

Ecophilosophy, Praxis, and the Deconstruction of Anthropocentrism in Richard Powers the Overstory

Abdul Ghafoor¹, Seful Bahri², Rini Susanti Wulandari³ and Ihsan Ahmed⁴

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Abstract

This paper analyses the relationship among eco-philosophy, praxis, and the deconstruction of anthropocentrism in Powers' (2019) The Overstory, utilizing the theoretical framework of Deep Ecology as advanced by Arne Naess (1989). Powers' work challenges the prevailing anthropocentric perspective, presenting an eco-realm in which trees and ecosystems serve as primary protagonists, questioning the hierarchical distinction between humans and nature. This study, informed by Naess's concepts of Deep Ecology, such as intrinsic value, ecological self-realization, and biocentric equality, examines how The Overstory (2019) promotes a transition from anthropocentric ethics to a life-centered environmental ethos. The study examines the praxis derived from Power's narrative, highlighting the novel's advocacy for environmental action, shared responsibility, and a redefinition of humanity's position within the biosphere. It emphasizes the metamorphic capacity of the story in cultivating ecological awareness, suggesting that the novel acts as a medium for reevaluating, redefining ecological ethics, and prompting action against environmental degradation. This study argues that by integrating Naess's (1989) theoretical framework with literary analysis, the novel challenges anthropocentrism while proposing a realistic approach to biocentric life, encouraging readers to adopt ecological interdependence and activism. Integrating the ecophilosophy of deep ecology and practice highlights the novel's importance in contemporary environmental discourse.

Keywords: Deep Ecology; Anthropocentrism; Richard Powers; Praxis; Arne Naess.

Introduction

Richard Powers' *The Overstory* (2019) is arguably the most significant novel of the past decade and undoubtedly one of the foremost environmental fiction. Powers' novel intricately narrates the lives of various characters, irrevocably linked to trees, to convey a narrative that transcends human experience and explores broader, sometimes overlooked, ecological systems. Powers (2019) interconnects all life forms and demonstrates a rejection of anthropocentrism that has contributed to environmental disruptions. Amidst the contemporary escalating climatic crisis and declining biodiversity, novels such as *The Overstory* (2019) are crucial to study, as they can convey truths that empirical facts may fail to dispatch. This study demonstrates how this novel embodies ecophilosophical and eco-critical concepts by portraying trees as dynamic, independent sentient beings rather than mere static components of human endeavors. Powers' novel advocates for a more symbiotic and caring relationship between humans and the world

¹MPhil Scholar, Department of English, Air University, Islamabad, Pakistan. Email: aglashari2206@gmail.com

²Assistant Professor, Department of English, Universitas Negeri Semarang, Indonesia. M.Pd.

Email: Seful.bahri@mail.unnes.ac.id

³Lecturer, Department of English, Universitas Negeri Semarang, Indonesia.

Email: rinisusanti_w@mail.unnes.ac.id

⁴Master in English Language Education, Universitas Negeri Semarang, Indonesia.

Email: ihsanahmedlaghari@gmail.com



by examining how each character develops their ties with trees and the environment. The *Overstory* (2019) serves as an eco-critical and ecophilosophical narrative, illustrating the significant potential of literature to function as an unrecognized advocate in the pursuit of ecological awareness and activism.

Besides, anthropocentrism is a set of ideologies, beliefs, and values prioritizing human concerns over other environmental and ecological aspects. In current times, the concept of Anthropocene was devised and generalized by Crutzen (2002), which states that it is a "human dominated, geological epoch" (p. 23). Rae (2014) believes that humans stand and occupy a higher pedestal in the hierarchy of existence. Tyler (2020) posits that anthropocentric thinking is the premise that prioritizes humans, viewing animals in nature as tools for satisfying human requirements. This viewpoint frequently positions people as the focal point for contemplation, promoting notions of superiority or normalcy (Ahmed et al., 2024). While appearing intuitive, this anthropocentric perspective has led to an understanding of our relationship with the world that prioritizes human supremacy and frequently overlooks the intrinsic worth of non-human entities. Nonetheless, within the domains of literature, ecophilosophy, and ecocriticism, a growing corpus of study indicates the necessity to interrogate, scrutinize, and ultimately deconstruct these anthropocentric myths that influence our collective understanding of ecological crisis (Khokhar et al., 2024). In discourse regarding ethics and the interrelationship between humans and nature, contemporary literature influences our comprehension, challenges our perspectives, and cultivates a profound connection with the natural world.

Davis and Turpin (2015) foreground that literature can change our perceptions and inspire us to resolve these difficulties. It can transform our understanding of our relationship with nature by inciting self-reflection and fostering transformation. It focusses on how literature depicts, questions, and modifies the human-centric worldview, which places our interests above everything else in our interaction with nature (Iqbal et al., 2024). Works of environmental fiction can be used as a technique to draw attention to ecological problems. They can also serve as a guiding light in tackling the pressing challenges our natural world and surroundings face. Developing an awareness of the environment can be accomplished by engaging with nature through the medium of novels. People are encouraged to have a more profound knowledge and admiration for nature's beauty, complexity, and sensitivity by reading stories and narratives contained within these works (Khalidi, 2023; Shah et al., 2024). This paper investigates how storytelling, narrative tactics, and literary devices challenge anthropocentrism, modify perceptions, and promote environmental consciousness.

Talgorn and Ullerup (2023) contend that collaboratively generating and disseminating stories about our planet helps to create a shared understanding and empathy while simultaneously promoting a consciousness about eco-concerns. The complexities that are involved in presenting persistent ecological and emotional involvement with the environment are brought to light by this study. With the help of this analysis, the study aims to shed light on the capacity of literature to bring about transformation, to question deeply established human-centered ideas, and to cultivate a relationship between humans and the natural world.

Problem Statement

The problem statement is a clear and brief summary of the research problem, characteristically limited to one paragraph; its purpose is to detect the problem (Ahmad et al., 2021; Rasheed et al., 2023). The relevance of the environment is undeterred in contemporary literature, and it is the need of the hour to present the treatment of the environment and its relationship between humans and the natural world. More studies need to be conducted that critically examine literary works of this kind to negate and challenge the anthropocentric perspective and advocate for a more moral and sustainable relationship between humans and their environment. This study is an example of an attempt to develop a study that critically evaluates the literary work

of Powers the Overstory (2019). The novel contains narratives that have the potential to challenge anthropocentrism, and it serves as an ideal canvas for an ecophilosophical and ecocritical examination. Even though these narratives exist, there is a sufficient gap in the sense that this novel needs to be analyzed using an ecophilosophical praxis lens combined with an anthropocentric perspective. The theoretical framework, which offers an anthropocentric perspective, is utilized in this study to fill the identified research gap.

Research Questions

1. How does Powers the Overstory (2019) depict the human connection with the natural world in current ecological crises?
2. How does The Overstory utilize the ecophilosophy of Deep Ecology and advocate for ecological self-realization?
3. How does the novel extend the narrative to deconstruct Anthropocentrism and promote praxis of ecological ethos through environmental activism?

Research Objectives

- To examine how The Overstory (2019) presents the human-nature relationship while considering the contemporary ecological crises.
- To explore the application of Deep Ecology's environmental and ecophilosophical principles and its advocacy for ecological self-realization.
- To analyze the novel techniques in deconstructing Anthropocentrism and promoting ecological activism and eco-ethics as a praxis for ecological issues.

Literature Review

This literature review aims to enhance basic knowledge of the research that has previously been conducted in this field (Rao et al., 2023; Maitlo et al., 2024). This research will examine studies investigating the phenomenon of deep ecology and anthropocentrism and the themes relevant to the environment. Following this, this literature review elaborates on the specific studies conducted on the selected novel, which are performed on issues closely related to one another. The following section analyzes the studies chosen for the literature review because of their relevance to this research.

Kopnina et al. (2018) examine the idea of anthropocentrism and its ethical consequences on moral and ecological concerns. In this regard, they investigate various points because it prioritizes values over everything else; writers and researchers criticize anthropocentrism because it can potentially lead to the exploitation of the environment to benefit humans. They suggest tackling inequalities before concentrating on environmental protection because these inequalities affect environmental issues. This is because disparities impact ecological problems. According to their findings, the prioritization of interests drives the actions intended to protect the environment. According to the authors, acknowledging the function that ecosystems play as support systems for humans might result in a sense of responsibility and caring for creatures that are not human.

McShane (2007) examines Norton's (1997) convergence hypothesis, which claims that human-centered and non-centered ethical perspectives may result in ecologically responsible behaviors and policies. McShane's analysis focuses on the similarities between the two perspectives. On the other hand, McShane contends that ethical considerations entail more than just certain acts and regulations; they also involve feelings and attitudes toward the world. She says that anthropocentrism and non-anthropocentrism have consequences for how we ought to feel about nature, influence feelings such as love, respect, and wonder towards the environment, and that these implications should be considered. Within McShane's (2007) perspective,

anthropocentrism undermines values typically connected with relationships, specifically with the natural environment.

Buell et al. (2011) offer many perspectives on the link between people and the natural world, as portrayed in several works of environmental literature. This is consistent with studies that oppose anthropocentrism and promote establishing links with its surrounding environment. The research highlights the importance of reevaluating how people view nature and draws attention to the consequences of disconnecting people from the natural world using a barrier that is either cultural or natural. Furthermore, Buell (2011) offers a complementary approach to our interest in analyzing how literature depicts the relationships between people and the natural world.

The study that Skold (2023) conducted on Power's novel *The Overstory* in the context of climate change fiction aligns with this research focus on how literature might inspire change as a response to the climate crisis occurring during the Anthropocene epoch. This essay explores the novel's role in bringing about change, notably focusing on how narratives like *The Overstory* (2019) might inspire ideas and values about our environment. Skold's (2023) analysis of the novel, about talks on ecocriticism, contributes to the objective of this research, which is to position work within ethical frameworks. In the context of solving ecological concerns, this article emphasizes the interaction between literature, cultural shifts, and ethical considerations.

According to Riem (2021), Power's novel does not criticize this notion but instead promotes the idea of partnership, care, and love towards humans and the world. Consequently, this is in line with the investigation of literature that encourages relationships with the natural world. Within the context of the analysis of *The Overstory*, Riem's (2021) incorporation of Eisler's partnership paradigm highlights the novel's depiction of caring and interrelated concepts. Furthermore, Riem's (2021) multidisciplinary approach, which incorporates insights from other domains and critical inquiries, improves understanding of how literature reflects and shapes paradigms. Considering this, this research aims to investigate how literature interacts with consciousness and ethical principles.

Nevertheless, despite the fact that these works offer a number of different perspectives, there is a discernible void in the investigation of how ecophilosophy and anthropocentrism are portrayed in literary contexts. Although these analyses provide a wealth of perspectives on the relationship between humans and nature, they challenge anthropocentrism in a roundabout way through narratives.

To summarize, this literature review highlights the significance of literature and Powers the *Overstory* (2019) in countering anthropocentrism, developing relationships with nature, and shaping perspectives. It shows the need for more direct assessments of how eco-philosophy, praxis, and anthropocentrism are depicted and criticized in literary works. Still, it also highlights the breadth of analyses examining human-nature interactions from various perspectives. Additional research that explicitly investigates the concept of anthropocentrism within contexts can significantly improve our comprehension of human-nature relationships in literary works.

Theoretical Framework

The theoretical framework is a structure that supports a theory, and its function is not merely to comprise the theory but also to provide chronicle justification about the theory employed by the researcher to investigate the research problem (Cheema et al., 2023; Maitlo et al., 2023; Sadaf et al., 2024). This study applies the theoretical framework of Deep Ecology as proposed by Naess (1989). Deep ecology is a philosophical, ethical, and ecological perspective that challenges traditional environmental approaches by arguing for a fundamental reconsideration of humanity's relationship with the natural world. It emphasizes the inherent value of all living

beings, regardless of how useful they may be to humans. On the other hand, it goes beyond shallow environmentalism, which focuses on tackling immediate environmental challenges such as pollution and resource depletion without examining the underlying systems of society. A Norwegian philosopher, Naess first presented this perspective in the early 1970s. He advocated for a 'deeper' ecological approach to the problem of tackling environmental disasters. Deep ecology is based on several philosophical foundations. According to Naess (1989), every being, whether human, animal, or vegetable, has an equal right to live and to blossom. It is a philosophical tradition that rejects anthropocentrism, which is the notion that human beings are the most essential organisms in the universe and that the environment should be regarded solely for its benefit to humans. It is a philosophical tradition that was developed in the nineteenth century. It adopts an ecocentric or biocentric perspective, according to which all forms of life have an intrinsic value of themselves, regardless of how valuable they are to humans.

The concept that all living species are interdependent is one of the fundamental tenets of the philosophical framework known as deep ecology. Because of this interdependence, any damage done to one component of the ecosystem will affect the entire system; deep ecology necessitates a holistic understanding of nature, in which the relationships between organisms and their surroundings are prioritized over the survival or growth of individual species. According to Naess (1989), this comprehensive perspective is essential for implementing genuinely sustainable and environmentally responsible actions. It is also possible to trace the philosophical foundation of deep ecology back to the work of thinkers like Spinoza, whose monistic philosophy proposed that all of nature is a part of a single substance; Gandhi, whose concept of "non-violence" extended beyond human beings to include all living creatures. Both of these thinkers are considered to be the precursors of deep ecology. He was strongly affected by Gandhi's concept of non-violence in his interpretation of Gandhi's ethic of non-violence, which he read ecologically to indicate that people should minimize their impact on the natural world (Naess, 1989).

Basic Principles of Deep Ecology

Naess and Sessions (1986) presented a set of ideas that are considered to be the fundamental principles of deep ecology. These concepts have acted as a guide for individuals and organizations dedicated to cultivating an ecologically balanced relationship with the land: The well-being and flourishing of all species on Earth, including human and non-human life, have value in and of themselves.

1. The intrinsic value of nature. According to Naess and Sessions (1986), these values must be considered regardless of whether or not the non-human world can be valuable for human goals.
2. The diversity of living forms offers an intrinsic worth and contributes to the flourishing of life on Earth. Biodiversity is an essential component of Earth's ecosystems.
3. Human interference with the natural world is excessive, and humans have no right to reduce this richness and diversity.
4. The viability of human society: Human existence and civilization can only flourish if they coexist peacefully with the ecosystem.
5. A radical transformation of economic systems: Human activities need to transition from practices that exploit natural systems to practices that protect the integrity of natural systems.
6. The obligation to lessen the influence of humans. They have a moral obligation to significantly reduce their negative impact on the environment, particularly regarding the increasing consumption of resources and population growth.
7. Dedication to ecological activism: People who subscribe to the deep ecology school of thought should actively participate in the campaign for dramatic environmental change.

8. A holistic worldview recognizes that all living things are interdependent on one another and that they are all components of a more extensive system, also known as the ecosphere. The concept of deep ecology proposes a more fundamental and comprehensive reassessment of humans' relationship with the natural world. The anthropocentrism that has been the dominant school of thought in Western thought and environmental policy is challenged by this approach, which emphasizes the inherent value of all living species and the interconnectivity of ecosystems. However, deep ecology is not devoid of any constraints or restrictions. The idealism of it, combined with the absence of any practical political solutions, has caused some people to question its relevance in the context of pressing environmental challenges like the loss of biodiversity and climate change. Despite this, the ethical framework of deep ecology continues to be an essential contribution to environmental philosophy. Furthermore, the emphasis that deep ecology places on the interconnectedness of all life forms serves as a crucial counterbalance to more anthropocentric approaches to environmentalism. As humans continue to face environmental problems that are becoming more complex, the concepts of deep ecology will continue to play a role in establishing the philosophical and ethical foundations of the ecological discourse.

Research Methodology

"Research methodology is the part of the research study in which researchers give an account of the research methods, which they have used to conduct their research" (Ahmad et al., 2023, p. 402). This research uses a qualitative analysis approach of Creswell and Poth (2018) to extract the themes from the novel *The Overstory* (2019) that are pertinent to the research objectives. This strategy entails reading and interpreting the relevant excerpts comprehensively to analyze them through ecophilosophical and ecocritical lenses and to recognize situations that challenge anthropocentrism. This study investigates moral considerations and environmental justice topics using Naess's (1989) theoretical framework as a guide. Additionally, it critiques human dominion over nature and disproves the notion that anthropocentrism is true. In this study, the textual evidence from the novel is interpreted critically to carry out the ecocritical interpretation. This analysis focuses on specific passages, relationships between characters, and narrative components pertinent to Naess's theoretical framework.

Analysis

The Overstory (2019) is filled with examples that challenge anthropocentrism, promote awareness praxis of eco and consider ecophilosophy, and the relationship between human nature and other aspects of human nature. Nevertheless, taking into consideration the constraints of the research, only the portions that are the most pertinent are analyzed. Powers's novel *The Overstory* delves into topics that can be investigated within the context of the study of humans' interaction with the natural world. It contradicts narratives centered around interests and brings attention to the significance of efforts being made to establish a sustainable link between humans and the natural environment.

Back in Brooklyn, a poet-nurse to the Union dying writes: One more spring, and the three remaining trees burst out in cream-colored flowers. The blooms smell acrid, gamy, sour, like old shoes or rank undergarments. Then comes a thimbleful of sweet nuts. Even small harvest reminds the man and his exhausted wife of the falling manna that brought them together, one night in the woods east of Brooklyn (Powers, 2019, p. 12).

The fact that the poet nurse's reflection on a blade of grass is just as significant as the movements of the stars highlights the fact that nature is valuable. It calls into question our propensity to place a higher priority on people and acknowledges the essence that may be found in even the most basic aspects of nature. A theme of connection and reverence for nature is

highlighted by Naess's (1989) perspective, which places a higher value on the unspoken wisdom that can be found in the cultivation of plants than on written words. It emphasizes the profound qualities that go beyond language and human conceptions, so reaffirming the necessity of placing an emphasis on relationships between people and the environment in which they make their living. The way in which the trees blossom into blooms and produce nuts serves as a reminder of the cycles that nature operates in and the ways in which the many components are integrated into one another. The couple's recollection of the harvest serves as a link between them and the rest of the globe, highlighting the significance of shared experiences and our connection towards the natural world.

Ostalska (2022) perceives it as ways in which humans perceive the blessings that nature bestows on them is demonstrated by the fact that the tree blossoms despite the fact that it has a perfume that leads to a harvest that is both delicious and satisfying. It demonstrates how natural processes continue independent of our judgements or preferences, which is a challenge to the notion that humans are superior to other animals. In addition to this, it highlights the way in which nature functions in cycles that are interrelated and beyond human comprehension. "Yet still this tree has a secret tucked into the thin, living cylinder beneath its bark. Its cells obey an ancient formula Stand cool and composed before a million universes. As cool and composed as wood" (Powers, 2019, p, 13).

Through the depiction of the chestnut trees' struggle for life, the narrative calls into question the notion that people are at the center of everything negating the notion anthropocentrism. It highlights the endurance of the trees despite the fact that they are an isolated species that is unable to reproduce, while also stressing the fact that we are unable to fully know or control nature "That tree will outlive, by a hundred years and more, the man who has never heard of it" (p. 14). This refutes the notion that nature exists simply for the purpose of satisfying human needs and desires. The picture of the surviving chestnut tree, which is devoid of any associates for the purpose of pollination, shows the resilience of nature and its unyielding determination to endure. The commitment of chestnut trees to the ageless precept of "Stay. Be patient." brings to light the concept of waiting and maintaining a long-term perspective in the natural world.

The consideration of Naess's (1989) lens, "diversity of life-forms is part of this value" (p. 23) which emphasizes how all living species are interconnected and urges us to understand the timescales that nature has that are beyond what people experience. It argues that there is a connection between the chestnut tree and the greater universe, similar to how wood maintains its peaceful and composed state. The implication is that nature is a component of a hierarchy that extends beyond issues that are centred on humans, and it highlights the value of trees within the context of the larger scheme of things. This representation displays the resiliency and tenacity of nature, which challenges human-centered ideas by highlighting the ways in which nature strives to thrive despite interference and highlighting the ways in which the natural world is interwoven with the universe.

A woman sits on the ground, leaning against a pine. Its bark presses hard against her back, as hard as life. Its needles scent the air and a force hum in the heart of the wood. Her ears tune down to the lowest frequencies. The tree is saying things, in words before words. It says: Sun and water are questions endlessly worth answering. It says: A good answer must be reinvented many times, from scratch. It says: Every piece of earth needs a new way to grip it (Powers, 2019, p. 7).

The relationship that exists between the woman and the pine tree is shown in these lines in a way that is both beautiful and suggestive of a sort of communication that is beyond the comprehension of humans. There is a sense that the tree is trying to communicate something about the fundamental components of life, such as sunlight, water, flexibility, and perseverance. This depicts the wisdom and intelligence of nature, which challenges human

oriented notions by attaching deeper meanings to natural aspects. In ecological systems, the message that emphasizes the importance of adapting to new circumstances and always renewing oneself highlights the significance of reimagining solutions and embracing new methods to adapt and prosper.

The concept that each region of the earth calls for a specific strategy to interact with it highlights the interdependence of elements within ecosystems as well as the necessity of a variety of approaches to adapt to changing conditions. This paragraph challenges preconceptions in a roundabout way by bringing attention to the knowledge and messages that trees carry. This assertion undermines the notion that human comprehension and significance are the determining factors in determining the value or knowledge of the natural world. It indicates that nature possesses its own wisdom and intelligence “The joy of a joyful tree is primarily in the tree” (Naess, 1995). This provides the truth of ecophilosophy by depicting nature as a living creature that communicates and imparts wisdom. There is a correlation between this and the framework's emphasis on interconnection.

We found that trees could communicate, over the air and through their roots. Common sense hooted us down. We found that trees take care of each other. Collective science dismissed the idea. Outsiders discovered how seeds remember the seasons of their childhood and set buds accordingly. Outsiders discovered that trees sense the presence of other nearby life. That a tree learns to save water. That trees feed their young and synchronize their masts and bank resources and warn kin and send out signals to wasps to come and save them from attacks (Powers, 2019, p, 429).

This paragraph demonstrates how trees are able to interact with one another through the use of their root systems and the air we breathe. It also illustrates the connectivity and communication that exists between trees. In doing so, it challenges the notion that trees are lonely beings that do not have any social relationships by demonstrating the ways in which trees communicate with one another and provide support for one another. In this text, trees are portrayed as sentient beings who are capable of memories and learning. The concept that trees are able to remember seasons, synchronize their growth, and react to external threats is presented. This depiction places an emphasis on the intelligence and flexibility of nature, of which theoretical framework that urges us to contemplate more than human entities and acknowledge the wisdom that the natural world possesses. Within the context of this depiction, the idea of a forest consciousness or awareness is presented, which suggests that when trees are connected to one another, they produce a system that is cognizant of itself. This concept challenges the notion that people are the most important part of forests and nature, hence drawing attention to the interdependent nature of ecosystems. It gives the impression that there is a degree of intricacy in the environment that may not be immediately evident to human beings. The hidden links that are present within ecosystems are brought to light through the introduction of concepts such as the capacity of roots to adapt connections between fungus and communication networks. It places an emphasis on the significance of recognizing and comprehending the intricacies that nature includes.

These themes bring to light the interconnection, intelligence, and adaptability of nature, within ecosystems, it draws attention to the ways in which trees convey their concern for one another and exhibit behaviors that suggest a connection and intelligence present within the system. This offers a critique of the pervasive tendency to disregard ideas by employing both common sense and the collective scientific position. It opposes the tendency of paradigms to overlook or reject ideas that go against established standards, reflecting a broader critique of an anthropocentric approach that frequently prioritizes humans over non-human agency and intelligence. In other words, it challenges the tendency of paradigms to ignore or reject ideas that break established

norms. Naess (1989) proffers “well-being of human and nonhuman life on earth is of intrinsic value irrespective of its value to humans” (p. 167).

This portrayal presents the concept that forests are capable of becoming conscious, implying that trees are able to converse with one another and possess an intellect. This highlights the interconnectedness and dependence of organisms within ecosystems, which challenges human-centered perspectives by demonstrating the significance and intelligence of nature that is beyond our comprehension. This bolsters the concept that nature possesses its own intellect and communication methods that are beyond our ability to comprehend. In a general sense, this praxis contributes to the understanding of themes by drawing attention to the fact that nature is complex, intelligent, and interconnected.

Animals start teaching their children about the past and the future. Animals learn to hold rituals. Anatomically modern man shows up four seconds before midnight. The first cave paintings appear three seconds later. And in a thousandth of a click of the second hand, life solves the mystery of DNA and starts to map the tree of life itself. By midnight, most of the globe is converted to row crops for the care and feeding of one species. And that’s when the tree of life becomes something else again. That’s when the giant trunk starts to teeter (Powers, 2019, p. 448).

The implication is that nature, including trees and ecosystems, functions based on its own intelligence and connection, without requiring human involvement or interference, by encouraging us to alter our perspective away from a human-centered and human hegemonic view of the universe. This presents a challenge to the idea that people are at the centre of the world or that they are superior to other living things, and it encourages a wider understanding of the autonomy and consciousness of nature. This enhances the idea to adopt a more expansive temporal perspective by bringing to our attention the history of life on Earth and by recognizing the existence of humankind within this timeline. It gives the impression that the presence of people over the period of a day, which is often used to symbolize the existence of Earth, has resulted in significant alterations to the equilibrium of the planet, highlighting the significance of acknowledging our relatively recent entrance and influence while maintaining a sense of humility. By providing a perspective that emphasizes the intelligence, consciousness, and deep connectivity that exists within nature, the passage effectively debunks the concept of anthropocentrism.

Ovid tells the story of two immortals who came to Earth in disguise to cleanse the sickened world. No one would let them in but one old couple, Baucis and Philemon. And their reward for opening their door to strangers was to live on after death as trees—an oak and a linden—huge and gracious and intertwined. What we care for, we will grow to resemble. And what we resemble will hold us, when we are us no longer... (Powers, 2019, p. 469).

Throughout the novel, the significance of interconnectedness is brought to light. Protecting one another while we are out in nature. This concept is illustrated in the narrative of Baucis and Philemon by the fact that they do acts of compassion towards immortals who are disguised on purpose, which finally results in the transformation of these immortals into trees. This portrayal gives significance to human entities such as trees, meaning that they contain agency and consciousness and can be a part of transformative processes. In the complex web of life, the importance of the role that non-human organisms perform is emphasized. With nature showing the significance of compassion for all living beings regardless of their species, this makes a case for a healthy interaction between all living things. In other words, it implies that taking care of other people might establish a bond. This perspective which instead proposes that all forms of life are interrelated and worthy of respect and reverence “humans have no right to interfere with nature” (Naess, 1989, p. 124). The concept of superiority is undermined in the

novel through the depiction of the effects of kindness and the ultimate metamorphosis from people to trees.

This passage highlights issues regarding the way in which humans see things, highlighting the ease with which individuals can accept beliefs as truth without challenging them. This emphasizes the weakness in nature that is to blindly adopt views without questioning them and without looking deeper into the veracity of those beliefs. This highlights the ways in which our human-centered views may impede our ability to comprehend the world around us.

The correlation between this suggests that our tendency to prioritize oneself may distort our understanding of the natural world. Through a roundabout way, the text raises questions about the predisposition that we, as human beings, have to prioritize consensus over truth. Specifically, it implies that placing a significant amount of weight on ideas that are founded on consensus might lead to misunderstandings and distortions. This illustration, in essence, contributes to the study by offering criticism of the way in which humans perceive things. It highlights the fact that beliefs are subjective. It pushes us to reevaluate our centric perspectives. "Wilderness is gone. Forest has succumbed to chemically sustained silviculture. Four billion years of evolution, and that's where the matter will end. Politically, practically, emotionally, intellectually: Humans are all that count, the final word" (Powers, 2019, p. 453).

There is a sense of anxiety expressed in these lines regarding the vanishing of places and how forests are being altered due to using chemicals in forestry approaches. It brings to light the influence that this has on spaces. In doing so, it reprimands activities that put desires and requirements ahead of preserving resources. According to the passage, judgments driven by hunger, whether actual or metaphorical, bring about exploiting and depleting those resources. On top of that, it tackles both the theoretical and practical dimensions of our behavior about nature. It calls our attention to the repercussions of placing worries ahead of the well-being of our environment, and it encourages us to contemplate the drawbacks of retaining a perspective primarily focused on humans. In addition, it brings to light the effects our actions have on the environment. The need to develop a long-lasting interaction between humans and the natural environment is emphasized throughout the text.

Conclusion

The novel *The Overstory* (2019) is an enthralling investigation of the connection between people and the natural world. Each of the characters in Powers the *Overstory* undergoes a transformational journey that serves as a reminder of the connection between humanity and nature. The novel gives the impression that trees are sentient beings that communicate with one another, assist one another, and care for their environment through descriptions. This analysis effectively dismantles human-centric and human-oriented ideas by demonstrating nature's resiliency and enduring significance that extends beyond its utility to humanity. The study is based on Naess's (1989) theoretical framework. In addition, the novel encourages us to rethink the sense of superiority and urgency imposed on ourselves by drawing attention to the ongoing processes occurring in nature. In addition, the book emphasizes the praxis and the necessity of taking action to cultivate a mutually beneficial relationship between humans and the natural environment.

Nevertheless, *The Overstory* (2019) is a representation that serves as a testimonial that compels us to reconsider our perspectives on the natural world. It helps to reflect on the significance of the world and its ecosystem and shift away from narratives that are only focused on humans and toward an understanding of our role within the ecosystem. Powers (2019) narrative serves as a catalyst for change by pushing for a shift toward a relationship between humans and nature. This transition is imperative in light of the serious environmental concerns. Based on Naess's (1989) idea of Deep Ecology, this analysis emphasizes the significance of accepting narratives that acknowledge and respect the value of nature while simultaneously creating relationships

and space for a peaceful coexistence and collective concern for humanity towards serious environmental issues.

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