



## Love, Resistance, and Social Justice: An Analysis of Power Dynamics in *Your Dreams Are Mine Now*

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### Abstract

This research paper employs Michel Foucault's theoretical framework of power relations and resistance to analyze Ravinder Singh's novel *Your Dreams Are Mine Now* (2014). Through meticulous textual analysis, the study uncovers the nuanced and layered ways in which Singh's narrative explores the complex dynamics between power and resistance within multiple social spheres, including educational institutions, gender relations, and social activism. Central to the research are the experiences of the protagonists, Rupali and Arjun, whose intertwined personal and political journeys reveal the multifaceted nature of authority, resistance, and individual agency. Their evolving love story serves as a powerful metaphor for how personal relationships can transcend private realms to become sites of political resistance, nurturing solidarity and collective action in the face of systemic oppression.

The university setting functions as a microcosm of broader society, illustrating how power operates through institutional policies, political maneuvering, entrenched social hierarchies, and pervasive patriarchal norms. Rupali's active involvement in student activism highlights the critical role of marginalized voices that challenge hegemonic structures, advocate for social justice, and strive to transform oppressive realities. Furthermore, the novel offers a profound critique of contemporary Indian society by exposing the subtle and overt mechanisms of power that shape individual lives and social interactions. It simultaneously underscores the transformative potential embedded in resistance, activism, and the development of collective consciousness, suggesting pathways toward empowerment and social

change. Overall, *Your Dreams Are Mine Now* stands as a significant literary contribution, reflecting the tensions and possibilities inherent in contemporary struggles for justice, equality, and agency within India.

**Keywords:** power relations, resistance, social activism, gender violence.

## INTRODUCTION

Through its exploration of topics like identity, nationalism, spirituality, love, and social change, contemporary Indian English literature captures the great sociocultural diversity of India. By examining a variety of topics with deep roots in Indian culture and society, authors like Upamanyu Chatterjee have made a substantial contribution to this tradition. Similar to this, Ravinder Singh's *Your Dreams Are Mine* now delves deeply into power, resistance, and social activity in modern India, providing a gripping story that goes beyond traditional love fiction. The novel, which is set against the backdrop of Delhi University, is a noteworthy addition to Indian English literature of the twenty-first century because it combines a moving love story with important social commentary. Singh's writing is a prime example of a new wave of Indian fiction that links intimate stories to more general social issues. The book captures the changing social consciousness of contemporary India via themes of love, friendship, dedication, and political involvement.

The narrative centers on Arjun, a student from Delhi, and Rupali, a young Patna lady whose goals for social change influence both her political and personal paths. The novel offers a perfect context for analyzing Michel Foucault's theory of the "microphysics of power," which holds that power functions through routine interactions, social norms, and institutional practices, against the backdrop of student politics and institutional power. Singh uses Rupali's experiences to show how power operates through both overt authority institutions and covert social control mechanisms. This essay contends that *Your*

*Dreams Are Mine Now* highlights the transformative possibilities of resistance via individual agency and group action while exposing the ubiquitous nature of authority.

## THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

This analysis employs Foucault's conception of power as a theoretical framework, which challenges traditional views that see power solely as repressive and top-down. Foucault argues that power is productive and operates through complex networks of relationships. In *The History of Sexuality*, he writes, "Power is everywhere; not because it embraces everything, but because it comes from everywhere" (Foucault 1978, 93). This understanding of power as both pervasive and dynamic illuminates the intricate social dynamics portrayed in *Your Dreams Are Mine Now*.

In Foucault's framework, resistance is an inherent aspect of power relations, suggesting that wherever power exists, resistance inevitably arises and is never external to power. This perspective illuminates how Rupali and Arjun's activism operates both within and against existing power structures, revealing the complex interplay between conformity and resistance within institutional frameworks. The novel portrays various forms of monitoring and control, from formal administrative oversight to informal peer surveillance, typical of autonomous educational institutions.

In a pivotal moment, Rupali realizes, "I have evidence!" She smiles as Arjun waits curiously. After a brief pause, she reveals, "A video of Prof. Mahajan sexually abusing Raheema (peon) will definitely serve as evidence. Right?" (Singh 2014, 92). This scene underscores the dynamics of power and

resistance within the university setting, highlighting the challenges faced by individuals confronting systemic issues.

*Your Dreams Are Mine Now* is a poignant love story set against the backdrop of Delhi University, where Rupali, a small-town girl from Patna, and Arjun, a Delhi boy involved in youth politics, navigate the complexities of campus life and politics. Their relationship and activism reflect the broader themes of power, resistance, and social change explored in the novel. Rupali's film challenges the modern systems of disciplinary power by documenting and exposing the abuse. In addition to serving as a tool for monitoring, controlling, and normalizing appropriate behavior in institutional settings, it offers proof for legal.

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### Gender Issues

The novel's examination of gender issues demonstrates how power dynamics influence personal subjectivity as she navigates both contemporary goals and conventional patriarchal expectations. Rupali's choice to take part in a demonstration against the institution's discriminatory practices, for instance, is an act of resistance within the limitations of the monitoring systems in place. She is reminded of the institution's authority over her by the surveillance cameras that follow her everywhere, but they also strengthen her resolve to oppose and undermine that authority. This sentence serves as an example of how gender works.

Rupali's transformation from a small-town girl to an activist questions existing power systems and gender conventions. The way that gender-based violence is shown in the book is consistent with Foucault's theory of how power

affects bodies in different ways depending on a person's gender. Rupali's experiences with threats and harassment serve as an example of how social practices and institutions govern and control bodies. Her activism and educational initiatives, however, demonstrate how power dynamics may be challenged and reinterpreted.

### Resistance

Resistance is the capacity to resist or battle against a force, as well as opposition or refusal to accept something. The university is a site of contestation as well as resistance. In addition to opposing power, the student movement against corruption embodies what Foucault would refer to as the intentional codification of points of resistance. Singh explains the development of student rebellion in this book. Many thousands of enraged individuals had emerged into Delhi's streets, a few thousand feet below the furious black clouds.

Resistance is not merely a reaction to oppression but also a means of building solidarity and collective consciousness. As Paulo Freire observes, "No one liberates himself by his own efforts alone, nor is he liberated by others; people liberate themselves in communion with one another" (Freire 79). This statement highlights the importance of collective action in challenging systems of domination. By working together toward a common goal, individuals create networks of support and empowerment that enable meaningful social change. Freire's perspective emphasizes that struggles for justice are strengthened through cooperation and shared commitment rather than individual efforts alone.

**Social Media Activism:** Using social media sites like Facebook, Instagram, YouTube, and X (Twitter) to advocate for, promote, or criticize social problems is known as social media activism. The primary goal is to swiftly reach a big audience in order to raise awareness, sway public opinion, and promote social change.

Given that Arjun and his other activists use social media to expose corruption, the examination of social media activism in *Your Dreams are Mine Now* particularly speaks to them. Social media channels are used by activists like Arjun and his companions to educate people about unfairness and corruption in the educational system.

Students can also use social media platforms to inform the public about issues that affect society and their university. Additionally, it aids in closing the knowledge gap and raising public awareness. In light of this, Arjun uses a digital platform to expose Prof. Mahajan's secret. Arjun challenges institutional authority and fosters social consciousness by bringing corruption and power abuse to the public's notice through the exchange of evidence, testimony, and reports.

In this book, Ravinder Singh presents social media as a democratic forum where anyone can voice their opinions about the Raheema incident. By giving marginalized people a public voice, social media strengthens them. *Your Dreams Are Mine Now* illustrates how the fight for social justice is inevitable. By questioning the authority's monopoly on reality, the students show their dedication to striving for a more equitable society. Their acts highlight the value of accountability and transparency in governance as well as the potential of individuals to hold public authorities responsible. As a result, the book demonstrates how the fight for social justice necessitates active involvement in forming the story of reality rather than passive acceptance and observation.

Singh explores this dynamic in a variety of media formats, examining how these media serve as both weapons of resistance and instruments of power. This interaction between social media and traditional media emphasizes how difficult it is to distribute information in the digital age. Singh's analysis highlights the significance of critical thinking and media literacy in navigating conflicting narratives that

influence our perception of reality. The intricate connection between media and power is also illustrated in the book. It also emphasizes how social media can be both a liberator and an oppressor. People actively engage with truth and knowledge to oppose and challenge control and manipulative systems.

The book eloquently illustrates the intricate connection between political power and human feelings, showing how broader social and political realities impact people's lives. The story blends romance and social action through Rupali and Arjun's developing relationship, demonstrating how their love develops alongside their shared dedication to confronting social injustices and promoting change. Love itself becomes a site of power dynamics as their connection develops both inside and outside of established power structures.

**Gender Violence:** Rupali's terrible demise and her encounter with gender-based harassment show how the female body functions as a specific site of power contestation. Ravinder Singh illustrates the psychological, social, institutional, and physical aspects of gender-based violence in this book. Singh also discusses the violence that society currently perpetrates against women. Rupali's activity and will to combat injustice lead to her becoming a victim of severe gender assault. She also defends women who oppose established hierarchies of power.

For example, Rupali's initial fear and rage turn into motivation for planning a protest march with other community members after she sees a police officer viciously abusing a protester. In addition to drawing attention to police violence, this group effort gives the characters the strength to oppose the repressive system and seek justice. Meanwhile, the book depicts loss, suffering, and terror. Following the assault on Rupali, Arjun and other activists won't be quiet. For Rupali's justice, they plan campaigns, demonstrations, and awareness

campaigns. The book highlights the institutional, psychological, and physical aspects of violence against women via Rupali's experiences.

It also emphasizes the significance of activism, collective action, and resistance in the struggle for gender justice. Singh demonstrates the transformational potential of group action and solidarity in opposing repressive systems via the experiences of her characters. She highlights the importance of emotion in influencing a person's reactions to power relations by focusing on the protagonist's emotional journey as they deal with fear and rage.

Through people who base their actions of resistance on their cultural past and customs, the book examines how cultural memory sustains resistance. The story implies that a thorough awareness of cultural heritage and group action are necessary for cultural change. We can better comprehend resistance and agency in society by acknowledging these many levels of power. In the end, the book is a powerful reminder of how important agency is in influencing the society we live in.

The complex connections between power, resistance, and social change in modern Indian society are exposed in this essay *Your Dreams Are Mine*. The book provides important insights into how power functions and how resistance emerges in contemporary educational institutions and larger societal contexts by analyzing institutional power, student activism, and interpersonal interactions. The author's depiction of Delhi University shows how educational establishments use a variety of control techniques, such as cameras and examination systems, to simultaneously become places of resistance and change from surveillance. Additionally, its examination of gender dynamics provides a wealth of information for comprehending the intersectional nature of power.

Singh uses Rupali's character to show how female activists have to deal with institutional authority, patriarchal structures, and social norms all at once. The limitations imposed by these power structures as well as the possibility of resistance and changes are highlighted by her path from a small-town student to an activist leader. Her resistance shows how collective action can confront these oppressive systems, while the gender-based violence she experiences reveals how institutional power frequently uses physical threats to maintain control. He shows how digital tools may be used for both resistance and power, opening up new avenues for organizing and enabling new kinds of control. The romance between Rupali and Arjun illustrates how common action may strengthen interpersonal ties and how emotional ties can maintain political commitment.

In addition to commenting on institutional violence, the novel's tragic conclusion shows how movements can transform individual loss into group resistance. Rupali's passing serves as a spark for fresh activism, proving that movements can flourish in the face of extreme persecution. Foucault's observation that power relations give rise to opposition is reflected in this conversion of tragedy into resistance. According to Singh's book, successful resistance requires simultaneously confronting institutional, cultural, technological, and interpersonal systems of power. The novel's topics are still remarkably relevant today.

*Your Dreams Are Mine* Now provides insightful information about how power operates and how it may be subverted as educational institutions around the world struggle with challenges of equity, accountability, and digital transformation.

## CONCLUSION

The book *Your Dreams Are Mine* now makes a substantial contribution to our knowledge of how authority operates and may

be subverted in modern society. The novel demonstrates how literature can shed light on both individual experience and group struggle through its story and incorporation of societal critique. The novel's examination of activism and gender offers fresh insights into how movements address interlocking kinds of oppression. In the end, it also acts as a cry for a society in which women can live in equality, dignity, and without fear of violence.

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