

## 'Narratives & Climate Change'

Special issue of the open access journal

*Interférences littéraires/littéraire interferences*

Within the current debate on the societal and environmental impact of climate change scientists and policymakers as well as artists stress the importance of producing compelling narratives to envision a safe future society. Especially speculative fiction – the genre that explores possible futures – plays an important, integrating role in imagining and engaging with the implications of climate change: not only do fictional narratives offer a great opportunity to engage readers on a personal level with the complexities and scale of climate change, they also prove to be productive in policy making practices and in mediating calculated, data-driven climate scenarios (Hajer 2005; Hulme 2009; Thomas 2013; Moezzi a.o. 2017; Johns-Putra 2016 and 2019).

This special issue sets out to investigate the integrative power of speculative fiction, focusing in particular on the intersection between literature and environmental sciences by focusing on the following key questions:

1. How to *conceptualize* the role that narratives play in bringing the global scale of climate change into the realm of the personal?
2. How do fictional narratives *co-produce* reality and contribute to the public debate, to governance or vice versa to (environmental) science? Are narratives indeed to be understood as means ('productive fictions') to encourage awareness and even foster behavioral change ('risk related affect', learning)?
3. What *narrative techniques* (e.g., the use of metaphors, allusion or extrapolation) are used in both scientific and artistic discourse to envision the consequences of climate change? How do they differ in use, where do they overlap? How do both utopian and dystopian storylines relate to 'eco-anxiety' and the wish to go beyond eco-paralysis? How and why do utopian or dystopian future scenario's manifest themselves within approaches from the different fields of study?

### Practicalities:

*Interférences littéraires/littéraire interferences* (ISSN 2031-2970) is a peer-reviewed, international and multilingual online journal (DOAJ) devoted to the interaction between literature and cultural and societal practices. For more information see: <http://www.interferenceslitteraires.be/index.php/illi/index>.

Researchers from literary and cultural studies with a focus on environmental humanities and sciences are invited to contribute full-length articles of approximately 8-10.000 words incl. footnotes and references. We particularly promote diversity in terms of theoretical frameworks and geographical contexts. We especially encourage non-English contributions (e.g. French, German, Spanish).

If you are interested in contributing, please send an email to [ClimateNarratives@ou.nl](mailto:ClimateNarratives@ou.nl) by April 30<sup>th</sup>, 2021 including an abstract (ca. 250-500 words) and a short bio (max. 200 words). The outcome of the selection process will be communicated before May 9<sup>th</sup>, 2021. We are expecting completed contributions by December 1<sup>st</sup>, 2021 after which the journal's peer review procedure will start. The issue is planned for Spring 2022.

### Editorial note:

The proposal for this issue follows up on the international workshop 'Narratives & Climate Change' held online on June 25<sup>th</sup>-26<sup>th</sup>, 2020 (Open University). The workshop is part of the research network project 'Imaginations of the Future City: Envisioning Climate Change and Technological Cityscapes through Contemporary Speculative Fiction'. More information on the network project is to be found on our webpage:

<https://www.ou.nl/en/the-safe-city-imaginaries-of-the-future-city>

### References:

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- Hulme, Mike. (2009). *Why we disagree about climate change*. Cambridge University Press.
- Johns-Putra, A. (ed.) (2016). *Climate and Literature*. Cambridge Critical Concepts Series. Cambridge University Press.
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- Moezzi, Mithra, Kathryn B. Janda, Sea Rotmann. (2017). 'Using stories, narratives, and storytelling in energy and climate change research'. *Energy Research & Social Sciences*, Vol.31, 1-10.
- Thomas, P.L. (ed.) (2013) *Science Fiction and Speculative Fiction. Challenging genres*. Sense Publishers, Rotterdam/Boston.