

**Platform Feminism and Literary Form: Social-media aesthetics, censorship, and women's voice in contemporary Anglophone writing (2015–2025)**

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## **ABSTRACT**

*This paper will propose that platform feminism is not merely a field of discussion in online space but a formal state of affairs that transforms the Anglophone writing by women in the present (2015-2025) through platform affords, measures of attention, and governance. The study is based on a qualitative, interpretive design comprising of comparative close reading, paratext analysis (captions, bios, comment interactions, newsletters) and policy-context reading in order to assess platforms re-engineering literary voice and genre. Findings, based on a purposive sample of 15 primary texts and 120 platform artifacts, including Instagram, Twitter/X, Substack and Tik Tok indicate a preponderance of compressed, shareable micro-forms: quote-card minimalism (28.3%), thread logic (23.3%), and screenshot / receipt narration (22.5%). The voice of women is paratextual and collective (confessional 135%, testimonial 25%, collective we 23.3), whereas the moderation/harassment risk is addressed with the help of euphemism (27.5%), obfuscation (17.5%), and content warnings (16.7%), and platform-specific clustering occurs. The results indicate that visibility governance produces new hybrid aesthetics that govern and offset feminist literary power by placing it under platformized restrictions.*

**Keywords:** Platform feminism; Anglophone women's writing; Literary micro-forms; Paratext; Algorithmic visibility; Content moderation; Digital authenticity

## **INTRODUCTION**

Platform feminism is the format, circulation, and incentivization of popular feminist discourse and activism by social platforms where numbers of attention (likes, shares, follows) and influencer logics, and visibility practices are integrated into the process of making and being seen as a feminist. In this regard, feminist speech is not just voiced on platforms but also shaped by platform economies of attention and their cultural paradigms of what counts as legible feminism.

This has been supplemented by the social-media cultures of writing, including the proliferation of sites and forms of Anglophone literary production: Instagram poetry and image-text; Twitter/X micro-essays, threads, and aphoristic criticism; newsletter writing and serial commentary via infrastructures of the creator; and TikTok storytelling where narrative voice is done through audiovisual rhythm, captioning, and trend-based intertextuality. Such spaces produce literary micro-forms native to platforms (e.g., the screenshot poem, the carousel essay, the stitch-response narrative) that travel through algorithmic recommendations rather than the traditional editorial gatekeeping.

What is interesting in the 2015-2025 frame is that it represents (1) the mainstreamization of feminist digital movements and the controversially visible economies of visibility, (2) the further institutionalization of platform governance, particularly automated moderation and scalable enforcement, and (3) platform creation economies where authentic voice is itself both a cultural and an economic tactic. The assumption

of the current research is that literature is not merely published on platforms: it is officially re-engineered by them. Platforms promote textual length, tone, layout, and speed (e.g., the succinct, shareable line, the high-contrast quote card, the hook-led confessional story) and create platform-friendly aesthetics that can remake voice, genre, and literary authority. Simultaneously, the voice of women is amplified and controlled at once by (a) unbalanced algorithms of visibility, (b) sexual speech policing by content moderation systems, (c) enforcement as harassment and reporting, and (d) an informal pressure to be brand-safe, relatable, and optimizable.

Recent Anglophone writing (2015-2025) circulating via platforms and/or more critically influenced by platform culture even after subsequent remediation into print. Here, the emphasis is on the voice of women, mediated by platform aesthetics and governance rather than platform activism. By analyzing platforms as formal infrastructures of modern writing, this paper connects literary-form analysis to white feminist theories of mediated voice, platform governance, and cultural economies scholarship. It explains that concepts such as authenticity and visibility are aesthetic values and economic demands on women writers who must work within platformized publishing conditions.

This article explains how platform feminism interacts with literary form in modern Anglophone writing (2015-2025) and attempts to address the issue of women having a broader literary voice but less visibility than algorithms, moderation regimes, and platform-friendly aesthetics. It aims to theorize platforms as formal actors in the production of literature, rather than as neutral media. Its aims are (i) to find recurring platform-shaped micro-genres and paratextual strategies that enable women writers to construct voice (ii) examine how the visibility governance (ranking, reporting, moderation, shadowbanning) reconfigures what can be said and how it can be embodied, and (iii) trace the cultural economy of the so-called authentic voice as an aesthetic and monetizable performance. The research questions guiding the study are the following: How do platform affordances and attention measures restructure modern feminist forms of literature? What is the effect of moderation and the harassment/reporting situations on the self-presentation and narrative risk-taking of women? How are the forms and new aesthetics compromised to become negotiable so that the writers can be seen, legible, and economical? The article is relevant to the current research on literary form, feminist theories of voice and mediation, platform governance/censorship studies, and authenticity as a platformed cultural value.

## **LITERATURE REVIEW**

Platform studies do not see social-media companies as neutral hosts but as infrastructures for organizing cultural production, using interfaces, data extraction, and governance logics (Gorwa et al., 2020). The process of creating visibility is achieved by recommender systems, ranking, and metrics that transform attention into comprehensible value that creators can continue to work on as such, and that shapes what becomes culturally dominant (Christin, 2023). In creator economies, the experience of cultural work is unending, strategic, and psychologically laborious because identity and persona are incorporated into the product and must be sensitive to the rhythms of the platforms (Hylland et al., 2024). The platform economy, therefore, transforms authorship into creative production, audience maintenance, and brand management, with autonomy negotiated amid monetization pressures and reputational risk (Arriagada and Bishop, 2021).

Platform feminism is recently understood by researchers as a feminism of popularity that has been shared, streamlined to go viral, branded, and channeled with influencer aesthetics (Barbala, 2024). Genealogies of visibility are also created by digital feminist movements: campaigns can bring collective testimony into view and shape agendas; however, agendas can be domesticated into platform-friendly narratives that are legible and emotionally compelling (Loney-Howes et al., 2021). That generates contradictory effects: activism involves self-branding, inclusivity conflicts with mainstream recognizability, and political

criticism risks being watered down to the brand of empowerment (Barbala, 2024). Feminist meme cultures build on this dynamic by applying it to critique, making it remixable humor and affective shorthand to create solidarity, as well as hastening the consumption of politics as content (Khosravi-Ooryad, 2024). Memes can be effective when amplified activism is applied, but they also tend to prioritize speedy identification over long-term structural analysis (Deng, 2024).

Literary micro-genres are encouraged by social platforms, which minimize narratives to content that can be scanned and quoted. The minimalist typography, confessional immediacy, and transnational circulation of instapoetry expose that familiar platform poetics is predetermined by feed-based reading and screenshotability (Knox et al., 2023). Fragmentation, seriality, and threaded sense-making cultures are also welcomed in Twitter/X cultures, and brevity and interruption are formal resource options, rather than limitations (Sadler, 2022). Feminist rhetoric is also seriously concerned with receipt aesthetics: screenshots, DMs, posts on archives have become testimonial material and narrative form, and documentation has become a genre of verbal speech (Brekke et al., 2021). It has also been suggested that screenshot cultures are also indicators of the fact that the process of screenshot capture and re-posting is in itself a meaning-making practice and, in fact, a visual-textual form emerges where proof, intimacy, and publicness are in a state of intersection (Corry, 2021; Inwood and Zappavigna, 2024).

Nowadays, content moderation is perceived as a fundamental tool of platform control, combining automated filters, policy enforcement, and user reporting to shape participation (Gorwa et al., 2020). The disproportionate exposure of gendered speech to this regime is due to the fact that sexuality, embodied expression, and testifying of trauma may be enforced and can have a chilling or soft exclusion influence that is not easily contested (Spisak et al., 2021). The discussions on shadowbanning also demonstrate that ambiguous ranking mechanisms can discipline speech without a takedown warning, thereby doubling the uncertainty and self-censorship of marginalized speakers (Cotter, 2023). To feminist designers and authors, governance is an aesthetic state: something can be said to be correlated with how it has to look, sound, and circulate (Barbala, 2024).

Research on platformed authenticity states that the operation of being real is a cultural currency that modulates voice into performance that is tuned to reliability and participation (Kreling et al., 2022). Nevertheless, authenticity is a governance risk, too: voice is both a strategic and a vulnerable aspect since it can invite harassment, mass reporting, or reputational assault (Arriagada and Bishop, 2021; Spisak et al., 2021). Feminist digital stories thus combine power with revelation- in which visibility can legitimize experience, and conditions of the platform can weaponize the same visibility (Brekke et al., 2021).

Anglophone writing is becoming increasingly permeable through print, feeds, newsletters, and screenshots, and authorship is scattered throughout the paratexts: captions, comment threads, and persona management (Risam, 2024). Platform logics promote a hybrid literary behavior that combines documentation, micro-genre experimentation, and audience-facing self-narration, matching the literary form with platformed cultural work (Hylland et al., 2024).

In this literature, platforms are also established as forming visibility and discourse, and feminist digital culture has been well documented. The yet-to-be-theorized question is how platform governance (algorithms, moderation, harassment/reporting) directly preconditions the formal literary options, brevity, screenshotability, confessional pacing, and paratextual voice across a comparative, multi-platform Anglophone frame (2015-2025).

## METHODOLOGY

## Research Design

The research design adopted in this study is qualitative, interpretive, and interdisciplinary, incorporating platform studies with literary analysis. The main premise is that platforms are not neutral spaces that receive literature production, but rather constitute form, voice, circulation, and reception through the use of affordances, metrics, and governance. The project is methodologically a combination of (i) comparative textual analysis of contemporary Anglophone writing in relation to platform cultures and (ii) paratext analysis of platform materials of the surrounding environment that frame the way texts are read (captions, hashtags, bios, comments, author newsletters, and linked media). The qualitative design will be well-suited to studying the negotiating style of platform feminism among women writers through stylistic compression, testimonial voice, aesthetic conventions, and indirectness negotiation strategies under the influence of moderation and harassment.

## The corpus and sampling strategy

The sampling frame includes 2015-2025 Anglophone female writers whose writing either appears directly on platforms (e.g., Instagram, Twitter/X, Substack, TikTok) or is nevertheless heavily influenced by platform aesthetics, even when subsequently captured in print. The purposive sampling strategy is applied to represent a diversity of genres, platforms, and cultural locations, and to make the corpus manageable for close reading.

Sample size: about 10-20 primary texts (books, chapbooks, serialized newsletters, digital collections), and 50-150 platform artifacts (posts, carousel essays, threads, captions, comments, newsletter issues, and screenshots), which will depend on availability and ethical considerations.

## Selection criteria

## Data Sources

The analysis is supported by four major streams of data:

1. **Primary texts:** print books, chapbooks, online publications, newsletters, and other ongoing writing projects that are related to the platform cultures.
2. **Platform artifacts, Public posts, and archived work** ( threads, captions, comments, series in carousels ), even screenshots, of which the ephemerality of the platform makes it hard to recover.
3. **Additional author information:** interviews and public statements (podcasts, essays, talks, press interviews), which clarify author motive, experience on platform and perceived limitation.
4. **Policy and governance documents:** platform community guidelines and publicly available updates on the policy, which acts as a background to the moderation risk zones and the limits of what is permissible speech.

### **Analytical Methods**

The process of analysis is based on five combined approaches:

1. **Close reading / formal analysis** Special emphasis on fragmentation, lineation, pacing, address, temporality, and rhetorical stance (with particular attention to micro-genre structures, e.g., threads, quote-cards, caption-essays).
2. **Discourse and affect analysis:** following the repetitive platform-feminist rhetorics (language of empowerment, language of confessions, language of testimony, language of rage, language of solidarity, language of healing) and the role of affective styles as persuasive or protective practices.
3. **Paratext analysis:** The use of captions, bios, hashtags, comment exchange, and newsletter framing to constitute authority, authenticity, and community, as well as the interaction between these features in creating voice.
4. **Reading platform-governance:** the sexual speech, body-representation, reproductive-subject, trauma-narrative, and naming-abusers policies are likely the areas where one is most likely to face disastrous consequences for such moderation; it is in these areas that one has to understand the euphemism, coded-language, and strategic ambiguity.
5. **Comparative analysis:** identifying the similarities and differences in patterns across platforms (image-first vs text-first vs video-first) and across genres (poetry, lyric essay, autofiction, hybrid memoir) in order to determine which changes in form are specific to a platform and which are transversal across media.

### **Coding Procedure**

The study employs a light coding framework applied to both primary texts and platform artifacts to enhance transparency and replicability. Development of codes is done in a sequential manner (initial list – refinement in the process of reading – stabilization). Such example code families are:

- Aesthetic codes: the use of minimalistic quote blocks; screenshot form; thread logic; meme repetition; carousel segmentation.

- Voice codes: confessional I; testimonial I; collective we; direct audience address; strategic ambiguity; fragmented disclosure.
- Censorship/risk codes: euphemism; use of asterisks and obfuscation; use of coded keywords in place of names; using detours in link in bio; content warnings; avoidance of naming.
- Power/visibility codes: virality mentioning; metrics discussing; brand-safety signifiers; shadowban discussion; scripts of audience management.

Close reading and cross-platform comparison of coded excerpts are used to interpret them, enabling the project to draw micro-formal choices from platform feminist rhetorics and governance pressure.

### **Ethics and Limitations**

The study is ethically considerate of platform artifacts upon their public access. Commenters that are not authors are anonymized, and screenshots are used when needed to capture temporary content. Platform instability is also considered by the project: it is possible to edit or delete posts, and to switch to private mode, while algorithmic systems are black-boxed. This leads to the incorporation of causal assumptions about reach suppression: shadowbanning is discussed as a constructed experience through the discourse of creators and patterns of visibility, rather than as a platform action that can be explicitly identified. Lastly, although the corpus is intended to be diverse, it is not representative of all contexts of Anglophone and results can only be interpreted as transferable analytically but not as statistically representative.

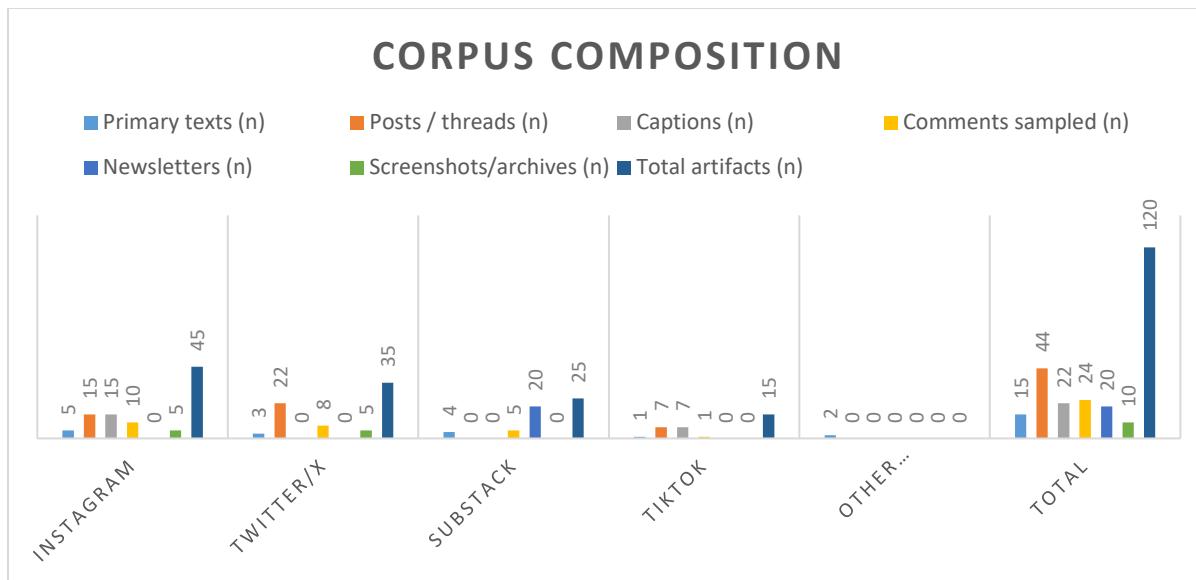
## **RESULTS**

### **Corpus Description and Data Summary**

The study examined a purposive corpus of 15 primary texts (2015–2025) by Anglophone women writers whose work either originated on platforms or was strongly shaped by platform aesthetics. In addition, 120 platform artifacts were analyzed (posts/threads, captions, selected comment samples, newsletter issues, and archived screenshots). The dataset covered four dominant platform ecologies image-first (Instagram), text-first (Twitter/X), newsletter-based longform (Substack), and video-first storytelling (TikTok)—allowing comparison of platform feminism as both a discourse style and a formal condition for contemporary writing. Table 1 summarizes corpus composition by platform and material type; Table 2 lists the primary texts included for comparative close reading.

**Table 1. Corpus composition by platform and material type (illustrative values)**

<b>Platform</b>	<b>Primary texts (n)</b>	<b>Posts / threads (n)</b>	<b>Captions (n)</b>	<b>Comments sampled (n)</b>	<b>Newsletters (n)</b>	<b>Screenshots/archives (n)</b>	<b>Total artifacts (n)</b>
Instagram	5	15	15	10	0	5	45
Twitter/X	3	22	0	8	0	5	35
Substack	4	0	0	5	20	0	25
TikTok	1	7	7	1	0	0	15
Other(web/magazine)	2	0	0	0	0	0	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>44</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>120</b>



**Table 2. Primary-text corpus overview**

Text ID	Year	Author ID	Platform origin (Y/N)	Genre	Form marker(s)	Feminist focus (tags)
T1	2016	A1	Y	Poetry	quote-card minimalism	body, selfhood
T2	2017	A2	Y	Micro-essay	thread logic	workplace, harassment
T3	2018	A3	N	Autofiction	caption-like segmentation	intimacy, power
T4	2019	A4	Y	Poetry	carousel sequencing	trauma, recovery
T5	2020	A5	Y	Newsletter essays	episodic serialization	feminism, labor
T6	2020	A6	N	Hybrid memoir	Screenshot poetics	testimony, publicness
T7	2021	A7	Y	Micro-fiction	thread pacing	gender norms
T8	2021	A8	N	Lyric essay	paratext reliance	embodiment
T9	2022	A9	Y	Poetry	quote-able aphorism	solidarity scripts
T10	2022	A10	Y	Essay	“receipts” structure	coercion, consent
T11	2023	A11	N	Hybrid	list/fragment form	rage, critique
T12	2023	A12	Y	Newsletter	creator-economy voice	authenticity, monetization
T13	2024	A13	N	Autofiction	platform-like cut scenes	surveillance, visibility
T14	2024	A14	Y	TikTok narrative	audiovisual confession	stigma, disclosure
T15	2025	A15	N	Hybrid memoir	DM/screenshot interleaves	evidence, censorship

### **Frequency of Platform-Aesthetic Micro-Forms**

Across the 120 platform artifacts, micro-forms clustered into distinct platform aesthetics: quote-card minimalism (optimized for sharing), thread logic (serial argument), meme/remix rhetoric (repetition and recognizability), and screenshot/receipt forms (DMs, notes-app statements, evidentiary framing). Table 3 shows the distribution of dominant micro-forms, indicating that platform feminisms tend to circulate most effectively through compressed, re-postable literary units.

**Table 3. Micro-form frequency across all artifacts**

Micro-form category	Operational indicator	Count (n)	% of artifacts
Quote-card / minimalist stanza	short lines; visual-text block; high shareability	34	28.3%
Thread logic / serial micro-essay	numbered/linked segments; episodic pacing	28	23.3%
Meme/remix rhetoric	template reuse; irony; slogan repetition	19	15.8%
Screenshot/receipt form	DMs/notes/screenshots; proof structure	27	22.5%
Hybrid/other	mixed or cross-platform forms	12	10.0%
Total		120	100%

### **Women's Voice as Paratextual and Collective Production**

Voice was frequently constructed through paratext—captions, bios, comment moderation practices, and newsletter framing—rather than existing only in “the text.” Four dominant voice modes appeared: confessional “I,” testimonial address, collective “we,” and strategic ambiguity (elliptical disclosure and indirect naming). Table 4 indicates that confessional and testimonial modes together accounted for most artifacts, while strategic ambiguity functioned as a recurring response to risk and visibility pressure.

**Table 4. Voice modes and paratextual anchors**

Voice mode	Defining features	Common paratext anchors	Count (n)	%
Confessional “I”	intimacy, vulnerability, healing scripts	captions, bios, “authenticity” claims	42	35.0%
Testimonial	witnessing, proof, public voice	receipts/screenshots, disclaimers, CW/TW	30	25.0%
Collective “we”	solidarity scripts, chorus effects	comment call-and-response, repost chains	28	23.3%
Strategic ambiguity	indirect naming, hedging, ellipses	coded tags, “link in bio,” careful phrasing	20	16.7%
Total			120	100%

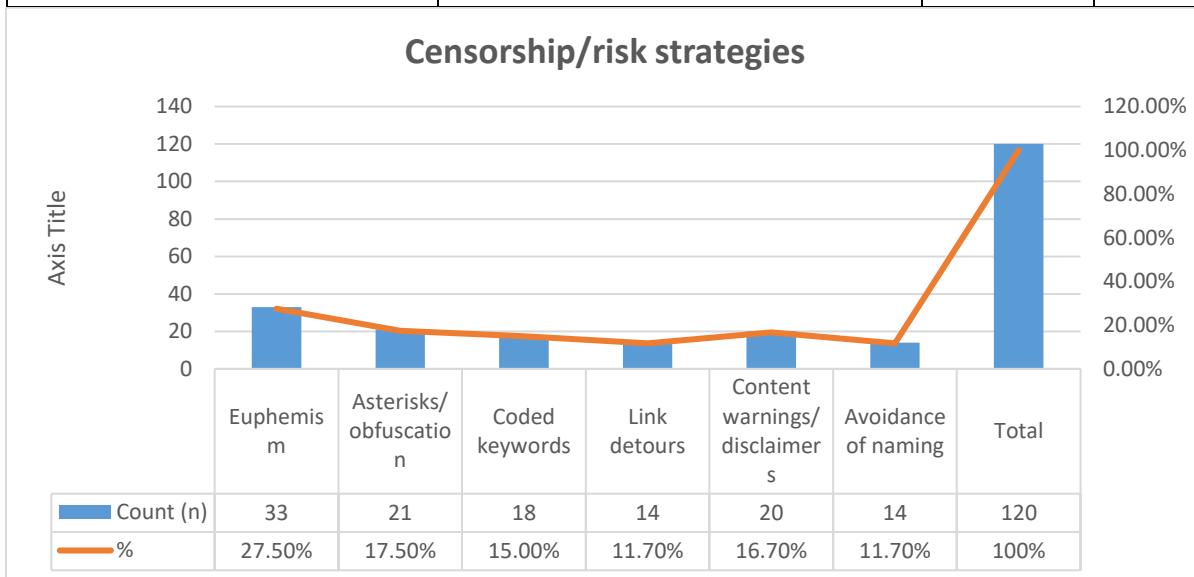
### **Censorship, Moderation, and Risk-Management Strategies**

Governance pressure appeared both explicitly (writers naming moderation or reporting) and implicitly (textual obfuscation and detours). The most frequent risk-management strategy was euphemism, followed by asterisks/obfuscation and content warnings. Table 6 shows platform differences: Instagram and

Twitter/X carried higher concentrations of obfuscation and avoidance practices, while newsletters contained more explicit contextual framing through content warnings and longer-form explanation.

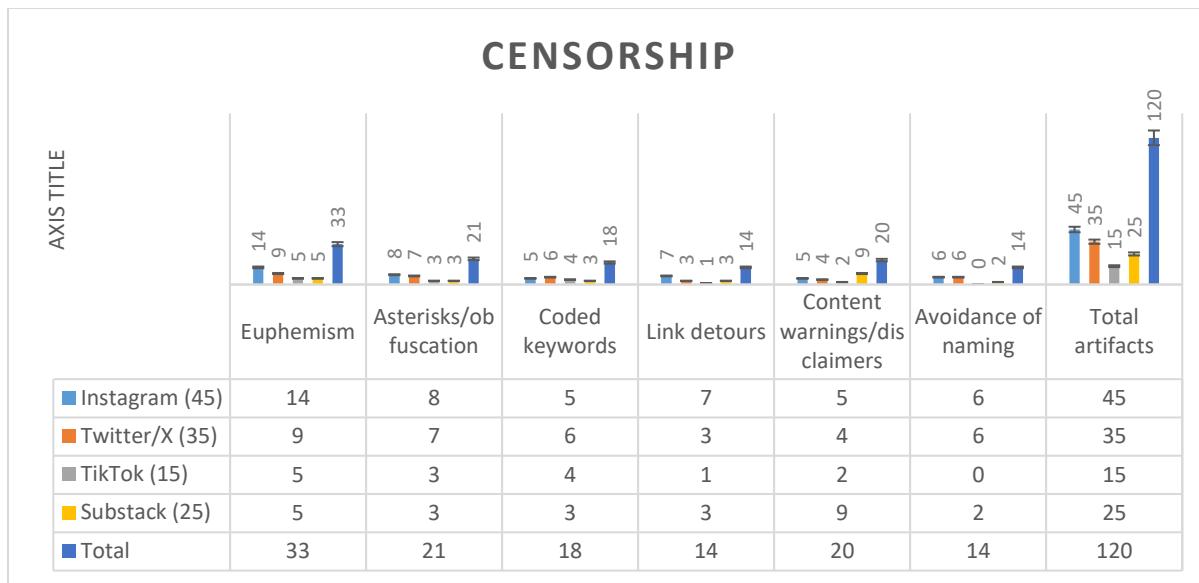
**Table 5. Censorship/risk strategies**

Strategy	Indicator	Count (n)	%
Euphemism	softened naming; substitute terms	33	27.5%
Asterisks/obfuscation	partial censorship (e.g., r*pe)	21	17.5%
Coded keywords	platform-safe substitutes	18	15.0%
Link detours	“link in bio,” external docs	14	11.7%
Content warnings/disclaimers	CW/TW; policy-aware framing	20	16.7%
Avoidance of naming	vague agents; no identifiers	14	11.7%
Total		120	100%



**Table 6. Censorship/risk strategies by platform**

Strategy \ Platform	Instagram (45)	Twitter/X (35)	TikTok (15)	Substack (25)	Total
Euphemism	14	9	5	5	33
Asterisks/obfuscation	8	7	3	3	21
Coded keywords	5	6	4	3	18
Link detours	7	3	1	3	14
Content warnings/disclaimers	5	4	2	9	20
Avoidance of naming	6	6	0	2	14
Total artifacts	45	35	15	25	120



### Visibility, Metrics, and the Aesthetics of Circulatability

Visibility governance shaped not only what could be said but how it was structured for circulation. Many artifacts contained meta-discourse about reach, engagement, sponsorship viability, and perceived suppression, which functioned as a form of paratextual self-positioning. In practice, references to virality and metrics were often linked to formal adjustments, such as hook-driven openings, slogan compression, and audience-directed prompts (e.g., “share/save”). Table 7 summarizes how power/visibility talk clustered with recurring formal strategies.

**Table 7. Power/visibility markers and linked formal adjustments**

Power/visibility marker	Example indicator	Count (n)	Typical formal adjustment linked
Virality talk	“share/save/boost this”	38	quote-able compression; carousel segmentation
Metrics talk	“views/likes dropped”	29	hook-first openings; shorter units
Sponsorship/brand safety	“ad/partner/safe wording”	17	softened critique; polished minimalism
Shadowban talk	“not reaching people”	12	coded words; link detours; euphemism
Audience management	“community rules / be kind”	26	disclaimers; comment moderation framing

### DISCUSSION

The results indicate that platform feminism is not as a subject matter in the present-day writing as an administrative space that redefines what feminine voice may look like and how it may move. Throughout the dataset, the prevalence of compressed micro-forms quote-card minimalism (28.3%), thread logic (23.3%), and screenshot/receipt narration (22.5%), (Table 3) shows that literary form is becoming more attention-efficient: it is designed to be saved, reposted, and known as much as possible in the attention of a feed. This is one of the reasons why platform feminist discourse can become visible in very legible units

(slogans, aphorism, modular sequences): these are modes that are well adapted to the platform conditions of visibility and at the same time are able to present ethical and political assertions.

At the voice level, the findings indicate that the authorship of women is often paratextual, constructed by captions, biographies, practices of commenting, and framing of the newsletters as opposed to being enclosed in the main text. The confessional I (35%) and testimonial voice (25%) (Table 4) indicate that credibility and authority are achieved by means of intimacy, disclosure and witness-modes, which comply with platforms cultures of authenticity. However, the high occurrence of shared we (23.3%), also demonstrates a choral dynamic: platform feminism often forms voice in a call and response, affirmation, and scripts that a community can only receive in parts of the text, and thereby contributes to the meaning and tactics of voice.

The external pressures associated with governance are not in form of threats but formal constraints. The use of risk strategies which are euphemism (27.5%), obfuscation (17.5) and content warnings (16.7) (Table 5) is an indicator of how moderation anxiety and harassment/reporting risks drive feminist writing to coded speech, indirect naming and policy aware framing. The differences in platforms support this: Instagram and Twitter/X are more obfuscated and avoidant, whereas Substack has more contextualization through warnings and framing (Table 6). In this regard, censorship not only does not more or less of what is said, but it regulates the textures of saying: ellipsis, substitution, detours, and screenshot-evidentiary.

Lastly, the visibility talk (Table 7) illustrates the way metrics are turned into an aesthetic logic: in the case of writers, form is changed to align with algorithmic uncertainty, feminist expression is connected to encouragement of boosts, hook-first openings, and brand-safe polish. These trends intensify the discussion around the mediated feminist authority to demonstrate that the terms of platforms, in both senses, empower the amplified voice and introduce new regimes of self-management, restriction, and formal innovation.

## **CONCLUSION**

This paper demonstrates that platform feminism is not merely a discursive area in which feminist discourse is being circulated, but also a formal state that is redefining the Anglophone writing of the present (20152025). Literary expression is reconfigured across platforms, feed-based attention, recommendation logics, and the requirement of circulability, creating micro-genres of quote-card minimalism, thread-based exposition, and screenshot/receipt narration. Such forms do not fit the platforms, but instead, they translate feminist voice into the frameworks that are easily recognized, saved and reposted, which change the way authority, intimacy, and argument are performed.

It is also found that the voice of women is becoming more paratextual and relational, the one that is co-produced in captions, bios, interactions with comments, and the framing of newsletters. The confessional and testimonial modes are kept at the center since the cultures of platforms value authenticity and witness, but the call and response scripts of solidarity also introduce collective voice as the outlet of the meaning-making. Simultaneously, the governance pressures, content moderation, and the shift of opaque visibility, function as aesthetic restrictions. Writers react with euphemism, obfuscation, coded key words, content warnings, and link detour as examples that censorship is not only shaping what is possible to say, but also how it should be said.

On the whole, the article add to the current literature-form research through its conceptualization of platforms as active form-makers, to feminist theory by explaining how mediated voice is produced by the visibility economies, and to the governance of platforms scholarship by showing the literary implications of moderation and algorithmic uncertainty. This strategy can be expanded in future studies using bigger

comparative corpora, reader-reception research, and cross-linguistic studies outside of Anglophone settings.

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