An Ecocritical Examination of Ray Bradbury's "The Fog Horn" and "Here There Be Tygers"

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Abstract

Ecological concerns have been a significant theme in works of science fiction across various media. Juxtaposed against technological advancements and the overall progress of humanity are the horrors of ecological destruction, scarcity of resources, environmental exploitation, etc., found in novels like *Dune* by Frank Herbert (1965), films like *Avatar* (2009), and television series like *Doctor Who* (1963) or *Star Trek* (1966). Similar contrasts can be found in Ray Bradbury's science fiction and/or speculative fiction. This paper is an ecocritical exploration of two of Bradbury's short stories: "The Fog Horn" (1951) and "Here There Be Tygers" (1968). It will employ textual analysis as well as ecocritical and ecofeminist approaches to examine Bradbury's portrayal of the relationships between humans and nature in the two short stories, and what this portrayal reveals about Bradbury's perspective on modernity and progress. The findings show that these short stories reveal humanity as a dominating force that exploits and alienates nature as they seek to take all they can from there without considering the effect this can have on others. Ultimately, his works reveal that while nature may be threatening at times, the truly frightening and consistent forces of destruction are modernity and its anthropocentrism.

Keywords: ecocriticism, Bradbury, environment, modernity, science fiction

Science fiction frequently utilizes the convention of duality and contrasts, as seen in classic texts like Huxley's *Brave New World* (1932) and Bradbury's *Fahrenheit 451* (1953), and timeless television series like *Doctor Who* (1963). On the one hand, there are fascinating planets to explore and colonize, and on the other, a dying planet Earth whose ecosystem has been annihilated by human activity. Gleaming futuristic technology is used in a world where nature has been exploited to its limits. Human progress is foregrounded at the expense of exterminating nearly all other nonhuman organic existence.

This "biotic invasion," as denoted by Rob Latham, does not just extend to ecological devastation on Earth in some other pieces of science fiction such as

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Le Guin's *The Word for World is Forest* (1976), where humans colonize another planet to exploit its resources and inhabitants (114). Latham's idea of an "ecological imperialism" maintained by humankind can also be found in lesser-known works of science fiction. While Ray Bradbury's texts like *Fahrenheit 451* (1953) and *The Martian Chronicles* (1950) are his more popular works, his anxieties regarding modernity and the treatment of nature also appear in his short stories, many of which lack the popularity of his novels. This paper will, therefore, examine two of Bradbury's short stories titled "The Fog Horn" (1951) and "Here There Be Tygers" (1968). While his writing style tends to be much more poetic (and often, even lyrical), there is no mistaking that these texts belong to the tradition of speculative and/or science fiction. The issues of environmental degradation, the exploitation of natural resources by capitalistic endeavors, and a relationship between humans and the natural world defined by greed and commodification make for an interesting ecocritical exploration of these texts. They portray the tendency of humans to dominate and destroy nature and all things natural in the name of modernity without considering the ramifications this may have on the balance in the natural world, the well-being of nature, the long-term effect environmental destruction may have on humanity's future, or even the psychological impact this legacy of biotic colonization may have on human beings. Instead of balance and coexistence, humanity has chosen a mode of unilateral domination to exploit Mother Nature's resources. As depicted in "Here There Be Tygers," once there is nothing left on Earth to utilize, humankind will simply move on to other planets, and eventually, other galaxies and solar systems. Moreover, both stories depict nature with anthropomorphic traits: curious and playful in its interactions with others, but also angry and vengeful when scorned or attacked. Nature is aware of its position in the anthropocentric hierarchy and the mistreatment by humans, and can mete out retribution in both texts. However, Bradbury also emphasizes that modern humans are relentless in their pursuit of progress and will find alternative means to exploit the natural world if necessary.

By examining "The Fog Horn" and "Here There Be Tygers" through an ecocritical lens, this paper will explore Bradbury's portrayal of the relationships between humans and nature, and analyze what this portrayal reveals about his perspective on modernity. The paper will attempt to establish that Bradbury's texts depict the relationship between nature and humans as one of exploitation and domination, where nature exists for humans to degrade, utilize, and enjoy in the name of progress, exploration, and profit in the modern age, without any consideration for the wellbeing of nonhuman species and ecological balance, thus showing that modernity is the monster that destroys nature and the environment without restraint. The significance of this paper lies in the insight it provides when reevaluating the ecocritical elements in lesser-known science fiction works and what they reveal about our attitudes towards nature and the relationship we have with our environment while highlighting the exploitation of nature as parallel to the treatment of women in a patriarchal society, and the ethical and environmental concerns that arise from modernity are allowed to go unchecked. It also bridges the gap between literature and real-world environmental concerns, revealing how literature critiques anthropocentric attitudes and warns against the exploitation of nature, making Bradbury's works relevant in contemporary discussions on resource depletion and ecological destruction. Thus, this paper expands and adds to the existing body of knowledge by highlighting two lesser-known short stories, examining them from an ecocritical and ecofeminist perspective. It also examines aspects of these stories that connect to trans-speciesism, with a focus on the dynamic between humans and nonhuman nature, and the role that modernity plays in the relationship portrayed.

The first section clarifies the background and context of the paper and introduces the subject matter and texts used. The second section examines the existing literature on Bradbury's works and ecocriticism, identifying the research gap while placing this paper in the context of ecocriticism and ecofeminism. The following section discusses and analyzes the texts in question from an ecocritical perspective, and the fourth section connects the texts to concepts of ecofeminism and trans-speciesism to prove that Bradbury's portrayal of the human-nature relationship foregrounds modernity as a malignant force opposing ecological harmony between mankind and nature. The final section summarizes the findings and inferences drawn from the paper.

Ecocriticism is a literary movement that studies the relationship between nature, environmental concerns and literature. Focusing on how literature portrays nature, it is rooted in late 20th-century American scholarship, due to the focus on the natural world and the environment in the American literary canon. According to Lawrence Buell, "pastoral, frontier, and wilderness" themes are significant in American literary-cultural tradition due to the ample representation of rustic living in prominent authors from Emerson to Faulkner (15). Ecocritical approaches are therefore relevant when examining the American literary canon, including works by Ray Bradbury. The theme of wilderness and the cosmic frontier can also be found in *The Illustrated Man* (1951) and *The Martian Chronicles* (1951). Moreover, the connection between humanity and the natural world plays a major role in his writing. The positioning of the destruction of nature versus advanced technology, both originating from human activity, can be found in various short stories of the two aforementioned collections. Nature is often foregrounded in Bradbury's works, even more so than the conventional features of science fiction like futuristic technology, because he "never loses sight of the organic and the natural" (Bonati 4). Thus, his works are more than adequately suited for various angles of ecocritical exploration.

Buell traces this focus on nature and the pastoral in American literature to Thoreau's *Walden* (1854), contending that Thoreau's position as one of the first members of America's literary pantheon, as well as his posthumous canonization as an "environmental saint" (24) in both popular and high culture contributed to a tradition of American ecocentric literature. Buell also argues that "environmental texts" like *Walden* are significant because they encourage ecocentric perspectives and function as "agents of ecocentricity" (143). Instead of an anthropocentric focus where nature is a passive backdrop, Buell advocates for environmental literature and perspectives that "suggest that human history is implicated in natural history" (7) that foreground nature and depict it as a dynamic force that actively engages with human actions (8). Most significantly, he states that accountability from humans should be a part of the text's "ethical orientation" with an egalitarian perspective where there are no fixed boundaries between humans and nature, so there is no mastery of humans over nature (7-8). In other words, Buell's concept of ecocriticism emphasizes the need for environmental literature that decenters humans and showcases nature as autonomous and dynamic with human accountability.

Building upon Buell's idea of an egalitarian connection between man and dynamic nature, Cheryll Glotfelty echoes this emphasis on the relationship between human and nonhuman nature; she defines ecocriticism as "the study of the relationship between literature and the physical environment" (xviii) with an emphasis on the interrelation between nature and culture, including the "cultural artefacts of language and literature" (xix) where scholars study the "reciprocal" relationships between people and the land, where nature is an actor involved in the story and not merely the stage where the story is enacted (xxi). Glotfelty also highlights the interdisciplinary nature of ecocriticism, which she calls "an earth-centered approach to literary studies," comparing it to feminist and Marxist interpretations of literature (xix).

William Howarth takes Buell and Glotfelty's ideas of criticizing human-centered perspectives of nature a step further and asserts that Western progress has been directed by the belief that "culture will always master nature," which ultimately led to overcrowding and scarcity of resources on Earth (77), expanding Glotfelty's concept of the bilateral connection between nature and culture. He also posits that human existence and well-being are interlinked with that of nature; that the "nonhuman creatures, physical forces, and biological processes" that humans share the planet with live in "biosocial communities" and that these relationships are reflected in literature (77).

While Buell, Glotfelty, and Howarth discuss the relationships between humans and the environment and the role of literature in examining these connections, other scholars focus on particular aspects of ecocriticism. Amongst these, ecofeminism is relevant to this paper, which connects feminist issues with ecological concerns, drawing parallels between the oppression of women and the exploitation of nature. According to Val Plumwood, there is a connection between the "domination of women and the domination of nature as part of a larger system of oppression" (15). Thus, ecofeminist critics argue that ecofeminism "synthesizes the feminist movement and the ecological movement" as nonhuman nature and sexual and social minorities like women are exploited and dominated in the same manner (Schultermandl 173). This concept of a parallel between the exploitative treatment of nature and women by dominating patriarchal powers appears in Bradbury's "Here There Be Tygers," which is set on a planet that is presented as feminine, as well as nurturing and welcoming to visitors, but fiercely protective when threatened or scorned. The text highlights nature's "cosmological otherness" (Pak 66) while presenting a homocentric angle of the story and characters who display a "masculinist orientation to the pastoral utopia," contrasting the planet and its ecosystem, which is portrayed as feminine.

Trans-speciesism, which is linked to posthumanism, explores the idea of cognitive and biological intersections between humans and animals and is also pertinent to the theoretical framework of this paper. This movement also focuses on animal ethics and "a shared trans-species being-in-the-world constituted by complex relations of trust, respect, dependence, and communication," as stated by Cary Wolfe (*Posthumanism* 141). Like ecocriticism, trans-speciesism challenges the hierarchy that places humans at the top as the master. Instead of a structure that centers humans, this movement prefers a "continuum of sentience and subjectivity between species" (LaCapra 92) and calls for reevaluating the conventional anthropocentric notions of intelligence and agency. Wolfe also advocates for "not just a pragmatic and functional shift but a philosophical one as well" when it comes to the binary of human and nonhuman, critiquing the "rigid, uncrossable ontological boundary between two sides of the distinction—between nature and culture, between the biological and the mechanical" (*Posthumanism* 206). The idea of sentience and cognition of nonhuman nature is echoed in "The Fog Horn," where the sea monster is depicted as feeling emotions typically attributed to people: loneliness, curiosity, sorrow, and anger.

Certain ecocritical approaches have been utilized in some of Bradbury's more popular works, such as his most famous work, the novel *Fahrenheit 451* (1953), which has also been the subject of much research. Matarazzo examines the themes of "overconsumption and overpopulation, and the degradation and disappearance of non-human nature" (ii) and how this novel intersects aspects like power, totalitarianism, and ecological exploitation, all of which corresponded to the social and political concerns prevalent during the time of its publication. Furthermore, Sabine Höhler refers to the premise of Bradbury's *The Martian Chronicles*, where the indiscriminate exploitation of nonhuman nature and depletion of resources have destroyed Earth, leading to the colonization of Mars to continue humanity's existence (83-100). While the scholarship on Bradbury generally focuses on his contributions to science fiction and dystopian literature, his works also provide material for ecocritical exploration, particularly in their portrayal of environmental degradation, human exploitation of natural resources, and the implications of modern and futuristic technological advancements.

However, in-depth research on Bradbury's short stories through an ecocritical perspective is quite limited, and except for "A Sound of Thunder," little to no work in this area has been done on *The Golden Apples of the Sun*, the collection of short stories to which "The Fog Horn" and "Here There Be Tygers" belong. The aspects of capitalist exploitation and destruction, as well as the ecofeminist undertones in these two stories, tend to have been overlooked, and this paper aims to address these aspects and fill the existing gap in the research.

Following is a discussion of Bradbury's "The Fog Horn" and "Here There Be Tygers" from his collection *Golden Apples of the Sun*. "The Fog Horn" is a short, emotionally charged story with vivid descriptions depicting an encounter two men working on a lighthouse have with a mysterious monster-like sea creature, possibly related to prehistoric dinosaurs. The narrator, Johnny, recounts the experience of being one of the lighthouse-keepers on Lonesome Bay, a hundred miles from the nearest town. The story is set on a cold November night, and the narrator only has his older, more experienced coworker, McDunn, for company. It is McDunn's perspective that leads the narrative, while Johnny, who appears to be a stand-in for the reader, is a passive listener for the most part. As the men settle in for what is the last night before the narrator takes his turn to return to the mainland, McDunn describes a night in the past when he was working alone, when all of the fish came to the surface to watch the tower's light blinking. The fish remained there until midnight before the "million of them" (4) slipped away together. McDunn tries to hypothesize why the fish behaved that way and thinks that they must have thought the giant lighthouse with its "God-light" and "monster voice" (4) to be some kind of deity that made them feel like they were in a sort of divine presence. McDunn then tells Johnny that around this time of the year, "something comes to visit the lighthouse" (4). After a long wait, the men see a giant sea creature swimming towards the lighthouse. The creature makes it clear *why* it chose to come to the lighthouse: when the fog horn blew, it responded; the two sounded almost exactly alike. For millions of years, the monster had been alone, the last of its kind and had to hide away in what McDunn calls "the Deeps" (6). As the creature and the Fog horn cry out at each other in a kind of conversation, it swims closer and closer to the lighthouse. McDunn then switches off the horn to see how the creature would react. Realizing the fog horn is no longer calling to it, the anguished and enraged creature attacks the lighthouse, even after McDunn turns the horn back on. The monster strikes at the lighthouse repeatedly, and as the fog horn and the monster roar at each other, the tower begins to collapse. In the ensuing silence, they listen to "the lament, the bewilderment, the loneliness" (9) of the creature as it cries out, heartbroken that the tower that called out to it is now gone. The creature never returned to the lighthouse, and according to McDunn, it swam back to "the deepest Deeps to wait another million years" (10).

A complex relationship between nature and humans is depicted in this text. Humans and nonhuman nature are portrayed as two separate spheres, where the lighthouse is far from civilization, connected by a long and desolate road. The name Lonesome Bay is quite fitting, the town being miles away, the road connecting the sea and the town coming through barren country with just a few passing cars, and the rock on which the lighthouse is located is separated from the mainland by two miles of cold water, with just the "rare few" ships that pass by (3). Surrounding the men on the lighthouse is the sea, which McDunn makes clear is unfathomable. He points out that despite mankind's progress, it would take "ten thousand centuries" before humans reached the bottom of the ocean, where time has not passed. While modernity and progress have swept through the land, McDunn believed it was still "the year 300,000 Before Christ down under there" and compares the time at the bottom of the ocean to the beard of a comet (4). In this setting, the man-made lighthouse is an intruder infringing upon the nonhuman nature. The lighthouse and its Fog horn serve as a metaphorical "metabolic rift" (Moore 295) of sorts, as together they disrupt the balance and ecology of the sea. Also, both iterations of the lighthouse (the original at the start of the story and the indestructible concrete structure at the end) represent human desire, "desire to conquer nature and remake the physical environment" (Parry 155). However, the rift between the two is artificial, and this is highlighted when the sea monster confronts the tower. The monster destroys the lighthouse, attempting to break the barrier between man and nature. The breakdown of binaries is both literal and metaphorical, as McDunn and the narrator get to understand and empathize with the heartbreak the creature experiences. The interactions between the two men and the mysterious sea creature, as well as McDunn's previous encounters with the inhabitants of the sea, align with Howarth's idea of "biosocial communities" (77) and how relationships between humans and nonhuman nature are reflected in literature.

The lighthouse itself tends to have multidimensional associations. Blake claims that the landscapes of lighthouses contain the "melding of people and the environment," further arguing that for many, lighthouses are "national achievement, dependability under duress, hope, and even religious faith," and function as a metaphor for guidance and safety (9). In "The Fog Horn" the lighthouse has a similar function of guidance as the flashing light and sound of the horn not only guide the ships at sea, but also lead the giant swarms of fish from McDunn's story and the sea monster to the tower. Lighthouses also act as an emblem of modernity, as according to Schiffer, they used the first installed electric lights and always played a significant role in trade and military activities (275-278). Thus, for people, the lighthouse symbolizes human progress and modernization. In "The Fog Horn," the lighthouse is not an inherent representation of monstrous modernity; it is more ambiguous, as it is first the source of comfort and companionship for the creature, and later the cause of its pain and anger.

While modernity may not be portrayed as overtly monstrous in "The Fog Horn," the depiction in "Here There Be Tygers" is more explicit. The text begins with a character stating that the only way to treat a planet is to "beat [it] at its own game," and "Drag out the minerals and run away before the nightmare world explodes in your face" (Bradbury 214). The characters are men sent to explore seventh planet of the star system 84. These missions are necessary because, in that future time, Earth is no longer sustainable for life: "her system and her sun forgotten, her system settled and investigated and profited on, and other systems rummaged through and milked and tidied up" (214). Due to this, humans explore other universes and their planets, stripping them of their resources. These expeditions are financed by companies with a simple policy: everything that can be used by Earth should be taken, and rockets that never return to Earth are simply forgotten, as the planets are assumed to be inhospitable or hostile.

The story has several characters: Captain Forester is the rocket man who respects the alien planets and is a "looker" who simply observes, while Chatterton is the "anthropologist-mineralogist" who obsesses over taking the planet's wealth with his "Earth Drill" and admits that he is "out for the money" (215), and Driscoll is the younger crewman who quickly develops an affinity with the planet. The planet itself is a character that dominates the narrative. It has a lush and temperate environment, the "freshest green color" (215) the men had seen since their childhood. The story is set on the planet, which is beautiful and uninhabited, with clear lakes and endless green fields. The planet seems welcoming and has "croquet weather," so the men explore the meadows, hills, and valleys. Captain Forester exclaims, "If ever a planet was a woman, this one is" (215). In addition, the planet has a psychic connection with those who walk upon it and can read the minds of men and respond accordingly. When the antagonistic Chatterton (who intends to plunder the planet's resources) steps down from the rocket, the ground shakes and trembles (216). When Driscoll comments that it would be nice to fly through the air, the planet lifts him and allows him to fly (217). When Chatterton attempts to drill into the planet for its resources, the planet sinks the machine into a tar pit (221). Chatterton claims that the planet is plotting to kill them and there are threats hidden: "Here there be tygers" (220). After his drilling equipment is swallowed by the ground, he attempts to destroy the planet with an A-bomb. However, he does not return, and the other men find a "few drops of blood," "marks of great claws," "a heavy smell of some feline," and hear the "roar of a tiger" (223). Reluctantly, the men leave the planet, which reacts in anger, as one scorned: "The face of the world was changed. Tigers, dinosaurs, mammoths appeared. Volcanoes erupted, cyclones and hurricanes tore over the hills in a welter and fury of weather" (225).

The story relates to several ideas of ecofeminism and delivers a scathing critique of modernity through the portrayal of Chatterton. He represents the shadowy, unnamed company that funds these expeditions and is in control of the operation. Chatterton and the company are exploiting other planets, plundering their resources until nothing is left, and moving to the next one. Chatterton represents the company with a single goal: to exploit planets for their resources to sell on Earth, profiting from metals and minerals, depleting natural resources, and leaving behind bare and barren solar systems once there is nothing left to use. He embodies modernity and how it is driven by capitalistic greed, the results of which destroyed Earth, eventually destroying other planets with no regard for their delicate ecosystems, or any thought about what will happen to everyone once the last planet is destroyed. This echoes capitalist sentiments on space exploration, viewing it as a means to primarily "protect Earth-bound political and economic interests" (Valentine 1047). Moore posits, "Human exemptionalism allows one to speak of modernity as a set of social relations that act upon, rather than develop through, the web of life," (290) and Chatterton embodies both human exceptionalism and the human exemptionalism in Moore's concept of world-ecology, where capitalist systems are not forces beyond nature, but instead intrude into it, reshaping, and dismantling it to sustain themselves. By depicting the company's cycle of plunder across star systems, "Here There Be Tygers" emphasizes modernity's paradox where technological advancement is framed as progress, while it must rely on ecological devastation, which is impossible to sustain indefinitely.

"Here There Be Tygers" portrays the planet as not just a setting, but a sentient character representing natural abundance and femininity, and at the same time, resisting human exploitation. It is not just fertile and beautiful, the alien planet also behaves as a gracious hostess, welcoming the men and giving them everything they wish for. However, she is also a fierce guardian, protecting herself from the threat Chatterton brings. This story depicts the planet as feminine, nurturing and resilient at the same time, aligning with the ecofeminist approach of Sulagna Sengupta similarly portrays Earth as "a living, breathing entity capable of resistance, resilience, and renewal," a perspective that resonates in the story's portrayal of the planet as a responsive being. The planet's ability to retaliate when threatened, such as when it sinks Chatterton's drill into a tar pit (Bradbury 221), reflects Sengupta's idea of the earth as an active participant in its own protection, capable of subverting exploitative forces and displaying agency. Through Chatterton's disappearance and the implications of his violent death, the planet asserts itself as a force that will not passively accept exploitation.

In addition, the story's narrative sets a dichotomy between respect for the natural world, embodied by Captain Forester and Driscoll, and the exploitative, destructive drive of Chatterton, who personifies capitalist and industrial motives and depicts modernity's ecological insensitivity. Chatterton's eagerness to plunder planetary resources would result in what Merchant (43) describes as "manipulated nature [that] undermined the organic model", which exemplifies "capitalist control for the purpose of profit". Thus, Chatterton and the company demonstrate the dangers of the mindset rooted in modernity that prioritizes profit and control over the intrinsic value of nature leading to a "disenchantment of the world that rationalization brings" (Baehr and Wells 40), where modernity's focus on rationalization and economic utility leads to a loss of reverence for nature, potentially risking irreversible consequences for both humanity and the environment. Moreover, the planet is rich in resources, particularly crude oil, and can be likened to a "commodity frontier" invaded by humans in order to "reorganize … biophysical nature" and send the resources "into the capitalist world-economy" (Niblett 3). Even though Chatterton is killed and this particular planet is spared, the expeditions will continue, and other planets will be successfully exploited. Thus, while Chatterton is the antagonist, modernity is the true monstrosity in this story –deadlier than any tiger or storm the planet can conjure.

Both "The Fog Horn" and "Here There Be Tygers" depict the complicated relationship between nature and modernity-driven humans. In "The Fog Horn," modernity is symbolized by the lighthouse with the fog horn, and while there appears to be no malicious intent, there is still a clear encroachment of human civilization into nature's domain. The lonely setting and the unease of the two human characters reflect a fundamental disconnect, a characteristic of modernity. Johnny and McDunn are both quite passive: they do not harm the sea monster, but the curious McDunn attempts to empathize with the creature's loneliness while also toying with it to see its reaction. Therefore, there is a significant emotional and spiritual detachment from nature expressed in this story. The fog horn represents modernity and industrial progress and is the antithesis of the existence of the possibly pre-historic sea creature. Yet, it is this fog horn that first entices the sea monster and then causes it pain through McDunn's actions. Ultimately, this leads the monster to destroy the lighthouse and the fog horn within it.

Just as the lighthouse in "The Fog Horn" can be seen as an intruder in nature's domain, the rocket in "Here There Be Tygers" similarly encroaches on the planet and the natural ecosystem it contains. Latham's "ecological imperialism" is in full swing as the men are essentially there to colonize and exploit the planet by destroying its ecological balance and taking its resources. Even though characters like Captain Forester, Driscoll, and Koestler are sympathetic and respectful towards it, they never do anything to stop Chatterton. They represent the idea that complete environmental destruction occurs once people become complacent and allow it to happen (Mitchell 273-280). Chatterton intimidates and bullies the captain in an exercise of corporate power, showing that modernity is rooted in a capitalistic ethos, operating solely on greed and profit, eschewing a balanced and symbiotic coexistence with nature. Furthermore, when the planet responds to the characters' fear or greed (manifested in the tiger's appearance), it underscores a central ecocritical theme: nature is not just a backdrop but an active force. Through this lens, Bradbury critiques humanity's tendency to treat nature as a resource, highlighting nature's right to exist free from human manipulation. Also, through Chatterton's character, the author critiques the exploitative aspects of modernity, driven and blinded by profit, echoing Nandrajog's claim that instead of celebrating technological advancements, Bradbury focuses on "the potentially dangerous effects that such an interference with nature can have" (36-38). Moreover, they claim that Bradbury is more concerned with what humanity loses through extensive reliance on technology, rather than what is gained from it.

Eventually, the men leave the planet as they are required to continue their responsibilities to the company. This angers the planet, as it feels rejected after all it has done to keep them happy. It provides the men with all their hearts' desires and even spares them when it kills Chatterton, proving that it has no malicious intent toward the would-be colonizers. Thus, both the sea creature and the planet's initial actions reveal a longing for communication and kinship with humans and their world, suggesting that despite modernity's alienating effects, there exists a potential for understanding between nature and man.

However, Bradbury portrays this connection as tragic: the creature's destruction of the fog horn is a response to humanity's disconnect from nature. When the creature, driven by loneliness and confusion, attacks the lighthouse, it underscores a larger theme: the destruction wrought by modernity affects both the natural world and human relationships with it. The collapse of the lighthouse and the angry storms summoned by the planet symbolize the loss of a potential connection with sentient nonhuman nature. Their reactions also reflect Buell's "ethical orientation" of human accountability (7-8) and question human mastery over nature.

While the ecofeminist aspects are less pronounced in "The Fog Horn," some underlying echoes persist. The creature's response to the fog horn evokes a sense of intimacy reminiscent of a maternal connection as it seeks connection and recognition in a world that has marginalized its existence. McDunn describes their kinship to Johnny, and it appears as an offspring seeking its mother: "the lighthouse calling to you, with a long neck like your neck sticking way up out of the water, and a body like your body, and most important of all, a voice like your voice" (Bradbury 7). Also, the repeated call-and-response between the fog horn and creature is similar to how maternal figures and offspring communicate and bond in nature, documented in primates, birds, and cetaceans.

The vulnerability of the sea creature as the last of its kind can be seen through its portrayal as a form of minority, making McDunn's toying with it appear cruel when the power imbalance between the two is considered. In other words, it shows a "larger patriarchal hierarchical system" placing man over land, water, and animals to "monopolize" knowledge and power (Ruether 22). The ecofeminist perspective is more apparent in "Here There Be Tygers." The planet itself is personified as feminine in multiple dimensions. At times, the planet is maternal; it keeps all the men except Chatterton safe, even granting them their every wish. At other times, it appears coquettish, showing off its beauty and charm. It is also referred to as fertile because of the abundance of its greenery. It is angered and insulted by the men leaving the planet, seeing it as a rejection. Moreover, Chatterton's treatment of the planet is more than exploitative; it borders on misogyny and belligerence. Chatterton rejects the very notion of the planet's femininity, dismissing the natural beauty as "cosmetics" meant to fool men because the planet was "woman on the outside, man on the inside" (Bradbury 215). Furthermore, Chatterton's Earth Drill is the deadliest threat to the planet's femininity: ready to drill seventy feet into the heart of the planet. The imagery of the Drill plunging into the planet as the skies tremble is reminiscent of forceful penetration, with connotations of sexual assault. This echoes Plumwood's parallels between the domination of women and the domination of nature (15). Thus, there is a direct association between raping a woman and drilling into the planet, furthering the idea that the "rape of the Earth and rape of women are intimately linked both metaphorically … and materially" (Mies and Shiva, xvi). Moreover, this embodies Warren's concept of ecological feminism, where "the conceptual connections between the dual dominations of women and nature are located in an oppressive patriarchal conceptual framework [are] characterized by a logic of domination" (125). Benita Parry argues "Raymond Williams's observation that the basic concepts of capitalist and imperialist ideology, 'limitless and conquering expansion …, repeat the triumphalist version of 'man's conquest of nature', an analogy to which he returns when identifying the capitalist drive to mastery over nature as the foundation of the dominative tendencies pervading bourgeois social relations from labour to sexuality" (35). Her materialist critique resonates with Chatterton (and his company's) capitalist and imperialist ideology of limitless expansion and exploitation, as well as how he feminizes, then attempts to plunder the planet in an act of patriarchal domination. This can be linked back to the idea of Michael Niblett's concept of commodity frontiers and the capitalist world-economy, as "(p)ropelled by capitalism's endless quest for profit, however, they also tend to rapidly exhaust the socioecological conditions upon which their productivity depends" (3). From this perspective, the story highlights how capitalist expansion is undoubtedly linked to ecological violence and the destructive downward spiral of modernity.

"The Fog Horn" conveys a trans-species narrative through the sea creature and its behavior. The fog horn's call resonates with the creature, signifying a shared existence that transcends species boundaries, challenging anthropocentrism by portraying the creature as sentient and capable of experiencing loneliness and longing. As it identifies the sound as akin to its own voice, it underscores a potential for empathy and connection between humans and nonhumans. In light of Wolfe's idea of inclusivity through a recognition of shared sentience and vulnerabilities (45), one can view the text as challenging an anthropocentric hierarchy. By highlighting the sentience of the creature and its tragic fate, Bradbury highlights the ethical implications of how we treat nonhuman entities, urging a re-evaluation of human-centered narratives as argued by LaCapra (92). The creature is shattered by its desire for connection with humans, highlighting the damage that results from the exploitation and commodification of nature.

This critiques modernity, which views nonhuman entities as mere resources rather than beings worthy of respect and empathy. In this sense, Bradbury's portrayal of the relationships between humans and nature challenges readers to reconsider their ethical obligations to the natural world and to recognize the intrinsic value of all sentient beings.

Similarly, "Here There Be Tygers" provides a narrative where the sentient planet is capable of experiencing emotions associated with humans and behaves according to those emotions. It is welcoming, nurturing, and caring when treated with respect, but can also respond with violence when threatened or angered, corresponding with LaCapra's concept of sentience and subjectivity (92) that the planet shares with humans. The human-like qualities of the planet underscore "hypercapitalist exploitation" of the company, which "transforms the human into the inhuman" (Schmeink 79), turning Chatterton into a belligerent predator. Moreover, the planet embodies nonhuman agency as the tiger that kills Chatterton is not a mere animal, but a manifestation of the sentient and intelligent planet acting as a defense mechanism, challenging the anthropocentric mindset by demonstrating nonhuman intelligence and intent. It reflects Glotfelty's idea of a more reciprocal relationship between man and nature, where nature is an involved character and not just a setting for a particular narrative (xxi). This perspective invites readers to consider the sentience and autonomy of the nonhuman world, portraying the planet as a being with awareness and intellect capable of judging and punishing humans who attempt to exploit or disrespect it. The planet itself may be viewed as an interconnected ecosystem that resists human belief in dominance.

Together, these perspectives show how both "The Fog Horn" and "Here There Be Tygers" serve as cautionary tales that challenge human-centric ideologies, suggesting that respecting nature's autonomy and seeing it as an active participant may be essential for coexistence. They exhibit complex emotions and display refined cognitive abilities, and interactions with humans are colored with what Wolfe describes as speciesism, which "discriminates against an other based only on a generic description and not on what we actually know about its needs, interests, and capabilities" (*Animal Rites* 34). In addition, it highlights a binary with modernity-driven mankind on one side and the "othered" nature in opposition.

Bradbury's works often serve as an exploration on two fronts: the outward exploration into time and space, and an inward exploration of human nature. "The Hog Horn" and "Here There Be Tygers" exemplify this dual exploration: while modern man has achieved progress, the valuable link to nature has been diminished greatly, revealing a callous attitude towards nature and the nonhuman animals that inhabit our world. Bradbury questions "the hierarchical relation … of master and slave" (Wolfe 183) that enables humans to exploit nature for economic gains. By questioning the myth of modernity and progress, he reveals deeply ingrained patterns of dominance and destruction. From McDunn's empathetic yet careless curiosity to Chatterton's antagonistic pillaging, compounded by the culpability of well-meaning men like Driscoll and Forrester, it becomes evident that modernity has nurtured an anthropocentric and exploitative attitude towards nature. However, the texts also show that nature is not without agency and can feel emotions and fight back when hurt or threatened.

This perspective reveals the cost of technological progress on real-world environmental crises. Bradbury's views align with contemporary ecological concerns, such as climate change, global warming, and resource depletion, compelling us to re-examine not only our treatment of the natural world but also the definitions of modern progress. Ultimately, Bradbury informs us that by alienating nature in pursuit of modernity, humankind is alienating itself from nature, becoming a more ferocious monster than the sea creature of "The Fog Horn" or the tiger of "Here There Be Tygers." In other words, Bradbury's stories warn us against the dangers of unchecked progress and humanity's detachment from the natural world. As Buell as well as Glotfelty emphasize, nature is not merely a passive backdrop to human achievement or intellectual curiosity but a being with agency, capable of both suffering and retaliation. This comparative exploration of Bradbury's two short stories suggests that his work contributes significantly to ecocritical discourse by highlighting the dynamics between modernity, capitalism, exploitation, and the agency of the nonhuman world. Through his portrayal of the monstrous consequences of exploitation and alienation, Bradbury urges us to reconsider our relationship with nature, advocating for a more harmonious co-existence. This resonates with the post-humanist view that the "flourishing of the human species depends upon embracing its nonhumanity, including the sensitive mechanisms of its organism and the fragile ecosystems of human and nonhuman existence on which human life depends" (Ellis 139). The lighthouse's rubble and Chatterton's death warn that if humankind continues on a path of unbridled exploitation, it may find itself not the master of nature, but the adversary in a conflict that may lead to its undoing.

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