

Eco-Activism and Climate Future Narratives in Power's *The Overstory*, VanderMeer's *Hummingbird Salamander*, and Jemesin's *The World We Make*

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ABSTRACT

Aim of the Study: This research aims to figure out how contemporary speculative fiction equally conveys our reaction to the environmental problem. It reveals the effect of personal and societal actions on possible ecological futures. Each work spoke through different timescales: from firm memories with trees to an urgent crisis in ecology, and lastly, to a city's collective strong spirit. When collectively, they intensify the earth's message, from individual alerting to communal acts.

Methodology: Using a comparative qualitative approach, the study evaluates the three novels' portrayals of eco-activism and speculative futures through comparative analysis. Drawing on Vandana Shiva's *Earth Democracy* (2005), Ursula K. Heise's *Sense of Place and Sense of Planet* (2008), Lawrence Buell's *The Environmental Imagination* (1995), and Cheryll Glotfelty & Fromm's *The Ecocriticism Reader* (1996) as a ground frame.

Findings: These novels demonstrate the connection between social equity and ecological activism. Based on the study, each book focuses on a future dependent on present actions and frames eco-activism as a vital response to the climate crisis.

Conclusion: Each narrative's genre shapes its aesthetics and ecological agency, from instant intervention to generational perseverance. Living systems are complex and thrive on numerous interrelated adaptation and resilience techniques. This tension between urgency and patience, hope and despair, individual action and systemic change reflects the problems of environmental response in a world where dangers operate on various scales and timeframes. Fiction reflects current realities and illuminates' possible possibilities in our ecological moment.

Keywords: Eco-activism, Eco-criticism, Ecological crisis, Comparative analysis, Climate Future Narratives, Narrative ecology, *The World We Make* (2022), *The Overstory* (2018), *Hummingbird Salamander* (2021).

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1. INTRODUCTION

This dissertation explores the intricate ways in which contemporary literature functions as a crucial medium for communicating the urgent environmental issues of our time through an investigation of eco-activism and climate future narratives. This study highlights three novels: *The Overstory* (2018) by Richard Powers, *Hummingbird Salamander* (2021) by Jeff VanderMeer, and N.K. Jemisin's *The World We Make* (2022) addresses ecological issues and fosters a radical change in response to environmental problems. We look ahead at Powers' *The Overstory* (2018) for its broad narrative framework, which highlights the deep connection between all living things by tying the lives of its protagonists with the cycles of forests. This research study stimulates readers to reconsider their involvement in the environmental crisis and fosters an overall awakening to the value of ecological sustainability. In contrast, the close-up portrayal of the effects of environmental degradation on populations and fragile ecosystems in Jeff VanderMeer's *Hummingbird Salamander* (2021) are studied. Social engagement and grassroots efforts are vital in creating resilience for the future climate. The novelistic exploration of equitable changes and the potential of human agency in dealing with damages to the environment in N.K. Jemisin's *The World We Make* (2022) is evaluated. The contention to the contrary of the research is that Jemisin's writings inspire readers to participate in developing a more just and sustainable society. The present study argues that reading literature develops empathy and understanding, the two attributes necessary for creating an eco-conscious attitude. In addition to increasing knowledge of the urgent reality of climate change in the future, this study takes a close reading qualitative approach (Kusch, 2016), with thematic and comparative analysis to investigate eco-activism. Within the theoretical framework, I look at how eco-activism and environmental futures shape readers' views of global ecological concerns. Ursula K. Heise's *Sense of Place and Sense of Planet* (2008), Vandana Shiva's *Earth Democracy* (2005), and Lawrence Buell's *The Environmental Imagination* (1995) explore the ability of literary devices to promote environmental awareness. The study shows how fiction inspires readers to participate in ecological justice and envision sustainable futures by tying these frameworks together.

1.1 Research Objectives

The objectives of this research are to

1. investigate how readers are attracted to the themes of eco-activism in selected novels
2. explore how these novels expect the future of climate change

1.2 Research Questions

1. How do the novels display opposing future ecological issues and climate activism?
2. To what extent do the selected literary works influence readers' views of sustainability?

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

Abba (2023) investigates how Niger Delta poets deal with eco-precarity via their poetry, with an emphasis on environmental action in the face of oil exploitation. While the primary study has focused on eco-degradation in the region, this research emphasizes the limited examination of poetic activism. Abba examines Tanure Ojaide's *Delta Blues and Home Songs* and Nnimmo Bassey's *We Thought It Was Oil but It Was Blood* to show the exploitation of the Niger Delta as a "sacrifice zone". It concludes that the selected poetry collections criticise and demonstrate how poetry can be used to promote eco-activism.

Haila (1997) examines the term "wilderness" as it has been used in environmental discourse, focusing on its historical implications. The research questions the traditional view of wilderness as a fresh domain while offering a different view of 'wildness' as a vital aspect of human life. The study contains a historical and philosophical analysis of the term 'wilderness,' tracing its origins to 19th-century American environmentalism and European Romanticism. It explores how these ideas have affected views of nature and weighs the effects of seeing nature as 'other.' It connects the concept of 'wilderness' to Thoreau's idea

of 'wildness' in ordinary human existence, suggesting a new relationship with nature. The findings indicate that the traditional concept of 'wilderness' needs to be revised. It concludes that acknowledging the radical contextuality of human existence is essential. It fosters a more sustainable and equitable relationship with nature.

Gandotra & Agrawal (2020) address the connection between sustainability, the role of women in environmental action, and trees as symbols of life, as shown in Richard Powers' *The Overstory* (2018). It looks at how the book discusses ecological concerns such as ozone depletion, highlighting the value of collective action via ecofeminism. Powers emphasizes the critical role women play in maintaining nature and culture by citing historical movements like the Chipko movement and the activism of the Kayapo Indians. According to the study's findings, ecofeminism provides a lens through which to view gender, sustainability, and the natural world intersect in modern literature.

Gaard (2011) aims to investigate the historical evolution of ecological feminism and its ensuing marginalisation, especially in the 1990s. Further, investigates how the reappraisal of ecofeminist current environmental and feminist activism. Gaard examines the historical rise of ecofeminism from the 1980s to the 1990s and the anti-feminist reaction. It looks at the theoretical connection between theories in contemporary domains like naturalized epistemology and animal science, which can enhance ecofeminism's effect between several types of oppression, such as racism, sexism, classism, colonialism, and speciesism. The research also considers the insights that ecological feminism has diminished since scholars have stopped using the term. The analysis illustrates that in the 1990s, ecofeminism was dismissed based on criticisms of essentialism, resulting in the loss of key feminist and environmental discoveries. Reclaiming ecofeminism provides a fundamental framework for modern laboratory theories and activism, and restores its academic and activist past.

Zapf (2023) analyses how the 'ecological imperative' (Hans Jonas) is represented in literature through its narrative, formal, and aesthetic procedures rather than just its content. It begins by discussing the often overlooked link between literature and survival, then differentiates three major ecological approaches: material, political, and cultural ecology. The author highlights the importance of eco-ethical literature in environmental studies and understanding the Anthropocene. Literary works and nature express global points of view, therefore surpassing cultural boundaries. Zapf concludes with a list of literary features that embody the ecological imperative from a cultural-ecological viewpoint, emphasizing literature's capacity to engage readers co-creatively in environmental discourse.

Saranya (2024) tackles the issues of deforestation and climate change as they are addressed in Richard Powers' book *The Overstory* (2018). To analyze how the Powers' characters portray ecological action and argue for the protection of nature from the damage caused by humanity. Stressing the interconnectedness of ecosystems and the moral consequences of the activity, the study shows how forest loss eliminates human life and affects biodiversity. The results highlight the pressing need for grassroots initiatives and group efforts to stop environmental degradation, highlighting the subject's urgency and optimism.

Ab Jabar et al. (2024) focus on the social principles, which are stated through folklore direct interactions with the natural environment, examining the relationship between literature, cultural ecology, and folklore's impact on promoting ecological sustainability. Malaysian folktales illustrate the magnitude of environmental lessons that can be learned from them and how they can be used as powerful teaching tools to raise environmental awareness in future generations. Finally, it highlights the significance of grasping writings on cultural ecology in influencing ideas of sustainability on the planet.

Ali et al. (2025) evaluate Karachi's public transportation drivers' disregard for environmental regulations, paying attention on their knowledge of emission and disturbance laws. The research assesses drivers' knowledge of pollution control laws using secondary data and a literature-based technique. The findings demonstrate a general lack of understanding, since drivers frequently disregard checks that lower dangerous emissions. The writers list indigence, poverty and lax law enforcement as the main obstacles.

They come to the conclusion that in order to promote sustainable practices in urban transportation, enhanced educational initiatives, regulation, and well-structured laws are required.

Sikandar et al. (2024) figured out how environmental transitions from isolation to urban settings in Robinson Crusoe and Moll Flanders reshape cognitive and labor-related identities through the prism of John Locke's Labor Philosophy. The research employs a qualitative literary study and examines how socioeconomic surroundings impact human behavior using Locke's (1690) theory as a framework. The authors point out that Moll Flanders depicts labor in urban settings as commercial and adaptable, reflecting a deft maneuvering of social institutions, whereas Robinson Crusoe depicts labor as a survival-driven, individual act founded in Locke's idea of property via efforts. Their research challenges philosophical ideas of work while highlighting the varied manifestations of cognition influenced by economic and environmental factors.

Muzamil (2025) examines the impact of US and Chinese climate policies on India's renewable energy transition, providing a detailed overview of worldwide climate plans. Using concepts from environmental studies and international politics, the paper investigates how India balances internal energy requirements with foreign geopolitical influences. The study emphasizes the intricate linkages between global climate politics and domestic energy, highlighting that India attempts to transition to greener energy sources. Muzamil examines trade, investment, and policy alignment to illustrate the complex role that global relationships and climate diplomacy play in India's sustainable energy future. The study adds to the larger discussion on climate governance and energy policy by underlining the interdependence of international actions and state plans.

Aslam and Farheen (2023) highlight the pressing need for climate education in Pakistan by looking at how young people in Islamabad perceive climate change and its effects on human health. Despite having a negligible contribution to global emissions, Pakistan is nonetheless one of the most affected countries, dealing with issues including droughts, changing weather patterns, and glacier melt. The research evaluates public comprehension by combining qualitative and quantitative data using a mixed-method approach. The results show that although the majority of young people are aware of the reality of climate change and its primary causes deforestation and global warming there is still a considerable lack of practical mitigation techniques. In order to encourage environmental responsibility among young people, the authors emphasize the significance of educational initiatives and institutional participation at the national and collegiate levels.

Khan et al. (2025) investigate ancient tales' concerns about climate change by analyzing the Great Flood's recurrent motif in Hindu, Anglo-Saxon, Mesopotamian, Christian, and Islamic mythology. using an interdisciplinary approach that blends corpus linguistics with ecocriticism. In order to find themes, patterns, and language changes in flood myths across cultural boundaries, the study uses Sketch Engine. The study starts with a quantitative analysis before moving into a qualitative discussion that emphasizes recurrent themes like environmental regeneration, survival, and divine vengeance. The authors contend that these myths include conventional ecological information that is still pertinent to the conversation about climate change today, in addition to spiritual or moral messages. Their research highlights the importance of folklore in fostering environmental awareness and cultural resilience while offering solutions for adaptation and sustainable living.

3. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Eco-activism refers to organized efforts and actions to protect the environment while addressing climate change, biodiversity loss, pollution, and natural resource exploitation. It encompasses a range of activities, from grassroots movements and local advocacy to global campaigns for policy change. Eco-activism often highlights the intersection between environmental sustainability and social justice, recognizing that ecological degradation affects marginalized communities. The idea that the environment ought to be protected from the adverse effects of our actions is conveyed by environmentalism. This wide goal has fueled activist attempts that include direct and legal action and cooperative efforts. Different

times, locations, and political contexts give way to varied forms of sustainability. Environmental activism is bound to be a fruitful area of anthropological research. In literature, eco-activism is reflected through narratives that inspire awareness and envision sustainable futures. These stories often portray characters, communities, or systems actively resisting environmental harm and promoting the ethical stewardship of the planet. By embedding eco-activism within storytelling, authors engage readers emotionally and intellectually, motivating them toward collective action for environmental preservation.

As the critical foundation of eco-activism, ecocriticism provides critical signals to identify the narratives of environmental damage. Eco-activism usually involves taking part in an active event, such as a rally or display, and holding posters with catchy slogans or dismal pictures of wildlife. On the other hand, we frequently associate literature with the arts versus practice, as we view words on a page as static. We'll examine how authors may utilize their words to affect the future. Key themes in eco-activism include the interconnectedness of life systems, social justice, environmental justice, and collective responsibility. These themes highlight the dependency of all life forms on each other, linking ecological issues with human rights and community-led efforts for sustainability.

As highlighted by Rodríguez-Labajos (2022), literature works within larger socio-ecological systems to promote systemic change. According to Abba (2023), literature exposes eco-precruit means human role in environmental collapse (Nayar, 2019), and inspires action by offering different viable prospects and featuring ecological inequalities. For literary studies to remain relevant in the Anthropocene, Zapf (2023) proposes the concept of the "ecological imperative," which posits that literary studies must engage with natural truth. Through these means, literature links action and consciousness, fostering individuals' engagement with ecological issues.

Climate future narratives offer cautionary tales for alternate ecological futures that involve both real and fictitious depictions of climate disasters in fiction. Rybak (2023) states that by addressing complex environmental issues, green literature fosters an active presence in the context of climate change. Gandotra and Agrawal (2020) argue that the literature on sustainability exceeds the gap between scientific plans and cultural consciousness, influencing general views of climatic futures. Haila (1997) broadens this debate by revealing the complex intricacy of environmental thought and how literature mixes political, cultural, and scientific aspects to create powerful climate narratives. They urge readers to envision transformative responses to ecological challenges while rejecting prevailing industrial practices.

Buell, Heise, Shiva, and Glotfelty's philosophical views are analysed in this study to examine climate narratives and eco-activist literature. Buell's research on environmental imagination serves as a foundation for comprehending literature's interaction with ecological awareness. Heise's transnational ecological critique emphasises planetary connection by placing climatic narratives in a global perspective. Glotfelty's contributions to ecocriticism provide the theoretical basis for incorporating environmental language into literary studies. In contrast, Shiva's ecofeminism and environmental justice viewpoints emphasise the relevance of literature in opposing ecological equity. By denying essentialist connections between women and nature and situating ecofeminism within materialist environmentalism, Gaard (2011) underscores the importance of ecofeminism. Jabar et al. (2024) reinforce the relationship between ecological feminism and cultural ecology, showing the link between environmental stability and social systems. Societal and industrial transformation has grown progressively linked with eco-activism. Examined by Putra et al. (2024), the impact of environmental activism on firm sustainability plans and the evolution of the industry.

4. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This section includes materials and methodology used for this research. It operates a qualitative approach to explore the theories of eco-activism and environmental futures in *The Overstory* (2018), *Hummingbird Salamander* (2021), and *The World We Make* (2022). This section collects primary data through close reading (3.2).

4.1 Research Model

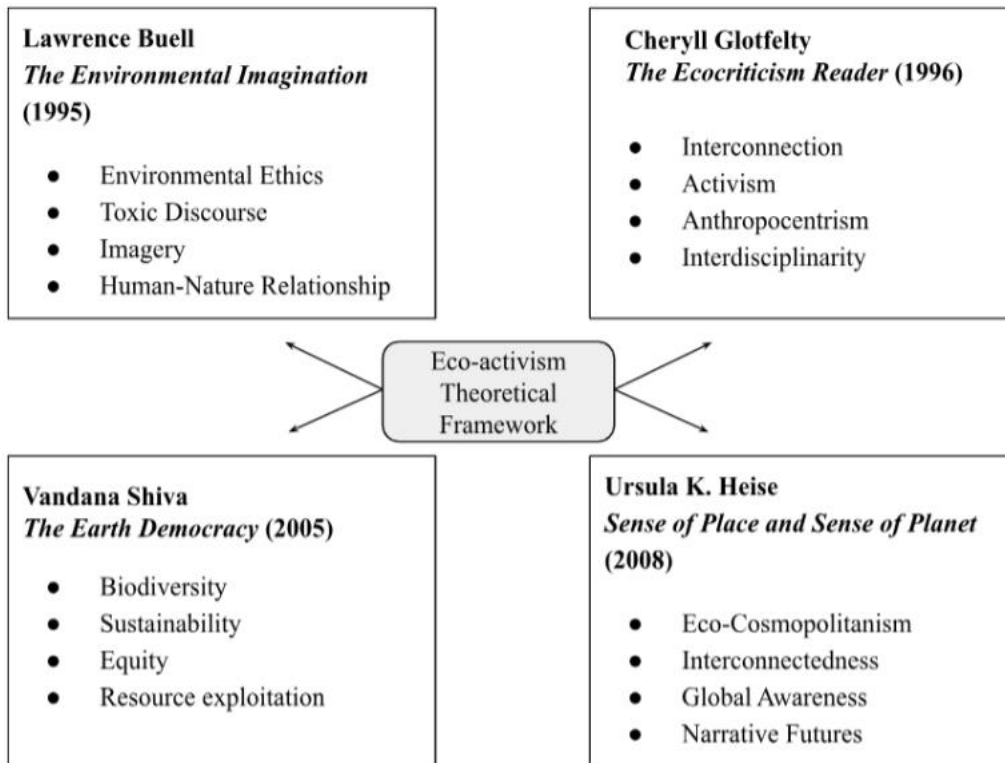


Figure 1: *Eco-activism Theoretical Framework*

This thesis examines eco-activism and climate future narratives using qualitative close reading analysis identified in Kusch's *Literary Analysis: The Basics* (2016) to examine eco-activism and climate future narratives of the selected texts.

4.2 Research Methods

Primary data is collected through close readings of *The Overstory* (2018), *Hummingbird Salamander* (2021), and *The World We Make* (2022), and thematic analysis from relevant academic literature. Thematic exploration (Kusch, 2016) identifies key eco-activism themes, while comparative investigation (Kusch, 2016) exposes diverse perspectives on environmental issues. This study also examined readers' responses across multiple platforms to analyze how they engaged with themes of ecological consciousness in the selected novels.

5. ANALYSIS

Jemisin's activism prioritises collaboration among diverse groups, which Glotfelty considers essential for effective environmental involvement. When her persona necessitates:

"We can't do it on our own because you motherfuckers had like a thousand years to handle this shit yourselves and you didn't... Do or die, show and prove. Can't be no in-between." (Jemisin, 2022)

She presents a theory of activism that necessitates both collaboration and confrontation. Shiva's "earth democracy" principle is embodied by this equilibrium between grassroots mobilisation and institutional engagement, which mandates equitable community participation in pursuing environmental justice.

Jemisin proposes a multifaceted approach to urban ecological justice that encompasses formal policy interventions and spontaneous community resistance, reflecting the real-world tensions in environmental movements between challenging and working within the fundamental structures of systems and working within them. Jemisin delves into the complementary relationship between institutional and grassroots activism that Shiva identifies as essential for sustainable change by depicting characters engaging in electoral politics and street-level organising.

Hummingbird Salamander views climate change as a contemporary collapse that is denied. The protagonist of VanderMeer acknowledges this temporal collapse:

"Those of us who survived the pandemic, and all the rest, passed through so many different worlds. Like time travelers. Some of us lived in the past. Some in the present, some in an unknowable future." (VanderMeer, 2021, p. 101)

This excerpt shows Heise's "narrative futures" that violate linear temporality. VanderMeer's eco-thrillers uncover corporate biopiracy, wildlife trafficking, and ecosystem manipulation, instilling paranoia. This method exemplifies Buell's "toxic discourse" by revealing environmental harm through detective work. VanderMeer uses thriller clichés to show how corporate and political structures hide environmental devastation. VanderMeer's paranoid narrative approach exposes systematic violence that often goes unnoticed in environmental debate by portraying environmental degradation as a crime. VanderMeer's activism emphasises individual enlightenment and disengagement over collective mobilisation. His protagonist says, "I want to be lost...even in the heart of the city... That's how we need to be. So the systems can't find us, can't wreck us" (VanderMeer, 2021). His technique contrasts with Jemisin's coalition-building and Powers' direct action, proposing that true resistance may entail breaking free of hegemonic systems. VanderMeer questions whether conventional activism can solve environmental damages inherent in fundamental economic and political processes. VanderMeer explores individual resistance to institutional power through his protagonist's path from corporate security specialist to environmental whistleblower. Both the novel and contemporary activism leave open the question of whether environmental groups should work inside existing systems or build new ones.

In *The Overstory* (2018), climate change is seen as "slow violence", ecological devastation that occurs across generations. Powers states this time perspective:

"The years ahead will run beyond anything he can imagine. The die-offs and disasters will make Bronze Age plagues seem quaint. Prison may become a hideaway from the sentence outside."

Powers (2018) portrays the climate catastrophe in timescales beyond human awareness. His technique exemplifies Buell's "environmental imagination" by challenging readers to consider beyond human time. Powers contrast arboreal timeframes: centuries signify single life cycles, with environmental urgency. Buell's idea that environmental disaster is frequently unnoticed because it evolves too slowly is illustrated by this temporal juxtaposition. Ecological processes and human attention spans are incompatible. By switching between human protagonists in crisis and arboreal viewpoints spanning millennia, Powers produces "environmental consciousness" that transcends anthropocentric boundaries, according to Buell.

Powers addresses Shiva's biodiversity principle by depicting individuals who protect forest ecosystems physically and conceptually: "The most wondrous products of four billion years of life need help. Not them; us. Help from all quarters." (Powers, 2018) Shiva argues that biodiversity is vital for human life, not only an aesthetic or scientific concern, but also that humanity requires help rather than giving it. Powers views rewilding as an ethical reorientation, seeing the significance of nonhuman living forms beyond their benefit to human society. Powers examines biodiversity conservation via direct action, scientific inquiry, and internet activism. Shiva's multidimensional presentation shows that environmental protection demands both practical conservation and fundamental changes in human-nonhuman relations.

Powers explores the ethics of prioritising biodiversity above human achievement by showing individuals who trade personal freedom for forest protection.

These climatic scenarios' emotional valences differ most. In Jemisin's urban fantasy, supernatural intervention gives her personified cities a fighting chance. This optimism is weak but sincere, reflecting Glotfelty's belief that creativity may generate new environmental possibilities. Her characters' refuse despair even while facing overwhelming forces, showing that group resilience supplies resistance resources that solo action cannot. This optimistic view acknowledges environmental problems but believes collaborative effort can make a difference. Noir clichés in VanderMeer's eco-thriller create strategic despair. Since his protagonist believes institutions may be irredeemably corrupt, real change may necessitate forsaking activism. By confronting difficult truths, despair creates "environmental consciousness" (Heise). VanderMeer contends that true environmental consciousness starts with realizing how deeply ecological degradation is rooted in modern societal institutions. It confronts complacency without reassurance by creating constructive pain.

Through its arboreal viewpoint, Powers' literary realism encourages patience. Buell constructs "environmental ethics" based on human limits by continually placing human characters in tree-centered settings. Famous quote: "She has watched a forest die that was older than her species." (Powers, 2018) Positioning human acts inside nonhuman temporalities illustrates this approach. Powers contends that effective environmental participation needs patience beyond human lifetimes, unlike Jemisin's eager optimism and VanderMeer's quick sorrow. Powers illustrates environmental movement conflicts by alternating between present activist fights and centuries-old arboreal viewpoints.

5.1 Environmental Fiction and Reader Engagement

Modern environmental fiction is an important link between what scientists know and how people feel about environmental problems. Authors such as N.K. Jemisin, Jeff VanderMeer, and Richard Powers have created unique ways to tell stories that make readers feel like they are really experiencing environmental issues. These authors use different types of stories to make readers more aware of the world by getting them involved. People enjoy talks about climate possibilities through environmental literature because it creates engaging experiences that "get under the skin in a way that just reading about the science doesn't always manage." We can learn how narrative styles can be used to raise knowledge and take action for the environment by looking at three important works: *The World We Make* (2022) by Jemisin, *Hummingbird Salamander* (2021) by VanderMeer, and *The Overstory* (2018) by Powers.

Table 1: Environmental fiction and reader engagement

Fiction	Temporal Focus	Affective Strategy	Reader Positioning	Theoretical Alignment
Urban Fantasy <i>The World We Make</i> (2022)	Near-future, multiverse possibilities	Hope through magical realism, a personification of urban spaces	Active participant in reimagining communities	Glotfelty and Fromm's activism; Heise's eco-cosmopolitanism
Eco-Thriller in <i>Hummingbird Salamander</i> (2021)	Collapsed present/future boundary	Paranoia, cognitive estrangement, and a horror body	Witness to concealed environmental crimes	Buell's toxic discourse; Heise's narrative futures
Literary Realism in <i>The Overstory</i> (2018)	Extended timeframes; tree-centered temporality	Empathy through scientific accuracy; arboreal consciousness	Witness to intergenerational processes	Buell's human-nature relationships; Shiva's biodiversity

As shown in Table 2: the ideal environmental literary response mixes urgent optimism, critical urgency, and contemplative patience to produce a full reader connection with ecological disaster and opportunity. Each of the three genres offers readers the fundamental components they need for thorough environmental engagement, making them all vital for a holistic response. Fantasy inspires readers to feel that change is attainable through collective effort and innovation. This belief alleviates environmental despair and inspires readers to take environmental action, even when the challenges seem insurmountable. Thriller offers readers the motivation they need to take quick action against pollution crimes and corporate dishonesty. This sense of urgency encourages readers to discover and combat hidden environmental degradation. Realism provides readers the profound comprehension to maintain a sustained dedication to environmental change via scientific insight. It creates enduring environmental awareness and stops mistaken environmental action. These three tale forms work together to provide a comprehensive response to the environment, tackling both short-term and long-term transformation. Without urgency, hope breeds comfort. Burning is the result of urgency without serenity. Hopeless patience fosters misery. Environmental literature can only provide readers the whole spectrum of answers required for successful ecological action that can endure, is necessary to matter, and yet hopeful to start using each of the strategies.

The detailed breakdown signals that Environmental narratives are produced by urban fantasy stories, which reveal how magic may rapidly cure environmental issues via shared action. This genre alters readers' perspectives on environmental issues by suggesting how they may be addressed through collective effort. Jemisin's novel offers a potent paradigm for actual environmental action, showing how people can cooperate to make cities come to life. In discussing "City magic" that adheres to "rules" and "science that we don't understand on anything but the most basic and instinctive level, Padmini outlines that shared education in communities might tackle environmental issues (Jemisin, 2022). This magical style of thinking translates environmental issues from unresolved into puzzles that may be solved voluntarily by locals. The citation implies that real environmental cures also require groups to collaborate and exchange knowledge. It demonstrates that even magical solutions require education and readership. The blending of "science" and "magic" in the sentence displays urban fantasy, connecting creative interest with practical ecological remedies. Readers learn that taking action for the environment doesn't have to be dull or technical; it can be fun. Due to this mixture, environmental advocacy no longer seems serious, yet it remains enjoyable and straightforward. Urban fantasy's spatial framework for quick change, giving rise to what we may refer to as quick transformation prospects. Manhattan's relationship with Manny and the formation of "Less illegal garbage dumping, fewer rats" (Jemisin, 2022, p. 45) prove this. Because readers see real changes occurring quickly, this clear correlation of environmental progress and consciousness inspires hope. It illustrates how one person's enhanced connection to their community can have a significant impact on our planet.

Readers learn from this clear cause and effect link that their surroundings may be directly impacted by their ecological consciousness. Readers gain confidence when they see that global problems may be swiftly resolved via societal charm. By removing the hurdles that make activism unfeasible in real life, the fantasy genre enables readers to see themselves as environmental activists. In Jemisin's global vision, cities such as "São Paulo," "Paris," and "Mumbai" collaborate as living entities with their cultural powers. For example,

"São Paulo has entered the ring... Paris, walking with a runway model's forceful confidence and lowering the unicorn horn of the Eiffel Tower... Istanbul... a giant bare-chested wrestler... Mumbai pats New York on its Queens shoulder... sparkling with pure Bollywood fight-choreography energy" (Jemisin, 2022, p. 391).

By offering ecological options that preserve regional culture while fostering global collaboration, Heise's eco-cosmopolitanism is achieved. Every city strives for the shared goal of protecting the planet while keeping its own cultural persona. Mumbai contributes Bollywood creativity, Istanbul Turkish strength, Paris French elegance, and São Paulo Brazilian vigour. This proves to readers that cultural diversity may

be a source of ecological vitality rather than a need for everyone to behave in a uniform way to achieve solutions. The line further shows how ecological activism doesn't have to be dull and self-sacrificing; it can be appealing and exciting. The cities combat pollution with flair, optimism, and fun. This rethinks ecological advocacy as a culturally diverse endeavor that respects many lifestyles and enables broad cooperation. Readers are transformed into active observers who may see their own cities as sites of cultural ecological renewal versus mere erosion. Readers are encouraged by the fantasy genre to see their local communities as possible sources of environmental magic, whereby cooperation may result in swift improvement.

In urban fantasy, the prevailing sentiment is one of hope through miraculous transformation. In Manny's perspective, "when the borough of Manhattan is in tune with him and vice versa, everything flows better," readers see an instance of human-urban harmony (Jemisin, 2022, p. 45). This is hopeful, as it suggests that environmental issues are reversible and can be resolved through collective action. The reader is transformed from a passive spectator to an active participant. Readers of urban fantasy are encouraged to see themselves as part of the miraculous solution, able to change their neighborhoods via community service. Reading becomes an active element in refining communities. Reading urban fantasy makes people think they can change communities via outreach and environmental awareness. People may affect the environment immediately by collective action through quick wonderful involvement. Environmental literature should motivate readers to act ecologically, according to Glotfelty's activism structure. Fantasy overcomes psychological obstacles that make environmental action seem beyond reach, demonstrating to readers that they can change.

Eco-thrillers utilize collapsed time and concealed crimes to make readers feel anxious about their environmental impact. Environmental damage occurs via systems that readers may unknowingly support, and this genre compels readers to face these painful realities. A thriller generates a sense of urgency by instilling dread and mistrust, in contrast to fantasy, which provides hope via illusions. VanderMeer constructs a dystopian future where "Fires, floods, disease, nuclear contamination, foreign wars, civil unrest" create a never-ending state of crisis, raising the question, "Was the world a failed state, too?" (VanderMeer, 2021, p. 278). Climate change turns previous environmental harm into calamity and future uncertainty into current danger. Nature, politics, health, and societal stability are all touched by an ecological crisis, as the passage demonstrates. Fires, floods, disease, nuclear contamination, foreign wars, civil unrest, is a full list of catastrophes that illustrates the interconnectedness of natural failure to all other kinds of social decline. It becomes clear to the reader that human and environmental issues are interdependent. Everything seems to be collapsing all at once, leading to a sensation of terrible overload. That question (Was the world a failed state, too?) urges readers to examine the efficacy of our present political and environmental institutions in resolving the issues they have caused. As a result, readers begin to wonder whether the institutions they rely on are only faking it as the world surrounding them breaks apart, which in turn breeds insecurity.

We may refer to the way eco-thrillers use time as an ongoing global disaster, in which the past, present, and future are all interwoven into a single destruction. Compare this with the eternal spans of life and rapid changes seen in fantasy. In a thriller, the passage of time feels rapid, creating the impression that readers have little time to address ecological concerns. Investigative journalism's strength lies in its ability to reveal subtle environmental crimes. Readers are nervous about their role in environmental degradation when the narrator realizes that "what did it mean that our clients resembled ghouls and grave robbers" and that "I helped to fix" a corrupt system (VanderMeer, 2021, p. 66). This quote illustrates how individuals may aid destructive systems while ostensibly contributing to environmental damage. When dealing with "ghouls and grave robbers" terminology, clients are portrayed as awful creatures that get financial gain from annihilation. This is terrifying because it implies that seemingly harmless business links might be with people who are committing crimes against nature. Readers start to wonder if their work, deals, and daily lives are also hurting the environment without them realizing it. When decent people say things like "I helped to fix" the system, it's a metaphor for how environmental crimes go unnoticed because they are

misquoted. The realization that readers can be unknowingly caught in similar circumstances contributes to the development of paranoia. This is aligned with Buell's toxic discourse theory, which asserts that environmental literature shows how corporate language uses business-friendly phrases to mask ecological harm. Words like "optimization" and "efficiency" help businesses cover up their environmental damage from consumers.

"A drowning in the water buried feeling crawling over my skin" challenges readers to confront posthumous grieving as Silvina's lifeless corpse symbolizes both personal loss and global breakdown, transforming bodily horror into environmental horror (VanderMeer, 2021, p. 118). The image of Silvina's "eyes were black, open, blood vessels exploded... Her hands gripped the chair like claws" gives a creepy, otherworldly quality to the account of her suffering. As a result of the effects of ecosystem collapse on human bodies and minds, this bodily horror establishes a connection between individual mortality and environmental death. A "drowning, buried feeling" may indicate that mental health issues mirroring physical signs are brought on by an ecological breakdown. The environmental anxiety that readers feel is a physical manifestation of the harm that abstract environmental issues cause to them.

A "keening" sound that seems to "never end" reveals how environmental sadness may be overpowering and endless. Fantasy's optimistic enchantment and realism's patient understanding contrast with thriller's destructive and abusive environmental feeling. The illegal hummingbird becomes an existential trap, revealing how environmental collapse criminalizes and monitors nature. The narrator states that;

"The taxidermy Silvina had given me was illegal, contraband. If caught with it... I could be prosecuted... Something watched me from those coordinates... if something watched me, I was already involved" (VanderMeer, 2021, p. 36)

The passage describes how ecological decline transforms natural beauty into hazardous and restricted environments. Hummingbirds, symbols of nature, become an indication of criminality that endangers the narrator. This causes paranoia because it implies that caring for nature is harmful under present conditions. "Something watched me" and "I was already involved" are examples of how environmental crises foster guilt. Readers stress about doing enough or the right thing as they feel evaluated for their ethical decisions. The reader perceives environmental crimes like a detective investigating a crime. Readers learn to doubt official claims and relate environmental issues to business interests. If someone desires to disclose what strong groups are hiding, they can do so by investigating widespread criminal activity on their own. Unlike fantasy's collective magic or realism's growing interest in change, mysteries rely on individual investigative work to find systemic criminal developments.

Literary realism builds environmental stories via increased timeframes that facilitate the alignment of human consciousness with non-human temporalities. This genre instructs readers to contemplate beyond personal lifespans and sharp needs, fostering what may be termed "nature patience," which facilitates profound environmental comprehension. In contrast to the instant charm of fantasy and thrillers, realism shows a significant ecological change that demands a plan of action spanning years. Powers argues that "A forest knows things" via "Root plasticity, solving problems, and making decisions" as well as "Fungal synapses," a growth of readers' awareness of the intellect beyond humanist perspectives (Powers, 2018, p. 411). This information fosters sentiment by depicting woods as communities with diverse kinds of insight. The saying "A forest knows things" questions accepted human knowledge and intellect. Readers discover that knowledge is not just confined to human brains, but also exists in forest networks that span trees through fungal relations and underground root systems. This widens the notion of thought to encompass communication and inhumane approaches to resolving issues. According to actual plant studies on "Root plasticity" and "Fungal synapses," forest thinking functions via naturally occurring, comprehensible mechanisms. This is true science, revealing the actual dynamics of forests, not fanciful magic. Readers grow to admire forest wisdom based more on real knowledge than on romantic fancy. Powers helps readers to perceive forests as social systems rather than just collections of individual trees by capturing them as communities with problem-solving ability. This social perspective on forest life

enables readers to see human groups as a link to broader ecological systems. The logical structure of the genre operates geologically, as trees throughout millennia transmit information. According to Powers, trees will "spell out, for a while, the word life has been saying, since the beginning," but "Two centuries more, and these five living letters, too, will fade back into the swirling patterns" (Powers, 2018). This wide lead teaches readers environmental patience and points out the value of assessing major ecological changes all over generations instead of short relief. The image of trees creating words over ages reveals how forests connect over ages far beyond human existence. In reality, larger forest signals that have been written and read for several centuries involve what seems to be the evolution of specific trees. This encourages readers to see natural events as forms of input needing time to absorb. "The word life has been saying since the beginning" suggests that every aspect of nature is in constant flux about life itself. In this discourse, trees write and rewrite messages about earthly life. Readers start seeing themselves as individuals who actively participate in this broader discussion, rather than being distinct from it. The idea that tree messages will "fade back into the swirling patterns" displays how brief even long-term, woodland communication is on earth's time scales. Thus, environments change and adapt, training readers' patience about their effects.

Powers slowly changes people's minds by showing links between people and nature that most readers are unaware of. He shows how "trees taught us to see that the sky is blue" and "fruit-bearing plants trick us into distributing their seeds," revealing how "Our brains evolved to solve the forest" (Powers, 2018). This true account of the ties between people and plants helps readers see how they have changed naturally over time. Human behavior is partially influenced by the requirements of plants, as the notion that plants "trick us" into aiding them entails. People think they are making free choices when they eat food and spread seeds, but they are simply modelling how plants reproduce. This gives people proof that plant ability helped humans grow. The statement "trees taught us to see that the sky is blue" shows how our color vision evolved to help us find ripe food in forests. Humans and trees evolved together to develop fundamental human qualities. In this way, readers can better understand that human skills are based on natural links rather than on developing oneself. That "Our brains evolved to solve the forest" comment shows that information itself comes from inhabiting forests. Readers make out that their thought skills improved so that they could live well in natural groups. This humbles human intellect and shows key links between humans and nature.

People gradually learn to think like nature, which creates environmental agency. This is contrary to fantasy's quick magic or thriller's sudden inquiry as realism focuses on the slow change in the human mind through scientific awareness and patient oversight.

5.1.1 Inclusive Narrative Power

Narrative styles used by N.K. Jemisin links social justice with natural survival. Her affective strategy mobilizes empathy by proving how social progress and ecological responsibility are distinct. This feeling aligns with her leading story theory: environmental disasters and social justice issues cannot be dealt with individually. This way of thinking shows up in her book *The World We Make* (2022), where she shows cities as places where social justice and environmental survival are fought over.

*"Most of the world is tired of the imposition of colonialism, of that sole perspective..."
Jemisin's storytelling method purposefully challenges conventional Western
environmental narratives. This explains the observed backlash" (Jemisin, 2025).*

Jemisin pushes readers to rethink urban landscapes by building flesh-and-blood New York City boroughs with diverse personalities. The mythology of New York outlasts the reality of New York people still believe that Charles Bronson Death Wish crap is what the city actually is and how she further challenges damaging urban myths. This narrative decision illustrates how environmental fiction may foster public dialogue by contesting detrimental perceptions about metropolitan areas that often hinder community-oriented environmental efforts.

Readers analyze Jemisin's work through the prism of their own experiences with urban settings and socioeconomic disparities. Her narrative technique encourages readers to use her writings as instruments for climate discourse by offering a lexicon for addressing the nexus of environmental and socioeconomic issues.

5.1.2 Emotional impact of Cli-Fi (Climate Fiction)

Climate fiction (cli-fi) stimulates public conversation by converting abstract environmental principles into emotional experiences that readers can comprehend, integrate, and disseminate. This genre conceptualizes climate danger in more perceptible, comprehensible, and palpable ways, making statistical projections and scientific warnings accessible via storytelling.

The brain effects of such a narrative are substantial. Our brains process creatively experienced events and those encountered directly and physically similarly. This neurological reaction indicates that environmental fiction generates mental simulations that resemble actual experiences, eliciting authentic emotional reactions that readers incorporate into their conversations and interpretations of climate futures.

Jemisin employs fanciful aspects, such as living cities, to evoke a sense of guardianship over urban settings, therefore converting abstract notions of sustainability into personal connections that readers can champion within their communities. VanderMeer utilizes apocalyptic motifs and psychological tension in *Hummingbird Salamander* (2021) to evoke a sensation of discomfort that reflects the widespread fear around environmental destruction. By setting his environmental thriller in a world somewhat more advanced than our own, he generates an instant urgency that readers see pertinent to contemporary ecological discussions.

Powers elicits awe via temporal scale, juxtaposing human lifespans with the ancient existence of trees in *The Overstory* (2018), using an emotive method that merges humility with accountability. Powers refers to a character's interaction with a 3,000-year-old Sequoia Dendron giganteum as a "meeting" rather than simply observing the tree, thereby eliciting what environmental psychologists term the "sublime response" a blend of awe, respect, and humility that frequently precedes environmental commitment and fosters a collective interpretive experience among readers.

5.1.3 Eco Narrative Initiation

Environmental philosopher Val Plumwood advocated for a comprehensive and transparent reevaluation of our representation of nonhuman nature. She contended that nature ought not to be shown as inert or mute, but instead as having its own species-specific forms of intelligence, communication, and consciousness. This philosophical dilemma poses a narrative issue that environmental fiction must confront to foster significant public dialogue around climate futures.

This difficulty is addressed by Richard Powers' scientific precision and emotive narrative in *The Overstory* (2018). His narrative structure depicts trees as living entities with existence, memory, and communication, based on botanical science. Mycorrhizal networks (the "Wood Wide Web") convey chemical messages and share resources, according to Powers. He weaves this into human beings' journeys of discovery, enabling readers to marvel at these insights and share their interpretations. Seeing old trees with this method gives one reader profound awe and a hollowing sense of diminishment. Powers fulfills Plumwood's objective by letting readers "see the intentionality and agency of nonhuman nature."

The Overstory (2018) sections are called after tree components (Roots, Trunk, Crown, Seeds). Multiple plots interweave like tree roots. The story spans millennia in tree time. This structural innovation enhances the content's environmental message, resulting in what reviewer Brian Calvert refers to as "a forest of narrative" that displays rather than merely describes interconnectedness. Readers see this structural approach as a manifestation of environmental ideas, so the form itself becomes part of the climate debate. Scientific studies alone cannot promote emotional interest in environmental results, but environmental fiction may. One review of *The Overstory* (2018) says, "This eco-epic has affected me as

no novel has for many years," (Hooper, 2018) showing fiction's power to motivate environmental action. Different but complementary narrative methods to environmental storytelling by Jemisin, VanderMeer, and Powers produce public dialog on climate futures: Jemisin links Social justice and environmental resilience. VanderMeer induces climate worry via psychology. Powers' scientific depth and temporal perspective inspire awe. These storytelling methods make environmental concerns approachable, urgent, and emotionally appealing. Climate scientist Katharine Hayhoe says, "The most important thing you can do about climate change is talk about it." These writers' works assist and emotionally enrich such talks, illustrating fiction's vital role in environmental discourse and giving readers' tools that they understand, absorb, and share in climate debates.

By exploring climatic futures, these three books engage readers emotionally, ethically, and cognitively. Climate awareness requires acknowledging catastrophic dangers while keeping hope for significant change, which is emotionally complicated. via joint resistance and observable change, Jemisin gives readers instant, communal hope via urban development. Dystopian noir by VanderMeer forces readers to consider their role in environmental catastrophe and prompts ethical thought. Powers uses arboreal timelines to build patient resilience by encouraging readers to contemplate multi-generational ecological linkages. These novels influence readers' environmental visions, not only climatic futures. Heise thinks that story futures reflect worries and create new planetary connections. These writers use magical realism in Jemisin, noir suspense in VanderMeer, and botanical perspective-shifting in Powers to connect readers with climate change. These three tale forms provide complementary environmental literary answers that cover many facets of ecological crises, therefore transcending conflicting strategies. Every genre offers necessary components absent in the others, therefore generating a whole environmental reaction when taken together. Fantasy gives hope and requires environmental action. Readers without hope get too crushed to take environmental action. Fantasy gives readers creative imagination that enables them to picture better environmental futures and community interaction, thus rendering environmental action appear possible. Thriller offers the urgent need and vital study required to solve right away environmental crimes. Readers without urgency may push environmental action off until it is too late. Thriller delivers readers legal instruments to spot environmental crimes and fight legal dishonesty. A profound insight and the patience that is necessary are provided by realism.

6. CONCLUSION

Contemporary ecological fiction inspires environmental awareness, activism, and ethical rethinking. N.K. Jemisin, Jeff VanderMeer, and Richard Powers' works break down "environmental literature" into a spectrum of methods, each revealing new ways to engage with our changing planet. *The World We Make* (2022), *Hummingbird Salamander* (2021), and *The Overstory* (2018) show how speculative urban fantasy, eco-thriller, and realist botanical narrative epistemologies depict ecological realities and actively reshape our place in them. Buell (1995) states that environmental texts create comparable concerns, as reported connections with specific locations are intertextual and intersocial (p. 13). These narratives locate ecological agency and responsibility beyond environmental deterioration. Literary responses to climate disaster are a constellation of approaches that reflect environmental participation patterns when evaluated together. These works break down anthropocentric barriers, expanding empathy to include the complicated, more-than-human universe. They prove ecological citizenship by showing how earth democracy, cultural critique, environmental imagination, and eco-cosmopolitanism may be applied to life. They envision futures that warn of continuous exploitation and offer alternatives. Their most profound change is our ontological knowledge of human-nature interconnectedness, breaking the false boundaries between human and non-human, civilization and wildness, self and environment. So, ecological fiction becomes more than a commentary on our changing world; it shapes future worlds. Future study may examine eco-activism and climate future narratives using other theoretical frameworks, providing fresh views on environmental representation in Literature.

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