



---

## **Eco-criticism, Techno-Capitalism, and Speculative Fiction: An Analysis of Ray Bradbury's Short Story "A Sound of Thunder"**

**Meher Nandrajog**

### **Abstract**

The current experience of the pandemic has raised questions about the planetary shifts that have been brought about. Rather than assess the pandemic as a medical crisis, critical assessments have sought to examine it as a consequence of structural inequalities and degradation of nature that the technocratic-capitalist nexus has resulted in. To make sense of this experience, people have sought to connect with past narratives of trauma and critiques of technocratic systems in genres such as speculative fiction. This paper uses a comparative framework to politically engage with the present through the analysis of Ray Bradbury's short story "A Sound of Thunder". This story is a piece of speculative fiction that examines the social, political, and environmental (ill)effects of technology on the natural and social world of a civilisation and its people. Set in the year 2055, a future in which 'Time Safari, Inc.' can provide its customers the opportunity to travel back in time to hunt dinosaurs, it signals the horrors that the use and misuse of technology that meddles with, and causes the destruction of, nature can unleash on the world. The paper examines this short story through the perspective of literary ecocriticism, for its humanitarian and conservationist themes, as Bradbury's critique of the capitalist American society that wishes to conquer all. It then establishes connections with the reading of the pandemic through 'conjoined histories' of nature and capital.

**Keywords:** Capitalocene, Ecocriticism, Nature, Ray Bradbury, Speculative Fiction.