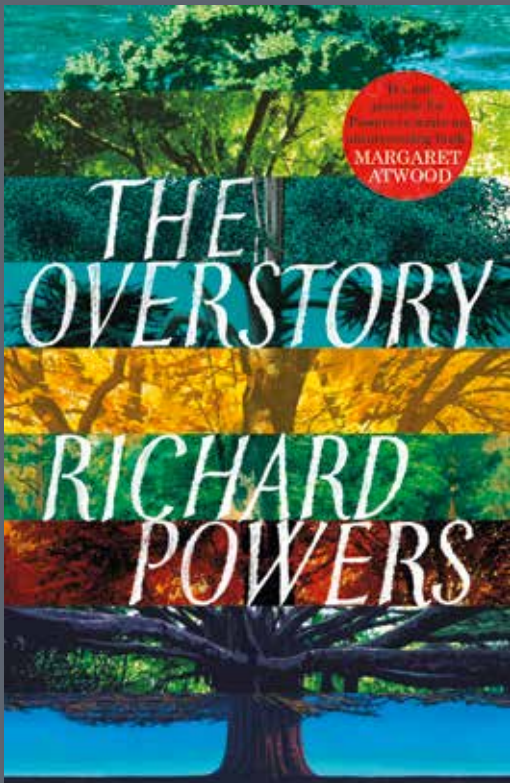




Readers' Guide



Other novels by Richard Powers

- Orfeo* (2014)
- Generosity: An Enhancement* (2009)
- The Echo Maker* (2006)
- The Time of Our Singing* (2003)
- Plowing the Dark* (2000)
- Gain* (1998)
- Galatea 2.2* (1995)
- Operation Wandering Soul* (1993)
- The Gold Bug Variations* (1991)
- Prisoner's Dilemma* (1998)
- Three Farmers on Their Way to a Dance* (1985)

The Overstory Richard Powers

William Heineman

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About the author	Richard Powers was born in Illinois, USA, in 1957. He is the author of twelve novels, including <i>Orfeo</i> (which was longlisted for the Man Booker Prize in 2014), <i>The Echo Maker</i> , <i>The Time of Our Singing</i> , <i>Galatea 2.2</i> and <i>Plowing the Dark</i> . He is the recipient of a MacArthur grant and the National Book Award, and has been a Pulitzer Prize and four-time National Book Critics Circle Award finalist. He lives in the foothills of the Great Smoky Mountains.
About the book	<p>Nine strangers, each in different ways, become summoned by trees, brought together in a last stand to save the continent's few remaining acres of virgin forest.</p> <p><i>The Overstory</i> unfolds in concentric rings of interlocking fable, ranging from antebellum New York to the late-twentieth-century Timber Wars of the Pacific Northwest and beyond, revealing a world alongside our own – vast, slow, resourceful, magnificently inventive and almost invisible to us. This is the story of a handful of people who learn how to see that world, and who are drawn up into its unfolding catastrophe.</p>
What the judges thought	“An ecological epic, a novel of ideas, <i>The Overstory</i> begins with five apparently distinct narratives and then binds them into a compelling network of connections. In this book about how we are destroying and saving our trees, the form reflects the subject, as disparate strands come together to form a canopy. Powers has managed to write a novel in which human responsibility is embedded in the most intimate, private, details of a lived life.”
Discussion points	<p>What lessons can be learnt about the way we treat the environment and the world around us?</p> <p>What do you think about the relationship between the environment and technology in the book?</p> <p>The book follows a number of characters, discuss how they interact and overlap.</p> <p>Each character experiences a trauma that motivates them. Do you think that the book is suggesting that trauma is necessary to appreciate the world around us?</p>
Themed reading	<p>Peter Wohlleben <i>The Hidden life of Trees</i> Barbara Kingsolver <i>Flight Behavior</i> Lyanda Lynn Haupt <i>Mozart's Starling</i> Peter Fiennes <i>Oak and Ash and Thorn</i></p>
Useful links	<p>https://www.theguardian.com/books/2018/mar/23/the-overstory-by-richard-powers-review</p> <p>https://www.theatlantic.com/magazine/archive/2018/06/richard-powers-the-overstory/559106/</p> <p>https://lareviewofbooks.org/article/speaking-for-the-trees-richard-powers-the-overstory/#!</p>