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Digital Dystopia: Surveillance, Autonomy and Social Justice in Gary Shteyngart's *Super Sad True Love Story*

> 'Until they become conscious they will never rebel and until after they have rebelled they cannot become conscious.'
> (George Orwell)

In the week after the Edward Snowden revelations first broke, sales of George Orwell's *Nineteen Eighty-Four* increased by 6,000 per cent.[i] Key actors in the drama, including Glenn Greenwald and Snowden himself, rushed to describe the implications of the leaks as "Orwellian", whilst President Obama quickly reassured the nation that 'in the abstract, you can complain about Big Brother and how this is a potential program run amok, but when you actually look at the details, then I think we've struck the right balance.'[ii] Contemporary mass surveillance practices are still often understood in Orwellian terms. But although Orwell's lasting salience is undeniable, his appropriateness for understanding surveillance practices in a digital age has been questioned.[iii] *Nineteen Eighty-Four* was written before personal computing, before the internet, before social media and before big data. Doesn't every crystal ball have a shelf life, even the most prescient?

In the last decade, a proliferation of dystopian visions have warned us of the potentially disastrous consequences of our increasing dependence upon digital technologies that are rapidly eroding our privacy. Dave Eggers' *The Circle* (2014) and Shummet Baluja's *The Silicon Jungle* (2011) both explore the consequences of social media and corporate surveillance.[iv] Cory Doctorow's *Little Brother* (2008) and *Homeland* (2013) attacked the mass surveillance practices of the post-9/11 US national security state years before Snowden brought them into the limelight of public scrutiny.[v] The Electronic Frontier Foundation recently published a collection of short stories on digital surveillance with the explicit aim of inspiring resistance, and two other major collections of short stories by American authors in the last year have taken the Internet's erosion of privacy as their central theme.[vi] Film and television has likewise witnessed a bonanza of digital dystopias in recent years, examples include *Ex Machina* (2014), the latest season of *Black Mirror* (2016), *Person of Interest* (2011-2016) and many others. If *Nineteen Eighty-Four* now offers an anachronistic framework for understanding contemporary surveillance practices, doesn't it make sense for us to examine some of these more recent dystopias that have updated and made appropriate to the information age our 'narrative vocabularies by which futures can be debated, discussed, adopted or discarded'?[vii]

This article explores one of the most critically acclaimed examples of this new wave of dystopian fiction: Gary Shteyngart's *Super Sad True Love Story* (2010).[viii]   There are three parts to this article. The first explores Shteyngart's dystopia as an act of social *diagnosis,* with a particular focus upon contemporary surveillance practices as a key determinant of the kind of synchronic system we find ourselves currently within. Zygmunt Bauman argued that 'one can do worse than define historical epochs by the kind of "inner demons" that haunt and torment them.'[ix] *Nineteen Eighty-Four,* he argued, offered 'the fullest – and canonical – inventory of the fears and apprehensions which haunted modernity in its heavy stage.'[x] But today we find ourselves situated within a new historical formation. Bauman chose to call it "liquid modernity", Gilles Deleuze chose to call it the "Control Society", Bernard Harcourt termed it the "Expository Society" and Shoshanna Zuboff has defined it as "surveillance capitalism".[xi] All of these synchronic models for understanding our present epoch see a fundamental difference between the kind of surveillance society that Orwell imagined, and today's emergent surveillance society. If, as Ruth Levitas has argued, one of the key functions of utopian and dystopian fiction is *estrangement*, or 'calling into question the actually existing state of affairs, rather than constructing a [definitive] plan for the future', then we need to examine *contemporary* utopian and dystopian fiction, rather than always returning to Orwell, Huxley, Kafka and Zamyatin, to help properly understand the latent dangers inherent within our present synchronic system. Having said this, comparing contemporary dystopias with the dystopias produced in the previous historical epoch remains important, for it is through this comparison that we can develop a diachronic understanding of the differences and development from one system to the next.

In the second and third sections of this essay I explore some of the implications, as iterated by Shteyngart in *SSTLS,* of today's emergent surveillance society. Here I attempt to bridge the divide within surveillance studies (and within the humanities and social sciences more generally) between an understanding of surveillance as a threat to personal liberty, and between surveillance understood as a form of social discrimination that has important implications for social justice. I do not consider a concern for personal liberty and autonomy (of a certain qualified kind) in the face of proliferating mass surveillance practices to mutually exclude a concern for social justice. For autonomy, as I understand it, not as egoism or self-sufficiency, but as a relational capacity both for critical self-reflection (who am I and what has made me who I am?), a degree of self-definition (I am what I say I am, not what my data says about me), and the ability to think critically about the social world we find ourselves embedded within (is the world that has made me a just world?), is an important precondition for achieving social justice, just as autonomy is, in the words of Judith Butler, 'coproduced by people who live together or who have agreed to live in a world in which the relations between them make possible their individual sense of being free.'[xii]

In the second section of this article I explore Shteyngart's figuration of surveillance as a means of social sorting, and the implications of this. One of the reasons the Orwellian (and Foucauldian) metaphor for understanding surveillance is in need of updating, is that it tended to ignore the differential effects of surveillance upon different sections of society. With the

notable exception of the "proles" in *Nineteen Eighty-Four,* which Orwell wrongly predicted would be exempt from surveillance (indeed quite the opposite has occurred!), surveillance in both classical dystopian novels (Orwell, Huxley, Zamyatin) and in Foucault's model of the panopticon, is remarkably egalitarian, "massifying" the population and ensuring conformity to a fixed institutional or ideological standard. In *SSTLS,* however, the decentralized, modulating and "dividuating" nature of surveillance is effective precisely because it is a means of discriminating among populations. This leads to differential levels of surveillance and consequent acts of targeted marketing and repression among different social groups that tend to reinforce existing patterns of inequality. *SSTLS* also points to another implication of the discriminatory nature of contemporary surveillance practices that returns us to the question of autonomy, that is, the way in which surveillance as a form of social sorting *imposes* crude categories of identity as essentially defining and banalises them as markers of consumer identity rather than as complex social and historical phenomena. Here I turn to Simone Brown's use of Frantz Fanon's notion of "epidermalization" to explore how surveillance *imposes* race upon the body which at once facilitates discrimination and removes the individual's right to self-determination.

In the final section, I turn more fully to the question of autonomy in *SSTLS.* Dystopian fiction is a literature of autonomy lost. Orwell's famous dictum that 'freedom is the freedom to say that two plus two makes four' is echoed throughout the genre, from Orwell to Attwood, from Zamyatin to Shteyngart. This has proved uncomfortable for some and is one of the reasons that dystopian literature is generally scorned by critical theorists who charge that its visions are too bleak, its solutions to contemporary social and political problems (if they can be found at all) too individualistic, and its lineage too rooted in the West's Cold War condemnation of Soviet collectivism and therefore the ideological foreclosure of collective struggle and revolution.[xiii] It is not by accident that the US Central Intelligence Agency appropriated Orwell's novels for their own ideological ends.[xiv] According to this line of criticism, dystopia is often seen as synonymous with anti-utopia, in that Orwell and his disciples, with the horrors of Guernica, Buchenwald and the Gulags still fresh in their memory, condemned political utopianism as inherently totalitarian. For Fredric Jameson, the most well-known exponent of this critique of the anti-utopian element within dystopian fiction (he once described his project as 'anti-anti-Utopianism'), the rise of anti-utopian fiction in the second half of the twentieth century is a corollary of a more general ideological failure under conditions of late capitalism to imagine an alternative society.[xv] The abrogation of *hope* in the immensely popular genres of dystopian and post-apocalyptic fiction is illustrative of Jameson's famous maxim that 'it is easier to imagine the end of the world than to imagine the end of capitalism.'[xvi]

But in his haste to dismiss dystopian fiction as hopeless, reactionary, anti-utopian and 'monotonously alike', Jameson ignores a few salient facts about the genre.[xvii] The first is that dystopian fiction can and is inspiring resistance and collective struggle across the globe, from privacy activists adopting Orwellian language and T-shirt slogans to combat government mass surveillance, to Thai protestors rallying around *Nineteen Eighty-Four* to resist creeping

authoritarianism, to digital activists inspired by Cory Doctorow's novels or adorning the face masks from *V for Vendetta* before marching in the streets in defence of both personal liberty and social justice.[xviii] Jameson and his adherents might dismiss dystopian fiction for its 'militant pessimism' that offers 'no meaningful possibility of movement or resistance, much less radical change', but the reality is that these pessimistic visions are engendering hope and inspiring activism for many different causes in many different places and across ideological divides.[xix] Second, as Gregory Claeys argues in his recent history of the genre, fetishizing the dystopian form as anti-utopian 'tells us nothing useful about what they approve or disapprove of', and since the 1980s the genre's Cold War anxiety towards totalitarian dictatorship has been gradually supplanted by a fear of 'corporate dictatorship in various guises, with the privatization, marketization, and monetization of all available resources, to the benefit of the wealthy.'[xx] In short, some of our most popular anti-capitalist myths today come in the form of dystopian fiction. *SSTLS,* with its blistering satire of neoliberal society at its catastrophic end, is just such a myth. Is it wise for critical theorists to so quickly dismiss these powerful popular critiques of capitalist exploitation on the basis of formal preference?

Lastly, and this is the point I address most fully in my final section, whilst dystopian fiction is certainly rooted in a defense of individual autonomy, this need not exclude the social, the collective, or be at the expense of solidarity. Orwell, a committed socialist, never understood personal liberty and autonomy as insular self-sufficiency, and neither does Shteyngart. Indeed, one of the more interesting features of *SSTLS* is the way in which it explores autonomy reflexively. In the characters of tech-CEO Joshie Goldmann and his employee, our protagonist Lenny Abramov, Shteyngart satirizes autonomy as self-sufficiency, and the particularly potent kind of techno-libertarianism that is influential in Silicon Valley.[xxi] But in the character of Eunice Park, Shteyngart offers us a vision of autonomy that is at once in conversation with the social forces that made her and conducive to a politics of solidarity that is accompanied by 'the imaginative ability to see strange people as fellow sufferers.'"[xxii]

The dystopian genre's defence of autonomy, or at least a qualified form of autonomy, remains as vital now as it did in Orwell's day. For under conditions of what Shoshanna Zuboff has described as "surveillance capitalism" in which 'the world's most valuable resource is no longer oil, but data', we are moving towards a dystopian reality in which privacy has been so far eroded that 'human autonomy is irrelevant and the lived experience of psychological self-determination is a cruel illusion.'[xxiii] For those who believe that privacy and autonomy are worth defending, and that personal liberty and social justice are not mutually exclusive values, reading dystopian fiction can and does have great social value.

Super Sad True Love Story: **A Post-Orwellian Surveillance Society**

George Orwell's *Nineteen Eighty-Four* imagined a future in which mass surveillance operated as a centralized instrument of state repression that instilled obedience and ideological conformity among the cowed citizens of Airstrip One. For most people, however, the experience of mass surveillance today is substantially different; Shteyngart's novel reflects

this. Though *SSTLS* envisions a near-future America ruled over by an authoritarian leader (Defense Secretary Rubenstein), whose state security apparatus (The American Restoration Authority - ARA), certainly spies on US citizens and utilizes mass surveillance to instigate targeted waves of repression against Low Net Worth Individuals ("LNWIs"), it is nevertheless a world in which surveillance is predominantly decentralized and participatory. 'With this book there is no need for a Big Brother', noted Shteyngart, 'because everyone's been deputised to chronicle their lives at all times'.[xxiv] The main instrument of surveillance in *SSTLS* is the äppärät, a near-ubiquitous mobile computing device resembling a smartphone that collects and projects torrents of personal data. 'The government doesn't need to spy into your bedroom', Shteyngart continued, 'because everyone in this society is constantly updating where they are, what they're doing, who they're sleeping with… and everywhere you go these streams are everywhere around you… So… I sort of thought "what would an Orwellian future look like without the government actually controlling things?".[xxv]

A number of critical theorists have asked the same question as Shteyngart, and they have come to remarkably similar conclusions about the way in which contemporary and predominantly digital forms of mass surveillance today entail quite different social consequences to those imagined by Orwell. What was once a relatively solid, fixed, undifferential or static instrument of repression, that homogenized the masses to institutional standards of conformity, is now a "liquid" or "gaseous" form of pragmatics that seeps out into almost every sphere of human interaction. Gilles Deleuze, for example, famously rejected Michel Foucault's disciplinary model of surveillance as outdated, in favour of what he foresaw as an emergent society of "control". Disciplinary power, he argued, 'individualizes and masses together, that is, constitutes those over whom it exercises power into a body and *moulds* the individuality of each member of that body.'[xxvi] The control society, by contrast, does not mould but "modulates" our subjectivity via a set of constantly fluctuating metrics that reduce the social collective, and the individual, to a state of 'perpetual metastability'.[xxvii] One of the consequences of this, is that individuals feel threatened by a sense of permanent social precariousness. This is quite distinct from the surveillance societies imagined by Orwell and his literary contemporaries. Recall that in classical dystopian fiction social status is permanently conferred. In *Nineteen Eighty-Four* there are inner-party members, outer-party members, and the "proles" – social mobility between these fixed social classes was impossible. In *Brave New World* members of each caste (Alphas, Betas, Gammas, Deltas and Epsilons) are genetically and socially conditioned (or "moulded) even before they are born to conform to a certain class. In *SSTLS,* however, rather than solidifying class distinction and identity, surveillance is fundamentally destabilizing, subjecting the individual to a process of continuous transformation. Rather than being fixed and conferred, identity under conditions of surveillance capitalism is always an 'unfulfilled project' in which the individual is in a permanent state of *becoming.*[xxviii]

The protagonist of *SSTLS,* Lenny Abramov, works for the Post-Human Services division of the Staatling Wapachung corporation. Lenny sells Post Human Service's "life extension" bioengineering treatments to wealthy clientele, or High Net Worth Individuals (HNWIs) as

they are described in the novel. His alienation from his labour (Lenny is wealthy but not wealthy enough to afford the life extension treatments) gives him a sense of permanent status anxiety as he watches his credit rating fall and his triglyceride levels rise, metrics that are of course available to anyone, which is everyone, with an äppärät mobile computing device. At Post-Human Service's New York headquarters, which occupies a former synagogue, the 'perpetual metastability' of subjectivity under the control society is reified in the form of a flap display departure board that hangs over employees from the building's arks where the Torahs were customarily arrayed:

> Instead of the *arrive* and *partenze* times of trains pulling in and out of Florence or Milan, the flip board displayed the names of Post-Human Services employees, along with the results of our physicals, our methylation and homocysteine levels, our testosterone and estrogen, our fasting insulin and triglycerides, and, most important, our "mood + stress indicators," which were always supposed to read "positive/playful/ready to contribute" but which, with enough input from competitive co-workers, could be changed to "one moody betch today" or "not a team playa this month." On this particular day, the black-and-white flaps were turning madly, the letters and numbers mutating – a droning ticka-ticka-ticka-ticka – to form new words and figures, as one unfortunate Aiden M. was lowered from "overcoming loss of loved one" to "letting personal life interfere with job" to doesn't play well with others." Disturbingly enough, several of my former colleagues, including my fellow Russian, the brilliantly manic-depressive Vasily Greenbaum, were marked by the dreaded legend TRAIN CANCELED.[xxix]

It is not just at work that Lenny experiences the modulating effects of real-time and constantly updating "dataveillance". No longer confined to Foucault's institutional "spaces of enclosure", as Deleuze puts it, the new "gaseous" control mechanisms seep out into every sphere of human interaction, 'forming a system of variable geometry the language of which is *numerical*…'[xxx] When Lenny reunites with his New York friends in a Staten Island bar after a mid-career break in Rome, he is quickly introduced to the new forms of social surveillance that have taken root in America. Electronic FAC-ing (Forming a Community), not too dissimilar to real life dating apps like Tinder, has replaced physical courtship: 'it's, like, a way to judge people. And let them judge you', Lenny's friend Vishnu explains. Vishnu instructs Lenny to place his äppärät against his chest and look at a girl. His äppärät then monitors his blood pressure and vital signs and 'tells her how much you want to do her.' After combining Lenny's vitals with his and the girl's personal data profiles his äppärät returns what Kevin Haggerty and Richard Ericson term a 'surveillant assemblage' – the combining of discreet data flows into a temporarily fixed "FAC" score: '"FUCKABILITY 780/800, PERSONALITY 800/800, ANAL/ORAL/VAGINAL PREFERENCE 1/3/2."'[xxxi]

Shteyngart's ribald categories and the superficially reductive manner in which these categories are compiled casts the "informatization" of the body as a fundamentally dehumanizing practice, reflecting a Marcusian concern for the alienating effects of the reduction of life into instrumental categories.[xxxii] In a satirical piece for the *New York Times* Shteyngart wrote:

With each passing year scientists estimate that I lose between 6 and 8 percent of my humanity, so that by the close of the decade you will be able to quantify my personality. By the first quarter of 2020 you will be able to understand who I am through a set of metrics as simple as those used to measure the torque of the latest-model Audi or the spring of some brave new toaster.[xxxiii]

Haggerty and Ericson expand upon Deleuze's theory of "dividuation" to explain how the body is broken up into discrete flows of data and then re-combined in various assemblages and for various purposes as a "data double" that is based upon, but nevertheless detached from, our lived experience.[xxxiv] What gets lost in this uncanny transference of the self into data is autonomy, both in terms of the individual's capacity to define their own identity (rather than being defined by their data) and in the sense of a domain of personal experience and private emotion that is inaccessible to others and beyond the reach of public scrutiny. This loss of control over our identity when our "data double" is produced is accompanied by the prospect of exploitation. For as Phoebe Moore and Andrew Robinson write, '[a]t the point that the autonomous self is measured as related to work and production, it becomes striated and made abstract. It is easy to see how this operates in practice, as the value of social performances is entirely reduced to managerial metrics without remainder.[xxxv] Not only does this render the individual vulnerable to managerial exploitation it also increases the prospect of social discrimination. 'Rather than being accurate or inaccurate portrayals of real individuals,' write Haggerty and Ericson, 'they [data doubles] are a form of pragmatics: differentiated according to how useful they are in allowing institutions to make discriminations among populations.'[xxxvi] For this reason, the pervasive metrification of the body and soul that Shteyngart satirizes in *SSTLS* poses a threat not just to individual autonomy, but to social justice as well.

Surveillance as Social Sorting in *SSTLS*

David Lyon has argued that the tendency of contemporary surveillance practices to socially sort, to group us into categories and then target those groups for specific surveillance practices, makes surveillance 'not merely a matter of personal privacy but of social justice.'[xxxvii] The work of Oscar Gandy, among others, has demonstrated the way in which the process of 'identification, classification and evaluation helps to generate and reinforce patterns of inequality…'[xxxviii] The "massifying" effect of institutional and state surveillance in the Orwellian and Foucauldian metaphors tended to overlook the "embodied" nature of surveillance that positions race, class (or "Net Worth" in *SSTLS*) and gender as key variables that structure surveillance along differential lines. *SSTLS,* however, with its emphais upon surveillance's capacity for social stratification, and its acknowledgment that surveillance affects individuals differentially, reflects more upon the social implications of contemporary mass surveillance than either Orwell or Foucault's models.

The discriminatory nature of surveillance in *SSTLS* has two key functions, both linked to the maintenance of a neoliberal order that structures citizenship and social privilege according to market logics. The first is the singling out of individuals and social groups, often according to race, class and gender, for targeted marketing practices. The second is to allow both state and non-state (particularly the security division of the Staatling-Wapachung corporation) actors to target low-income communities for a particularly brutal form of "gentrification" that is described as "harm reduction" in the novel. In both cases, identity is transformed into a form of *identification* that simultaneously withholds the individual's right to self-definition, banalises symbolic identities as an essentialising consumer category, and positions the '(in)dividual... within a data spectrum [that] grants or denies them access to 'resources, services and power'.[xxxix]

The key determinant of social status in *SSTLS,* and thus whether or not an individidual will be marked out for repressive measure, is class, or whether an individual is deemed a "High Net Worth Individual" (HNWI) or Low Net Worth Individual" (LNWI). That Shteyngart repeatedly identifies LNWIs and the victims of "harm reduction" in the novel as members of ethnic minorities, however, points to the intersectional nature of discriminatory surveillance practices. Indeed on a number of occasions Lenny laments the way in which harm reduction had emptied out the multi-ethnic neighborhoods of Manhattan island and replaced them with 'half-man, half-wireless bohemians ramming their baby strollers up and down the hump of Victory Boulevard... wishing they could work Media or Credit.'[xl] Net worth is literally a matter of life or death importance for New York's denizens in the novel. Under the ostensible leadership of Defense Secretary Rubenstein, the American Restoration Authority carries out "harm reduction" in LNWI areas to make way for gleaming HNWI condos, and the protestors on the receiving end of ARA repression are invariably low earners (and disproportionately members of ethnic minorities). During a climactic wave of particularly widespread and brutal repression, Lenny is granted special status as a Staatling-Wapachung employee, which helps save him from the ARA death squads roaming Manhattan. At one point he asks his boss, Joshie, whether his friends will be spared too – '"It depends"', Joshie replies. '"On what?" "Their assets."'[xli] Those, like Lenny, with the right level of assets, and the helpful protection of his employer, Staatling Wapachung, are often exempted from surveillance. Moreover, privacy is a commodity in *SSTLS.* Towards the end of the novel, Lenny attends a Staatling-Wapachung corporate party, and notices 'that none of our clients or our directors wore äppäräti, only the servants and Media folk... The truly powerful did not need to be ranked.'[xlii] Likewise, following a particularly severe wave of "harm reduction" in a low income neighbourhood, he notices new condominiums in the area, that have replaced social housing, offering HNWI residents the added bonus of '[e]xemption from American Restoration Authority (ARA) Cavity, Data & Property Searches'.[xliii]

Utilising Frantz Fanon's notion of "epidermalization", or 'the imposition of race on the body', Simone Brown argues that the practice of branding in transatlantic slavery anticipated the modern techniques of digital "social sorting" that David Lyon and Oscar Gandy discuss. The commodification of race, and the 'marketing of blackness as commodity' reifies

'boundaries, borders, and bodies along racial lines, and where the outcome is often discriminatory treatment of those who are negatively racialized by such surveillance.'[xliv] One of the implications of Brown's linkage of the practice of branding in the transatlantic slave trade with contemporary biometric methods of social sorting is to show how what she terms 'racializing surveillance' makes race legible to capital in inherently discriminatory ways. Oscar Gandy argues that market segmentation according to race and ethnic identity is not inherently harmful. For example, political activism, participation and community formation can be encouraged through such targeting. The problem, for Gandy, is that marketised segmentation tends to ignore these socially positive forms of group identification and formation in favour of profit-driven classifications. Citing Edwin C. Baker, Gandy notes '"market-determined segmentation predictably disfavors, for example, media focusing on political ideology, non-market valued ethnic and cultural divisions, economically poorer groups, or any life-style needs and interests not easily exploited for market purposes…"'[xlv]

In *SSTLS* "credit poles" line the streets, which detect and publicize people's credit ratings and other markers of consumer identity. Race, in particular, is considered a key identifier of consumer behavior in the novel. Resembling the real-world practice known as "digital redlining", where consumers are targeted, or even refused particular services, based upon their racial or ethnic identity, particular consumption habits according to race and ethnicity are expected and encouraged by the "credit poles".[xlvi] China has eclipse the United States as the global hegemon in *SSTLS* and its vast financial resources are projected onto individual Asian and Asian-American consumers who are constructed as wealthy spendthrifts and aggressively targeted by the credit poles for marketing practices that encourage them to spend. Latinos, on the other hand, are profiled in the novel as financially irresponsible, and targeted billboards 'in the Latino sections on Madison Street' that feature a frowning grasshopper in a zoot suit showing us his empty pockets' instruct them to '"Save it for a Rany Day, *Huevón*"'.[xlvii]

Jodi Dean argues that neoliberalism destabilizes and displaces our previous notions of subjectivity. Whereas the subject of classic liberal philosophy (Hobbes, Locke, Kant) was understood as a sovereign rational chooser, the subject in neoliberal societies is understood 'as acting and reacting in accordance with various economic incentives and disincentives'.[xlviii] Whereas previously identity was symbolically anchored '(structured according to conventions of gender, race, work, and national citizenship)', neoliberalism constructs new "imaginary" identities, more ephemeral and fragile, that are rooted in consumption.[xlix] What results is both the erosion of autonomy, and what Ronaldo Munck identifies as the 'combination of the banalization of citizenship and celebration of consumption characteristic of neoliberal ideology's reconstruction of the terms and terrains of politics…'[l] 'I think she shops just because our society is *telling* Asian people to shop', Lenny remarks on Eunice's compulsive consumption. 'You know, like it says on the Credit Poles. I actually heard one guy yelling to Eunice, "Hey, ant, buy something or go back to China!"[li]

Gender identity is likewise banalised via its marketization as a consumer category in *SSTLS*. Eunice's obsessive penchant for the AssLuxury and JuicyPussy clothing ranges offers a

hyperbolized satire of the construction of femininity according to a commoditizing male gaze. The research of Valerie Steeves and Jane Bailey, based on interviews with several young women about their experiences using social media, suggests that 'the compulsory hypersexual embodiment that dominates popular culture [was packaged] as a form of sexual, feminine liberation...'[lii] But Shteyngart does not seem to be offering here a kind of third wave feminist vision of sexual empowerment – such a vision requires a degree of self-consciousness about the appropriation of commoditized feminine culture as a form of liberation.[liii] Rather, what Shteyngart seems to be describing is a world in which 'the very constraints placed on young women online – the heteronormative tropes embedded in commercialized social space, the gendered nature of the surveillant gaze within interpersonal surveillance, and the overvisibility of the feminine body' are not seen as 'impinging on their equality' because they are so fully entrenched and internalized by the female characters in the novel.[liv] One of the core techniques of dystopia, and satire for that matter, as political critique, is the technique of estrangement: by exaggerating, extrapolating, inverting or hyperbolizing extant social conditions, the dystopian and satiric forms render the commonplace and the taken for granted as strange, and thereby open it up to critique.[lv] The hyper-sexualised vision of femininity in *SSTLS* does exactly this to the ways in which social media, datafication and the proliferation of contemporary surveillance practices online render young women hypervisible and subject to the commoditizing male gaze in ways which, as the work of Steeves and Bailey indicates, is not always apparent to young women themselves.

Eunice's construction as a hyper-sexualised Asian consumer in *SSTLS* demonstrates the way in which surveillance capitalism *imposes* market-driven identities, or in other words transforms *identity* as a process of self-definition in relation to the social world we inhabit into a pragmatic and discriminatory form of *identification*. As I have tried to illustrate, this represents both a threat to autonomy, or the individual's capacity for self-determination, and to social justice, by enabling inherently discriminatory methods of surveillance, targeted marketing and repression. In the final section, I will now turn more fully to the question of autonomy, and explore how, by the end of the novel, Eunice manages to reclaim a sense of autonomy that enables her to resist the determining gaze of the surveillance consumer society that she finds herself in.

Autonomy, Resistance, and Refusal

On Christmas Day in 2013 Edward Snowden appeared on British television to deliver an alternative to her Majesty the Queen's customary annual message. In it he explained why he believes privacy matters: 'Great Britain's George Orwell warned us of the dangers of [mass surveillance]... Privacy matters. Privacy is what allows us to determine who we are and who we want to be.'[lvi] For Snowden, as for so many other whistleblowers, activists and NGOs, privacy matters because a world in which all of our actions, expressions and ideas are subjected to constant scrutiny is a world in which the non-conforming, creative, recalcitrant individual, capable of challenging social convention (and therefore social injustice), cannot

exist. The result, as Herbert Marcuse warned us many decades ago, 'is not adjustment but *mimesis:* an immediate identification of the individual with his society and, through it, with the society as a whole.'[lvii]

Of course, the specter of individualism that hangs over both privacy activism and the dystopian literary tradition has not passed without critical reflection. Raymond Williams, for example, once dismissed Orwellian science fiction as "Putropian", characterized by a 'form of feeling' that pits 'the isolated intellectual' against 'the "masses" who are at best brutish, at worst brutal.'[lviii] Stuart Hall similarly noted that in *Nineteen Eighty-Four* '[t]he proles are unable to become the basis of the opposition to tyranny, and Winston and Julia go down alone, holding aloft the flickering candle of individual liberty, private emotion and personal dissent.'[lix] Does a belief in individual autonomy mutually exclude a recognition of society and social shaping as fundamentally important? Or is it the case, as Julia Cohen has argued, that the dichotomy that Williams and Hall so fervently draw here between these two domains 'is a product of the reflexive distancing too often practiced by members of different academic tribes rather than of any ineluctable reality'?[lx] Orwell, who was at once a civil libertarian and a committed socialist, would surely have agreed with Cohen. As he once remarked:

> 'The greatest mistake is to imagine that the human being is an autonomous individual. The secret freedom which you can supposedly enjoy under a despotic government is nonsense, because your thoughts are never entirely your own. Philosophers, writers, artists, scientists, not only need encouragement and an audience, they need constant stimulation from other people. It is almost impossible to think without talking. If Defoe had really lived on a desert island he could not have written *Robinson Crusoe,* nor would he have wanted to.'[lxi]

Orwell's point here, as was his point in the conclusion of *Nineteen Eighty-Four* when Winston Smith finally capitulates to the regime in room 101, is that the autonomous subject is not the transcendental *a priori* given that Immanuel Kant most famously elaborated. Rather, autonomy is brought into being, preserved, shaped and dependent upon society, and, reciprocally, a just society depends upon that preservation of a space for individual autonomy. For this reason, Nick Couldry argues that a Hegelian conception of autonomy, in which 'freedom is "possible… *only* if one is also already in a certain (ultimately institutional, norm-governed) relation to others"', is most fruitful for understanding the value of privacy today in the face of increasing threats from proliferating digital surveillance:

> At the heart of Hegel's idea of autonomy is the idea of some space of autonomy where an individual can be in a *reflective relation with herself.* It is not that autonomy requires a life free from constraints: on the contrary, an autonomous life involves, in large part, the reflexive adaptation to constraints. But at the core of autonomy instead is having in some sense an inner life, enjoying one's own "right of subjectivity"… for this is the basis on which selves *recognize others* as having the same status as moral agents that they assume themselves to have… As Hegel himself put it, "freedom is this: to be *with oneself* in the other". It is autonomy in just this sense… that becomes harder to sustain under surveillance capitalism…[lxii]

SSTLS depicts a world in which both personal values and social worth are entirely data-driven. The result is 'a system of empty self and social reproduction, where data simply affirms the [existing] order…' [lxiii]   The "computed sociality" that Lenny and Eunice are engaged in throughout the novel implicates them in the system of social stratification and gross inequality that facilitates the "cleansing" of LNWIs from Manhattan.[lxiv]   Obsessively working to improve his data, and in particular his credit score that might one day buy him access to immortality, Lenny's capacity to critically reflect upon the brutal injustices that go on around him is neutralized. 'What was it like to be one of the dead or the about-to-be-dead?', Lenny reflects as he watches a particularly violent wave of ARA repression on television. 'Finally, the fear and the empathy were replaced by a different knowledge. The knowledge that it wouldn't happen to us… That we were of good stock.   That these bullets would discriminate.'[lxv] Eunice is so immersed in shopping and FAC-ing on her äppärät that she fails to even register the violence. And his friends, Noah and Amy Greenberg, immediately seek to capitalize on the ensuing crisis by live-streaming their social commentary to their online audiences.[lxvi] At one point Lenny asks Noah: 'I know we're living in Rubenstein's America… But doesn't that just make us even more responsible for each other's fates? I mean, what if Eunice and I just said "no" to all of this. To this bar. To this FACing…' Noah groans in response and castigates Lenny for halving his live-stream audience in a single moment of socially critical self-reflection.   In an article for the *New York Times* entitled *Only Disconnect,* Shteyngart describes the lack of critical awareness and self-reflection entailed by our contemporary addiction to social media as a 'techno-fugue' state.[lxvii] Appositely, a fugue state implies both a loss of awareness of our own sense of identity, and of the world around us. His point is that self-awareness, self-constitution as well as awareness of our social world, in a word… *autonomy*, can only be achieved, as Moore and Robinson advocate, through a 'refusal of data – a refusal to track the body, a refusal to subordinate the qualitative to the quantitative, a refusal of surveillance, a refusal to share data with corporations and the state.'[lxviii] Only by disconnecting, Shteyngart believes, do we become critically aware enough to reconnect with one another in a meaningful way that isn't structured by the commoditizing and determining gaze of digital surveillance.

Crucially then, Shteyngart's understanding of autonomy, or of a space for critical reflection free from social scrutiny, does not valourise an ideal of self-sufficiency, elevating the individual at the expense of society. On the contrary, he reserves some of his most acerbic satire in *SSTLS* for just that. Lenny's boss at Post-Human Services, Joshie Goldmann, is the archetypal techno-libertarian – youthful (thanks to bioengineering), self-assured, ostensibly progressive and with an adolescent faith in the individual's capacity to transcend all social constraints, and even nature itself. Lenny, who strives unsuccessfully for much of the story to emulate his "ersatz papa's" outlook and lifestyle opens the novel by telling us 'I am never going to die' before disparaging death and the idea of living for future generations as 'utter nonesense' that encourages 'an adult's relinquishing of selfhood…'[lxix] Later, he tells Joshie,

'that's what immortality means to me, Joshie. It means selfishness. My generation's belief that each of us matters more than anyone else would think.' [lxx]

Lenny and Joshie's egotism leads to precisely the kind of insular 'form of feeling' that Raymond Williams and Stuart Hall observe in *Nineteen Eighty-Four.* As the violence intensifies and the Internet goes down, Lenny finds himself increasingly isolated: 'My äppärät isn't connecting. I can't connect… I can't reach my parents. I can't connect to Westbury. I can't connect to Vishnu. I can't connect to Grace… I'm so scared. I have no one.' [lxxi] Lenny gradually retreats from society, holing up in his apartment, finding solace in reading alone. But his social isolation and the destruction of his community by Staatling Wapachung's property division, who clear his apartment block of LNWIs to make way for the building of HNWI condiminiums, forces Lenny to reappraise the techno-libertarian values he has inherited from Joshie – 'Today I have made a major decision, *I am going to die*' – and to turn away from the ideal of self-sufficiency – 'Who was I?', he asks, 'A secular progressive? Perhaps. A liberal, whatever that even means anymore, maybe. But basically – at the end of the busted rainbow… at the end of the empire – little more than my parents' son.' [lxxii]

Joshie fails to critically evaluate his techno-libertarian ideal of self-sufficiency until the very end of the novel, when his bio-engineered body malfunctions and slips into a state of grotesque decay – 'in the end', he reflects, 'nature simply would not yield.' [lxxiii] But it is Joshie's response to the climactic wave of repression known as the "Rupture" in the novel, that reveals his cruelty and callous indifference to suffering, positioning him as the villain of the story and his libertarian transhumanist vision of autonomy as malevolent. In a not-so-subtle metaphor Joshie tells Eunice towards the end of the novel 'that in a couple of years I'm going to have my heart removed completely. Useless muscle. Idiotically designed.' [lxxiv] His heartlessness in the face of social catastrophe is already well-established by this point. When Lenny returns to Post Human Services after the Rupture he finds Joshie in a state of frenetic excitability – '"I bet this is going to be good for us in the long run', he tells Lenny, 'The Rupture's created a whole new demand for dying.' [lxxv]

As Martha Nussbaum points out, however, '*egoism* and *normative self-sufficiency,* the values Joshie and, to a lesser extent, Lenny, espouse, are often constructed as caricatures with which to critique liberal values and the ideal of autonomy. 'The essential emphasis of liberal individualism is on respect for *others* as individuals; how can this even initially be thought to involve egoism?' [lxxvi] In the character of Eunice Park, Shteyngart offers a different model of autonomy, one that involves the kind of being "with oneself in the other" that Hegel, Nussbaum, Couldry and many others advocate as the best means by which social justice can be achieved.   Unlike the transcendent and isolated "I" of Lenny and Joshie, Eunice's autonomous subjectivity is both *emergent* and *relational*. Emergent subjectivity is central to an understanding of privacy's value as a space in which we develop our sense of self, responding to social cues and always evolving as individuals. As Julie Coen argues:

> Privacy shelters dynamic, emergent subjectivity from the efforts of commercial and government actors to render individuals and communities fixed, transparent, and predictable.

It protects the situated practices of boundary management through which the capacity for self-determination develops.[lxxvii]

Relational autonomy is a notion of subjectivity that emerged within feminist theory and seeks to address and incorporate feminist critiques of the liberal subject. Like Couldry's Hegelian understanding of autonomy, it emphasises the reciprocal relationship between the subject and the social world and can include an understanding of socialisation as a basic precondition for the realisation of autonomy.[lxxviii] It understands autonomy as 'a capacity rather than an occurrent state' that 'enables the agent to reflect on and critically assess the various processes (socialization, parental or peer influence, etc.) by means of which she came to acquire her desires, beliefs, values, and emotional attitudes.'[lxxix] Through this process of reflection upon her social situatedness, Eunice becomes critically aware of both the valuable and the harmful aspects of her social shaping and reflexively adapts to her social constraints. Crucially, her sense of self that emerges does not valourise the isolated transcendental subject, as per Joshie and Lenny, but responds to and acts in the face of social injustice. If there is hope in *SSTLS,* it lies in Eunice Park.

Eunice may seem an unlikely candidate for a model of autonomy. Far from an ideal of the self-aware and self-constituting individual, she seems forever being *constituted by* the social constraints that bind her. She is constituted by the hyper-sexualised and consumerist society that she finds herself in; she is a shopaholic, and her particular penchant for the "TotalSurrender" brand of underwear is another not-so-subtle metaphor for her subjugation. She is constituted by Lenny and Joshie, who compete for her affection, and cast her according to their techno-orientalising gaze as a 'nano-sized woman' with an 'electronic corporeality' that make her a 'poster child' for their technophillic lust for bioengineered eternity.[lxxx] She is constituted by her abusive father. She is constituted by her äppärät, which Lenny later notices resembles the Korean word "Appa", for father. She is constituted by her family's Christian preacher, Reverend Cho, who justifies her father's abuse by reading scripture 'which say woman is second to man.'[lxxxi] She is even denied autonomy by the very structure of the novel. Lenny's diary entries, a private and introspective medium, are interspersed with her social media chats on her GlobalTeens account – a non-private, commoditized and largely non-introspective medium, denying her the same degree of critical self-reflection that Lenny is afforded. When Lenny accompanies Eunice and her family to one of Reverend Cho's sermons his inner-monologue delivers what is surely Shteyngart's most visceral defence of the autonomous liberal subject in the face of these social constraints that bind her:

'"Do not accept your thoughts!" the reverend shouted, the copper orbs of his eyes alight with a painless flame. "Accept world of Christ, not your thoughts! You must throw away yourself. Why? Because we are dirty and we are wicked!" The audience sat there – subdued, restrained, compliant… I wanted to get up and address the audience. "You have nothing to be ashamed of," I would say. "You are decent people. You are trying. Life is very difficult. If there is a burden on your heart it will not be lifted here. Do not throw away the good. Take pride in the good. You are better than this angry man. You are better than Jesus Christ… Do

not believe the Judeo-Christian lie! Accept your thoughts! Accept your desires! Accept the truth! And if there is more than one truth, then learn to do the difficult work – learn to choose. You are good enough, you are *human enough,* to choose!"'[lxxxii]

But Eunice cannot so easily cast off the forms of socialization that have constituted her. She rejects Lenny's faith in the human capacity for reason as 'this American white guy thing where life is always fair in the end, and nice guys are respected for being nice, and everything is just HONKY-dory (get it?).' In other words Eunice is well-aware, though Joshie and Lenny are not, that the *practice* of autonomy and self-realisation that Lenny and Joshie espouse are often contingent upon social privilege. Her sister Sally puts it more succinctly, describing Post Human Services and the values it inscribes in Joshie and Lenny as 'egotistical'.[lxxxiii] However, whilst Eunice recognizes the extent to which socialization can impede or enhance autonomy, her situation also demonstrates the importance of subjecting socially constitutive values to critical scrutiny. Lenny may not be self-reflective enough, until the end of novel at least, to recognise the contingency of his own autonomy, but he still surely has a point, that Eunice's compliance to the more repressive features of her faith and family is problematic to say the least. 'Values may well play a significant role in autonomous agency,' argues Linda Barclay, 'but to play an important role, they have to be more than purely discovered, constitutive social traits. Values themselves must to some extent be subject to the self's autonomous scrutiny.'[lxxxiv]

Eunice's process of self-evaluation begins when she encounters a homeless LNWI in Central Park, Aziz, who is later killed and becomes a martyr for the uprising that name themselves "Aziz's Army". Whilst Lenny tries to keep her cloistered from the deprivation around her, buying her a first class ticket on the New York subway, Eunice reflects that 'I don't think it's right that our country can't take care of these people.'[lxxxv] In the same sermon that produces revulsion in Lenny, Reverend Cho declares that only Jesus will 'save this fallen country and protect from Aziz Army.'[lxxxvi] Her friend "Grillbitch" who is her primary correspondent on Global Teens for much of the novel also condemns Aziz and the LNWI protestors who destroyed her family's business. Eunice's mother, likewise, cautions against Eunice's involvement with the protestors.[lxxxvii] Eunice rejects their advice. As the novel unfolds and Lenny retreats into isolation, she becomes more intimately involved with the protestors. Against her mother's urging she becomes politicized.

But whilst her politicization is an assertion of her autonomy it also stages a reappraisal and a coming to terms with her socially constitutive values and constraints. As Catriona Mackenzie and Natalie Stoljar outline, relational autonomy can be construed in both a *causal* and *constitutive* sense. Whilst the former focusses upon the ways in which 'socialization and social relationships impede or enhance an agent's capacities for autonomy', the latter focusses upon 'the social constitution of the agent or the social nature of the capacity of autonomy itself…'[lxxxviii] 'I'm writing this for me', Eunice declares in one of her final GlobalTeens entries, shifting from the dialogic to the diaristic and adopting a private, introspective and self-reflective register that has hitherto been afforded only to Lenny in the

novel. Crucially, this moment of self-awareness and self-determination (it is the moment where she decides to leave Lenny) is predicated upon her critical self-reflection on the socially constitutive values that have shaped her subjectivity in ways altogether different from Lenny – 'I was always a Korean girl from a Korean family with a Korean way of doing things, and I'm proud of what that means. It means that, unlike so many people around me, I know who I am.' [lxxxix] But knowing who she is does not mean uncritically accepting the values and constraints that have shaped her. In this sense Eunice's relational automomy is both *causal* and *constitutive*. Whilst she rejects her parents' conservative values and Reverend Cho's condemnation of the LNWI protestors, she nevertheless frames her solidarity and compassion for the latter in terms of her (critically-reflected upon) received values. Though she condemns (at least privately) her father's abuse, she also remembers his acts of charity and compassion in offering free healthcare (her father is a podiatrist) to her community when she was growing up.[xc] Later in the novel she takes him with her to Aziz's Army's makeshift camp in Tompkins Square Park where he provides a free clinic for the sick and wounded – 'My dad was kind to me after he saw me and David [Eunice's main contact among the LNWIs in Tompkins Square] in the park', Eunice later reflects, 'because all three of us were in it together, doing something for a greater good…'[xci] Though she rejects Reverend Cho's sermonizing she ultimately frames her acts of charity and compassion in Christian terms – when she reminds her activist sister that she 'is supposed to be religious not Political', her sister reminds her that 'Christianity is an activist's creed.' Soon after, Eunice notices an old fountain in the park with the words "Temperance, Charity, Faith, Hope" inscribed on its four corners – 'I don't know about temperance or faith, but what about charity and hope? Don't we all need that?'[xcii]

Ultimately, it is Eunice that offers hope in the novel, contrasting sharply with both Lenny and Joshie's response to the "Rupture". Where Lenny turns inward and finds himself isolated, Eunice learns that '[t]here's something powerful in being able to focus on something that's completely outside of yourself.'[xciii] Where Joshie seeks to exploit and profit from social catastrophe, Eunice organizes food and water deliveries for the sick and the needy in her apartment block, and arranges for supplies to be sent to Aziz's Army. Hope, collective resistance, the imagination of a better society – these are all elements that critical theorists from Raymond Williams to Fredric Jameson find sadly lacking in dystopian fiction, but they are all present in *SSTLS* and products of Eunice's relational autonomy, of her learning to 'be herself in the other', which Shteyngart directly juxtaposes with Lenny and Joshie's insular vision of self-sufficiency.

Justice, argues James Brassett (invoking Richard Rorty's conception of the "liberal ironist") 'is an infinitely ongoing project of contest and deliberation, *not a final destination*.'[xciv] According to this understanding our received values must undergo a continuous process of "re-discription" as new ideas and social realities emerge to challenge them. This process of constantly '"playing the new off against the old"' 'is a reform minded experimental approach to achieving solidarity, a solidarity, which "is to be achieved not by inquiry, but by imagination, the imaginative ability to see strange people as fellow sufferers."'[xcv] The reduction of the qualitative to the quanititative, of human beings into their "data doubles", undermines this

capacity to see others as fellow sufferers. As Eunice discovers, learning to 'see strange people as fellow sufferers' entails viewing them as complex moral agents, not as so many points on a data spectrum. That ultimately Lenny can only see the LNWI protestors as LNWIs, remaining content in the knowledge that the bullets would discriminate, is not an assertion of autonomy but a relinquishing of it, a submission to data, to a technological rationality that, as Herbert Marcuse warned, entails 'the "technical" impossibility of being autonomous, of determining one's own life.'[xcvi] 'It is always radical to make the demand to see and to be seen as human rather than as someone's lord or someone's subject', writes Martha Nussbaum.[xcvii] In this sense, the dystopian genre's affirmation of autonomy, of our right to self-determination in the face of proliferating surveillance practices that threaten to take away that right, remains a radical vision, 'a vision that can and should lead to social revolution.'[xcviii]

[i] Felicity Capon, 'Sales of Orwell's 1984 Rocket in Wake of US Prism Surveillance Scandal', *The Telegraph,* 12 June 2013.

[ii] The White House Office of the Press Secretary, 'Statement by the President', Fairmont Hotel, San Jose, California, 7 June 2013, available online at https://www.whitehouse.gov/the-press-office/2013/06/07/statement-president, accessed on 9 January 2017.

[iii] See for example Kevin D. Haggerty and Richard V. Ericson, "The Surveillant Assemblage", The British Journal of Sociology, 51:4 (2000), 605-622.

[iv] Dave Eggers, The Circle (New York: Penguin, 2014); Shumeet Baluja, The Silicon Jungle (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2011).

[v] Cory Doctorow, Little Brother (New York: Tor Books, 2008); Cory Doctorow, Homeland (New York, Tor Books, 2013).

[vi] Dave Maas (ed.), *Pwning Tomorrow* (San Francisco, CA: Electronic Frontier Foundation, 2015); Bryan Hurt (ed.), *Watchlist: 32 Stories by Persons of Interest* (New York, NY: Catapult Press, 2016); Alexander Weinstein, *Children of the New World* (New York, NY: Picador, 2016).

[vii] Cory Doctorow, 'A Vocabulary for Speaking About the Future', *Locus Magazine,* 1st January 2012.

[viii] For a survey of the novel's critical reception see Stankomir Nicieja, 'When China Rules the World: Apocalyptic Visions of the Post-American Order' in Gary Shteyngart's *Super Sad: A True Love Story*' in Pere Gallardo and Elizabeth Russell (eds.), *Yesterday's Tomorrows: On Utopia and Dystopia* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge Scholars Press, 2014), 334.

[ix] Zygmunt Bauman, *Liquid Modernity* (Cambridge, UK: Polity Press, 2000), 27.

[x] Bauman, *Liquid Modernity,* p. 26.

[xi] Bauman, *Liquid Modernity*; Zygmunt Bauman and David Lyon, *Liquid Surveillance: A Conversation* (London, UK: Polity Press, 2012); Gilles Deleuze, "Postscript on the Societies of Control", October, vol. 59 (winter 1992), 3-7; Bernard Harcourt, *Exposed: Desire and Disobedience in a Digital Age* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2015); Shoshanna Zuboff, 'Big Other: Surveillance Capitalism and the Prospects of an Informational Civilization', *Journal of Information Technology,* 30:1 (March 2015), 75-89.

[xii] Stephanie Berbec, 'An Interview with Judith Butler', available online at https://www.versobooks.com/blogs/3304-we-are-worldless-without-one-another-an-interview-with-judith-butler, accessed on 3rd August 2017.

[xiii] A good overview of these arguments can be found in Andrew Miller, 'Changing the Climate: The Politics of Dystopia', *Continuum: Journal of Media and Cultural Studies,* 23:6 (2009), 827-838.

[xiv] Daniel Leab, *Orwell Subverted: The CIA and the Filming of Animal Farm* (University Park, PA: The Pennsylvania State University, 2007).

[xv] Fredric Jameson, *Archeologies of the Future: The Desire Called Utopia and Other Science Fictions* (London, UK: Verso, 2005)*,* xvi.

[xvi] Ibid, 199; See also Fredric Jameson, 'Future City', *New Left Review,* 21 (May-June 2003).

[xvii] Fredric Jameson, *An American Utopia: Dual Power and the Universal Army* (London, UK: Verso Book, 2016), 1.

xviii Rachel Harrison, 'Third Hunger Games Film Poses Biggest Protest Threat Yet to Thai Government', *The Conversation,* 21 November 2015.

xix Tom Moylan, *Scraps of the Untainted Sky: Science Fiction, Utopia, Dystopia* (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 2000), 162.

xx Gregory Claeys, *Dystopia: A Natural History* (Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press, 2016), 284, 395.

xxi See endnote xlii

xxii James Brassett, 'British Irony, Global Justice: A Pragmatic Reading of Chris Brown, Banksy and Ricky Gervais', *Review of International Studies,* 35 (2009), 226.

xxiii 'The World's Most Valuable Resource is no Longer Oil, But Data, *The Economist,* 6 May 2017; Zuboff, 'Big Other', 82.

xxiv Gary Shteyngart Discusses "Super Sad True Love Story", Talks at Google, 13 January 2012, **https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mrlaqvH6bzU,** accessed 20 May 2016.

xxv Ibid.

xxvi Deleuze, 'Postscript on the Society of Control', 5.

xxvii Deleuze, "Postscript on the Societies of Control"*,* 4-5.

xxviii Bauman, *Liquid Modernity,* 29.

xxix Shteyngart, Super Sad True Love Story, 55-56.

xxx Deleuze, "Postscript on the Societies of Control"*,* 4.

xxxi Haggerty and Ericson, "The Surveillant Assemblage"; Shteyngart, Super Sad True Love Story*,* 87.

xxxii Irma van der Ploeg, "Biometrics and the Body as Information: Normative Issues of the Socio-Technical Coding of the Body" in David Lyon (ed.), Surveillance as Social Sorting: Privacy, Risk, and Digital Discrimination (London, UK: Routledge, 2003) 58; Donna Haraway, "A Cyborg Manifesto: Science, Technology, and Socialist-Feminism in the Late Twentieth Century," in Simians, Cyborgs and Women: The Reinvention of Nature (New York; Routledge, 1991), 149-181; Herbert Marcuse, One-Dimensional Man: Studies in the Ideology of Advanced Industrial Society (London, Routledge, 1964).

xxxiii Gary Shteyngart, 'Only Disconnect', New York Times, 16 July 2010.

xxxiv Haggerty and Ericson, "The Surveillant Assemblage", 611-614

xxxv Phoebe Moore and Andrew Robinson, 'The Quantified Self: What Counts in the Neoliberal Workplace, *New Media and Society,* 18:11 (2016), 2786.

xxxvi Ibid, 614.

xxxvii David Lyon (ed.), *Surveillance as Social Sorting: Privacy, Risk, and Digital Discrimination* (London: Routledge, 2003), 1. See also Oscar Gandy, *The Panoptic Sort: A Political Economy of Personal Information* (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1993).

xxxviii Oscar Gandy, 'Matrix Multiplication and the Digital Divide' in Lisa Nakamura and Peter A. Chow White (ed.), *Race After the Internet* (New York, NY: Routledge, 2012) p. 129. See also Gandy, *The Panoptic Sort*.

xxxix Haggerty and Ericson, "The Surveillant Assemblage", 614.

xl Shteyngart, *Super Sad True Love Story,* 80, 49-51.

xli Shteyngart, *Super Sad True Love Story*, 240.

xlii Ibid., 317-318

xliii Shteyngart, *Super Sad True Love Story,* 150.

xliv Simone Brown, *Dark Matters: On the Surveillance of Blackness* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2015), 16.

xlv Edwin C Baker cited in Gandy, 'Matrix Multiplication and the Digital Divide', 133.

xlvi Lyon, *Surveillance as Social Sorting*, 14-15; Gandy, 'Matrix Multiplication and the Digital Divide', 137.

xlvii Shteyngart, *Super Sad True Love Story,* 52.

xlviii Jodi Dean, 'Enjoying Neoliberalism', *Cultural Politics,* 4:1 (2008), 48-49.

xlix Ibid., 62.

l Ronaldo Munck cited in Ibid., 63.

li Shteyngart, *Super Sad True Love Story,* 160.

lii Valerie Steeves and Jane Bailey, 'Living in the Mirror: Understanding Young Women's Experiences with Online Social Networking' in Meulen and Heynen (eds.), *Expanding the Gaze,* 78.

liii See Jennifer Baumgardner and Amy Richards, 'Feminism and Femininity: Or How I Stopped Worrying and Learned to Love the Thong' in Anita Harris (ed.), *All About the Girl: Culture, Power, and Identity* (New York, NY: Routledge, 2004), 59-68.

liv Steeves and Bailey, 'Living in the Mirror', 78.

lv Levitas, *Utopia as Method,* 113-116.

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[lvii] Marcuse, *One-Dimensional Man*, 10.
[lviii] Raymond Williams, "Science Fiction", *Science Fiction Studies,* 15:3 (1988), 357.
[lix] Stuart Hall, 'Conjuring Leviathan: Orwell on the State' in Christopher Norris, *Inside the Myth: Orwell: Views from the Left* (London, UK: Lawrence and Wishart, 1984), 219.
[lx] Julia Cohen, 'What Privacy is For', *Harvard Law Review,* 126 (2013), 1909.
[lxi] George Orwell, 'As I Please', *Tribune,* 28 April 1944 reprinted in Peter Davison (ed.), *George Orwell: The Collected Non-Fiction* (London, UK: Penguin Modern Classics, 2017), 2460.
[lxii] Nick Couldry, 'Surveillance Democracy', *Journal of Information Technology and Politics,* 14:2 (2017), 185.
[lxiii] Moore and Robinson, 'The Quantified Self', 2783.
[lxiv] Cristina Alaimo and Jannis Kallinikos, 'Computing the Everyday: Social Media as Data Platforms', *The Information Society,* 33:4 (2017), 175-191.
[lxv] Shteyngart, *Super Sad True Love Story,* 155.
[lxvi] Ibid., 158.
[lxvii] Gary Shteyngart, 'Only Disconnect', *New York Times,* 16 July 2010.
[lxviii] Moore and Robinson, 'The Quantified Self', 2878.
[lxix] Shteyngart, *Super Sad True Love Story,* 1-2.
[lxx] Ibid., 68-69.
[lxxi] Ibid., 248-249.
[lxxii] Ibid., 303, 292.
[lxxiii] Ibid., 327
[lxxiv] Ibid., 293
[lxxv] Ibid., 256.
[lxxvi] Martha Nussbaum, *Sex and Social Justice* (New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 2000), 60.
[lxxvii] Cohen, 'What Privacy is For', 1905.
[lxxviii] See Catriona Mackenzie and Natalie Stoljar (eds.), *Relational Autonomy: Feminist Perspectives on Autonomy, Agency, and the Social Self* (New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 2000); Marina Ohsana, 'Autonomy and Self-Identity' in John Christman and Joel Anderson, *Autonomy and the Challenges to Liberalism* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2005); John Christman, 'Relational Autonomy, Liberal Individualism and the Social Constitution of Selves', *Philosophical Studies: An International Journal for Philosophy in the Analytic Tradition,* 117:1/2 (2004), pp. 143-164.
[lxxix] Mackenzie and Stoljar (eds.), *Relational Autonomy,* p. 16.
[lxxx] Shteyngart, *Super Sad True Love Story,* 19, 125.
[lxxxi] Ibid., 45.
[lxxxii] Ibid., 186-188.
[lxxxiii] Ibid., 229.
[lxxxiv] Linda Barclay, 'Autonomy and the Social Self' in Mackenzie and Stoljar (eds.), *Relational Autonomy*, 65.
[lxxxv] Shteyngart, *Super Sad True Love Story,* 111-112.
[lxxxvi] Ibid., 187.
[lxxxvii] Ibid., 167.
[lxxxviii] Mackenziee and Stoljar (eds.), *Relational Autonomy,* 22.
[lxxxix] Shteyngart, *Super Sad True Love Story,* 295.
[xc] Ibid., 43.
[xci] Ibid., 262.
[xcii] Ibid., 144.
[xciii] Ibid., 295.
[xciv] Brassett, 'British Irony, Global Justice', 225.
[xcv] Ibid., 226.
[xcvi] Marcuse, *One Dimensional Man*, 162.
[xcvii] Nussbaum, *Sex and Social Justice,* 80.
[xcviii] Ibid.