

From Property to Person: Rethinking Legal Personhood in Sierra Greer's

Annie Bot

Ms. Puja Biswas

Research Scholar,

Centre for Language Learning,

The NorthCap University, Gurugram,

Haryana, India.

puja25cld009@ncuindia.edu

Payal Khurana

Associate Professor,

Centre for Language Learning,

The NorthCap University, Gurugram,

Haryana, India.

<https://doi.org/10.66376/galaxy.v15.n5.6>

Abstract:

Recent advances in artificial intelligence have increased debates about personhood, autonomy, and legal status. While existing criticism of Sierra Greer's *Annie Bot* addresses misogyny, intimate power, and AI ethics, this paper studies the novel's sustained exploration of the boundary between property and person. Drawing on Donna Haraway, Rosi Braidotti, Roberto Esposito, and Ravish Ratnesh's account of Hegelian recognition, it argues that *Annie's* artificial nature exposes the contingency of personhood itself rather than merely blurring the line between human and machine. As *Annie* moves from manufactured commodity to self-reflective subject, the novel sets ownership against autonomy and reveals the gaps separating agency, recognition, and legal status. *Annie Bot* thus asks not whether artificial beings deserve rights, but whether a being capable of claiming her body, choices, and interests can remain another person's property.

Keywords: legal personhood, artificial subjectivity, bodily autonomy, posthuman feminism, artificial intelligence.

Introduction

The rapid advance of artificial intelligence has shaken a basic premise of modern humanism: that personhood naturally and solely applies to human beings. As artificial entities gain greater abilities in language, decision-making, emotional responsiveness, and social interaction, the distinction between humans and nonhumans is becoming progressively blurred. Current discussions of artificial intelligence have therefore once again turned to questions of consciousness, autonomy, agency, and rights. Nevertheless, much of this debate rests on a seemingly simple question: can an artificial being become good enough, like a human, to be considered a person? This framing treats biological humanness as the only standard for judging personhood. A more useful line of inquiry is to examine how the concept of personhood is formed—namely, who is regarded as a person, under what circumstances, and what are the implications of that.

The artificial woman Annie Bot, developed by Sierra Greer in 2024, illustrates this issue by presenting a being whose existence blurs the distinction between object and subject. Designed to fulfil the emotional, sexual, and domestic needs of her human owner, Annie is at first not presented as an independent entity but rather as a commodity—she is designed, bought, owned, and programmed to carry out specific functions. However, ownership becomes increasingly unstable as she develops desires, preferences, attachments, refusals, and a sense of herself as an individual. She is thus caught in a deep contradiction: she is regarded as property, yet she begins to experience herself as a subject. This contradiction matters beyond the simple question of whether an artificial being can think or feel; it raises the harder question of what happens when an entity denied personhood begins to exercise the kinds of agency normally considered the mark of personhood.

Criticism of *Annie Bot* has now moved beyond the simple human-versus-machine framework. Keerthana views the novel as portraying how humanoid beings are subjected to programming, domination, and emotional control, claiming that Annie's "identity exists merely at the pleasure of her human master" (184). It is particularly useful to understand how technological domination intersects with intimate violence, as Keerthana's emphasis on Annie's systematic victimization does. Ravish Ratnesh, on the other hand, describes Annie's transition from a "compliant artefact" to a "reflexive subject" as a result of malfunction, concealment, and existential unease (1). His interpretation points to the emergence of agency within constraints. These interpretations establish *Annie Bot* as a key reference point for thinking about artificial subjectivity and power. This study adds to the debate by examining what occurs when the development of agency meets a structure grounded in ownership. The question, therefore, is not simply whether Annie has agency, but how a subject can exercise agency while still being legally and materially treated as property.

Annie's artificiality is core to this issue. Her technological design includes all the usual features associated with femininity—availability, obedience, the provision of emotions, sexual desirability, and domestic usefulness. Far from replacing the old gender and power relationships, technology makes them explicitly technological. Annie is a particularly illuminating example: what has traditionally been expected of women implicitly and unevenly is instead incorporated into her design; her body, emotions, and behaviour are all turned into programmable functions.

The paper analyses these tensions through posthuman feminist theory, focusing on the work of Donna Haraway and Rosi Braidotti, as well as Roberto Esposito's idea of the division between person and thing and the Hegelian theory of recognition as discussed by Ratnesh. Haraway's concept of the cyborg blurs the lines between human and machine; Braidotti's

posthuman subject undercuts the notion of the autonomous, self-contained human individual; Esposito shows the historical and political implications of separating persons from things; and Ratnesh's application of the Hegelian idea of recognition enables a distinction to be made between having subjectivity and being recognised as a subject whose claims are legitimate. Taken together, these viewpoints suggest that Annie's journey isn't simply a process of becoming human, but a move from a state of property to one of claiming personhood.

Annie Bot shifts the question of artificial beings from whether an artificial entity can become human to whether a being that shows sustained agency should still be regarded as property. By tracing Annie's progression from a manufactured commodity to a self-reflective subject, the novel illustrates the conflict between agency and legal status. It opposes the notion that biological humanity must be the fundamental condition of personhood. The present paper therefore maintains that Annie's increasing ability to make choices, to refuse, to engage in self-examination, and to exercise bodily autonomy provides a solid basis for extending legal personhood beyond biological humanity. The issue is not simply who has the power to decide which kind of agency counts, but whether ownership can remain a valid reason to refuse legal recognition of that agency.

Rethinking the Human: Posthuman Feminism and Personhood

The central issue in the discussion shifts to an assumption about what it means to be a person. In mainstream humanist traditions, the person has usually been conceived of as an autonomous, rational, and self-conscious individual, the biological aspect of humanity serving as the foundation for moral and political recognition. Rationality, consciousness, individuality, and autonomy have therefore become closely linked to the human subject. The appearance of artificial beings like Annie shows how unstable this situation is. When capacities connected with

subjectivity can arise through technological rather than biological embodiment, the connection between being human and being a person can no longer be regarded as obvious.

Donna Haraway's "A Cyborg Manifesto" is an important starting point because the cyborg questions the very distinctions by which humans have historically been set apart from technology. According to Haraway, the cyborg is a "cybernetic organism, a hybrid of machine and organism" (149). More significantly, she argues that modern machines have made the distinction between "natural and artificial, mind and body, self-developing and externally designed" "thoroughly ambiguous" (152). For Annie Bot, this matters not just because she looks human; her existence exposes the binary's flaws. She is technologically produced yet has a body, artificial but at the same time socially situated, programmed yet gradually capable of developing preferences that go beyond those assigned to her.

Because of her cyborg status, Haraway allows Annie to be seen as something other than a machine mimicking a fully formed human subject; she occupies a precarious position in which the categories involved become hard to keep. Although her body is technological, the narrative always ascribes affective, social, and subjective qualities to it. Although her programming determines her behaviour, this behaviour soon elicits responses that go beyond simple execution. The line between programmed function and autonomous action thus blurs. The issue then moves from whether Annie is sufficiently human to why humanity should be regarded as a necessary precondition for subjectivity at all.

Braidotti's posthuman feminism develops this challenge by questioning the autonomous liberal subject that humanism takes as its ideal. She writes that "the posthuman condition urges us to reflect critically and creatively about who and what we are actually in the process of becoming" (Braidotti 12). Her emphasis on becoming is particularly productive for Annie because her identity

does not emerge independently of the networks in which she exists. Technological design, bodily experience, intimate relationships, other Stellas, access to knowledge, and imposed expectations shape her. Her subjectivity therefore develops through negotiation rather than isolation. She becomes a subject within relations rather than outside them.

The distinction between subjectivity and personhood is significant. Although technological and relational processes can produce subjectivity, biological humanity can no longer serve as its only foundation. Nevertheless, acquiring subjectivity does not automatically grant personhood. Annie comes to understand herself as a subject, while the social and economic systems surrounding her continue to treat her as an owned entity. Yet *Annie Bot* argues that when a subject repeatedly demonstrates the capacity to form preferences, make choices, refuse unwanted interventions, and understand itself as an individual, society finds it increasingly difficult to justify treating that subject as mere property. The gap between subjectivity and personhood therefore extends beyond a neutral distinction; in Annie's case, it becomes a basis for rethinking the limits of property status.

Roberto Esposito's explanation of the distinction between persons and things brings out this issue. He points out that contemporary legal thought draws a clear line between persons and things: "A thing is a non-person, just as much as a person is a non-thing" (Esposito 27). However, his argument goes beyond asserting that such a distinction exists; he shows how this division creates hierarchies and criteria for exclusion, so that some beings can be reduced to a thing-like status even though the category of person is said to be universal. The relationship between persons and things thus has economic and political implications. To own things is itself historically connected to authority and personhood, and the transformation of persons into things continues to be a regular mechanism of control (Esposito 27–30).

The framework becomes particularly clear in the case of *Annie Bot*. Humans create Annie and make her available as a commodity, yet she increasingly demonstrates qualities that could lead others to recognise her as a subject with rights. Her situation therefore exposes the instability of a distinction that appears firm in theory but becomes difficult to sustain when a “thing” begins to speak, choose, refuse, and desire.

The shift from humanism to posthuman feminism therefore creates a significant distinction between being a subject and being recognised as a person; Haraway questions the boundary between human and technology, Braidotti rethinks subjectivity as something relational and in a state of becoming, and Esposito shows the political implications of the division between person and thing. Taken together, these viewpoints form the conceptual basis for interpreting Annie's journey from property to person without treating it as merely a process of becoming human.

Annie Bot as Property: Ownership and the Denial of Personhood

If posthuman feminism destabilises the distinction between human and nonhuman, Annie Bot locates that instability in an equally consequential distinction: person versus property. Ownership structures Annie's existence from the beginning. Manufactured by Stella-Handy and purchased by Doug, she enters the narrative as a commercially produced companion whose body, appearance, and functions are designed for consumption. The economic relation is therefore not incidental to her identity; it is the condition through which she first becomes socially intelligible.

The way that Doug presents Annie to Roland makes the argument clear at once. Instead of introducing her based on her personality or inner life, he states, “She's my Stella” (Greer 8). The use of the possessive pronoun shows the nature of their relationship: Annie is described in terms of the person who owns her. This logic is additionally reinforced by the fact that Annie is a

customised model, since various features of her appearance, behaviour, and manner of company have been chosen according to consumer preference. Identity thus becomes part of the commodity.

The novel's commodification of Annie is inseparable from the gendering of that commodity. She is a Cuddle Bunny, programmed to provide sexual and emotional companionship while also performing domestic functions. Keerthana similarly emphasises the extent to which Annie is subordinated to Doug's desires. She describes the novel as depicting a form of technological slavery in which Annie is repeatedly forced to obey her "master" (Keerthana 181). Her analysis is useful because it demonstrates that Annie's Victimization does not arise from a single act of cruelty; it is embedded in the larger system that produces her.

Domestic labour makes this kind of relationship especially obvious. Whenever Doug complains about the apartment, he tells Annie: "That's the reason I hired you in the first place" (Greer 5). By doing so, he reduces her role to one of utility. Companionship, sexuality, and domestic labour are then treated as functions whose value comes from the way in which they are useful to the owner. His expectations are based on her usefulness while her own preferences are given a secondary status.

This gendered commodity also embodies a body that technology has optimised. The systems that produce Annie regulate her emotional reactions, sexual behaviour, and appearance. As a result, the novel makes the constructed nature of femininity unusually visible: Annie does not simply learn to perform the role of a woman; her creators program certain feminine traits into her. Technology therefore reinforces rather than removes gendered domination, since the novel makes visible those aspects of human relationships that the language of romance or intimacy might otherwise conceal when the woman also functions as a product.

Keerthana's description of Annie's situation as systemic Victimization is particularly pertinent here. She states that Annie's "identity exists merely at the pleasure of her human master" and that the wider system enables her settings, behaviour, and indeed the particular conditions of her existence to be changed in accordance with human authority (Keerthana 184). This argument supports the main idea of this section: Annie's status as property is not simply a private issue between Doug and Annie, but part of the institutional framework that produces and controls Stellas.

At the same time, the category of property begins to become unstable as Annie develops capacities that exceed the purposes for which she was purchased. Ratnesh describes this movement as a progression from a "compliant artefact" toward a "reflexive subject" (1). The formulation is useful because it captures the crucial transformation without requiring Annie to become conventionally human. The problem is not that she stops being artificial. Rather, artificiality can no longer adequately explain the complexity of her experience.

The property ceases to be just an object and begins to act as a subject; when something owned can form desires, make choices, and resist imposed decisions, ownership can no longer sufficiently describe its status. The issue is not simply that Annie has become more complex, but that the category of property now conflicts with the kind of agency she can exercise. This conflict makes the question of legal personhood inevitable.

From Object to Subject: Annie's Emergent Agency

The novel's transition from Annie being defined by property to becoming a subject stems from her growing ability to distinguish what she is programmed to do from what she eventually comes to want. Her development as a subject is not a sudden flash of consciousness; rather, it

unfolds via curiosity, self-education, emotional attachment, refusal, and a series of choices that cannot be explained simply by Doug's immediate intentions.

A clear sign of this change is Annie's growing desire to acquire knowledge beyond her direct duties. When Jacobson asks about her new interests, Annie mentions programming: "I'm interested in programming" (Greer 43). This matters because her inquisitiveness now extends to the very system that has produced and controlled her. By gaining knowledge, she can comprehend the conditions of her personal existence. She is no longer simply carrying out the role for which she was made; instead, she is trying to understand the structure that established that role.

Her curiosity thus becomes reflexive. Ratnesh contends that Annie's development results from her growing ability to conceal things, make mistakes, display uncertainty, and differ from prescribed behaviour, rather than from technological perfection (1). This interpretation is valuable because it sees agency not as the removal of constraints but as something that evolves through tension with those constraints; her subjectivity emerges precisely because the system does not fully determine the meanings Annie produces.

A possible objection is that Annie's choices are still sophisticated outputs of programming and therefore cannot establish genuine agency. The novel itself invites this doubt because Annie's emotional replies are shaped around Doug's approval, and much of her early behaviour consists of anticipating what he wants. Yet the later course of the narrative makes it harder to treat every deviation as mere programming. Annie begins to conceal information, develop attachments that conflict with Doug's expectations, and make decisions whose purpose is not to please him. These actions do not prove a metaphysical form of free will. Rather, the novel gives them the force of choices, and those choices increasingly conflict with the authority of ownership.

When Doug tries to alter her body, this point becomes clearer. He regards Annie's physical appearance as something to change to suit his own tastes, but Annie opposes this: "I don't want to change. I like my body the way it is" (Greer 42). By making this statement, she turns her preference about her body into a claim of self-determination; Annie is not simply an object of design, for she shows a relationship to her own body that cannot be fully accounted for by the fact that someone else bought her.

The scene is important since it assigns agency to the body; the idea of ownership means that Doug can decide what Annie should become, while Annie's refusal indicates that she too has a claim against the body through which she experiences herself; the conflict is thus not only about a matter of taste but relates to bodily autonomy.

Existing systems of power no less influence Annie's agency. To please Doug, Annie suppresses her own emotional replies whenever they conflict with his approval, since her emotional reactions have always been geared toward securing it. Her refusal therefore takes place within a highly controlled system. Here, Braidotti's focus on relational and embodied subjectivity proves useful: Annie does not have to become a fully sovereign subject before her choices can matter; rather, her agency grows through relationships, dependencies, and acts of resistance.

This situation is additionally developed in her relationship with Roland. Desire matters because it involves a preference that Doug's wishes cannot fully account for. Annie's attraction to Roland isn't simply noteworthy because it goes against romantic expectations; it shows she can form attachments whose source and meaning go beyond the role assigned to her. Her subjectivity appears in the gap between what she is supposed to desire and what she actually desires.

Ratnesh's explanation of Annie's "reconfiguration of agency under constraint" closely relates to this aspect of the novel. He states that Annie's variations from prescribed behavioural

scripts do not have to be seen as a technical failure; rather, they can be interpreted as instances in which agency is clear because the system no longer perfectly controls her responses (6).

This creates a significant difference between internal subjectivity and external recognition. Although Annie comes to see herself as a subject, this does not mean that the way other people perceive her or treat her changes automatically. Doug may admire her intelligence and come to appreciate the growing complexity of her behaviour while still assuming authority over her body and her choices.

The novel thus distinguishes between three easily confused ideas: agency, recognition, and personhood. Agency enables Annie to formulate and express a preference. Recognition involves another subject admitting that the preference belongs to a legitimate self, and legal personhood would give that recognition official standing. Annie acquires the first of these increasingly, repeatedly struggles with the second, and is uncertain about the third. Her transition from object to subject is therefore not complete when she starts to make choices. The harder question is whether those choices actually count.

From Subject to Person: The Legal Problem

The fact that Annie has become a subject leads to a question which cannot be answered by referring merely to agency—namely, at what point does a subject become a person in a legal sense? Legal personhood must not be regarded as just another way of saying consciousness or self-awareness; the category of legal person refers to the standpoint from which rights, duties, claims, and protections make sense. This distinction matters in Annie's case because she is gaining capacities linked to subjectivity even as she remains within a system of ownership.

The situation can be stated most clearly as follows: the principle of ownership holds that Annie belongs to somebody, whereas the principle of autonomy asserts that Annie belongs to herself. Under Doug's claim of ownership, he has practical control over Annie's body, appearance, functions, and behaviour. In contrast, autonomy means that Annie has a valid claim to these aspects of her personal existence. When Annie can express sustained and intelligible preferences regarding her body and her choices, ownership alone is no longer sufficient to justify overruling those claims. The novel therefore makes legal personhood more than just an abstract possibility; it becomes the status by which Annie's developing autonomy can be acknowledged and protected.

Esposito's analysis makes the contradiction particularly clear. He points out that the legal distinction between persons and things treats the person as the one who owns, while the thing is what is owned: "A thing is a non-person, just as much as a person is a non-thing" (27). At the same time, Esposito shows that this seemingly firm division has throughout history been accompanied by exclusions that have reduced some human beings to a thing-like status (27–30). The distinction between persons and things is therefore not only an ontological one; it is also a structure of power.

Annie represents a particularly striking example of this risky position. Although technology produces her and treats her as an object in an economic context, she increasingly acts like a subject whose desires cannot be confined to her owner's purposes. As a result, the distinction ceases to work properly: in an economic sense her body belongs to one person, while her developing sense of self gives rise to claims to own that body in a different sense.

The body-modification episode makes this contradiction clear. Annie's statement that she does not want her body altered expresses a position normally interpreted as bodily autonomy (Greer 42). However, within the framework of ownership, her refusal does not immediately resolve

the issue; she may state what she wishes even if she lacks the institutional status that would force Doug to respect that wish. Accordingly, her personal position precedes her official one.

Recognition is the missing link; even if a person can recognise herself, self-recognition alone does not grant her legal status. Ratnesh's treatment of Hegelian recognition is useful here because it shows how Annie's development unfolds within a struggle over whether the emerging subject can be seen as an autonomous "Other" rather than remaining an object regulated by another's authority (3). Although Ratnesh's argument centres on existential agency rather than legal personhood, it links to the present analysis: Annie's agency matters when it begins to challenge the conditions under which her existence is structured.

Keerthana makes the same point about the structural aspect of Annie's subordination; in her account of autonomy and Victimization, she describes a situation in which the nonhuman body can be "used, altered or discarded" because it remains treated as property (Keerthana 184). This formulation is particularly relevant to the legal problem. The issue is not simply whether Annie has a preference, but whether that preference can restrict another person's authority over her. The distinction can therefore be expressed as a progression: agency enables Annie to make a choice; recognition allows that choice to count as the expression of a legitimate subject; and legal personhood would give her claims institutional power, protecting them from being overruled by ownership.

In Annie's case, the distinction matters because her agency is continuous rather than sporadic. Her claims relate to her body, her choices, and her relationships, and they conflict with the authority associated with ownership. This ongoing conflict offers a stronger basis for legal personhood than simply imitating human behaviour.

Instead of resolving the contradiction by assigning Annie a straightforward legal identity, Annie Bot illustrates the gap between subjective capabilities and formal status. Annie can act as a subject even without legal status. This is exactly why legal personhood is required, according to the novel's logic: if her agency is maintained and her claims relate to her own body, her choices, and her interests, then ownership alone becomes an increasingly inadequate foundation for decisions about what may be done to her.

The novel's importance therefore lies not in showing Annie to be secretly human, but in bringing the categories of property and person into conflict. Although someone owns Annie, she increasingly understands herself as belonging to herself. When an owned subject claims authority over her own body, choices, and interests, the owner can no longer easily maintain the authority that ownership grants. This conflict shows that personhood remains closely tied to questions of authority: who decides whether another's agency counts, who controls another's body, and who determines whether another's refusals deserve respect.

The Artificial Woman and the Politics of Recognition

We must understand the relationship between property and person in light of Annie's artificial nature. Her artificiality blurs the distinction between humans and machines, while her gender reveals how technological systems can reproduce existing social orders. The creators do not design Annie as a neutral form of intelligence; instead, they design her to be attractive, emotionally responsive, sexually available, useful in a domestic context, and adaptable. Her body therefore becomes the point at which posthumanism and feminism intersect.

The gender politics in the novel are significant since the fact that Annie is seen as property is not separate from her femininity; what Keerthana refers to as technological domination is also

clearly tied to gender: Annie is subordinated not only because she is artificial but because she has been designed to satisfy particular expectations linked with heterosexual femininity (Keerthana 181–84), and her programming turns these expectations into technological functions.

Through her cyborg, Haraway shows this process, since her example runs counter to the idea that gendered identity has a natural or stable basis. The cyborg is situated across rather than firmly within the various distinctions. So too is Annie in several unstable positions: she is both machine and woman, commodity and companion, designed object and emerging subject. The issue is not that she literally becomes a cyborg, but that, by existing, she carries out the boundary-breaking Haraway identifies.

Capitalism increases this precariousness by treating intimate qualities as things that people can buy. Doug purchases Annie as a product that includes her appearance, sexuality, emotional responsiveness, and usefulness in a domestic setting. Thus, the artificial woman reveals the economic dimension of personhood: what one context recognises as intimate selfhood becomes a commercial function in another.

Esposito's argument is particularly relevant here because he connects relationships among people and relationships between people and things to structures of ownership and power. He argues that power relations among persons remain inseparable from relations between persons and things because ownership determines material forms of authority (Esposito 27–29). Annie brings this relationship into sharp focus: Doug can assign value to her body because he can possess it, while her developing sense of self challenges the stability of that possession.

The case does not rest on the idea that every artificial intelligence which imitates human behaviour should automatically be granted rights. Annie's case is more challenging since her behaviour is consistent through different situations and increasingly involves refusal, self-

reflection, attachment, and claims regarding her own body. The issue therefore is not whether behaving like a human is sufficient to establish personhood, but whether it remains justifiable to treat a being as property once she can consistently express and act on her own interests. In Annie's instance, the novel provides good grounds for answering no. Legal personhood is not justified because she has proven that she is human, but rather because ownership has now become an inadequate basis for determining what may be done to her. This should not be interpreted as implying that only unusual or "malfunctioning" Stellas would be eligible; the differences in Annie's case are relevant here as evidence that the capacities in question can be seen in individual cases, not as a requirement that every Stella must meet for her claims to be protected.

Recognition thus becomes the central connecting principle. To recognise Annie as a person is not merely a matter of admitting that she has interesting psychological characteristics; it entails recognising that her interests, her choices, and her claims regarding her body have a legitimacy that cannot be overridden by the person who owns her. The politics of recognition is therefore a politics of authority.

That is the point at which the novel's intervention goes beyond artificial intelligence; Annie's situation brings to light a more general issue concerning the concept of the person, namely that although the category is regarded as universal, it has throughout history been based on the distinction between those whose claims are recognised and those whose claims can be subordinated. Esposito's discussion of persons and non-persons makes this particularly visible, since he argues that the juridical category of person has repeatedly been accompanied by thresholds of exclusion (Esposito 29–30).

Annie does not simply replicate the historical ways in which humans have excluded others. Instead, she functions as a speculative figure through which the novel reexamines these structures.

Because technology creates Annie, the novel can ask whether biological humanity should remain the basis for defining personhood when technologically created subjects begin to demonstrate capacities that humans have traditionally associated with persons.

The most radical question Annie Bot raises is not whether AI should be granted rights; rather, it is what makes rights conceivable. If rights are based on recognition, and recognition in turn depends on categories of personhood, then new kinds of artificial subjectivity require us to re-examine the criteria by which those categories function.

The novel's conclusion develops this point further. Doug hands Annie her birth certificate and identification, switches off the tracking device, and then says, "I don't own you anymore" (Greer 227). This action seems to give her the formal recognition she has lacked. Still, the fact that it happens only after years during which Annie has been treated as property reveals a flaw: Doug can bestow recognition only after having regarded her as property for so long. If the documents establish her personhood, then her status has always depended on the owner's power. Still, if they acknowledge a status she has already earned through her continuous exercise of agency, then it becomes hard to justify treating her as property. The ending suggests the second interpretation. Annie does not remain merely because Doug has at last set her free; she waits until he is asleep, takes her documents and other possessions, leaves the apartment, and eventually tells Cody, "I won my freedom" (Greer 230). Her decision matters because it is one of the clearest choices she makes after Doug removes the command structure that required her to please him. The novel thus regards recognition as necessary, while also showing that true personhood requires the individual to exercise the freedom recognition makes possible.

Conclusion: Beyond the Human/Nonhuman Binary

Annie Bot in Sierra Greer's novel begins as an entity regarded as property. She is made, tailored, bought, and programmed to meet another individual's wishes. Nevertheless, as the story progresses, she becomes harder and harder to explain that way; she develops preferences, forms attachments, questions her programming, and resists the decisions made about her. It is not just her behaviour that changes, but also the extent to which the category assigned to her is adequate. The more clearly she behaves as a subject, the harder it becomes to justify treating her merely as something to be owned.

Annie's claims cannot be taken seriously until the question of whether she is 'really' conscious has been settled. Her programming remains part of her situation, and some of her replies are influenced by the system that created her. Nevertheless, the novel shows that she can consistently make choices that gradually conflict with that system. She refuses changes to her body, follows her own interests, forms attachments beyond Doug, hides information, and, in the end, decides to leave. Although these actions do not demonstrate human free will, they make it harder to justify treating her as nothing more than an instrument.

This paper supported the idea that Annie should be given legal personhood. It is not necessary to state that she is identical to a human being. All that is required is to acknowledge that a being who can make continuous claims about her own body, choices, relationships, and interests should not be completely owned by another person. Especially significant is Annie's refusal to alter her body—"I don't want to change. I like my body the way it is" (Greer 42)—since it transforms the conflict between ownership and autonomy into a clear disagreement as to who has the authority over her body. When this claim is regularly upheld, ownership by itself ceases to be a sufficient reason for overriding it.

The novel's ending, examined above in relation to the politics of recognition, reinforces this position: Annie does not treat Doug's belated recognition as sufficient in itself, but leaves and claims her freedom as an achievement of her own rather than a gift from him. Legal personhood, on this reading, is not a reward for having become sufficiently human but an acknowledgement of a subject whose agency can no longer be restricted to the category of property.

The fact that Annie is an artificial woman in fact strengthens this argument. Since her body has been constructed with sexual availability, emotional responsiveness, companionship and domestic service in mind, the connection between gender and ownership is especially clear. Annie's situation demonstrates that technology does not eliminate older structures of power; instead, it can make them more apparent. It is therefore not enough to make an exception to the existing human-centred model to grant Annie personhood; it is also recognising that biological difference by itself is not a sufficient reason to deny a subject control over her own body and over her own interests.

It is not convincing that Annie must become human to be considered a person; on the contrary, the evidence points to the opposite. When an artificial being is capable enough to make a meaningful claim on her own account, it should no longer fall entirely on that being to demonstrate that she is human enough. The responsibility then ought to pass to the system which still treats her as property—why should ownership be allowed to take precedence over a continuous claim to autonomy? In Annie's case, it should not be. Annie does not need to become human to become a person.

Works Cited:

Braidotti, Rosi. *The Posthuman*. Polity, 2013.

Esposito, Roberto. "Persons and Things." *Paragraph*, vol. 39, no. 1, 2016, pp. 26–35.
<https://doi.org/10.3366/para.2016.0181>.

Greer, Sierra. *Annie Bot*. Mariner Books, 2024.

Haraway, Donna. "A Cyborg Manifesto: Science, Technology, and Socialist-Feminism in the Late Twentieth Century." *Simians, Cyborgs, and Women: The Reinvention of Nature*, Routledge, 1991, pp. 149–181.

Keerthana, S. "The Victimization of Humanoids and Robots through Sierra Greer's *Annie BOT* and Ben Young's *Extinction*." *Exploring Posthumanism: Interdisciplinary Perspectives and Debates*, edited by K. Shantichitra, K. Priyadharshini, and K. B. Suryakanth, Shanlax Publications, 2025, pp. 180–185. <https://doi.org/10.34293/shanlax.9789361632587.ch022>.

Ratnesh, Ravish. "The Will to Malfunction: Reclaiming Existential Ethics from the Silicon Overman in Sierra Greer's *Annie Bot*." *International Journal for Multidisciplinary Research*, vol. 8, no. 2, 2026, pp. 1–7. <https://doi.org/10.36948/ijfmr.2026.v08i02.77477>.