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**A QUEER ECOLOGICAL PERSPECTIVE OF ANIMAL-BEING IN THE  
GOAT OR WHO IS SYLVIA? (2002) BY EDWARD ALBEE**

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**Abstract**

Man's anthropocentric perception of being the center of earth has profound interconnectedness with other non-human living creatures. Human culture is connected to the physical world and affects it or gets affected by it. Queer ecology broaches the prevalent conceptions regarding different dualisms in nature, biology and sexuality. It challenges the heteronormative perception of nature and also disrupted the dualisms of natural and unnatural, human and animals and culture and nature in human understanding. The conceptions of humanity and bestiality are not binary in the sense that these are evolved by the anthropocentric position of human beings. Animals have been treated as others and it has been the part of human understanding to exploit the notion of animality. This research intends to analyze The Goat or who is Sylvia? by Edward Albee with the theoretical framework of queer ecology by Timothy Morton. Furthermore, this

research is valuable for understanding the complexities of human behavior and the relationships of humans and other life forms.

### **1. Introduction**

Edward Albee (1928-2016) is one the great playwrights of the absurdist theater. Albee is famous for presenting modern plays in contemporary existentialist society. He brought about the themes of quest for identity and meaninglessness in human life. Albee's play *The Goat or who is Sylvia?* presents the absurdity of human existence and it questions the prevalent moral and ethical conceptions of society. Its title *Who is Sylvia* is taken from the Shakespearean play *Two Gentlemen of Verona* (written between 1589 and 1593) which exhibits the theme of love and betrayal and it also portrays the question of the importance of love between two men or two lovers of opposite genders. Albee on the other hand, discusses the prevalent notions of homosexuality while investigating into the social perceptions of something natural or unnatural, human or animal. The play also presents the chaos and anxiety caused by practicing materialistic and anthropocentric views of human beings regarding animals and nature. It also questions the essence and presence of sexual taboos in the contemporary materialistic society in the light of queer theory of ecology.

The play revolves round husband and wife and a goat. Martin the husband in the story is turning fifty (50), and his wife Stevie is a confident and attractive woman. Martin has a successful professional career and seems somewhat distracted in the start of the play. On the other hand, Stevie is confident of her husband and their love relationship. The interviewer, Ross is a best friend of the couple, who wants to record Martin's interview on his success of winning the Pritkzer Prize, the prize that equates with the Nobel Prize in architecture. The interview is going to be recorded on the event of Martin getting an opportunity to design a multi- billion-dollar city "The World City" of the future. Ross gets shocked to learn that Martin who has been faithful to Stevie all his life, now cheating on her with a goat. Martin tries to explain his situation but Ross after watching the picture of goat, leaves the house in anger. He threatens Martin to tell it to Stevie if Martin fails to tell her the whole situation. Ross tells Stevie through a letter and she gets furious—after knowing that Martin is having an affair with a goat. Martin and Stevie both lack communication and understanding which leads to frustration. Stevie leaves the house after threatening Martin and returns with the corpse of the goat named Sylvia (Whitehead, 2013). In the context of the play *The Goat or who is Sylvia?* queer ecological concerns are the framework for this study.

### **1.2 Theoretical Background**

In the book *Queer Ecologies* (2010) Catriona Mortimer-Sandilands and Bruce Erickson argue about the objective of queer ecology that probes into the environmental politics which signify the understanding of sexual relations to influence the material-natural world and the perceptions, experiences and constitutions of humans in the society. The term queer ecology has originated by the intersection of two different theoretical paradigms. Eco-criticism and the queer theory of ecology have combined to make queer ecology. As an evolutionary theory, queer ecology aims to explore and challenge the heteronormative social perceptions in order to bring out the queer Nature that has been burdened by the anthropocentric human beings.

Queer Ecology overthrows the perceptions of human exceptionalism and anthropocentrism. Human beings usually see themselves as unique and important part of the environment and all

other beings as means to human ends. Environment studies have a strong opposition to anthropocentrism and consider it as the root cause of ecological crisis. There has been a long debate on the issue that whether anthropocentrism is valuable for the environment or is a cause of disturbing the equilibrium of the ecology. Byron G. Norton distinguishes between strong anthropocentrism and weak anthropocentrism by indicating the differences between both based on intrinsic value. He advocates weak anthropocentric attitude towards nature and environment on its basis of giving intrinsic value to other non-human beings like animals in the environment (Mouchang Yu, 2009).

The *Goat or who is Sylvia?* contextualizes the very notion of rejection to heteronormativity in the twenty first century. Queer ecology challenges the notions of recognizing “heterosexual” with “natural” and homosexuality with something unnatural in the society. The framework of this perspective lies in the queer theory of sexuality that overthrows old conceptions of natural and unnatural with help of the growing interest of understanding homosexuality in the modern society. These notions of queer theory have influenced the scientific studies of non-human wild life. It rejects the association between heterosexual and natural as these are the constructs of human culture. Queer ecology explores the differences between humanly constructed culture and environment as human culture is the result of human anthropocentric approach. Queer theory is an umbrella term that coined by the lesbian feminist film critic Theresa de Lauretis that refers to a set of theories to explore the intersections among the gender, sex and desire, identity and sexual orientation or preference. The philosophical point that provides the base for queer ecology is about sexuality that is not something biologically inborn rather socially constructed and constrained. Human sexuality is not something that is fixed. It is rather fluid; homophobia is something like other prejudices of racism and sexism. Furthermore, sexuality is not something like sex, desire and gender that we cannot fix it. A woman whose biological gender is female, she can be either heterosexual or homosexual (Corinne E. Blackmer, 2010).

Timothy Bloxam Morton is a professor of English and the theorist behind the emerging theory of queer ecology in contemporary times. He coined the term queer ecology by combining eco criticism and the queer theory of sexuality. Some other ecologists like Greta Gaard and Catriona Sandilands are also have major part in the development of queer ecology. Ecology explores the intimacies with other beings as the queer theory, so both have interconnectedness in theoretical and philosophical points. Queer ecology deals with the aspects of interconnectedness of all life forms including animals in the nature. It rejects the notions of anthropocentrism of thinking human beings as the subject and all other non-human living things as objects. Morton in his book *Humankind: Solidarity with Non-Human People* (2017) identifies the sense of separation among humans and non-humans and questions the way humans conceive themselves and animals or the nature as a whole. This difference is from object oriented ontological perspective, which explores the existence of non-human objects outside the human perception and cognition. In metaphysics object oriented ontological view questions and challenges the privileged position of human beings in the universe. This idea is very much in contrast with the anthropocentric perception of human beings as a privileged subject. Thus, queer ecology shatters the subject-object dichotomy in nature (Morton, Guest Column: Queer Ecology, 2010).

Theater is a favorable place to present such ideas that can challenge the conventional notions of society. Queer ecology and twenty first century theater is linked with each other. Theater is a place to present the queer ecological notions to explore the relationships between humans and

non-humans. In the *Anthologies of Queer Ecology* (2010) the editors of the book Catriona Mortimer-Sandilands and Bruce Erickson describe the task of queer ecology that is to reconsider the natural world and our perceptions about the sexual relationships and experiences which constitute the world around us. In recent times many playwrights have been writing to investigate the very recent perspective of queer ecology in modern and absurd themes of plays. The plays Wallace Shawn's *Grasses of a Thousand Colors* (2009), Mark Rigney's *Bears* (2012), and Eric Coble's *My Barking Dog* (2011) present the themes of queer ecology that questions the perception of nature in twenty first century (Arons, 2012). Albee's play *The Goat or who is Sylvia* (2002) is an example from the same genre of plays in contemporary American society.

## 2. Literature Review

Richard Brad Medoff in the review of the play *The Goat or Who Is Sylvia?* explores the themes of existential theatre by the intersection of two distinct forms of comedy and tragedy. He further argues that the play questions the prevalent concepts in the society. The title of the play has its various interpretations. The goat can be the symbol of sexual appetite that was a prominent theme at that time of American society. The play sketches a realm of imagination out of realism on stage. Martin's celebration to build a city for the future is a clear reflection towards idealism contrary to the prevalent themes of that time. Medoff further questions the theme of forbidden love. The real dramatic events in the play explore the striking paradox, and affirm that by only the terror of tragedy the life flourishes (Medoff, 2003).

Eric Weitz in the article "Moving Target: Comic Calculation and Affective Persuasion in Edward Albee's *The Goat, or Who Is Sylvia?*" (2009) argues about the strategic ways to use laughter to disrupt the prevalent social and cultural prejudices. He further strengthens its argument that comedy as a genre usually reinforces the thoughts and feelings of the status quo but it can be used to dismantle the prevalent social conventions. This study explores the play as a tool to represent the outer boundaries of the concepts of tragedy and comedy, sex and love, civilization and barbarism. The play provides glimpses of the empathy that is to be felt for the characters like Martin (Weitz, 2009).

Helene Narnhofer in the dissertation "A Study of Albee's Recent Plays *Three Tall Women*, *The Goat Or, Who is Sylvia?* and *At Home at the Zoo* (2012)" explores the autobiographical approach in Albee's plays. He further argues that Albee is no doubt one of the prominent leading playwrights in American literature and his plays represent existential themes along with the realist drama. His plays explore the themes of broken identities, danger of routines and conventions. Albee illustrates that life must be examined by the inescapable proximity of death. The study explores the conflicting nature of Albee's works as by blurring the boundaries between tragedy and comedy, realistic and absurd (Narnhofer, 2012). Fatimah in her dissertation "Revealing Hidden Political Agenda in the Representation of Martin as a Zoophile in Edward Albee's *The Goat or Who is Sylvia?* (2014)" explores the existence of deviant sexual orientation and the prevalent prejudices regarding a zoophile in the society. She further argues that there are some political agenda attached with the representation of a zoophile in the play. She explores the political thoughts behind the queerness of Martin as a zoophile. The thesis further investigates the real life of a zoophile. The representation of Martin as a zoophile is an attempt to normalize the political notions of alleviating discrimination and intolerance in the society (Fatimah, 2014).

In the light of the previous studies, the objective of this study explores the Albee's play *The Goat or Who is Sylvia?* (2002) with the queer ecological perspective. This further explores the

interconnectedness of all living species in biosphere by challenging the prevalent notions of bestiality. It also challenges man's anthropocentric position in the world.

### 3. Research Methodology

This study explores the play "The Goat or who is Sylvia? (2002) by Edward Albee from the Queer Ecology perspective, investigating the anthropocentric perception of humans and the intrinsic interconnectedness of all life forms on earth. Moreover, the study also explores the social conceptions of heteronormativity by rejecting the generalizations of human and animal behavior in the diverse natural world. Qualitative paradigm which codifies data is selected for this research. Close reading—exegesis: reading, analyzing, assessing and evaluating— of the play is done to analyze the chaos and meaninglessness in human world by challenging the prevalent social taboos in the light of the recent theory of queer ecology by Morton.

### 4. Analysis and Discussion

#### 4.1 Rejection of Heteronormativity as Human Anthropocentric Construct

David Bell and Stacy Alaimo (2010) by exploring the sexual life of non-humans, claim that such activities like homosexuality and zoophilia, overthrow the heteronormative perceptions of society. As heteronormative being, it is very much akin to the "natural" and homosexuality is disgusted as something "unnatural" in the society. Queer ecologists argue that these perceptions of "natural" or "unnatural" are the constitutions of human culture. It distinguishes the relationships between culture and nature, between animals and humans by rejecting the fact that "Nature" is out of the umbrella of culture. While culture is constructed by humans and "Nature" is diverse beyond the human perception and understanding (Arons, 2012).

Martin's behaviour regarding nature and animal is not according to the societal norms: it rejects the beliefs of natural and unnatural associated with human interests. Martin's gay son, Billy, is able to empathize with his father's misplaced passion suggests a certain commonality in their father-like, like-son rejection of a traditional heterosexual relationship. Albee points out here the queer ecological concerns by contrasting Martin's bestiality with the homosexuality of his son. Homosexuality is acceptable in the society but man's relation with animal is still a taboo. Stevie calls out Martin to be a liberal to accept his son's homosexuality but she is not ready to understand Martin's association with an animal. Human beings have become far liberal in order to understand man's relation with the man in terms of homosexuality but their liberalism does not allow them going beyond their privileged position to understand animals as living beings.

Stevie: "(Cool) I said your father's sorry for calling you a fucking faggot because he's not that kind of man. He's a decent, liberal, right-thinking, talented, famous, gentle man (hard) who right now would appear to be fucking a goat; and I would like to talk about that, if you don't mind. Or ... even if you do." (Albee, 54).

Later on, she talks furiously to Martin:

Stevie: "(Abrupt; cold) Stay away from me; stay there. You smell of goat, you smell of shit, you smell of all I cannot imagine being able to smell. Stay away from me!" (Albee, 57). Human beings have constructed the social taboos to assert their superiority over other beings on the earth. Homosexuality and bestiality both offer similar rejection of the societal norms, which shatter the human anthropocentric position. Martin's personality suggests that identity is a fluid, rather than fixed, entity—one that can shift inexplicably like societal norms and are the direct result of human anthropocentric position.

#### 4.2 Interconnectedness of all Life forms and Diversity of Nature

Timothy Morton in his article Guest Column: Queer Ecology (2010) argues that all life forms have intrinsic interconnectedness on earth. He developed his theory of queer ecology from reviewing the Darwin's biological theory of evolution. Morton argues at one point that all life forms on earth along with the environments they inhabit flout the boundaries between inside and outside. He further argues that as biology does not recognize boundaries between inside and outside, male and female, life and nonlife, or between and within species. He notes that at DNA level every object is "permeable and boundariless". (Arons, 2012). Morton claims that evolution means all life forms are made of other life forms. All the entities are mutually determined and they exist in relation to each other and derive from each other (Morton, Guest Column: Queer Ecology, 2010). According to him all the living objects on earth are having intimacies and interconnectedness. Human beings are intrinsically connected to animals and other non-human living beings on earth. Morton's concept of "mesh" describes the concatenation of interrelatedness that fades away the boundaries between the living and non-living between organism and environment. This idea of interrelatedness of all living things re-conceptualizes the relationship between humans and animals. Morton claims that queer ecologists do not like the word "animal", they regard it as someone stranger by postulating Post- Structuralist Derrida's notion of deconstruction. As queer ecology does not see any boundary between human and animal on sharing the same DNA, they regard decentralization of human beings in the universe. Rejecting the anthropocentric position of humans in the diverse universe, they claim that the notions of animality are the constitutions of human culture. Acknowledging the diversity natural world and interconnectedness of all life forms, queer ecology puts culture out of the sphere of "Nature". The capital "N" is used here to describe the supremacy of diverse natural world over anthropocentric human culture (Morton, Guest Column: Queer Ecology, 2010).

Albee's play *The Goat or Who is Sylvia?* establishes the human –animal relation and a deep connection between them. Martin's relationship with the goat is something that explains the equal presence of animal-beings like human beings on earth. "Martin: "And there was a connection there—a communication—that, well ... an epiphany, I guess comes closest, and I knew what was going to happen" (Albee,90)." Martin argues with Stevie about the existence of animals as beings and values like human beings have:

"STEVIE: (Pause; then, even more sure) Yes! It is about fucking! It is about you being an animal!

MARTIN: (Thinks a moment; quietly) I thought I was.

STEVIE: (Contempt) Hunh!

MARTIN: I thought I was; I thought we all were ... animals.

STEVIE: (Cold rage) We stay with our own kind!

MARTIN: (Gentle; rational) Oh, we fall in love with many other creatures ... dogs and cats, and ..." (Albee,93)

Timothy Morton in his book "The Ecological Thought" argues that ecology is not just about global warming, recycling or solar power and also not just to talk about everyday relationships of humans and non-humans. Ecology is about love, loss, fear and compassion. It has to do with depression and psychosis. It has to do with capitalism and all other social issues like amazement,

wonder and open-mindedness. It has to do with irony, pain, beauty and ugliness. It also has concern with gender and sexuality, conscious and unconscious. Ecology is about society and coexistence (Morton, *The Ecological Thought*, 2010). Furthermore, he argues that ecological thought does not contain only positivity rather it has capacity for taking negativity in it. Negativity can be more ecological than positivity is. Dark ecology puts hesitation, uncertainty, irony and thought fullness back to ecological concerns (Morton, *The Ecological Thought*, 2010).

In the book *The Historical Roots of Our Ecological Crisis* by Lynn White Jr. argues that our anthropocentric relationship with the nature is the root cause of the environmental crisis today. Queer Ecology rejects the anthropocentric notion of humans. It demonstrates the idea that all beings on earth are interconnected to each other. Human beings like other living and non-living species are dependent on other beings on earth for the survival in healthy biosphere. The idea of interdependence and inter connectedness of all beings on earth is in contrast to the anthropocentric perception of humans. Aldo Leopold one of the early conservationists and environmentalists argues that natural world has intrinsic value. He further attests the preservation of the natural world from the exploitation of the humans. Early environmentalists believe that the natural world possess its intrinsic value rather than the usefulness to human world. From an anthropocentric perception only, human beings possess the moral understanding because only humans have cognitive skills. Anthropocentrism sometimes can be confused with the anthropomorphism. Anthropomorphism is often called another form of anthropocentric practice by giving non- humans; human characteristics authors usually convey their own emotions rather than conveying the consciousness of animals as having different intrinsic value (Nelson, 2012).

Brenda Murphy in the article “Who is Sylvia? Anthropomorphism and Genre Expectations” argues that the play reveals different ways in which anthropomorphism is implicated in the text. Anthropomorphism is defined as attributing human like qualities to the non-humans or any natural phenomena. The critics and scholars of Animal Studies and Performance Studies have critically argued the use of anthropomorphic devices. Murphy claims that the play has vivid description of Sylvia the goat as projecting anthropomorphic qualities. The protagonist Martin Grey attributes human like qualities to the goat by having a sexual affair with it. Martin talks to his wife Stevie, when she doubted him of having affair with another lady.

“STEVIE: Something’s going on, isn’t it!?”

MARTIN: Yes! I’ve fallen in love... STEVIE: I suppose you’d better tell me!

MARTIN: I can’t! I can’t

STEVIE: Tell me! Tell me!

MARTIN: Her name is Sylvia!

STEVIE: Sylvia? Who is Sylvia?

MARTIN: She’s a goat; Sylvia is a goat! (Acting manner dropped; normal tone now; serious, flat) She’s a goat.” (Albee, 2005, p.19)

Environmentalists differ in opinion about the use of anthropomorphic device in the texts or performances. Some believe that by humanizing non-humans and animals is equally important as giving them a soul and a place in the human world. On the other hand, some may disagree by

attributing such anthropomorphic characteristics also the anthropocentric approach by humans as these characters portray the feelings and emotions of the author. However, the idea of giving an importance to animals or non-humans by giving them humanly characteristics is very closer to the queer ecological notion of giving intrinsic value to all beings on earth (Murphy, 2017). In the play “The Goat or Who is Sylvia?” there is a conflict between the protagonist and the other characters in the acceptance of the anthropomorphic qualities of the animal. However, this negation of animals or non-humans by other characters is the denial of giving intrinsic value to all the other non-human life forms in the biosphere. This non-acceptance of the fact animals having an importance like humans is in the core of anthropocentrism. Thus, the idea of anthropomorphism is very much related to the anthropocentric perception in ecology (Murphy, 2017).

#### **4.3 Bestiality and Human – Animal Relation**

Margret Grebowicz an environmental philosopher, commenting on the interconnectedness of humans and animals in her video lecture on queer ecology, comments that humans have relationship with animals. She talks about a famous documentary video on the events of life and death of the famous grizzly bear enthusiast environmentalist Timothy Treadwell. Treadwell had spent thirteen years in the company of grizzly bears in Alaska. He claimed to have a trust and pet like relationship with the bears. Unfortunately, he was killed with his girlfriend by the bears. The long 100 hours footage which he himself had captured before his death is the base for filming the documentary name “The Grizzly Man”. Margret Grebowicz discusses that the problem does not lie with the Treadwell, who had developed a connection and relationship with grizzly bears rather she points out that queer ecologists do not like the documentary that presents the idea that Treadwell had crossed the boundary between humans and animals. His fate was what he deserved (Grebowicz, 2019).

The word “queer” that is usually associated with the homosexuality but its meaning is something weird. Morton argues that nature is weird, uncertain and uncanny. Nature does not make sense to human beings. He believes that “natural” is a human delusion. It only exists in contrasts. He rejects the notion of normal. He believes that all beings are biologically queer. He argues this idea of queerness among all beings on earth by giving examples from cross-breeding in agriculture and bees and flower. However, humans try to control life, it finds its way, in other words weird, uncanny and uncertain finds its way. That is the queer ecology (Grebowicz, 2019).

Greg Garrard in his article “Being Zoo: Bestial Humans and Sexual Animals” discusses the notion of bestiality as sin among human beings. He argues about the sodomy law in Ireland, which forbids the act of bestiality. Bestiality was considered a crime against God and it had strict punishment law. The matter of fact was that in bestiality, it was not an animal that was beast rather the human, who had lowered himself to the level of the animal. However liberal societies have moved out of this and developed a tolerance and acceptance for such kinds of notions. In 2012, Germany had recriminalized the act of bestiality and announced it as a minor offence to Martin’s relationship with nature and animals are not comprehensible for the other members of the materialist society. Martin who is an epitome of goodness according to the norms and standards of the society, finds himself attracted towards nature and does not account himself guilty for his emotions and passions for the nature and an animal.

Martin: “(Broad country parody) New-mown hay, fella! The smell a country; the smell a apples! (Normal tone again) The roadside stands, with corn and other stuff piled high, and baskets full of other things—beans and tomatoes and those great white peaches you only get late summer ...”

(Albee, 2005, p.45).

use any animal for sexual activity. The offence of bestiality committed against animals has become the part of animal rights movements in modern times. The activists of animal welfare movements have suggested replacing the term “bestiality” with “zoophilia” (Garrard).

Peter Singer in his book “Animal Liberation” argues about the expansion of utilitarian concept to the animals as well. He further argues that the boundaries between animals and humans are arbitrary. He has given a term speciesism that has been adopted by different animal rights activists by rejecting the supremacy of humans on animals and other species on earth (Buckle, 2015). His term speciesism explains the taboo against bestiality. However, he talks about the prohibition of zoophilia or bestiality in a society where homosexuality is allowed, is the humans desire to differentiate them erotically or any other way from animals. It’s a form of anthropocentric view to exhibit humans’ supremacy over animals. However eco-critics are more interested in wild animals than domestic ones. Queer ecology has emerged as field to observe the sexual diversity of animals (Garrard).

Edward Albee in the play “The Goat or Who is Sylvia?” have presented more tragic than a romantic human-animal relation. Martin Grey the protagonist of the play confesses to have been in love with a goat named Sylvia. He claims that “Anyway, it was pretty wonderful. And I was getting back in the car, about to get back in the car, all my loot—vegetables and stuff ... (change of tone to quiet wonder) and it was then that I saw her. (Sees it) Just ... just looking at me” (Albee, 2005, p.46). He tries to describe his relationship with the animal to Ross, who calls Martin his best friend, but Ross does not accept the idea of Martin’s being in love with the goat. Ross frowns with shock and contempt on Martin “FUCKING A GOAT!”. Stevie, the wife of Martin reacts furiously on knowing the truth about the goat named Sylvia:

Sevie: “(Abrupt; cold) Stay away from me; stay there. You smell of goat, you smell of shit, you smell of all I cannot imagine being able to smell. Stay away from me!” (Albee, 2005, p.57).

However, the act of bestiality in the play is not socially acceptable by the humans. Zoophilia in the play is taken as a social taboo. Ross and Stevie do not like the relationship of Martin with a goat, due to their anthropocentric notion of being different from animals. Human animal relationship is considered as social degradation by them.

“MARTIN : I’m getting there. I’m getting to

her. STEVIE : Stop calling it her!

MARTIN : (Defending) That is what she is! It is she! She is a she! “ (Albee, 2005, p.71).

Martin tries to explain his feelings regarding nature and animal but Ross sarcastically takes all the account. Ross is unable to familiarize himself with Martin’s feelings, as Ross sees every feeling, emotion in materialist terms. Martin: “(Sad) You don’t understand. (Pause) I didn’t know what it was—what I was feeling. It was ... it wasn’t like anything I’d felt before; it was ... so ... amazing, so ... extraordinary! There she was, just looking at me, with those eyes of hers, and ...” (Albee, 2005, p.47). Everything that occurs outside the social boundary is an act of degradation of human norms. The concept of bestiality in society, is associated with something unnatural. Human beings regard their relationships with animals unnatural and able to be condemned. Human beings do not want to understand the equal importance of other beings including animals. The denial of intrinsic

value of other life forms is a center point of anthropocentric belief. Martin rejects this conception and in return faces severe criticism from his wife. Ross and Stevie believe that love can only be expressed in a narrowly socially defined way and Martin sees it as something much more primal and indefinable (Whitehead, 2013).

Stevie : “Fucking right we don’t! (Didactic) Something can happen that’s outside the rules, that doesn’t relate to The Way the Game Is Played. Death before you’re ready to even think about it—that’s part of the game. A stroke that leaves you sitting looking at an eggplant the week before had been your husband—that’s another. Emotional disengagement, gradual, so gradual you don’t know it’s happening, or sudden—not very often, but occasionally—that’s another. You’ve read about spouses—God! I hate that word!—“spouses” who all of a sudden start wearing dresses—yours, or their own collection —wives gone dyke ... but if there’s one thing you don’t put on your plate, no matter how exotic your tastes may be is ... bestiality” (Albee, 2005, p.65).

Through all this argument between Martin and his wife, they explore their relationship and it ends on chaos because not of the affair and infidelity rather the socially unacceptable participant the goat. This play gives a look into the complexity of life and the fact that social definitions are not able to completely label the dynamism of the human mind and emotions (Whitehead, 2013).

In the modern contemporary society human beings struggle to understand their relations and connections to one another and particularly with other beings on earth. The materialistic pursuits of human beings are the hindrance in their recognition of interconnectedness of all living beings on earth. Martin feels that he has a connection with goat although he does not explain it:

Martin: “I didn’t know what it was-what I was feeling . . . There she was, just looking at me, with those eyes of hers” (Albee, 2005, p.22).

Billy also loses his connection with his father on the disclosure of the affair with goat and tries to re-establish it also in an unusual way. Stevie also loses her connection with Martin and reacts in destructive violent way. Ross tries to save his professional relationship with Martin by writing to Stevie about his affair with goat. The final scene when Stevie comes with the corpse of the goat, proves the failure of human understanding of the diversity of nature (Whitehead, 2013).

## 5. Conclusion

In Edward Albee’s words the play is about the love, the feelings of our tolerance and the true picture of human beings. The play questions the norms and standards of society in the perspective of queer ecology. It rejects the anthropocentric perception of being privileged and center of all the earth. Queer ecology believes that all the beings on the Earth are interconnected and it gives equal importance to other beings on earth like animals. Moreover, it believes that for maintaining order and balance in the biosphere, human beings must admit the presence of animals and regard them with the intrinsic value they have. The research is beneficial for society in order to understand the complex human behaviour that brings chaos and disintegrates familial relationships in the modern world.

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