

AN EXPLORATION OF ECOLOGICAL FLUX CAUSING MALLEABILITY OF SELF-HOOD IN JENNY OFFILL'S *WEATHER*

Aena Munawar

Institute of English Studies
University of the Punjab
aena.amina4@gmail.com

Maryam Raza

Lecturer
Institute of English Studies
University of the Punjab
maryam.english@pu.edu.pk

Abstract

The aim of the research paper is to explore Jenny Offill's cli-fi novel, Weather, through the lens of climate change studies. The objective is to examine the psychological burden and sense of helplessness that accompanies the impending climate catastrophe. The novel's pervasive sense of dread and eco-anxiety is illuminated through its characters' struggle with personal anxiety, environmental collapse and the preparation for imminent doomsday. The significance of the study lies in accentuating the interconnectedness of human experience with the prevalent environmental crisis. This further demonstrates how individual selfhood can be eclipsed by larger existential threats. The study also probes the novel's fragmented narrative style as a symbol of shattered self-hood and the dilapidating environmental spheres.

The primary tool of the research is Jenny Offill's novel Weather. Whereas Anouchka Grose's A Guide to Eco-Anxiety: How to Protect the Planet and Your Mental Health serves as the secondary tool. The dearth of scholarly research on Offill's novel as a precursor of eco-anxiety has compelled the research. Future researchers can explore environmental dystopia in the selected text. It is a qualitative, inductive and multi-disciplinary research.

Keywords: Cli-Fi, Eco-Anxiety, Apocalypse, Fragmented Identity, Environmental Literature, American Literature.

Introduction

In the era marked by environmental crisis, literature has increasingly become an insightful lens to reflect on the psychological impact of climate change. The paper aims to explore the emergence of eco-anxiety in the populations affected by climate change and its subsequent consequences followed by the onset of this phenomenon. Consequently, the objective of the study lies in accentuating the likelihood of a global climate crisis that threatens human existence and induces environmental apprehensions. It recognises the intricate relationship between human beings, environmental sustainability and socio-political adaptability that help shape individual and collective responses to ecological crises. In tandem with this holistic study, *Weather* serves as a foundational tool to unravel the global existential threats that induce identity crisis, a sense of vulnerability and emotional paralysis wherein the relentless pressures of planetary chaos compromise individual autonomy.

Jenny Offill, the author of *Weather*, is an influential American novelist, editor, and highly acclaimed contemporary fiction writer. She is renowned for her distinctive narrative style and exploration of complex themes in modern times. Jenny Offill's writing style is often praised for its brevity and fragmented structure, which sets her work apart from other traditional novelists. In her famous works like the *Dept. of Speculation* and *Weather*, Offill's perspective is genuine and remarkably original, exhibited by evocative brief passages forming a kind of vignette. Her writing is also characterized by a concise yet poignant style, each sentence laden with emotional intensity, giving the reader an everlasting impression. Offill's use of fragmented storytelling mirrors the disjointed nature of contemporary life,

particularly in the face of existential anxiety and personal crises. However, Jenny Offill in her interview with The Interlochen Review editors describes her rationale behind her writing style in *Weather* in the following words: “*Weather* was supposed to move sort of like weather. And so, I wanted it to have these qualities where it seems something like it was storming” (The Interlochen Review). Thus, her writings often feel like a series of reflections or meditations, offering insight into matters of everyday importance. She expertly navigates themes of marriage, motherhood, climate change, and political uncertainty by delivering profound insights with a light, sometimes humorous touch.

Weather's peculiar structure is a sign of her modernist tendencies, which couple literary fiction with auto-fictional elements to create something deeply personal yet widely resonant. It also highlights how Offill's concise prose conveys complex themes, blending a sense of disorientation with human emotions. Thus, Offill's name is synonymous with literary excellence conjuring images of lyrical prose, precisely crafted paragraphs by providing intellectual perspective to storytelling. Additionally, Iverson in her critical review of *Weather* praises Offill's writings as “a reminder that while there might be many novelists whose works have echoes of Offill's voice, there's nothing quite like the original” (Iverson “We Are All”). On top of it, Jenny Offill has established herself as a vital voice in contemporary American literature.

Weather is an outstanding example of Jenny Offill's remarkable insight into social issues, and climate catastrophe while capturing how individual inaction reflects a society's paralysis in the face of overwhelming crises. Offill demonstrates how personal anxieties and indecision reflect broader societal issues, especially during times of ecological and political upheaval. The novel is set against the backdrop of contemporary concerns, including the political tensions surrounding the 2016 U.S. election. The narrative unfolds through a series of fragmented short excerpts with the character of the protagonist, Lizzie. It delves into her thoughts and experiences through a non-linear narrative style rather than a traditional linear plot to amplify the urgency of climate-related issues. This structure mirrors the chaotic nature of modern life, particularly in the face of global environmental crises. Lizzie, the protagonist of the novel, lives in Brooklyn with her husband Ben, a video game designer, and their son Eli. Throughout the novel, Offill blends Lizzie's daily life with darkly humorous observations and snippets of information about climate science, survival strategies, and societal failures. Lizzie's preoccupation with preparing for disaster manifests in her developing a “doomstead”(63), where she imagines creating a haven for her family amid impending chaos. Her internal struggles are compounded by her interactions with family members, particularly her brother Henry, a recovering addict who grapples with his fears of inadequacy as a father.

The themes of climate anxiety and political disillusionment permeate the narrative, reflecting the broader societal context. The backdrop includes references to significant political events, such as the election of Donald Trump, which further heightens the sense of urgency and despair. Offill deftly captures the pervasive feeling of eco-anxiety, the fear that humanity is unprepared for the catastrophic effects of climate change while exploring how ecological themes intertwine with the shaping of self-hood and identity formation. At the same time, it describes the effects of climate change on mental health.

However, it is difficult to decipher which possible subtypes of the syndromes defined in the literature highlight the true nature of eco-anxiety. Various terms have been introduced to showcase them such as environmental anxiety, climate phobia, climate angst, planetary panic and eco-stress, which unravel the complexities of eco-anxiety and lead to the intricate landscape of eco-anxiety. Eco-anxiety is an emerging new topic in literature due to its present-time relevance and its subsequent impact on mental and emotional health. The term

eco-anxiety was coined by Australian philosopher, Glenn Albrecht, who defined it as “a chronic fear of environmental doom” (Coffey et al. 1).

Anouchka Grose, a distinguished British-Australian Lacanian psychoanalyst and prolific author, significantly contributed to the burgeoning field of eco-anxiety studies. In her groundbreaking publication in 2020, *A Guide to Eco-Anxiety: How to Protect the Planet and Your Mental Health*, she conceptualizes and addresses eco-anxiety in a transformative and highly influential manner. The book provides a foundational blueprint for scholars, clinicians, and practitioners to comprehend the complex psychological implications of environmental degradation and foster sustainable emotional resilience. *A Guide to Eco-Anxiety: How to Protect the Planet and Your Mental Health* serves as a manifesto for connection and positive change by illuminating the intersection of environmentalism, psychology, and personal agency. It bridges the gap between emotional experience and ecological awareness.

Grose embraces a more sustainable, resilient future. Grose’s expertise in eco-anxiety is grounded in her extensive clinical experience as a psychoanalyst, wherein she has observed a significant uptick in clients presenting with environmental-related anxiety, particularly concerning climate change. This direct exposure has enriched her nuanced understanding of eco-anxiety’s emotional dimensions, enabling her to provide insightful analyses of its psychological impact.

Grose primarily blends psychoanalytical theories with ecological awareness by scrutinising eco-anxiety, not just related to individual mental health, but as a societal and collective experience. She merges both psychological insights with environmental activism in her theoretical framework *A Guide to Eco-Anxiety: How to Protect the Planet and Your Mental Health*. In it, she showcases a comprehensive understanding of eco-anxiety by drawing upon psychoanalytical theory explaining the intrapsychic conflict and ambivalence that individuals experience regarding climate change action, characterized by an oscillation between hope and despair.

In addition to that, Grose’s conceptualization of eco-anxiety as a rational response to a climate change threat distinguishes her perspective from traditional mental health issues, which are often pathologized as irrational or dysfunctional. She has discussed this notion in her book *Guide to Eco-Anxiety: How to Protect the Planet and Your Mental Health* in the following words: “grief is not the paralysis of despair, it is the dynamic process, that takes you to a new place... this starts with acknowledging a problem, which turns our anxiety from unease to eagerness to do something, and the requisite willingness to act. And that’s when the real work begins” (Grose 17).

Grose sheds light on climate denial as a subtle manifestation of eco-anxiety. By rejecting the cultural narrative that equates success with unwavering happiness, Grose underscores the adaptive potential of anxiety, asserting that “Being upset is actually part of the solution. Anxious people unite!” (Grose 26). Her assertion is capable of inspiring transformative action.

While considering all factors, Grose’s theoretical perspective contributes to a growing body of literature, by aligning with emerging research in eco-psychology, environmental humanities, and sustainability studies. Furthermore, it also underscores the intricate relationship between human emotions, environmental awareness, and proactive citizenship.

The study illuminates the following research questions:

- How does the novel illustrate the malleability of self-hood in response to environmental uncertainty?
- How does eco-anxiety accentuate the intersection of ecological awareness and identity crisis?

- In what ways does eco-anxiety, as a psychological phenomenon, blur the relationship between individual and collective experience?

Literature Review

Weather has gained worldwide recognition and international acclaim for its masterful diction and nuanced characterization owing to “Offill's signature achievement ...to capture the angst specific to our particular moment in our time, the rising tide of anxiety...with humour, incredulity, panic, disaster preparedness.... action” (McAlpin “Stormy 'Weather' Captures”). New York Times reviewer, Jamison, also praises Offill's fragmentary structure, claiming that “it evokes an unbearable emotional intensity” (Jamison “Offill’s ‘Weather’ Is Emotional”). Clanchy in “The Guardians” critically hails the book for being recognized as an instant New York Times bestseller, “half of novella’s length serves as an autofiction: a novel that blurred the boundaries with memoir, dramatically pared down to taut, tight paragraphs trapped in the present tense, each packed with quirky observations and fantastic one-liners” (Clanchy “Wit for the End”). Offill, being one of the contemporary American writers, often experiments with a writing style which depicts her deep reverence with modernistic writers as illustrated in one of her interviews with Maia Siegel, in which she demonstrates her inspiration from Jean Rhys, Amy Hempel, Denis Johnson and Virginia Woolf. She declares “I was impressed by those when I read them” (“The Interlochen Review”).

While commenting on Offill’s writing style, Erik wrote about her diction as “sparse” and “highly selective” (Erik “Review of Weather”). This creates a richness of language by delving into thoughtful and vibrant stories, and character development with concise and clear information. She further hails her narrative style as: “short dispatches, describing everyday occurrences in only a few lines...The effect is not fragmentation, but cumulative awareness and understanding of exploring human thought in the digital age, where every idea that surfaces can be pursued down a rabbit holes of facts and associations” (Erik “Review of Weather”). In short, she sparks the reader through the intricate portrayal of characters causing deep resonance with real-life situations.

Moreover, Brownis applauds the realistic depiction of human concerns in *Weather*: “*Weather* manages to reflect on the mundanity of everyday life, the slippery passage of time, the feelings of despair and hopelessness that can accompany an intimate knowledge of climate change” (Brownis “‘Weather’ by Jenny Offil”). True to form, Offill delves into the emotional depth of her characters amidst the turmoil of modern life to “provoke a sense of deep emotion, of fleeting humour but lasting melancholy”(Yoshua “claiming the mind”). While relentlessly targeting environmental issues and their deleterious consequences, Offill’s *Weather* serves as a vehicle to understand the underlying association with psychological toll and global issues.

The novel is also considered a great success due to its invigorating sense of atmospheric dread, obsession, and worry. Offill’s rationalization and her appeal to the readership around the globe is marked by “surgical and lyrical prose” (Erik “Review of Weather”). It is “a lullaby that soothes the panic that it also invariably stirs. We are living in frustrating times” (Erik “Review of Weather”). Ash Sanders, award-winning writer and environmental activist, in her essay “Under the Weather” published in “The Believers” introduces a new lexicon of words to describe the turbulent experience of living in mass climate changes such as climate panic, eco-anxiety, and climate grief. The increasing use of these concepts is reflected in the themes of *Weather* (McAlpin “Calming the Mind”). Recently published book on climate uncertainty and its future repercussions acclaims *Weather* as “it negotiates uncertainty at all levels of the spectrum discussed in the introduction, from the future-oriented anxiety experienced by the protagonist to the reader’s

own affective experience, via the elusiveness of the novel's fragmentary form of end" (Caracciolo 199).

Therefore, while examining eco-anxiety in Jenny Offill's novel *Weather*, it is imperative to consider the broader literary context and existing research on eco-anxiety. The study probes into the triggering factors, deepens one's understanding of this timely and pressing issue.

Climate change is one of the most persistent and impertinent global health threats of present times, causing mental health issues due to the gradual emergence of global warming, melting of glaciers and deforestation after the pre-industrial era, resulting in mental and psychological problems. Australian Medical Association in 2019 declared "climate change as a real threat causing severe health consequences, especially for vulnerable populations worldwide" (Coffey et al. 1). Many people report fearing for themselves, their children, and future generations with deep feelings of loss, hopelessness, and anger as they witness the drastic effects of climate change. Eco-anxiety is also perceived as "distress caused by climate change where people are becoming anxious about their future" (Coffey et al.1).

Though the term eco-anxiety has gained recognition in seminal works of literature, media and newspapers, the term remains ambiguous because of its multifaceted nature. On account of this, Albrecht, in his book *Climate Change and Human Well-being* introduced the term eco-anxiety by describing it as "a chronic fear of environmental doom" (Coffey et al. 1). However, according to "The Journal of Climate Change and Health", Eco-anxiety is defined as "mental distress or anxiety associated with worsening environmental conditions" (Coffey et al. 1). Despite all the research done on this topic, till today no benchmark definition has been introduced for eco-anxiety and different terms are used interchangeably such as Climate Change anxiety, Climate change worry, environmental distress, ecological grief, or ecological stress. This ambiguous nature of the term Eco-Anxiety resulted in the emergence of different definitions. Within the concerns of climate upheaval, "Climate Psychology Alliance in 2022" defines anxiety related to climate change as a "heightened emotional, mental or somatic distress in response to dangerous changes in the climate system" (Boluda-Verda et al. 2). The existing literature on Eco-Anxiety explores negative emotions associated with climate change. Meanwhile, there is limited but comprehensive research on eco-anxiety as a driving force to cope with climate trauma and strategic response to tackle the issue efficiently.

Anouchka Grose's *A Guide to Eco-Anxiety: How to Protect the Planet and Your Mental Health* serves as a seminal work on combatting climate distress and anxiety. Williams in her book review of *A Guide to Eco-Anxiety: How to Protect the Planet and Your Mental Health* opines that Grose "cultivates a pragmatic form of hope by offering a dynamic toolkit packed with practical ways to connect with commonly and systemic support, self-care practices to ease symptoms of anxiety and strategies to spread awareness and crucially bring about change" (Williams "Guide to Eco Anxiety"). While taking a holistic and far-reaching approach to Grose viewpoint on Climate anxiety, she notes how Grose has made it clear that anxiety about the climate is an entirely rational response to a real crisis. We should take the matter seriously What matters is that the anxiety doesn't become crippling, that it doesn't rob us of our joy in life. Instead, we can make use of it (Williams "Guide to Eco Anxiety").

However, Grose introduced anxiety as a source of maintaining productivity in her book highlighted by these lines: "The point won't necessarily be to stop being anxious altogether...but to learn to be on better terms with our worries so we can use them to orient us, energize us and maybe even bring other people on board" (Grose 29). Anxiety can be seen as a resource for activism. "If you want to feel better about the planet, and your place in the global system, a certain level of activism and change is arguably the only way forward" (Grose 59).

While probing into intricate relationships between the individual and natural world order, eco-criticism theory can also be seen as one of the relevant approaches to eco-anxiety. Eco-criticism investigates the relationship between humans and the natural world, examining the symbiotic relationship between environmental and cultural issues. This refutes the anthropocentric worldview which has been at the forefront hitherto.

Consequently, the paper aims to depict the diversity and complexity of eco-anxiety. However, it also fosters resilience, community engagement and a sense of collective responsibility to tackle the prevalence of global warming.

Research Methodology

The research incorporates a textual analysis of the novel *Weather* by Jenny Offill as a primary text. The applied theoretical framework is Anouchka Grose's Eco-Anxiety theory. The reviews concerning the aforementioned author, novel and theory form the secondary sources of the research paper. The secondary sources also employ both print and electronic media. Anouchka Grose's book *A Guide to Eco-Anxiety: How to Protect the Planet and Your Mental Health* has also been consulted as a part of secondary sources for research.

The critical study embodies qualitative, inductive and interdisciplinary research which is conducted on a theory by Anouchka Grose. The research paper opens new dimensions for the novel as environmental literature. The dearth of literary criticism on the novel from the lens of eco-anxiety and environmental dystopia compelled the study. The significance of the study lies in the literary analysis of climate-induced emotional distress in Offill's work.

Discussion And Analysis

Weather provides an intricate interplay between ecological instability and individual subjectivity. The research aims to unpack the existential dread that looms over individual identities by accentuating how environmental degradation not only affects the world at large but also penetrates the psyche of individuals, altering their sense of self. Thus, *Weather* examines climate change issues in the modern-day world.

The novel signifies the causes of psychological burden and a sense of malleability in response to imminent climate change. Additionally, the novel's title directly refers to the climate crisis, a central concern of this research. It evokes a sense of unpredictability by presenting the inconstant nature of global weather. Metaphorically, *Weather* reflects the oscillating psychological and emotional state of the characters in the novel, who have to grapple with climate-related issues. Henry, the protagonist's brother, suffers from a distinctive form of psychological disorder. He struggles to cope with everyday life situations. As a result, he finds himself at the threshold of indecisiveness and ambivalence, struggling to cope with the looming threat of rapid climate change. His inner turmoil is exhibited in the following lines, "I am on fire." "Nothing can be done until the weather moderates" (111). His assertion "I am on fire" (111) and his inability to take any action to combat its consequences highlight the tremendous effect of global weather patterns on one's mental health. Moreover, much like the weather, the feelings of the characters are also transient, consequently fluctuating and influenced by external circumstances of the Planetary crisis. *Weather* as a universal phenomenon transcends individual experience to collective concerns of humanity. This notion aligns with the novel's exploration of interconnectedness between humans and the planet, and the crisis that has affected both largely.

Offill is known for her unique writing style characterized by short and pithy writing, which unfolds the complex issues of the modern world. As a result, Offill's unique writing style in *Weather* provides a lens to examine the global issue of severity of climate crisis with a keen observation, revealing its impact on human existence. The novel's fragmented, non-

linear and disjointed writing style reflects the characters' fragmented cognitive and emotional states. In *Weather*, Jenny Offill presents Lizzie, as a protagonist deeply attuned to the looming existential threat of climate change. Lizzie's assertion, "Just remember, don't be yourself" (24), is a paradoxical statement that reveals her internal conflict and anxiety over identity and authenticity as she is engaged with eco-anxiety. The fragmented narrative style mirrors inner turmoil, characterised by disjointed thoughts and contradictory advice. This narrative style also indicates deeper existential worries by demonstrating the inherent connection between awareness and action, a key feature of eco-anxiety. As Anouchka Grose explains eco-anxiety, as a compelling force through which individuals confront uncomfortable truths about environmental destruction, often leaving them feeling powerless. Lizzie's struggle exemplifies this condition, as she navigates a world where knowledge of impending crisis clashes with the paralysis of inaction.

In contrast, the characters' dismissal of the severity of climate crisis clashes with their underlying eco-anxiety, a psychological condition characterized by persistent worry and helplessness in response to climate change.

Furthermore, this analysis delves into the profound impact of climate change on individual selfhood and the resultant identity crisis that ensues. Offill has presented environmentalists in a Melancholic and sombre terms, "Environmentalists are so dreary" (36), which underscores a defence mechanism amidst the threat of climate disruption. This statement appears to be a coping mechanism, trivializing the climate crisis to avoid feelings of overwhelming dread. Furthermore, Lizzie's constant apprehension and sense of susceptibility as she continually weighs the safest options for her son's future, "What will be the safest place? No one they'd consulted with would give them a straight answer" (37), illustrates the intersection of ecological awareness and fluidity of identity and selfhood. Thus, the novel's fragmented narrative style demonstrates the way people think in moments of stress and uncertainty, with thoughts darting from one concern to another, rarely achieving resolution.

In the novel, Offill has used paradoxical statements to invoke absurdity and Existential dread. Henry's visualization of a man holding his child in search of water triggers a profound moment of introspection, as he abruptly retreats into denial, admitting, "I don't think I could do that. I don't think I'm strong enough" (53). This powerful scene captures the essence of his struggle to reconcile his limitations with the enormity of the global crisis. This statement embodies a profound sense of inadequacy and vulnerability. Henry's monologue underscores his recognition of the futility of his efforts. The existential condition of being aware of the world's problems, yet powerless to resolve them entirely. His self-doubt reveals a psychological fracture, where he oscillates between his desire to acknowledge the need for action and feels incapable of delivering his full potential. This notion encapsulates the absurd struggle to find purpose in an indifferent world. This reaction is common among individuals facing overwhelming issues, where distancing oneself mentally can momentarily relieve anxiety. Moreover, this statement also echoes Grose's idea that "grief is not a paralysis of despair, it is a dynamic process that takes you to a new place"(Grose 17). Thus, the potential solution to eco-anxiety is moving beyond self-focus and engaging in communal responsibility and relationships.

Grose's concept of communal engagement as a coping mechanism for eco-anxiety assumes paramount significance in the novel. It stresses the importance of collective action in mitigating the debilitating effects of environmental anxiety. The emphasis on communal engagement is reinforced by the narrative, which highlights the importance of collective action in ensuring psychological and physical survival. As the text notes, "We banded together in tight-knit groups to better protect ourselves" (55). This statement embodies the

significance of unity in enabling individuals to cope with adversity. The adjective "tight-knit" (55) is particularly noteworthy, as it connotes a sense of closeness. It serves as a foundation of strong social bonds. These bonds, in turn, empower individuals to collectively respond to external threats, thereby enhancing resilience and capacity for survival.

The image of "BREATHE! BREATHE!" (56) functions as a visual metaphor for the overwhelming sense of eco-anxiety. Offill's use of striking imagery illustrates eco-anxiety as a psychological phenomenon that blurs the relationship between individual and collective experience. The "little signs in the library" (56) that command individuals to breathe serve as a constant reminder of the looming threat of climate change. Lizzie's bewilderment, "How did everyone get so good at this breathing thing?" (56) serves as a poignant expression of the sense of disconnection that arises from ecological crisis. The narrator's sense of alienation and disconnection from mindful orientation highlights the struggle to reconcile individual identity with the collective cause of ecological awareness. The tension is further intensified by the juxtaposition of the library, a symbol of knowledge and rationality, with the catastrophic idea of climate departure. Grose's contention that a certain level of activism and change is necessary for progress is echoed in this perspective, which underscores the imperative of collective action.

Another facet of human existence that eco-anxiety permeates is the interpersonal relations. Climate dread had drastic effects on Lizzie's relationships, choices, and feelings. Climate disaster weighs heavily on Lizzie's mind. Her psyche is fragmented by the disconcerting news of climate destruction and a bombardment of other lesser disasters. She can hardly concentrate and is drained with thoughts to the edge of despair. "There is a period after every disaster in which people wander around trying to figure out if it is truly a disaster. Disaster psychologists use the term 'milling'..." (75). This affirms psychological distress, suggesting a state of emotional and cognitive paralysis. Lizzie's eco-anxiety affects her relationships and makes her deeply complicated as a mother, sister, and friend. The repetitive question "What are the best ways to prepare my children for the coming chaos?" (61) shows ecological collapse's impact on parenting. Grose also highlights how eco-anxiety creates stress in relationships because individuals wrestle with foreseeing disaster and the need to cultivate hope and stability for their loved ones.

According to Offill and Grose, the understanding and acceptance of emotions are more valuable than the denial and suppression of emotions. Emotions need to be validated. It helps individuals regain some control over what is happening to them and their lives. It is critical in coping with the uncertainty and unpredictability of climate change. Lizzie's assertion that "life is tolerable" (88) reflects her grasp of acceptance as climate change warrants uncertainty and impermanence. In saying, "Techniques for calming a fearful mind might be the most useful" (61), Lizzie acknowledges her fears. She also intimates the necessity of confronting emotional responses before attempts are made to engage with the practical. Thus, "participating in the duties and pleasures of the trip" (57) further delves into the process of healing. Grose states that when people listen to others, their pain of eco-anxiety swells and recedes in due course, morphing into collective resilience in overcoming that grief. In her interpretation, Grose emphasizes the necessity of group support to buffer the isolating effects of eco-anxiety. The imagery of "emotional pain coming in waves" (96) sparks flashpoints of hope and resilience in climate dread. Offill's lyrical prose gives eloquence to emotions that find themselves at odds with weighing circumstances. The metaphor of lives as "a drop of water... in an endless sea" (64) embodies the existential despair and humility accompanying eco-anxiety. Grose notes that naming and talking about these fears is critical to lessen their psychological burden.

Eco-anxiety also forces people to confront their mortality. Thus, the impermanence of human achievements. *Weather* by Offill conveys the theme of malleability through meditations. Offill explains how “whatever they make will not stand; it will crumble to the ground before their very eyes” (64). This transience of human effort in the face of ecological destruction strengthens the case. Grose makes for viewing impermanence as humbling yet liberating. A suggestion to “teach them to sew, to farm, to build” (61) implies preparing through practical skills for a future created with psychologically driven endeavours. Thus, leading to resilience. True to form, the study affirms that the novel creates meaning through environmental chaos. Offill foregrounds “participating in duties and pleasures” (57) as an example of how group actions and shared experiences can be calming.

Conclusion

In *Weather*, the psychological and emotional ramifications of ecological instability are constructed through intersection of environmental factors and individual subjectivity. Lizzie's experience of climate dread embodies a dual threat. This threat imperils both the environment and human psyche, resulting in identity fragmentation and pervasive vulnerability. The novel illustrates how characters navigate an oscillation between awareness and inaction, reflecting the psychological burden of living in an era of climate uncertainty. Lizzie's internal conflict and Henry's existential paralysis exemplify the struggle to reconcile environmental responsibility with personal agency. Despite this, Lizzie's acceptance of her circumstances and her ability to develop coping strategies for navigating the complexities of climate change highlights growing awareness of eco-anxiety. She takes a crucial step by acknowledging and validating her climate-related emotions, rather than suppressing or denying them.

Furthermore, Offill's use of fragmented, disjointed narrative structure, creates a cognitive and emotional disarray in which characters grapple with the existential weight of the climate. Ultimately, *Weather* serves as a seminal text in contemporary American literature, illustrating the interplay between psychological and environmental crises. By intertwining Offill's fictional exploration of climate dread with Grose's theoretical framework, this research underscores the urgency of collective engagement in climate action. Thus, the study reaffirms that confronting eco-anxiety through awareness, adaptation, and collective efforts is essential to navigating the psychological and existential challenges of the Anthropocene.

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