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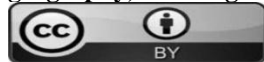
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Weathered Minds: Climate Anxiety and Emotional Geographies in Jenny Offill's 'Weather' (2020)

ABSTRACT

This article studies 'Weather' (2020) by Jenny Offill as an important work of current climate fiction that portrays the emotional and inner effects of climate anxiety. Unlike conventional climate fiction narratives of catastrophe and spectacle, 'Weather' depicts a soft climate aesthetic that highlights fragmented narrative, irony, and daily anxiety. Drawing on theories from ecopsychology, solastalgia, emotional geography, and affective theory, the study explores how Offill's formally simple style echoes the confusion and unease of being in the Anthropocene. Through textual analysis, the study positions 'Weather' within broader ecological humanities debates, concentrating on how ambiance anxiety is internalized and moulded by cultural, social, and psychological burdens. Offill's hero, Lizzie, represents the psychologically drained, ethically numbed matter of climate instability. By intermingling narrative form and affective analysis, this study illustrates how 'Weather' represents the restrained emotional geographies of ecological breakdown and exemplifies how literature can respond to environmental distress.

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العقول المنهكة: القلق المناخي والجغرافيات العاطفية في رواية (الطقس) (٢٠٢٠) لجيني أوفيل

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المستخلص:

تتناول هذه الدراسة رواية "الطقس" (٢٠٢٠) لجيني أوفيل، كعملٍ رئيسي في أدب المناخ المعاصر، تُسلط الضوء على التأثير العاطفي والنفسي للأزمات البيئية. بعيداً عن التوجهات التقليدية في أدب المناخ، كالكارثة والعرض الباهر، تستخدم رواية "الطقس" "جمالية مناخية هادئة" تُركّز على السرد المُجزأ، والسخرية، والقلق اليومي. وبالاستناد إلى أطرٍ من علم النفس البيئي، والسولستالجيا، والجغرافيا العاطفية، ونظرية التأثير، تُجادل المقالة بأن أسلوب أوفيل البسيط الشكلي يعكس حالة الارتباك والقلق التي تُصاحب العيش في عصر الأنثروبوسين. ومن خلال قراءة مُتأنية، تُحدد المقالة موقع

رواية "الطقس" ضمن نقاشات العلوم الإنسانية البيئية الأوسع، مُركزة على كيفية ترسيخ القلق المناخي وتشكيله من خلال الضغوط الثقافية والعلائقية والنفسية. تُجسد بطلّة أوفيل، ليزي، موضوع عدم الاستقرار المناخي المُرهق عاطفياً والمُشلول أخلاقياً. من خلال مزج الشكل السردي بالنقد العاطفي، تُظهر هذه المقالة كيف يرسم "الطقس" الجغرافيات العاطفية الدقيقة للانهايار البيئي، ويُعيد تعريف كيفية استجابة الأدب الروائي لأزمة المناخ.

الكلمات المفتاحية: الأنثروبوسين، قلق المناخ، الأزمة البيئية، الجغرافيا العاطفية، السولستالجيا.

1. Introduction

In the Anthropocene, the environmental disaster is not only a worldwide ecological issue but also a private and psychological one. As climate insecurity increases and media attention magnifies its necessity, individuals progressively experience feelings such as dread, grief, guilt, and nervousness. Terms like climate anxiety, eco-mourning, and solastalgia capture these psychological states that presently represent everyday life. As science and policy challenge universal resolutions, fiction offers a distinct realm to examine the psychological tensions of living within environmental uncertainty, presenting how ecological crisis is sensed more than it is comprehended.

Current knowledge on the environmental humanities has gradually focused on how story captures the psychological and emotional consequences of environmental crisis. The intersection of eco-criticism, affect theory, and emotional geography, this intense change accentuates literature's role in shaping how we feel and understand ecological crisis. Climate fiction (cli-fi) "literature explicitly focused on climate change" (Schneider-Mayerson, 2020, p. 474), has consequently grown beyond dystopian demonstration to disclose quieter, closer dimensions of ecological unease—presenting characters concerned not by disaster itself, but by surrounding distress, excessive information on climate change, and mental perplexity.

Jenny Offill's '*Weather*' (2020) reflects this new tendency in cli-fi. Centred Lizzie, a librarian, caregiver, playing everyday practices, and growing existential fear, the story moves away from plot-oriented novels to concentrate on form. Its fragmented, poetic-like structure—full of ironic remarks and perturbed thoughts—echoes the mental dismay of living with climate awareness. Offill takes the passionate touch of the Anthropocene: not via spectacle, but via the peaceful, persistent anxiety of knowing a lot and feeling frozen.

This article studies '*Weather*' as a fictional investigation of emotional geographies in the Anthropocene. Utilising an interdisciplinary theoretical framework—incorporating Albrecht's solastalgia, Ray's sociocultural concept of climate anxiety, Seymour's theory of bad environmentalism, and Buell's models of the environmental imagination and toxic discourse—places the novel within the main debates in ecological affect. Instead of merely portraying ecological collapse, '*Weather*' shows how environmental disaster is internalized and psychologically enacted, offering an accurate picture of the psychological strain of living via slow, perpetual climate disturbance.

Therefore, this article contributes to the expanding area of cli-fi by highlighting the emotional struggle rooted in ecological mindfulness. It maintains that '*Weather*' does not seek resolutions to environmental crisis but offers room to practice its passionate intricacy, challenge its incongruities, and reflect on its private and interpersonal effects.

2. Climate Fiction and Narrative Form

The interconnection of climate change and literature resulted in cli-fi, a variety that interrogates the environmental crisis via speculative, factual, and increasingly emotional modes. Fundamental texts in the area, such as Ursula Heise's *Sense of Place and Sense of Planet* (2008), stress the conflict between regional environmental connection and universal ecological awareness. Amitav Ghosh's *The Great Derangement* (2018) evaluates the dominant literary culture's inadequate response to the environmental crisis, proposing that conventional realist styles are inappropriate to convey the vastness and complexity of ecological disaster.

As a result, cli-fi has experienced a formal progress, with contemporary scholarship detecting a move from spectacle apocalypse to more personal, psychologically based stories. Adam Trexler (2015) and Matthew Schneider-Mayerson (2020) argue that recent cli-fi progressively privileges disintegrated transience, psychological inwardness, and everyday affect.

Offill's *Weather* (2020) exemplifies this trend. Avoiding complex plotlines and worldwide-scale disasters, embodying the environmental crisis through emotional and psychological confusion, existential exhaustion, and interpersonal fragility. Its fragmented style reflects the affective and epistemic skepticism feature of living within gradual ecological violence.

3. Fragmentation and the Form of Anxiety

Fragmentation is one of the most significant features of *Weather*. The short, disconnected notes that mimic internal monologue, headings, and daily fragments echo Lizzie's psychological disorder, validating the inner effect of environmental anxiety throughout the narrative structure.

Trexler (2015) and Dürbeck (2019) contend that cli-fi mainly rejects realism to reflect the uncertainty of the Anthropocene. *Weather's* disconnected plot reveals this doubt, precisely delivering the protagonist's exhausted mind and overwhelmed thoughts concerning approaching environmental collapse.

Offill's *Weather* relies on a deliberately fragmented narrative structure that mirrors the cognitive and emotional disorientation characteristic of climate anxiety. Rather than unfolding through conventional chapters, the novel progresses in terse, discontinuous paragraphs (often no more than one or two sentences) separated by generous white space. This formal fragmentation, widely noted in criticism (Adams, 2020; Lam, 2020; Smallwood, 2020), becomes a textual analogue for Lizzie's anxious mental state in the Anthropocene.

A first example of fragmentation functioning as anxiety appears in Offill's abrupt transitions between domestic concerns and global catastrophe. A short, standalone sentence such as "My brother has decided to live in his car" is quickly followed by Lizzie's worries about ecological collapse and societal breakdown. Offill presents no transitional glue between the fragments; instead, the white space functions as the psychological gap where an anxious mind leaps from one fear to the next. Critics have observed that this "antsy, distracted,

swerving” rhythm simulates catastrophizing thought patterns, in which domestic minutiae and existential dread coexist without hierarchy (Dillon, 2020).

Offill also uses fragmentary lists and aphoristic statements to evoke the informational overload of climate discourse. A brief line such as “*People keep asking what to do, but all I know is what not to do*” resembles an emergency bulletin: clipped, declarative, and incomplete. Lizzie’s inbox, filled with questions from climate-worried listeners, is represented through micro-fragments that mimic the urgency and fragmentation of real-time digital alerts. As Lam (2020) notes, these fragments “reproduce the pace and texture of doom scrolling,” showing how environmental crisis is cognitively processed through discontinuous inputs rather than coherent narrative.

Another structural pattern in the novel is the juxtaposition of humor and dread. A light domestic moment such as “*My son tells knock-knock jokes that do not end*” is immediately followed by reflections on infrastructural collapse or civil unrest. Offill’s refusal to integrate these elements into a smooth narrative underscores the impossibility of cordoning off personal life from global threat. Emotional geographies become fractured: the home, library, and street appear not as continuous spaces but as anxious “nodes,” each introduced through a short, isolated fragment that represents a shift in affective terrain. In this way, fragmentation becomes a spatial as well as cognitive marker of anxiety (Smallwood, 2020).

Finally, Offill incorporates prepper-style notes that further reproduce the fractured epistemology of crisis culture. A line such as “*Skills that will matter: water filtration, first aid, fire*” appears as though excerpted from an online survivalist forum. These intrusions of alternate discourses (emails, lists, warnings) fracture the narrative surface and illustrate how climate anxiety penetrates everyday consciousness. Instead of offering narrative cohesion, the novel foregrounds a collage of anxious micro-genres that reflect contemporary modes of encountering risk (Abarrio, 2022).

Across these examples, Offill’s fragmented style does not merely depict anxiety; it formally enacts it. The novel’s discontinuous structure becomes an aesthetic simulation of an anxious cognitive map; one shaped by recursive thoughts, incomplete information, and a future that arrives in broken signals rather than coherent narrative lines. Fragmentation thus serves as both a representation and a symptom of the emotional geographies through which the climate crisis is lived.

4. Solastalgia and Ecological Affect

Albrecht’s (2005) Solastalgia means the grief of environmental loss without being physically displaced, “*a form of homesickness one gets when still at home*”. It implies the indirect psychological dislocation resulting from ecological ruin. Cunsolo and Ellis (2018), instead of apocalyptic incidents, have expanded this concept to involve ecological grief and avoidance of loss, underlining the way climate anxiety stems from slow, silent instabilities.

This form is chiefly relevant to Offill’s ‘*Weather*’ (2020), since ecological catastrophe is not directly documented but interwoven with the psychological feelings towards climate in everyday life. Lizzie, the hero, thinks that home is both a place of adaptation and suffocation, demonstrating solastalgia’s quiet instability. The story proves this

through its fragmented style, black comedy, and inner restlessness, capturing how environmental uncertainty enters ordinary life. Such a moment of quiet climate distress surfaces in Lizzie's thought when she says: "*We are preparing for the end of the world, but which one? The one with the melting permafrost or the one with fascists?*".

Here, environmental collapse runs alongside political unraveling, both feel like actual threats, not just ideas. This sense of dread, with multiple disasters impending at once, shakes Lizzie's sense of home. Her home, her country, and even her role as mother begin to feel uncertain. The scenery of her thoughts turns into a place of tension—a condition reflected in her neighborhood, where "*people begin to make lists of barterable items*" and quietly talk about collapse.

Unlike conventional apocalyptic stories that focus on external destruction, '*Weather*' investigates the emotional impact of living with the constant threat of loss. Lizzie's home is still standing, but her grasp on reality begins to break down. This gradual, internal collapse mirrors what Cunsolo and Ellis (2018) name as "anticipatory grief": the grieving of future losses that have not yet arrived but are seen as unavoidable. Lizzie's gradual distractibility, insomnia, and dark humour depict not just one event, but a long-lasting ecological unease: "*The whole city is overrun by rats and bedbugs now. Everyone says this is a sign. But a sign of what?*".

This question is left unanswered, capturing the emotional state of solastalgia. The familiar feels strange, but not clear disaster has occurred. The rats do not signify a huge collapse in a mythical sense. Instead, they represent the slow decline of the city. Lizzie's uneasiness was caused by enduring this doubt, where the future is vague nevertheless psychologically affected.

Another example of solastalgic thought appears while Lizzie is packing a "go bag," survival stuff for impending disasters. She reflects with biting irony: "*In the go bag: granola, duct tape, toothpaste, knife, water purifier. In the go mind: despair, paranoia, confused nostalgia, occasional hope.*"

At this moment, Offill focuses on the inner underpinnings of solastalgia with obvious sensation. The protagonists' "go mind" lists feelings instead of items, showing a psyche affected by persistent dread and wishing for stability. Listing is often made for realistic undertakings, shifts to emotional documentation of environmental grief. The difference between physical tools and emotional states highlights the gap between survival logic and emotional disarray.

Furthermore, Lizzie's alienation from her city environment, marked by endless warnings, disaster reports, and overheard fears, reveals the psychic destruction of trust in one's environment. Nature is hardly seen in '*Weather*', but its absence is felt as an almost ghostly destabilizing force. The environment turns out to be ghostlike, not visible: an entity of fear, prediction, and abstraction, rather than a physical object.

The atmosphere filled with emotion, Lizzie is a part of, echoes eco-psychological observations that mental health issues related to climate often involve persistent low-grade anxiety, emotional freezing, and feelings of absurdity (Clayton et al., 2023). Lizzie's ironic tone, skeptical, and quietly despondent, perfectly demonstrates this. For example, when asked

by a listener of her podcast how to prepare emotionally for a certain environmental disaster, she says: *“You are not one of the lucky ones. But maybe you can be one of the brave ones.”*

This line conveys not only bravery, but to the solitude of knowing—of being conscious in a society not ready to react. The weight of environmental awareness becomes an emotional refugee. Lizzie does not leave her dwelling, rather, her dwelling leaves her psychologically through a vanishing feel of security, stability, and care.

To conclude, *‘Weather’* renders solastalgia through the emotional feels of daily life. Set in a domestic city background, the novel shows how the climate crisis forms moods, humor, and upcoming fears, offering solastalgia as a close lived experience.

5. Climate Anxiety as a Sociocultural Phenomenon

Sarah Jaquette Ray (2020) reinterprets climate anxiety not as a pathological condition but as a sociocultural condition influenced by privilege, political consciousness, and inadequate contact to ecological harm. In her book *A Field Guide to Climate Anxiety*, Ray criticises the propensity to pathologize ecological distress, mainly in the in the Global North’s educated, white, middle-class communities. She contends that this practice is a reflection of systemic contradictions rather than personal weakness.

In *‘Weather’*, Lizzie, a highly educated and hyper-aware woman, embodies this disempowered awareness, making this framework particularly pertinent. As a result of working on an environmental collapse podcast, the protagonist Lizzie is emotionally and mentally burned out in the environmental discussion, but is incapable of doing anything. Her unease results from the ethical burden of having too much knowledge but taking too little action, rather than from a literal catastrophe. Her disconnected life echoes the affective immobility Ray argues, presenting the way climate anxiety is shaped by social status and resolved through routine, irony, and fatigue. She is trapped between mental dismay and normal family life. Her disintegrated innermost monologue echoes this dichotomy—the psychological involvement in disaster and the ordinary drive of routine. *“What are the best questions to ask when preparing for the apocalypse? How much water do I need per person per day? What if the grid goes down? What if there are riots?”*

Instead of physical contact, these questions surface not from actual uncertainty, but from visionary readiness, a type of psychological rehearsal grounded on too much information. They confirm the way radical personal social stories of preparation and self-government are adopted as affective obligations. In spite of her helplessness to control the reason for producing such ruin, Lizzie thinks obligated to feel, prepare, and dread.

This psychological situation, which Ray calls as "disempowerment of the hyper-aware," happens when information incapacitates instead of activates. Besides her engagement in ecological debate, Lizzie does not participate in any activity or political conflict. It generates a vicious cycle of immobility, irony, and regret. She depicts this point in the scene below: *“A woman asks me, Should I have children? And I don't know what to tell her. What I want to say is that we can't be sure the baby will sleep through the night, let alone live to see the year 2100.”*

The ethical effects of ecological information are plainly demonstrated in this section. Lizzie is depicted as getting access to scientific forecasts and ecological debates, but this information makes her psychologically exhausted and ethically ineffective. Her disability to offer a reasonable answer to the woman's question embodies what Ray indicates as "ethical overload"—the pressure of compelling to make existential options while addressing a shortage of information and physical inactivity.

Fundamentally, Lizzie's unease is not depicted by the author of the novel as uncontrolled or hyperbolic. Instead, it portrays the way the sociocultural conditions of beyond reality, radical America—its news phases, economic instability, opposed civic discussion, and a focus on private therapies—make climate anxiety as a rational, even reasonable, response. In spite of being a librarian and not an ecologist or politician, she is believed by people and herself to have sufficient knowledge on existential risks. In this respect, the novel echoes Ray's thought that individuals who are mindful but cannot take action often endure the effect of environmental unease.

Additionally, Lizzie's environmental anxiety is affected by her conversations with other individuals and is not exclusively her own. She reacts to the audience's admissions and dreads in her program, which are often mixed with ridiculousness or hopelessness. These interactions show the way climate conversation functions as a circulated accountability and a shared language. One audience member asks: "*Should I move to higher ground? Should I learn how to make fire? Should I become a doom prepper or a Buddhist?*"

The absurdity of this perplexity—joining practical survivalism with spiritual submission—demonstrates how environmental mindfulness leads to self-identity crisis in place of clarity, a quality Ray connects to the emotional disintegration of the Anthropocene theme. Similar to Lizzie, the auditors are endeavouring to equalise contradictory stories: those of exertion and inertia, hopefulness and hopelessness, individual responsibility and general helplessness.

Additional crucial constituent of Ray's critique, the race and class-based sides of environmental worries, is similarly wisely examined by Offill. Lizzie often feels protected from more compelling and physical disasters by her apocalyptic concern. She meets her neighbour "hoarding water and ammunition" and another who peacefully continues her yoga exercise while she fusses about the probability of a breakdown in the forthcoming. The socioeconomic differences in the way individuals disregard or plan for environmental expectations are introduced to by these juxtaposes. '*Weather's*' essential theme, that climate anxiety is a social sign of comfortable communities fighting with deferred catastrophe, is extended by the shortage of declarations from the developing countries or from areas already undergoing ecological destruction.

This psychological disorder is mirrored in '*Weather's*' fragmented structure, which is composed of brief scenes, epigrammatic lines, and casual remarks. The novel's style activates the mental conflict and emotional strain, instead of constructing a direct story, Ray classifies as fundamental to environmental anxiety. In place of disinterest, the outcome is an insistent condition of awareness without solution, which distinguishes Lizzie's sociocultural state.

'*Weather*' embodies information overload and a collective inefficacy, that have formed environmental anxiety, as a social disorder. Using Ray's background, the novel demonstrates the way environmental sensation is culturally fabricated, inequitably suffered, and deeply political via the protagonist Lizzie, depicting the immobility of the knowledgeable but powerless.

6. Emotional Geographies and Environmental Mourning

The concept of emotional geography, which originates from social geography and has become more and more common in ecocriticism, elucidates how narrative style, culture, and planetary effects environmental sensations. According to DeLoughrey (2019) and Dürbeck (2019), cli-fi exaggerates the mental and psychological perplexity caused by climate change as well as merely portraying it.

Dürbeck highlights how prescribed characteristics as disintegration and earthly disturbance, echo the emotional uncertainty of the Anthropocene. In contrast to DeLoughrey, who stresses how ecological grief is traditionally and ethically established, interwoven with colonist defeat and generational damage. Both indicate that cli-fi grieves, offering readers a method of purifying their thoughts in response to the slow decline of the environment.

'*Weather*' is a key instance of this approach. Instead of displaying catastrophic ecological happenings, it shadows the internal site of the protagonist, Lizzie, whose restless internal life pictures the psychological strain of climate insecurity. The disjointed practice of living with observational collapse and ambient anxiety is reflected by the story's fragmented construction, which becomes a sort of emotional cartography. Thereby, the novel reinforces contemporary eco-critical notions that looks at cli-fi as a stage for psychological manifestation in place of simply describing the atmosphere. As Lizzie notices at the start of '*Weather*': "*My brother thinks I have a calming presence. I try to act normal even when I'm falling apart.*"

The emotional geography of the Anthropocene is exemplified by this paradox between outer manifestation and internal disorder. Though Lizzie is not in instantaneous threat tangibly, her psychological background is affected by her emotional experience to intensifying disasters. Instead of a specific event, her domesticity becomes a venue of grief for approaching damage with no time limit.

Lizzie's obsessive collecting of catastrophe mitigation recommendations, ranging from sensible to silly, is stricken with grief. This action caters more as a mental ceremony—a means to cope with prophylactic sorrow—than as preparation. She states, for instance: "*People keep asking me what to do if it all goes sideways. I tell them: stay hydrated, get some baby aspirin, keep cash in small bills.*"

These unemotional recommendations are moving. Instead of intense turmoil, they suggest feelings of dread, remorse, and senselessness, highlighting how environmental grief appears as a daily preoccupation. This is consistent with DeLoughrey's opinion of ecological grief as a slow, continuing method in which damage is intertwined into routine life and domestic settings in place of climaxing.

The emotional geography of '*Weather*' is more amplified by Lizzie's responsibility as a mother. Her son symbolizes an ambiguous coming and turn out to be the entity of both dread and hopefulness. She is worried about his capability to stay psychologically balanced despite innate unease in addition to his security in a world where the environment is unsteady. Lizzie meditates in one of her internal monologues: "*My son asked me, 'Are we all going to die?' I said, 'Yes, eventually.' Then I added, 'But not all at once.'*"

The psychological dichotomy of child-rearing in the Anthropocene—the need to safeguard children from desperation as they conflict against life, extremely significant and unable to disregard—is depicted in this blackly humorous reaction. Like Offill's greater thematic concern in the quiet collapse of environmental and psychological balance, the home, which was once a paradise, becomes a challenged area where anxiety and caring exist side-by-side.

Moreover, a comparable sort of grief—individual breakdown as an image for environmental weakness—is presented by Lizzie's brother, who struggles with addiction and rehabilitation. There is a social geography of shared helplessness as his unbalanced psychological situation is like Lizzie's. The author deals with no striking metaphors here; in its place, she creates closeness as a spot of mutual instability, where grief is social rather than private.

The novel likewise utilizes irony and implied humour as a grieving method. Though Lizzie's cynical remarks offer a short break, they also signify the psychological tiredness that obstructs thorough purgation. For example, Lizzie answers as the following when questioned to recommend apocalypse podcasts: "*People are feeling too anxious to listen to anything depressing. So I recommend the ones that are funny-depressing.*"

The phrase "funny-depressing" can be employed to explain '*Weather*'. It represents a fictional form easily affected by the ridiculousness of emotions and lack of emotional expression via slow catastrophe. The story portrays how sorrow stays in indirectly, for example via disturbance, recurrence, and quiet fear, in place of dramatizing ecological ruin.

Offill depicts emotional geography through Lizzie's interiority as a place of emotional saturation where psychological burdens mount in situations that appear neutral, such as podcast inboxes, school pickups and tube rides. These areas absorb and refract ecological grief, but they do not visually represent crisis. In this way, '*Weather*' challenges readers to think about how, in a time of uncertainty, everyday locations can become emotionally charged spaces and how mourning permeates the fabric of daily life.

DeLoughrey reminds us that this kind of mourning is socially and historically situated rather than abstract. '*Weather*'s' portrayal of a white, middle-class protagonist going through climate grief subtly highlights inequalities in whose losses are apparent and whose feelings are centred, even though it does not overtly highlight colonial histories. The novel's partial, privileged, and fragmented emotional geography reflects the wider inequality in how people around the world envision and experience climate futures.

'*Weather*' performs emotional mourning through intimacy, irony, and fragmentation, portraying an inner ecology of fear and grief. It offers a quiet situation for detecting and

considering environmental damage in the Anthropocene by permitting readers to stay in psychological uncertainty rather than discovering a resolution.

7. Irony, Ambivalence, and *Bad Environmentalism*

Traditional ecological stories, which inspire admiration for nature and encouragement to heroic deeds, often depend on honesty, earnestness, and ethical simplicity. In *Bad Environmentalism* (2018), Nicole Seymour critiques this emotional seriousness, maintaining that it might appear inadequate when dealing with the Anthropocene's psychological complexity. In its place, she proposes that “improper affects” like humour, uncertainty, collapse, and ridicule are esteemed responses to environmental disasters.

Seymour argues that these emotional approaches permit more exposed, disordered relations with ecological instability by echoing the struggle between environmental wakefulness and ordinary life. This approach is exceptionally relatable to ‘*Weather*’ in which Lizzie, the protagonist, embodies a sort of “bad environmentalism.” Lizzie is well-informed and anxious, but she’s similarly ill-tempered, emotive, and confused. Her sarcastic manner and incoherent thoughts deliver a truthful picture of environmental awareness as conflicting and devastating.

Lizzie’s irony and uncertainty offer a precise emotional pragmatism that does not diminish climate anxiety. Seymour proposes another ecological issue—one that is shaped by struggled mindfulness and moral collapse in a world of ceaseless disaster rather than by engagement or certitude. Look at Lizzie’s opinions regarding her ex-supervisor’s program about climate anxiety, for instance: “*People ask me about how to prepare. I tell them to stockpile baby aspirin and condoms. I tell them to learn to make soap. I say, put a solar panel in your go-bag. Also, learn to swim.*”

Here, ironic humour is intertwined with beneficial advice. The absurdity of planning for breakdown while keeping routine is underlined by unremarked mentions of condoms and swimming classes. This isn’t trivialising—it admits the dreamlike strain of being alive under environmental danger. Humour discloses the emotional strain of constantly predicting the end and operates as a means and a story method. In another place, Lizzie considers: “*I spend my days answering emails about how doomed we are. I spend my nights wondering if it’s ethical to have another child. I try to be hopeful, but I keep a list of ways to barricade the door.*”

The psychological confusion that Seymour explains as a characteristic of bad environmentalism is greatly demonstrated by this juxtaposition between daily emails, existential anxiety, and homemade catastrophe methods. Lizzie’s contradiction is the psychological effect of being concerned for others, stressed out from collapse, not indifference. For a large number of people in the advanced countries, the conflicting emotional space of climate consciousness is encapsulated by their oscillation between hope and resignation, irony and sincerity.

Furthermore, Lizzie often ridicules the action-oriented sides of environmental discussion, echoing Seymour’s condemnation of climate performative activism. Considering

wealthy survivalists building apocalypse shelters, she notices: “*The rich are prepping for the apocalypse. The poor are prepping for the next paycheck. I read that somewhere.*”

This statement is sarcastic, even bitter, but it also emphasises a deep-seated reality: upper-class advantage often turns into a facilitating element in climate dread, and environmental helplessness is unevenly distributed. Although Lizzie avoids overtly moralising in her speech, there is a moral critique in her irony. Seymour’s call for climate fiction that exposes structural injustices without elevating its heroes to ideals is supported by Offill’s storytelling style.

Irony also functions as a coping strategy in ‘*Weather*’, a way to deal with the psychological immobility that often comes with climate mindfulness. Lizzie frequently conceals more serious worries behind her witty remarks and bits of thought: “*My husband says that I live in a state of agitation. I say, no, I live in a state of pre-agitation.*”

Instead of full dread, this unexpected comment reflects a common mental state: a rumbling, prophylactic anxiety. Lizzie’s use of the term “pre-agitation,” describes a new climate effect that falls somewhere between worry and numbness, awareness and fatigue. Thanks to Seymour’s work, we can see this not as an emotional failure but as an affective truth of our time.

Fundamentally, Offill does not portray Lizzie as a heroine or a good model. She is unpredictable, distracted, kind, and sometimes self-centred. She occasionally disregards her climate anxieties, and other times she becomes fixated on them. The soft strain of attempting to have a moral life while feeling overburdened and helpless in all of her relationships, particularly with her son and husband. Throughout the novel, this ambivalence endures rather than being resolved, urging instead of seeking comfort, readers should sit in discomfort.

Thus, the novel bolsters Seymour’s argument that discussions of climate change must take emotional nuance into account. Offill’s villainous environmentalist protagonist rejects the three qualities that traditional environmentalism requires: clarity, resolve, and optimism. And in that refusal lies a powerful form of ecological witnessing—one that mirrors the emotional reality of a generation navigating climate collapse in a world that offers no easy answers, and often no real agency.

All things considered, ‘*Weather*’ effectively conveys the moral and artistic power of bad environmentalism. It eschews moral clarity by presenting climate awareness as nuanced and human through irony, fragmentation, and emotional ambivalence. Through humour and flawed care, the novel invites readers to participate and broadens the emotional scope of cli-fi.

8. The Environmental Imagination and Toxic Discourse

According to Lawrence Buell, the environmental imagination highlights how literature can portray not only natural environments but also the moral and emotional toll that environmental crises take. Buell contends in *The Future of Environmental Criticism* (2005) that compelling environmental narratives bridge the gap between internal awareness and external disruptions by reflecting how people internalise ecological change.

Toxic discourse (2009), which depicts gradual, widespread environmental harm like pollution or climate anxiety without depending on dramatic events, is at the heart of his later

work. Instead, toxicity is a subtle part of everyday life that destroys the ecosystem, the emotions, and the mind.

Since this framework is represented in '*Weather*'. The novel displays how climate dread infiltrates daily life and the home, rather than demonstrating outward ecological apocalypses. Disjointed news, a hum of anxiety behind the scenes, and unexpected comments are how nature expresses. Offill's elliptical construction mirrors the fractured, anxious state of contemporary climate consciousness. Lizzie is overwhelmed with information about the climate to make anything of it. This toxicity forms her emotional life, a notion that also represents Buell's argument that environmental fiction often works best when it focuses less on nature itself and more on how climate anxiety penetrates relationships, routines, and thoughts. "*The natural world is asking for help, and we are not listening. What will it take for us to listen?*"

This line is stated as one of many aphoristic notes in the novel, one that suggests the strange manifestation of environmental cues that remain unheard amidst social distraction and affective overload. It evokes a helpless intimacy with its wording; an intimate failure of care, not stunning because of its dramatic scene, but suffocating in the psychological sense.

In '*Weather*', the soft permeation of the domestic sphere creates toxic discourse. Lizzie's house, although looking safe, is afflicted by anxiety. How fear of the environment impairs personal instability is revealed in her brother's survivalist paranoia, hoarding batteries, and fixating on collapse. As senseless as his actions seem, they are a human response to the psychic strain of living perpetually on the brink of ecological disaster.

Offill's dry humour and everyday routine details help her to convey the slow seepage of environmental dread. Lizzie's ironic allusion to a "*future museum of failed predictions*" also emphasizes the weight of ignored warnings and reveals how climate anxiety gradually infiltrates everyday thought. Here, humour functions as both a coping mechanism, and as a gauge of emotional toxicity — a way to illuminate, through its absurdist portrayal of the stress of attempting to lead a normal life while threatening to collapse.

Buell's notion of environmental loss as a silent, psychological colonization is best demonstrated by the book's quiet emotional tone. Lizzie is concerned, not panic-stricken or indignant. Her reflections skip erratically, echoing the awkwardness of nonstop climate discussion.

This is the affected site of Buell's toxic speechmaking, which is subtle, lasting, and emotionally harmful. Lizzie recalls a child's question, "Will this happen to us?" as a visceral illustration of that infowhelm. —endlessly unlost, unanswerable question that carries the subdued fear at the core of the novel. "*Will the animals be in heaven?*"

The morality at the heart of Buell's ecological imagination, where innocence meets loss and ambiguity, is captured in this simple question. It is an emotional cry that emphasizes the emotional effect of environmental loss rather than a scientific argument or a call to arms. The immobility and quiet grief that often come with climate knowledge are shown by the child's question goes unanswered.

Offill's writing veers between the philosophical reflection and the everyday routine, exemplifying the way poisonousness appears as emotional filtrate rather than spectacle. Lizzie's routines and relationships are all quietly affected by a perpetual undercurrent of ecological dread. She observes: "*It is important to remember that the world is not ending. It has ended many times before. But this is our ending, and we are still here.*"

Here, the concept of various endings—some historic, some ongoing—resonates with Buell's argument that we must take environmental change as a continuous, cumulative process rather than as an isolated event. "*The apocalypse is not sudden but slow and strangely survivable, leaving behind not ruins but frayed attention spans and overburdened hearts,*" Lizzie says, revealing the physical and inner sides of toxic discourse.

Buell's transition from depicting devastated nature to exploring the emotional effects of climate breakdown is evident in '*Weather*'. Offill displays how climate anxiety filters through daily life, revealing crisis as ceaseless, inward strain. In the Anthropocene, the document revisualizes ecological narrative as a spot to detect quiet emotional breakdown.

9. Conclusion

'*Weather*' has been analyzed in this study as a quiet genre of cli-fi that highlights psychological perplexity and emotional fracture over dramatic scenes. The analysis demonstrates how Offill's fragmented form and ironic tone mirror the inner, ambient stresses of the Anthropocene, grounded on concepts like *Solastalgia* (Albrecht), sociocultural climate distress (Ray), and *Bad Environmentalism* and *Toxic Discourse* (Buell). Instead of explicitly rendering ecological disaster, '*Weather*' demonstrates how climate anxiety invades everyday life, thought, and emotion. The novel develops the psychological and recognized space of cli-fi by highlighting emotional experience. By identifying '*Weather*' as a key representation of quiet environmental affect, this study progresses the cli-fi study and helps a more multidisciplinary Eco-critical study of likewise affect-driven stories, mainly those written by unpopular novelists.

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