

Graduate Center for Literary Research Annual Conference Call for Papers

Climate Fictions

April 18-19, 2020

McCune Conference Room, HSSB



As climate change has become a central topic of discussion, laced with the uncertainty of tomorrow, the UCSB Graduate Center for Literary Research invites scholars from a variety of disciplines to reframe their conversations with a focus on this ubiquitous topic as it has been interpreted in literary fiction, as well as within the arts.

Originally coined by Dan Bloom, Climate-Fiction, popularly known as Cli-Fi, is a type of fiction that explores what the earth might become if climate change continues at its current rate, and specifically if humans do not intervene to save the planet. As many successful authors, such as Margaret Atwood, T. C. Boyle, Amitav Ghosh, Ursula Le Guin, Lydia Millet, David Mitchell, and Leslie Marmon Silko, have contributed to promulgating the topics of climate change and global warming into the public eye, Cli-Fi has gained prominence as more than a fringe genre.

However, the genre has become incorporated into discussions well outside literary studies, and this conference aims to interrogate how fictional texts as well as the arts have suggested new ways of thinking about climate change across broader media, including film, poetry, and other forms of art, forming a plurality of discourse networks better reconceptualized as Climate Fictions.

Possible questions and topics of interest to consider:

- Does climate change shift our perspective of traditional literary periodization? Or does it shift relations between realist, modernist, and other modes of thinking about the anthropocene?
- In terms of climate change, and the mediums that engage with it, are genre fictions, fict-documentaries, mainstream novels, poetry, works of nonfiction, and film, really so separable? What does each bring to the table? How do they overlap, and where do they diverge?
- How does climate fiction reflect and/or imagine the nonhuman/posthuman experience of environmental change and destruction?
- As climate change compels us to rethink geopolitics, how does it complicate questions of post-coloniality? How are people from around the world responding to climate change?

Please send abstracts to Christene d'Anca at christene_danca@ucsb.edu by January 25, 2020.