

## **POSTHUMANISM AND ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY: RECONSIDERING OUR BOND WITH NATURE**

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### **Abstract**

The potential of posthumanist thought to contribute to environmental sustainability. Posthumanism challenges the anthropocentric view that places humans as the pinnacle of creation and argues for a more inclusive and interconnected understanding of life. By decentering the human, posthumanism encourages a shift in perspective that recognizes the intrinsic value of all beings and the interconnectedness of all life. This shift can lead to a more ethical and sustainable relationship with the environment. By acknowledging the agency of non-human entities, such as animals, plants, and ecosystems, posthumanism can inspire new approaches to environmental management that prioritize the well-being of the entire ecological community. Furthermore, by embracing technological advancements and exploring the possibilities of cyborgian existence, posthumanism can offer innovative solutions to environmental challenges. For example, advancements in biotechnology and artificial intelligence can be utilized to develop sustainable technologies, mitigate climate change, and restore damaged ecosystems. However, it is crucial to address the potential risks associated with posthumanist approaches. Issues such as the ethical implications of genetic engineering, the potential for technological dystopias, and the risk of further marginalizing marginalized communities must be carefully considered and addressed. Posthumanism offers a valuable framework for rethinking our relationship with the environment. By decentering the human, embracing interconnectedness, and leveraging technological advancements, posthumanist thought can contribute to a more sustainable and equitable future for all beings. This study focuses on possible interpretation of posthumanism and its relation to environmental sustainability. There are diverse perspectives within posthumanism, and the relationship between these two fields is complex and multifaceted.

**Keywords:** Posthumanism, Environment, Sustainability, Technology.

### **Introduction**

New imaginaries for teaching and learning in environmental education are informed by posthumanist research potential. In order to decenter the human, posthumanism looks for ways to recognize and negotiate our mutually beneficial coexistence with a wide range of other species.

Therefore, the necessity of stopping the "anthropological machine," the ongoing "production" of rigid boundaries between people and the rest of nature, is taken seriously from a posthumanist standpoint. A philosophical understanding that transcends human subjectivities by challenging the predominance of anthropocentric thinking and humancentric ethics in Western imperial thought is also reflected in posthumanist theorizing.

By challenging established dichotomies like the human/nature and object/subject divides, posthuman and new materialist perspectives aim to reinterpret the human subject and upend the Cartesian division. The roots of posthuman and materialist thought in Western imperial thought can be found in the historical materialism of Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels, the process philosophy of Alfred North Whitehead, the monism of Baruch Spinoza, some post-phenomenological approaches, animisms, Buddhism, and the frequently disregarded "relational knowledges" ascribed to Indigenous and First Nations people.

In order for mankind to address the ecological horrors and lingering effects of Western capitalism, this new paradigm was considered essential. It was believed that in order for humanity to combat the ecological problem, post-anthropocentrism was essential. The term "Anthropocene" was also chosen to emphasize the importance of resolving and reestablishing the human/nature divide. A worldwide concern was the vital role that sustainability education, outdoor education, and environmental education play in educating common people at all educational levels. The researcher of this article hopes to provide educators, researchers, and authors who are studying and producing papers on this subject with stimulating thoughts by dissecting posthumanism and how it relates to sustainability and environmental education.

### **What is Posthumanism?**

A viewpoint known as posthumanism seeks to dismantle the borders and hierarchies that separate humans from other beings by highlighting the interdependence of organisms and complex systems. Broadly speaking, "posthumanist" theories aim to take into account the new ways that power is exercised in societies with more than humans as well as the indisputable involvement of non-human actors like nature and technology. Rosi Braidotti, one of the prominent scholars of posthumanism, says that we are now witnessing a convergence of two major movements—posthumanism, which rejects “the humanist ideal of ‘Man’ as the allegedly universal measure of all things,” and post-anthropocentrism, “which rejects species hierarchy and human exceptionalism” (Braidotti, 2019).

Posthumanism, a philosophical outlook that encounters the idea of mankind as distinct and grander to the natural world, is gradually perceived as a critical lens for speaking environmental sustainability concerns by decentring the human being and recognizing the interconnectedness of all living existences inside an ecosystem, by this means encouraging a further principled and universal approach to environmental care.

### **Key points about posthumanism and environmental sustainability**

When it comes to environmental sustainability, posthumanism highlights a change in point of view from considering human beings as distinct from nature to one of interconnectedness with the environment, where human actions must take into account the welfare of all living things and ecosystems. By questioning conventional human-centric viewpoints, posthumanism advocates for a more comprehensive approach to sustainability practices.

1. **Interconnectedness:** Posthumanism emphasizes the complex interrelationships between people and the natural environment, arguing that human behavior has a big

- influence on ecosystems and other animals. However, we cannot determine the welfare of the human race solely based on human profit. due to the fact that it is also linked to the well-being of other nonhuman species.
2. **Beyond anthropocentrism:** It calls for a reassessment of our position within the natural system and questions the notion that humans are the dominant species with complete control over nature. Like other organisms, humans are not given any special treatment.
  3. **Ecological ethics:** It is a philosophical approach that applies posthumanist concepts to environmental ethics. It basically makes the case that humans and the natural world are inextricably linked and that moral responsibility must change to include the welfare of all living things and ecosystems, not just humans. This entails decentering the human perspective and acknowledging the agency of nonhuman entities.
  4. **Systemic thinking:** Posthumanism encourages examining environmental problems from a multifaceted, systemic perspective, including how various ecological elements are interrelated.
  5. **Technological considerations:** Some posthumanist viewpoints investigate the ways in which new technology might be applied to solve environmental issues and promote a more sustainable future.
  6. **Social responsibility:** A change in societal ideals toward group responsibility and environmental care is promoted by posthumanism. It is everyone's duty and a social issue to protect the environment and its creatures.

#### **Examples of how posthumanist thinking can be applied to sustainability**

1. Rethinking agriculture: shifting to more environmentally friendly agricultural methods that put ecosystem health and biodiversity before yield maximization.
2. Urban planning: Creating cities that lessen dependency on fossil fuels, encourage green spaces, and integrate natural systems.
3. Activism for animal rights: recognizing non-human animals' sentience and promoting their well-being.
4. Climate change action: considering climate change to be a systemic problem that calls for international collaboration and game-changing fixes.

#### **How posthumanism can contribute to sustainability:**

Through radically changing our point of view away from a human-centric one and making us realize how interconnected all living things and ecosystems are, posthumanism can support sustainability by promoting a more comprehensive approach to environmental responsibility and ethical considerations for non-human life, such as plants and animals, when thinking about sustainability practices. In following key ways posthumanism can contribute to sustainability:

1. Decentering the human: Posthumanism challenges the notion that humans are distinct from nature and urges us to view ourselves as a component of a wider ecological network, which forces us to think about how our activities affect other species and the environment.
2. Broadening the ethical sphere: Posthumanism promotes a more inclusive approach to sustainability that emphasizes the well-being of all living forms by arguing that ethical considerations should be extended beyond humans to non-human beings.

3. Criticizing anthropocentrism: Posthumanism opposes the idea of using natural resources exclusively for human gain and promotes a more equitable approach to resource management by contesting the premise that humans are the dominant species.
4. Encouraging interconnection: Posthumanism emphasizes the intricate connections that exist between people and the environment, stressing how crucial it is to comprehend and honor these interdependencies in order to attain sustainability.
5. Promoting systemic change: By fostering a critical examination of existing structures and advocating for new, ecologically conscious lifestyles, posthumanism can inspire a change in society norms and values.

**Examples of how posthumanist thinking can be applied in sustainability practices:**

1. Designing for multi-species ecosystems: Taking into account the requirements of various species while creating urban spaces, such as restoring habitat and creating wildlife corridors.
2. Encouragement of plant-based diets: acknowledging how animal agriculture affects the environment and promoting dietary changes to more plant-based options.
3. Creating sustainable technologies: Giving top priority to technical developments that reduce damage to ecosystems and promote environmental sustainability.
4. Learning from indigenous societies' profound knowledge of their ecosystems and ecologically balanced activities is known as "engaging with indigenous knowledge."
- 5.

**Criticisms and challenges:**

Posthumanism is frequently criticized for its potential to diminish human agency, its excessive dependence on technology, the absence of clear ethical standards for human growth, the danger of ignoring social justice issues by concentrating too much on the "post-human" concept, and worries about the blurring of boundaries between humans and non-humans, which could result in the abuse or a loss of personal identity.

**Key criticisms:**

1. Neglect of social injustices: According to critics, posthumanism occasionally ignores important issues like gender, racism, and class, possibly putting technology progress ahead of resolving current social injustices.
2. Technocentric bias: According to some, posthumanism exalts technology and its capacity to change humans excessively, possibly ignoring the moral ramifications of technological advancement and its potential for abuse.
3. Loss of human agency: Posthumanism may diminish the importance of human agency, accountability, and personal autonomy by decentering the human subject.
4. Uncertain ethical foundation: Detractors wonder if posthumanist concepts offer a strong ethical framework for handling difficult problems involving human augmentation, especially those involving who should have access to these technologies and what qualifies as "improvement."
5. Blurring the lines between humans and non-humans: Some are concerned that posthumanist ideas of human and non-human hybridity and interconnection may diminish the value of human individuality and even serve as an excuse for the exploitation of other species.

6. Dystopian scenario potential: There are worries that posthumanist technology could be applied to establish a society in which people are manipulated or subjugated by technical advancements.
7. Absence of real-world application: Some contend that posthumanist concepts can be overly idealistic and devoid of specific methods for dealing with pressing issues.

What seems discussed in all these points relating to the posthumanism and environmental sustainability, is a thinking not in either/or binaries but in relational complexities in terms of both Human and Non-human existing. Within this context, there is also an emerging scholarship focusing on posthumanism and sustainability. This interest is partly related to the fact that posthumanism is gaining attention in diverse research fields, including but not limited to philosophy, education, anthropology and archaeology, psychology, religion and spirituality, international relations, business, and design. This is a timely concern, given that two lines of critique of humanism and anthropocentrism have converged within the posthuman condition (Braidotti, 2019).

### Conclusion

The rise of new study areas focusing on sustainability is noteworthy given the effects of decisions pertaining to sustainability on the ecological, political-economic, and socio-technical systems and, consequently, on the acceleration already described. Gaining knowledge of the onto-epistemologies that underpin these choices and corporate operations—which mostly exhibit dualist, humanistic, and anthropocentric characteristics—is equally crucial. Posthumanism provides a means of rethinking our connection with the environment in this context, opposing dualistic, humanistic, and anthropocentric viewpoints while advancing sustainability. Examining the literature to investigate potential links across posthumanism and sustainability is the aim of this article.

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