparatuses, cyberspace, and techno-sovereignty. Although these concepts may be relevant, they are not integrated into a sufficiently coherent analytical framework. The manuscript would be stronger if it identified a primary theoretical approach—preferably posthumanism in conjunction with consumer culture or the commodification of desire—and used the remaining concepts selectively where they illuminate particular passages. The proposed sequence of desire moving from biological need to artificial substitution, followed by the loss of the original and the acceptance of the artificial as real, could serve as the organizing argument. However, its theoretical foundations and relationship to the novel need to be explained more carefully rather than presented as a predetermined trajectory.

A related issue concerns the treatment of humanism and posthumanism as opposing positions. The comparative tables on pages 3–4 characterize humanistic desire as reciprocal, emotionally fulfilling, and socially constructive, while posthumanistic desire is presented as unilateral, mechanical, emotionally deficient, and potentially destructive. This binary simplifies both traditions. Posthumanism does not necessarily imply the abandonment of empathy, the replacement of human relationships, or the inevitable reduction of individuals to mechanical personalities. Likewise, human relationships are not invariably reciprocal, caring, or emancipatory. The authors should distinguish critical posthumanism from technological determinism and clarify whether the paper is criticizing the technologies represented in the novel, the commercial structures surrounding them, or posthumanist thought itself. A more nuanced comparison would allow the manuscript to engage seriously with the novel's ambiguities rather than treating technological mediation as inherently incompatible with human feeling.

The analysis of Ron Lord's sex-doll business is among the manuscript's more promising aspects, particularly where it considers the purchase, rental, customization, and commercial promotion of artificial companions. The quotations from the novel on pages 5–8, including Ron's statements about ownership, convenience, and the availability of sexbots, provide material for examining how intimacy is transformed into a consumer product. Nevertheless, the analysis frequently moves from a character's statements to general conclusions about contemporary society without establishing the intervening interpretive steps. For example, the claim that repeated engagement with sex dolls permanently shifts desire away from

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human partners, or that such practices produce impatience, diminished empathy, and the degradation of human essence, is not demonstrated by the textual evidence presented. The authors should distinguish what the novel explicitly represents, what can reasonably be inferred from its characterization and narrative structure, and what constitutes the researcher's broader social prediction. More sustained close reading of dialogue, characterization, irony, and narrative context would strengthen the literary argument. The discussion of behavioural psychology also requires conceptual refinement. On pages 5–6, the manuscript uses the language of stimulus, positive reinforcement, operant behaviour, and habit formation to explain why a user might repeatedly seek satisfaction through a sex doll. This is a potentially useful interpretive connection, but the paper does not establish that Ron's fictional experience demonstrates the psychological process being described. The reference to habit formation should be used to develop a limited analogy, not to establish a general causal account of the effects of sex-doll use. The authors should clarify the distinction between behavioural theory and literary interpretation and avoid presenting hypothetical psychological consequences as empirical findings. The paper would also benefit from explaining how this discussion contributes something distinct from the broader argument about convenience, customization, and consumer desire.

The treatment of Freudian psychoanalysis in the section beginning on page 15 would benefit from similar care. The manuscript associates libido, repression, substitute objects, the pleasure principle, and the reality principle with the use of sex dolls, but these concepts are sometimes treated as interchangeable explanations of desire. The authors should clarify the particular Freudian concepts being applied and explain their relevance to the specific scenes discussed. In particular, the claim that the doll functions as a substitute for a repressed object needs closer theoretical justification. The paper should also avoid implying that sexual desire is reducible to a biological need or that the use of an artificial object necessarily signifies psychological deficiency. A more precise application of psychoanalytic concepts would strengthen this section and prevent the theoretical framework from becoming merely illustrative. The discussion of feminism, particularly on pages 14–15, raises important questions about gender, control, objectification, and the commercialization of women's bodies. Ron Lord's emphasis on customizable physical features and the ability of sexbots to satisfy users without negotiation offers a useful basis for examining the relationship between consumer choice and gendered power. However, the manuscript's claims about women's attitudes towards men, their supposed withdrawal from conjugal relationships, and their preference for mechanical partners are overly generalized and insufficiently supported. The analysis should distinguish the commercial logic articulated by the novel's characters

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from claims about women's actual experiences and behaviour. It should also consider whether the novel invites readers to accept Ron's account of consumer desire or exposes the assumptions and gender hierarchies embedded in his business model. This would produce a more convincing feminist reading and avoid reproducing the gender stereotypes the paper seeks to criticize.

The manuscript's discussion of consumerism and technological power is also potentially valuable, especially in its treatment of sex dolls as commodities designed to anticipate and satisfy consumer preferences. However, the argument on pages 10–11 that commercial products may eventually become compulsory, supported by an analogy with the spread of mobile phones and government policy, remains speculative. The connection between commercial demand, ideological control, state institutions, and the eventual displacement of human relationships requires a clearer explanation. Similarly, the references to Althusser's ideological state apparatuses and "ideological repressive apparatuses" should be checked for conceptual accuracy and applied more precisely. The authors should avoid moving from the existence of a profitable market to predictions of compulsory adoption or government-directed control unless the novel or relevant scholarship provides adequate grounds for these claims.

The use of Baudrillard's concept of simulacra, which is introduced in the research framework, should also be developed more explicitly. The manuscript repeatedly describes sex dolls as substitutes that imitate the human body and potentially acquire the status of reality, but it does not sufficiently explain how this process relates to Baudrillard's distinction between representation, simulation, and the real. A focused discussion of selected passages could clarify whether the doll functions as a copy of the human body, a commercial construction of idealized femininity, or a technological object that changes how users understand intimacy itself. This distinction would also help connect the paper's proposed transition of desire to its wider argument about the construction of new realities.

The methodology and structure require some refinement. The paper identifies its method as qualitative textual analysis, but the analytical procedure is not clearly specified beyond listing the theoretical approaches used. The authors should briefly explain how passages were selected, what interpretive questions guided the analysis, and how the different theoretical concepts were applied to the text. The separate section titled "Outcome of the Discussion" largely reiterates conclusions already developed in the preceding discussion, while the "Limitations" section on pages 16–17 includes additional evaluative claims rather than a clear account of the study's methodological boundaries. These sections could be streamlined to reduce repetition and make room for a more developed conclusion explaining the specific contribution to scholarship on Winterson's novel.

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Finally, the manuscript requires careful language editing and bibliographic verification. There are recurrent grammatical errors, awkward constructions, inconsistent spacing, and variations in the spelling and presentation of names and concepts. Some references appear incomplete or inconsistently formatted, and the authors should ensure that every in-text citation corresponds accurately to an entry in the works cited. The bibliographic details and publication information for all sources should be checked, particularly where recent scholarship is used to support broad theoretical claims. The title is relevant to the paper's subject, although the phrasing could be made more concise and academically precise. A possible revision is "The Commodification of Desire and Posthuman Intimacy in Jeanette Winterson's *Frankissstein: A Love Story*," which more directly identifies the central literary and theoretical concerns. Overall, the manuscript addresses a worthwhile subject and contains the basis for a useful interpretation of the relationship between technological mediation, consumer culture, and intimacy in *Frankissstein*. Its principal strength lies in identifying the sex-doll enterprise as a site where desire becomes commodified and gendered assumptions about control and availability are reproduced. The paper would be more persuasive if it narrowed its theoretical scope, strengthened its close reading, distinguished textual interpretation from speculative social claims, and adopted a more balanced understanding of posthumanism and human relationships. These revisions would improve the coherence, precision, and scholarly contribution of the article.

Final Recommendation

Decision: Accepted with minor revisions.