Routledge
Taylor & Francis Group

Comparative American Studies An International Journal

ISSN: (Print) (Online) Journal homepage: www.tandfonline.com/journals/ycas20

Radically Hopeful Dystopian Climate Fiction: Exploring Social Dreaming, Temporal Re-Sensitisation, and Katharsis in Jeff VanderMeer's *Borne*

Jasmin Kirkbride

To cite this article: Jasmin Kirkbride (11 Apr 2025): Radically Hopeful Dystopian Climate Fiction: Exploring Social Dreaming, Temporal Re-Sensitisation, and Katharsis in Jeff VanderMeer's *Borne*, Comparative American Studies An International Journal, DOI: 10.1080/14775700.2025.2490336

To link to this article: https://doi.org/10.1080/14775700.2025.2490336

Published online: 11 Apr 2025.

COMPARATIVE AMERICAN STUDIES AN INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL
https://doi.org/10.1080/14775700.2025.2490336

Routledge
Taylor & Francis Group

Radically Hopeful Dystopian Climate Fiction: Exploring Social Dreaming, Temporal Re-Sensitisation, and Katharsis in Jeff VanderMeer's *Borne*

Jasmin Kirkbride

Department of Media, Culture, and Creative Industries, City St. George's, University of London, London, UK

ABSTRACT

This article applies Jonathan Lear's concept of radical hope to dystopian climate fiction, using Jeff Vandermeer's weird fiction novel *Borne* as a vehicle to explore the intra- and extra-textual impacts of revivals in dystopian climate fiction. Fuelled by the protagonist's actions as a radically hopeful individual, *Borne*'s revival is weird and uncanny, subverting dominant Messianic and redemptive concepts of revival to reframe it as a critical act (Ursula Heise, L. T. Sargant, Tom Moylan, and Rafaella Baccolini), thereby enabling radically hopeful katharsis and temporal re-sensitisation in the reader (Kyle P. Whyte). This article argues that in dystopian climate fiction, not all revivals are not to be taken literally but, supported by evidence from empirical ecocriticism (Matthew Schneider-Mayerson) and psychoanalysis (W. G. Lawrence), are cathartic acts of social dreaming on the part of writers and readers alike. n this way—far from being promises of utopia, comfort, or even continuity—fictive radically hopeful revivals in dystopian climate fiction can support a needed examination of temporality, dreams, and impermanence to redefine what it means to be radical, courageous, and honourable in the face of the climate crisis.

KEYWORDS

Radical hope; climate fiction; climate change; empirical ecocriticism; reader affect; spiral time; social dreaming; cli-fi; weird fiction; dystopia

Fictive, radically hopeful revivals put dystopian climate fiction (DCF) in a tricky position.

If climate fiction (CF) is to have a task, it is generally acknowledged to be accurately portraying the climate crisis, acting as arbiter between the sciences and arts (for example, Frelik 2017, 128–129; Ghosh 2016; Boykoff 2019, 190ff.). Particularly until the 1980s, DCFs were therefore 'dire warnings' in the tradition of classical dystopias, which extrapolated present conditions to paint bleak, usually hopeless endings warning readers about the future (Baccolini 2004, 2012; Sargent 1994, 8). Some CF critics argue this created an 'ecocidal status quo' which cannot 'create thought-spaces necessary for a radical transformation of how we imagine ourselves in relation to the biosphere', and helps reinforce belief in unavoidable ecocide (Oziewicz, Attebery, and Dedinová 2022, 5).

CONTACT Jasmin Kirkbride jasmin.kirkbride@city.ac.uk Department of Media, Culture, and Creative Industries, City St. George's, University of London, London, UK

However, non-classically DCFs positing revivals may equally be critiqued as 'misleading' or 'conformist' (Oziewicz, Attebery, and Dedinová 2022, 5; Baccolini 2020, D40). Combined with DCF's flourishing popularity, they threaten to make the genre cliché and comfortable, undermining its efficacy as a 'powerful tool of political criticism' (Heise 2015), and downplaying climate change's irreversible damage. Unrealistic revival following climate disaster might misdirect the reader's hope, transforming it from agentic thinking into wishful apathetic optimism.

How, then, can DCF gesture towards the revivals required by a radically hopeful reading, and not betray its position as orator of hard truths?

I argue that the multi-layered nature of radically hopeful DCF's 'dire warnings' do not necessitate revival's foreclosure. Revival has multiple meanings, not all literal, including some which actually underscore climate change's terrors. This article therefore explores how radically hopeful DCF revivals overcome these criticisms by encouraging intra- and extra-textual katharsis, temporal re-sensitisation, and social dreaming, using Jeff VanderMeer's *Borne* (2017) as a case study.

Defining Radically Hopeful Revival

To begin, let us define philosopher and psychoanalyst Jonathan Lear's 'radical hope' theory. Using archival interviews from the late-1800s with the Indigenous American Crow people, Lear posits that societal and cultural collapses, in which traditional ways of living become unintelligible, are best endured through 'radical hope'. It arises from a 'genuine courage' that transcends collapsing cultural frameworks, and enables individuals and communities to live 'well' and 'honourably' despite external circumstances (2006, 91–100).

The source materials Lear draws on are historic interviews between Plenty Coups, leader of the Indigenous American Crow (Apsáalooke) nation, and Frank B. Linderman, a white historian and advocate for Indigenous communities. These interviews detail the Crow's real, lived and living experiences of cultural collapse at the hands of white, patriarchal, colonial powers, and the excruciating wrench and extraordinary difficulty of finding radical hope in that situation. Lear acknowledges that radical hope is just one interpretation of what those interviews 'might mean' out of many valuable possible readings (2006, 1–5).[1]

Similarly, in this article, and aware of my own positionality of as a white British-Antipodean academic, I am not suggesting the Crow experience is a direct parallel to the climate crisis: the depths of cultural devastation visited on the Indigenous population of North America are beyond my understanding or imagination. Nor am I attempting to interpret DCF as retellings of colonial cultural destructions – though these retellings are taking place, such as Cherie Dimaline's *The Marrow Thieves* (2017), and are a fruitful area of research in their own right. Instead, I am applying the radical formulation of hope that Lear theorises to the new DCF context. This is to, in Lear's words, inquire 'into the legitimate roles that hope and imagination might play in the formation and development of courageous ways of living' (2006, 149) in the era of climate crisis.

The broader hope discourse contains numerous ideas regarding hope's value and constitution in the climate crisis. Radical hope is particularly useful as an analytic framework as, intentionally or not, it expresses numerous elements of other activist hope theories: for example, the militant pessimism of Terry Eagleton's tragic hope (2015); the enduring impulse to action of Joanna Macy and Chris Johnstone's active hope (2012); and the

cultural malleability of Jem Bendell's deep adaptation (2018). This is not hope in the oft-attacked anodyne, wish-fulfilling sense of unresponsive optimism, but an 'imaginative', 'well-deployed' engagement with reality, based on 'courageously' facing the risks of cultural collapse with dignity and making 'good judgements' in light of them (Lear 2006, 103–110).

Lear theorises four steps that radically hopeful individuals – or, in DCF, characters – take when facing cultural collapse:

(1) Engage in a Kierkegaardian teleological suspension of the ethical.
(2) This enables imaginative interaction with reality, allowing one to react with courageous, appropriate solutions and adapt failing cultural traditions to new circumstances;
(3) whilst acknowledging the losses taking place;
(4) and understanding one's actions are to improve a world one may not understand, but hope will emerge containing some form of 'revival' (92–96).

The fourth point regarding acting towards an 'unknowable revival' most concerns us here. Ecological destruction engenders cultural collapse,[2] thus a radically hopeful reading of DCF revivals offers the chance to explore intra- and extra-textually how humans can survive the climate crisis, if not within recognisable cultural frameworks, then with dignity and courage (Lear 2006, 46, 78–79, 103–136).

Radically Hopeful Foundations in Jeff VanderMeer's *Borne*

Throughout *Borne*, protagonist Rachel engages in radically hopeful actions. *Borne* is set in a near-future post-apocalyptic city overrun by biotechnology including humans, creatures, and failed experiments. The 'harrowed, poisoned, semi-ruined' (Miller 2017) city is caught in a fight between Mord, an 'enormous, sentient, cataclysmically destructive bioengineered bear' (Hand 2017), and the Magician, who experiments on children and plans to take over the city. The Magician used to work for biotech corporation, the Company, which once governed the city and created Mord and the other 'biotech' creatures, but is now deteriorating. Protagonist Rachel lives in the ruined Balcony Cliffs with her sickly lover Wick. Like the Magician, Wick was a Company employee but he now deals in biotech memory beetles. Struggling with her own patchy memories, Rachel knows only that she grew up on an island with her parents but left in search of safety when environmental issues intruded.

Facing this ongoing cultural collapse, Rachel discovers and adopts a biotech creature she names Borne. Soon, Borne starts moving, eating, growing, and learning alarmingly fast, so that when Rachel is assaulted by a group of the Magician's genetically altered, feral children, Borne is large and powerful enough to kill them. Rachel becomes maternal towards him, defending him against suspicious Wick, who fears Borne is a dangerous Company product. The conflict between Mord and the Magician deepens and, worried, Rachel seeks out Wick but finds him already talking to another version of her – this is Borne imitating her, apparently attempting to mend the rift between the lovers. Rachel cannot forgive the breach of trust and throws Borne out. Afterwards, she finds his journal, in which he details his struggles with his insatiable, murderous appetite. Borne is mysterious and likely dangerous, thus Rachel's society's codes of ethics and survival

dictate she should reject him. Instead, she engages in a radically hopeful teleological suspension of the ethical, moving towards a transhuman embodiment of love, allowing her to engage imaginatively with reality and adapt failing traditional frameworks of love to new, weird circumstances by attempting to nurture her existing erotic ties with Wick *and* storgic agape towards Borne. She is not always successful in this unity, but persists, continuing to talk to Borne even after his questionable actions make her eject him from their home, the Balcony Cliffs (for instance, VanderMeer 2017, 210–225).

Soon after Rachel sends Borne away, Mord's forces also chase Rachel and Wick from the Balcony Cliffs. Wick leaves behind his life-saving medicine, so they must hunt for more in the Company building. Before entering, Wick gives Rachel a letter to read in case he should die, but Rachel secretly reads it anyway. Borne visits her, explaining he has only been consuming 'evil people' and has a plan to improve things, before he shape-shifts into Mord and chases him. Inside the Company building, Rachel searches for Wick's medicine. In one room, she finds the Magician and a one-way portal to another world, which the Company previously used to supply the city. It now displays an inaccessible utopia. The Magician tries to coax Rachel into joining forces, but from Wick's letter she knows this is a trap and kills the Magician.

During this conflict, Rachel acknowledges the losses that have happened, yet stops them overwhelming or compromising her capacity for courageous, honourable action. The Magician offers to join forces, but Rachel instead admits her traumas and grieves for the worlds denied to her: seeing the utopian world through the portal is a painful reminder of the Company's oppression (295ff.). Rachel reflects that she and Wick have always been alone and, though she desperately wished someone in the Company's depths could 'pull a lever or push a button to fix our situation' (296), there is no one to take responsibility for the damage done. Grieving these injustices and the personal losses that accompanied them helps Rachel resist despair and the Magician's 'obvious trap' (297). Instead, she acts with courage and honour, rejecting the Magician and undertaking what in this extreme circumstance is the 'appropriate' solution: fighting her.

Wick's letter also reveals that he is biotech and gave Rachel memory beetles at her request, which made her forget that the Company murdered her parents after they entered the city as stowaways using the portal. Rachel does not mind that Wick is biotech – he is still a person to her – and she engages in reasonable forgiveness of him for the things he's done wrong, saving him with the medicine she finds.

Back outside the Company building, Wick and Rachel watch Borne defeat Mord, causing both to disappear. The city 'flourishes', as Rachel and Wick become adoptive parents to feral children, forming found family amidst revival. Here, Rachel makes a radically hopeful extension of their community to encompass the feral children, recognising their trauma and supporting their rehabilitation, while adapting nuclear family community patterns to encompass nonhuman and posthuman found family. She demonstrates radically hopeful empathy, tolerance, and appreciation of the communal needs, enabling the establishment of previously unthinkable human-nonhuman kinship.

Throughout the book, when one path collapses, Rachel's agentic thinking creates another series of actions towards her intended goals: improving the world for a revival she cannot fully understand. Unlike the non-radically-hopeful Magician, Rachel can sense the future is for 'the animals that had gotten through the cracks' in the Company

building, returning to 'the place that had created their destroyed and destructible lives' to rewire and change everything (297). After the humans abandon the Company building, foxes burrow in, finding the portal and its final shipment: more foetal 'Bornes', which the foxes take outside, creating 'a quiet revolution sneaking up on us' (299), which will eventually see humans cease to exist. As one of the last surviving humans untouched by biotech, Rachel is part of the problem. She understands the beckoning revival is not for her, yet still courageously acts towards its formation, first by killing the Magician, then by caring for the feral children.

Rachel's radically hopeful characteristics form the roots of *Borne*'s revival, laying the groundwork for our interpretation of it.

Re-Framing 'Revival' in DCF via Radical Hope and Critical Dystopia

To understand why *Borne*'s radically hopeful revival escapes undermining the novel's powerful climate messages, we should re-examine the meaning of 'revival' more broadly.

In English-language, Euro-Western discourse revival's underlying cultural association defaults to Messianic resurrection and redemption. Much CF lends itself to such interpretations, especially those emerging from and set in the USA, where religious matters assail climate discourse (Nash 2014, 13–22) – for example, Barbara Kingsolver's *Flight Behaviour*. Yet, such novels often actually imply post- or supra-religious concepts of resurrection. *Flight Behaviour*'s closing paragraphs detail familiar agrarian fields inundated by antediluvian floods and biblical fire, evoking 'the sublime landscape of the End Times' (Lloyd and Rapson 2017, 921–922). Protagonist Dellarobia watches as the critically endangered monarch butterflies of this near-future engage in a collective 'exodus' (Kingsolver 2012, 597), but the 'whole new earth' (597) they fly towards is neither heaven nor heavenly, and implications of Messianic resurrection are undermined by the novel's assertions that this new earth is 'not a good thing' (597).

Linked with this, critics often assume resurrection in DCF revival includes human redemption, and regularly equate hope and redemption (Rambo 2008, 100). However, redemption is not automatically entwined with hope or revival. Again, *Flight Behaviour*'s 'whole new earth' is the result of life-wrecking, accumulated mistakes (Kingsolver 2012, 529), in which 'you could count on nothing you'd ever known or trusted' (499). It denies the promise of human redemption implied by Messianic resurrection (Lloyd and Rapson 2017), reflecting the clear climate science that our species is irredeemable, and elides the possibility of deliverance or rescue by a higher spiritual or technological power.

Dissociating DCF revival from these Messianic formulas of resurrection and redemption unlocks other 'revival' possibilities. Revival discourse tends to focus on specific historical linguistic, political, artistic, and/or religious revivals (for example the Hebrew revival (Henig 2024), or colonial architectural revival (Lockwood 2012)). Sometimes, these socio-political revivals lead to literary movements, which might in turn be studied for their depictions of such revivals (for instance, Gregory Castle's investigation into depictions of revival in the early-20th Century Irish novel in relation to the Irish Revival (Castle 2020)). However, sustained studies into depictions of revival within literature itself are broadly reserved for religious texts (for example, Meek 2006). This dearth is particularly notable regarding climate fiction, where critics instead opt for more neutral terms,

such as 'post-collapse' or 'uncertain future' (as in Mussgnug 2022; Caracciolo 2022, 189–94; or; Henry 2022). As a result, similar to the dearth of utopian or positivist climate fiction, there is a lack of work discussing what 'revival' specifically might look like in climate fiction. Reasons for this are the remit of another study, but given the broader climate literature discourse I hypothesise this aversion may be due to concerns of raising false hopes, as revival of our current civilisation will not be possible in the face of extreme climate change. However, I argue that such a restriction misunderstands the nature of revival.

Revivals in literature more broadly encompass stays of execution; undead risings; hubristic creations; restoration of material or intellectual culture and memory; awakening in the literal, spiritual, or psychological sense; recovery of objects, for example memories; recovery from affliction; rejuvenation, either returning to a former state with new vigour or finding a new state in which to be vigorous; renaissance; resuscitation; revitalisation. . . Revival's scope is vast, its only unifying theme being that it looks over its shoulder at the past.

In most senses, however, revival does not raise the old and return to what was, it adapts the past into new forms. The Latin root 're-vivere' means simply 'live again' (Harper 2023), it does not dictate how, when, or why. Though often attributed a positive valence, revival does not promise to be recognisable, knowable, or better or worse than the present. Revival just urges: 'Somewhere, somehow, live again'.

In this vein, Lear exhorts radically hopeful individuals to approach revival as 'coming back to life in a form not yet intelligible' (2006, 95). Revival is for future generations, with vastly different cultural and social frameworks, forcing present generations to abandon traditional concepts of 'the good life', and admit that, though 'we shall get the good back', we can currently have 'no more than a glimmer' of what that means (94).

This interlocks with the concept of open-ended, 'critical dystopias'. Containing elements of dystopia *and* utopia, critical dystopias emerged from 1980s science fiction, and were overwhelmingly the work of feminist, female authors such Margaret Atwood, Octavia E. Butler, and Ursula K. Le Guin (Baccolini 2020). Warning about society's future evolution *and* reflecting its present state, critical dystopias differ from classical dystopias by containing an enclave of radical individuals who act towards disruption with utopian instinct, gesturing towards late- or post-narrative revival. As Baccolini says, critical dystopias maintain a central, utopian core, 'a locus of hope that contributes to deconstructing tradition and reconstructing alternatives' (Baccolini 2000, 13ff.). Such critically dystopian, militantly pessimistic open endings compel readers to hopeful action rather than apathetic despair (Moylan 2000).

Critical dystopian theory challenges the genre boundary between dystopia and utopia, which makes Lyman Tower Sargent balk, arguing that 'without boundaries, we do not have a subject', thus one is required 'however porous it may be' (1994, 12–14). However, to me Baccolini's critique does not *dissolve* the boundary, only increases its porosity, setting utopia and dystopia as two ends of a spectrum, in the centre of which a radically hopeful coexistence is possible. Suspending the concrete delineation of genre undermines prevailing, hierarchical ideologies of scholarship, challenging cultural constructions that situate normality and deviance in binary opposition (Baccolini 2000, 14–15). Radically hopeful teleological suspensions of the ethical participate in this literary shift to critical dystopias, enabling 'appropriations of generic texts' that radically re-vision conservative

genres, creating sites of resistance against hegemonic ideologies which link nature, women, and other marginalised groups with 'deviance and inferiority' (15).

Radically hopeful revival can therefore exist within dystopia without undermining the text's climate messages, as it is precisely by their open-endedness that critically dystopian revivals can encourage agentic thinking in the reader. We can see this in *Borne*'s revival, which emerges from Rachel's radical hope, and is also critically dystopian. In the book's final twelve pages, Rachel and Wick emerge from the Company building, the Magician dead, and watch Borne defeat Mord. Afterwards, it rains for days, during which biotech creatures fall from the sky and grow from the ground. Many ultimately die, but some remain, while Wick and Rachel return to the Balcony Cliffs, to 'sift through the wreckage and begin again' (VanderMeer 2017, 317), inviting others – mainly feral children – to live with them. Sickly Wick never returns to full health, and Rachel never tells him she killed the Magician. Rachel rediscovers an infant Borne and takes him home, keeping him on the balcony, but this time he does not grow, move, or talk. As years pass, the city recovers from the horrors of the past, becoming a new community with new rules and traditions. In this revival, everyone lives again, but permanently and insurmountably touched by the past. In a radically hopeful way, old traditions have been repurposed for communally minded, transhuman ends: Rachel's lover is biotech, her children are adopted, and she is permeable to the new world, even if she does not fully understand it. With its transformative inclusiveness and unknowability to the protagonist, *Borne*'s revival is therefore critically dystopian *because of* its radical hopefulness, counteracting the wider concern that dystopia is being co-opted by consumerism, capitalism, colonialism, and patriarchy, 'losing its political power' to become 'routine', 'familiar', and 'comfortable' (Baccolini 2020; Heise 2015).

Not all DCF is critical, just as not all DCF contains radically hopeful characters, and subjective definitions of what constitutes critical dystopia abound. Further, critical dystopia and fully manifest radical hope are not mutually inclusive. Still, DCF revivals do not *automatically* undermine the power of a text's climate messages. Indeed, if occurring within a critical dystopia on radically hopeful principles, revivals may strengthen these messages, as we see in *Borne*: its post-human revival holds flourishing and beauty, which Rachel's radical hope contributes to, but Rachel nonetheless remains the last of our species – a stark warning indeed.

Radically Hopeful DCF Revivals as Acts of Social Dreaming

A related criticism of DCF is that, by leaning into unrealistic worlds and revivals, DCFs do not provide actionable roadmaps to mitigate climate change (Futerra 2018).

Narrative fiction offers unique opportunities for effective climate change messaging: immersive, tailored communication that speaks to both the brain's rational and emotional parts (Rayner and Minns 2015; Schneider-Mayerson et al. 2020). However, during the 2010s, a vein of ecocriticism emerged which set before writers a moral obligation to overcome the literary establishment's 'crisis' of imagination and engage with climate change (Ghosh 2016, 5–20) in a manner that can be projected onto current global affairs and planetary systems, overcoming apocalypse's 'tired formulae' to increase chances of creating new climate understanding

and impetus for action in readers (Clark 2010, 138–147; see also Trexler 2015, 18–19; Reiss 2023; Malpas 2021). This melds with a broader cultural wave pressuring CF authors to 'imagine new pathways' out of and 'roadmaps' towards solutions for climate change (Gill and Laungani 2021; see also Hofstetter 2019; Chaudhuri 2019).

Yet, such critiques take a particular view of data on reader affect and CF. Though Matthew Schneider-Mayerson is amongst critics who warn of some apocalyptic literature's dangers (Schneider-Mayerson 2017), his leading empirical studies suggest that CF is largely read by young liberals already concerned with climate change. Preaching to the choir, CF texts do not make the most promising 'Trojan horses for message smuggling'. On this level, evidence shows CF's affect is the small-scale, short-term – but 'ecopolitically significant' – 'nudging' of readers into greater concern about and action to mitigate climate change (ibid.).

More significant is CF's value as a catalyst for dialogue, with almost half CF readers discussing a CF book with friends and family after reading it (Schneider-Mayerson 2018, 478–480, 495; see also Schneider-Mayerson et al. 2020; Rayner and Minns 2015). Indeed, among its most numerous readers – the climate concerned – CF's primary affect may actually be unlocking and articulating pre-existing, sometimes nascent anxieties, and instigating otherwise rare primary, secondary, and tertiary social sharing about climate change. This contributes to a virtuous cycle of activating and reactivating thoughts and emotions, building greater extra-textual individual and collective support for climate action and emotional regulation around climate change (Rimé 2007). These impacts are potentially larger than is currently measurable, as real-world CF contexts are considerably different than studies have been able to simulate, such as multiple exposures to CF, which are likely to have longer-term, deeper conscious and sub-conscious effects. In this context, readers' ability to visualise a novel's setting and empathize with its characters are more significant drivers than the realism of depicted climate crises or solutions.

DCF is not an imaginative act to pass on to the reader, but a stimulant for the reader's own imagination. As such, DCF's capacity for social dreaming may be more important than its capacity to posit revivals that would be actionable in the real world. First formally theorized by W. Gordon Lawrence in 1982, social dreaming is an opportunity to share one's dreams with others in a matrix. The dream is 'not a personal possession', but captures the social, political, institutional and spiritual aspects of the dreamer's social environment. The dream's meaning unfolds through 'free association and amplification', giving form 'to the echoes of thinking and thought that exist in the space between the minds of individuals' (2005, ix–x).

Social dreaming invites us to enter 'the surreal world' of the narrator's night, discuss it utilising a combination of synthetic and analytic understanding, and emerge with a more holistic view of society and the methods that might improve it (1–3, 13–17). It subverts the Jungian and Freudian endeavour to interpret the dream in relation to an individual and instead relates it to the community and its culture, altering the function of dreaming from individual therapeutic exploration of the subconscious to occupying the dream's imaginative space (14). Dreams arise from our emotional states, which, though individual, are predicated on the social and cultural frameworks in which we operate. These emotional states may be forgotten or buried in our conscious memory but are activated during the subconscious work of

sleep (16). Engaging in this subconscious dreamscape is crucial: rejecting dream-life cuts us off from 'swathes' of the subconscious life that informs more of our consciousness than 'can ever be credited' (16).

Denial of social dreaming's importance is a Euro-Western, capitalist trend, and denial of the subconscious is a dominance strategy of eco-problematic powers. Social dreaming has existed as long as humankind, evidenced as early as the *Epic of Gilgamesh*, and historical societies worldwide regularly see dreaming as a cultural, rather than an individual, phenomenon (Lawrence 2005, 16–17). Social dreaming is implicit throughout Lear's theorisation of radical hope, through the communal reception of Crow leader Plenty Coup's dreams, and the interpretations and actions they catalyse. Lear's exhortations for radically hopeful individuals to repurpose existing traditions gestures to a similar sense of social daydreaming. Thus, the creative, Deleuzian questioning of logic's primacy that social dreaming promotes is itself a radical act of resistance (Long and Manley 2019). CF's lack of literality transforms it into a tool for such social dreaming: the allegorical and metaphorical may be instruments of revolution, not novums to be dismissed as 'low-brow' genre quirks. As Lydia Millet notes in the DCF *A Children's Bible*, if religion is transposed onto climate communication realities, art is the subconscious land of the Holy Ghost (Millet 2020, 142, 224).

If, as Sargent says, 'writers communicate their dreams by writing them down and publishing them' (1994, 18), when a CF writer offers a book, they are partly saying: 'Here is a dream I had about climate change'. The reader socially sharing their experiences of the text then becomes an act of social dreaming, making CF novels, dystopian or otherwise, catalysts for creating social dreaming matrices.

Dystopia and utopia have long been entangled with social dreaming. The utopian instinct is, at heart, 'the result of human propensity to dream while both awake and asleep' (Sargent 4). Yet this dreamscape is entered partly in recognition of the dilemmas and problems afflicting society, and not all its dreams are pleasant. Some are nightmares, or in critical dystopias' case, cocoon a daydream within a nightmare (Moylan 2000). Nightmarish qualities do not preclude dreams' potential for radical hope or critical dystopianism. Nonetheless, as Baccolini and Heise argue, the dystopian dream/nightmare must be wary of homogenization by eco-problematic forces, which might consciously or subconsciously appropriate, tame, and commodify the 'transgressive and radical' (Baccolini 2020; D44; see also Heise 2015).

From its radically hopeful foundation, *Borne* participates in such positive metaphorical, subconscious social dreaming, using the 'weird' to engage via estrangement and allegory to make its didactic aspects accessible (Moylan 5). VanderMeer writes at the forefront of the 'new weird', his freely shifting prose reading 'like a dispatch from a world lodged somewhere between science fiction [and] myth' (Publishers Weekly 2017). His allegories intrigue and alienate: Mord can be read as capitalism's unassailable, ever-present grip; the Company represents the companies exploiting and benefitting from eco-problematic systems; the portal in the Company building is both a window from the places capitalism exploits onto the privileged enclaves it supports, and a window from the future of an ecologically devastated world onto a parallel future in which humanity made responsible environmental choices. In such ways, VanderMeer embroiders the novel with dystopian allegory's 'insightful and incite-ful' potentials (Moylan 2000, 5).

In this light, *Borne*'s revival is a testament to environmental collapse and resilient, radically hopeful adaptation. The novel's literal events form an evocative ending, but also reveal deep, poignant meanings when interpreted as allegory or social dream. The revival opens with an arresting reflection in the generic second person singular, implicating the reader:

> There comes a moment when you witness events so epic you don't know how to place them in the cosmos or in relation to the normal workings of a day. Worse, when these events recur, at an ever-greater magnitude, in a cascade of what you have never seen before and do not know how to classify. Troubling because each time you acclimate, you move on, and, if this continues, there is a mundane grandeur to the scale that renders certain events beyond rebuke or judgement, horror or wonder, or even the grasp of history. (VanderMeer 2017, 311)

This narrative turn applies Rachel's position in the dystopian future to the reader's position in the present, on the cusp of certain but unknowable cultural upheaval. Mord and Borne's battle, then, is the war between capitalism – a looming, unassailable, artificial hyperobject – and the environment – changing, growing, maturing unnaturally fast, and provoked to fight by eco-problematic forces. Borne wins, not through violence, but by 'flattening and widening the aperture at the top of his body until he resembled an enormous passionflower blossom' (313). This emblem of nature fools Mord into thinking Borne has surrendered – not dissimilar to the apparent capitulation of trees to chainsaws, oil sands to diggers, or seas to trawlers. But Borne takes Mord by surprise, imprisoning him behind Cthulhu-like tentacle bars, and consuming him whole, not unlike the ways in which ecological collapse will, eventually, cause the fall of eco-problematic forces in one direction or another. Rachel mourns Borne in a simulacrum of econostalgia – 'I was filled with the grief of that absence, could hardly breathe for it' (315) – offering readers a way of reading the world's shape which supports overcoming 'social alienation' and 'anthropological strangeness', and catalyses action to alter that worldly shape for the better (Moylan 2000, 27–28).

Rooted in a radically hopeful revival, this social dream is not a return to the past, but an adaptive embrace of change. When the rain comes, it washes away the last 'uncanny' human traps and creations, making space for unknowable revival as traditional forms of eco-problematic civilisation are replaced by a post-human flourishing whose causes are mysterious and mechanics beyond human influence (VanderMeer 2017, 316). Despite this initial plentitude, after the flood much perishes, so that to a fresh observer 'it might have looked as broken and useless as before. But it was not. Some new things remained, took root, became permanent' (316). As above, against this backdrop of lost familiarity, old existences are repurposed for new environments, and through a process of trial and error, a new culture emerges. Yet Rachel, like the reader, reels from 'the shock of recognition' that is the present moment, implicitly asking climate change's grittiest question: 'How do we transition to a culture of stewardship without losing everything we've worked for? Or losing just what *must* be lost?' (Oziewicz, Attebery, and Dedinová 2022, 1–2). Unavoidably, a flood of losses uncanny and natural is coming and, as Lear says, 'It is one thing to dance as though nothing has happened; it is another to acknowledge that something singularly awful has happened – the collapse of happenings – and then decide to dance' (2006, 153). Yet, this proverbial dance is exactly what Rachel and Wick achieve with their community of kin. This is typical VanderMeer territory, asking

'how ecological catastrophes create ruins for the humans that live around them, and [. . .] examining the kinds of lives possible in the ruins' (Strombeck 2019, 13). The author is 'not interested in how life ends, but in how it changes', of 'persistence through change' and 'hidden continuity' (Rothman 2015).

This revival is not a false promise of a return to an old, irrevocably lost world, but 'the old world bought back to us' in new assemblages (VanderMeer 2017, 319). Rachel does not teach her feral children the now-irrelevant way she taught Borne. Instead, she teaches 'only the useful things, the hopeful things [. . .] the things I am and the things I can never be' (321). Acknowledging that in this 'new-old' world 'we all just want to be people, and none of us know what that really means' (319–320), Rachel nurtures the feral children's thick concepts of honesty, courage, respect, and honour (321). Yet, as a radically hopeful character, Rachel knows she will not see and could not comprehend the revival's fruition, and it's this relinquished ownership of the revival that enables Rachel's transhuman community building:

> The strange, forgotten animals abandoned by the Company live among us, along with their insatiable curiosity, like Bornes that want nothing from the old world. They need nothing from it. They are their own captains and lead their own lives [. . .] They will outstrip all of us in time, and the story of the city will soon be their story; not ours. (317)

Precisely because of its revival, *Borne* thus imparts a hard social dreaming provocation regarding our current ecological and cultural situation: 'you can go home again [. . .] so long as you understand that home is a place where you have never been' (Baccolini 2012, 44).

DCF Revival as Enabler of Radically Hopeful Katharsis and Temporal Awareness

Alongside enabling social dreaming, and beyond offering 'roadmaps', radically hopeful DCF revivals cultivate karthasis and temporal awareness in the reader, offering readers pathways towards deeper understanding of their ecological grief and resources for radical hope.

I say 'katharsis' as opposed to 'catharsis' to avoid associations with 'purification' or 'cleansing', which brings to mind holy water, antibacterial spray, and detox diets, or the bourgeois intellectual clarification that might balance unwarranted passions. Instead, this is kartharsis in the pre-*Poetics* Aristotelian sense of medical purgation and evacuation (Dadlez 2016; Golden 1973). This is not just permission, but catalyst, to metaphorically vomit, bleed, and excrete eco-anxiety in all its terrifying overwhelm. It is a reaching back to the dark chthonic gods who turn the souls and seasons; a reaching forth to the beckoning chthulucene. DCF arouses an old, challenging katharsis that exhumes rhizomes of feeling and leaves them exposed, unresolved, and ripe to grow into a mycelial network of social dreaming. Here, readers seek ritualistic bathing in blood to understand colonial violence, patriarchal transgression, and capitalist madness.

The allegories for loss and grief in DCF might have such potent kathartic affects, and radically hopeful revival is implicit in and therefore compounds such kathartic acts: without revival, katharsis is unneeded; yet katharsis indicates a dysfunctional status quo, which requires that revival to be unknowable and estranged.

Katharsis is therefore fused to temporal awareness: first the recovery of history, then the use of this history to shape the future. In *Borne*, recovery of the past and acknowledgement of its loss enables the radically hopeful revival. Rachel remembers her past as a climate refugee in hazy fragments, but has amnesia concerning her parents' death. Wick reveals what really happened: Rachel and her parents snuck through the portal in the Company building, believing it led to a better place. However, Company employees murdered Rachel's parents and discarded her. Wick rescued Rachel, but the experience 'broke something' in her, and she asked him to erase the memories (VanderMeer 2017, 301). However, Wick did not take all her memories, feeling that would make her 'less than a person, a cipher' (303). Dealing in biotech memory beetles, Wick respects the past's importance, knowing it stabilises the present and forges the future. Thus, he betrayed Rachel, just erasing her early traumas in the city.

Yet, only by being told about these memories can Rachel act with insight and agency. The Magician uses Rachel's presumed ignorance to try manipulating her, understanding the longing it creates (295). However, unbeknownst to the Magician, because Rachel has already uncovered her past and begun processing the accompanying grief, she is free to access her agency and build a radically hopeful future (297). VanderMeer consciously inserted the motif of access to and ownership of personal and cultural memory, saying in interview, 'Memory is a form of resistance [. . .] The only way a better future can be built is if we remember the past. Especially for marginalized people' (Bancroft 2017).

Kathartic engagement is key to activating these memories without falling into nostalgic sentimentality. As Laura Miller notes, despite its 'lamentation' over our present world's loss, the contemporary dystopian trend 'often runs on a current of nostalgia for an earlier age' replacing our current civilization with the frontier American dream, where settlers 'get to reinvent society' and 'prove their worth in feats of manly valour'. In this way, the postapocalyptic imagination can be 'shot through with unacknowledged wish fulfilment'. VanderMeer's fiction, Miller argues, transcends this potential commercialisation precisely through its allegorical weirdness, bending fiction 'to unaccustomed ends' (Miller 2017).

Beyond integrating personal history, then, katharsis is also about integrating geological and cultural memory. Remembering is a process of becoming aware of time and sensitised to where in its slipstream we sit. *Borne* is set in an unclear moment: either it is a near-future Earth in which climate change has caused economic and political collapse *or* it is a near-future alternate reality, connected to ours through the Company portal. By the book's end, it is immaterial, Rachel telling Wick that the Company 'was always the alternate reality' and 'the real reality is something we create every moment of every day' (VanderMeer 2017, 318). Whichever version is real history, the allegorical and emotional truth remains: the Company and its eco-problematic practices were always an unreality to break from.

In other ways, too, *Borne* illustrates DCF's capacity to dialogue across time, within and beyond the text, encouraging chronologically unbound social dreaming and dialogic forms non-standard in Euro-Western capitalist cultures. As Kyle P. Whyte outlines, the Indigenous Anishinaabe of North America have a perspective of intergenerational time embedded in spiralling temporality, in which '[we] consider ourselves as living alongside future and past relatives simultaneously as we walk through life' (Whyte 2018, 228–229). This creates narratives that unfold in response to and

reflecting on 'the actual and potential actions and viewpoints of our ancestors and descendants'. Similar ontological and cosmological paradigms exist in Māori culture, where it is impossible to think of present or future as distinct from the past, as the past makes up the present, and both reconstituted create the future. This 'spiraling time does not foreclose linear, future thinking', it is a 'dialogic unfolding' that also has both predictable and irregular forward motion (229). In this frame, counterfactual and philosophical dialogues can be held across time in speculative capacities-one reason why Indigenous storytelling and epistemology often features time as a navigable stream, incorporating time travel, alternative realities, and multiverses. As Whyte says, by engaging 'in dialogic narratives through counterfactual space, we can connect ourselves to the errors of our ancestors and work to change how we do things today so as to learn needed lessons to pass on to future generations. We are always in dialogue with our ancestors as dystopians and fantasizers' (238). In this sense, DCF revival symbolises handing the world to the next generation, as Rachel does first to Borne, then to the feral children, the novel exhibiting an implicit awareness of spiralling time and the intergenerational dialogic.

Like Rachel, the reader is aware of the cultural disruptions ecological collapse will provoke, and the magnitude of ensuing intergenerational ruptures. Yet, DCF revivals like *Borne*'s offer emotional pathways towards reparative radical hope: Rachel and Borne's relationship acts as a 'trans-species rumination' on parenting (Miller 2017). Rachel finds Borne's new perspective on the world endearing: when he calls the city's gelatinous, contaminated river 'beautiful', Rachel realises she loves him because he sees the world differently, making her 'rethink even simple words like *disgusting* or *beautiful*' (VanderMeer 2017, 56). For Rachel, 'to take on a child is to step out of fantasy and into history' (Miller 2017), so when she adopts the feral children, having learnt from her mistakes with Borne, she teaches them only resilient, adaptable concepts of courage and honour. Though she tries, she cannot fully recognise or understand their world or worldview, just as they cannot comprehend hers. Yet, through appreciating these differences, they build a loving community that heals intergenerational ruptures.

These spiralling dialogics also operate extra-textually. The cognitive estrangement of VanderMeer's weird allegories allows readers to depart from the 'consensus reality', circumnavigate its denials and biases, and begin imagining responses to these dysfunctions. Readers continuously compare the alternative world with theirs, shining a new light on reality that enables them to imagine 'the inconceivable' (Menger 2018, 80–88). We live in a world of 'pervasive capitalist logic' that has erased historical memory, making it 'almost impossible to see that what is going on around us was not always the case'. Dystopia offers readers a blank slate that empowers them to 'uncover the tensions and contradictions that are constantly in motion' and, with the help of allegorical revivals, comprehend unthinkable futures (Moylan 2000, 26, 41–46; see also Suvin 1972) – crucial, as 'what may be coming next is a shift that we cannot grasp by looking directly at it' (Moylan 2000, 26; see also Jameson 1982; Suvin 1972). DCFs can create powerful 'circulating references', in which texts 'become meaningful only when set alongside the world, and vice versa' (Strombeck 2019, 4). By extrapolating present fears, critical dystopias allow readers to 'apprehend the present moment as history' (Moylan 2000, 25–27; Menger 2018, 6ff.), building a 'culture of memory' that fuels activities like social dreaming (Baccolini 2004).

Thus, critical and radically hopeful revivals such as *Borne*'s can rebound on the reader, re-sensitising them to the familiar world being lost in the present. Rachel grieves past losses and embraces a revival not for her, reminding us that however we adapt, the future we determine will eventually elide us. In turn, the future will find the past we live in just as unknowable and incomprehensible. VanderMeer reminds us that 'our own world may soon be providing us with answers we don't want to hear' (Hand 2017), yet Rachel's radically hopeful actions encourage readers to dig for their own hopeful, imaginative, and resistive resources.

Conclusion: Finding Radical Hope in the Dreamlike and Deathlike

Important to the effectiveness of these radically hopeful revivals in cultivating karthasis and temporal awareness is their dystopian dream/nightmare setting. DCF's social dreaming reflects past and present, but promises nothing for the future except change. As Lear argues, on the cusp of cultural collapse societies experience a systematic and enigmatic anxiety, and an appropriate response for those sensitive to 'living at the horizons of their world' is to speak about the future with hope but not clarity (2006, 76). Utopian or positivist CF is therefore challenging because it often feels disingenuous: for people 'genuinely at the historical limit of their way of life', it is almost impossible to 'peek over to the other side' in detail. Social dreaming offers a fruitful resource during such times, enabling dreamers to imagine a radically new future without becoming specific about its nature (76–77). Radical hope is therefore unlikely to inspire textual depictions of literal revival, only the dream of it and persistent intentional movements of central characters towards it. Radically hopeful DCF revivals might therefore be dreamlike, allegorical, or metaphorical – but nonetheless potent.

DCF's task is not only to offer literal solutions to humanity's current problems, but also to suggest philosophies and attitudes that enable readers to respond courageously to their own tangled futures. This is not shirking responsibility or shying from the challenging task of engagement with planetary systems – but sometimes, the revolutionary act is *not* to create a roadmap. As cultural movement the Dark Mountain Project notes, cartography is 'not a neutral activity' but 'full of colonial echoes'. The world is not humanity's to observe and survey, but is a patchworked enmeshment for which a map may equally mislead as lead. Instead, 'our maps must be the kind sketched in the dust with a stick, washed away by the next rain' as 'around us shifts are under way which suggest that our whole way of living is already passing into history' (Kingsnorth and Hine 2019, 24–25).

DCF's radically hopeful revivals therefore discuss the crucial border between acknowledgement and denial, comprehension and confusion, stability and collapse, life and death. They kathartically express and bring to awareness the moment's existential crisis, a necessary act for, as the Dark Mountain Project says, we are 'poised trembling on the edge of a change so massive that we have no way of gauging it', and though we are trying not to look down at our potential doom, that's exactly what might be 'good for us' (15). As Tompkins notes, like DCF, the Dark Mountain Project 'offends a lot of people' and can be seen as 'defeatist, misanthropic, collapsitarian'. Yet, 'there is something in the air (and in the soil, and the ocean) these days' which invites these conversations beyond 'apocalypse-mongering or twenty-first-century millenarianism' (Tompkins 2014). The hyperobjects have arrived, and imaginative responses to ecological collapse take many forms, including critical and radically hopeful DCF.

DCFs are not merely acts of despair. Conscious, serious, and lengthy consideration of mortality – individually and societally – has proven to increase empathy and consideration of long-term community outcomes. Repressing these conversations, or visiting them blithely and briefly, has the opposite effect (Solomon, Greenberg, and Pyszczynski 2015, 210–225). Rachel realising Borne is immortal upsets her because, 'To him, on some level I'd never understand, there was no death, no dying, and in the end we stood on opposite sides of a vast gulf of incomprehension. Because what was a human being without death?' (VanderMeer 2017, 222) If the reflection cast by CF is to be honest, it must also describe human impermanence.

Not all CF should be dystopian, however a text's dystopian nature does not undermine its potency. Revival wears many faces, and DCFs promise a verdant variety of revivifications. These revivals do not always return to the pre-dystopia (our present), offer comfort, or gesture towards humankind's continuation, but use critical dystopia's utopian heart to suggest new societal and cultural constellations through metaphor and analogy. Critical DCF revivals do not offer a 'get out', just as radical hope does not equate to wishful thinking. Instead, both reach for the future with utopian instinct and realistic expectations – if not militant pessimism.

Through characters' manifestations of radical hope, DCF can ask: when our culture comes apart, and preservation of the known is increasingly improbable, how might our modes of being embody revival? This promises neither utopia or continuity. Indeed, DCF revivals make no promise or bargain at all, but engage in a crucial, ongoing discussion: in the face of death and extinction, who and what matters? And in the face of drastic climate change, who should we become?

Notes

1. Given his positionality, Lear's engagement with Indigenous culture is not without its critics. However these tend to interrogate the research to deepen its meaning, rather than to 'distract from Lear's insightful, well-articulated, and fresh interpretation of what it can mean to experience the collapse of one's culture and the hope that can bring about a meaningful future' (Frey 2008, 243), and therefore leave the essential analysis and interpretation intact.
2. As in Tim Marshall (2016), Jared Diamond (1998), and Peter Frankopan (2023), the role of geography in forming, shaping, and destroying human civilisations and histories is powerful and unequivocal.

Disclosure Statement

No potential conflict of interest was reported by the author(s).

Notes on contributor

Dr Jasmin Kirkbride is an author and academic. She is a Lecturer at City St. George's, University of London, and holds an MA in Ancient History from King's College London, and an MA in Creative Writing and PhD in Creative and Critical Writing from the University of East Anglia (UEA). Her thesis explored radical hope in dystopian climate fiction, and her current research interests include transhuman communities of care in genre fiction, intergenerational trauma in fungal fiction, and ecopoetry. Her debut novel, The Forest on the Edge of Time, is due out in February 2026 with Tor. Her short speculative fiction has appeared in places including Reactor, and her poetry has

appeared in places including Frogpond and Presence. She was the 2022 Researcher-in-Residence for the British Haiku Society, investigating haiku in the climate crisis.

ORCID

Jasmin Kirkbride http://orcid.org/0000-0002-1475-1265

References

Baccolini, R. 2000. "Gender and Genre in the Feminist Critical Dystopias of Katharine Burdekin, Margaret Atwood, and Octavia Butler." In *Future Females, the Next Generation: New Voices and Velocities in Feminist Science Fiction Criticism*, edited by M. S. Barr, 13–34. Lanham, MD | USA: Rowman & Littlefield.

Baccolini, R. 2004. "The Persistence of Hope in Dystopian Science Fiction." *PMLA* 119 (3): 518–521. https://doi.org/10.1632/003081204X20587.

Baccolini, R. 2012. "Ursula K. Le Guin's Critical Dystopias." In *Critical Insights: Dystopia*, edited by M. K. Booker, 37–53. Hackensack, NJ | USA: Salem Press.

Baccolini, R. 2020. "'Hope isn't Stupid': The Appropriation of Dystopia." *mediAzioni* 27:D39–D49. https://mediazioni.sitlec.unibo.it/index.php/no-27-2020/120-dossier-the-domestication-of-utopia/402-hope-isnt-stupid-the-appropriation-of-dystopia.html.

Bancroft, C. 2017. "'For Florida Author Jeff VanderMeer, Giant Flying Bears are All in a Day's Work'." *Tampa Bay Times*, May 16, 2017. https://www.tampabay.com/features/books/for-florida-author-jeff-vandermeer-giant-flying-bears-are-all-in-a-days/2324112/.

Bendell, J. 2018. "Deep Adaptation: A Map for Navigating Climate Tragedy." *IFLAS Occasional Paper* 2:1–31. http://www.lifeworth.com/deepadaptation.pdf.

Boykoff, M. 2019. *Creative (Climate) Communication*. Cambridge | UK: Cambridge University Press.

Caracciolo, M. 2022. *Slow Narrative and Nonhuman Materialities*. Lincoln, NE | USA: University of Nebraska Press.

Castle, G. 2020. "Revival Fiction: Proclaiming the Future." In *The Oxford Handbook of Modern Irish Fiction*, edited by L. Harte, 117–132. Oxford | UK: Oxford University Press.

Chaudhuri, R. 2019. "Dystopia or Utopia? Politics or Aesthetics? What are the Challenges of Writing Climate Fiction?" *Scroll.in*. October 13, 2019. Accessed 20, 2023. https://scroll.in/article/940301/dystopia-or-utopia-politics-or-aesthetics-what-are-the-challenges-of-writing-climate-fiction.

Clark, T. 2010. "Some Climate Change Ironies: Deconstruction, Environmental Politics and the Closure of Ecocriticism." *Oxford Literary Review* 32 (1): 131–149. https://doi.org/10.3366/olr.2010.0009.

Dadlez, E. M. 2016. "Fiction and Negative Emotions." In *The Routledge Companion to Philosophy of Literature*, edited by N. Carroll and J. Gibson. 1st ed, 259–268. Abingdon-on-Thames | UK: Routledge.

Diamond, J. 1998. *Guns, Germs and Steel*. London | UK: Vintage.

Dimaline, C. 2017. *The Marrow Thieves*. Toronto, ON | Canada: Cormorant Books.

Eagleton, T. 2015. *Hope without Optimism*. London | UK: Yale University Press.

Frankopan, P. 2023. *The Earth Transformed: An Untold History*. London | UK: Bloomsbury.

Frelik, P. 2017. "On Not Calling a Spade a Spade: Climate Fiction as Science Fiction." *Amerikastudien/American Studies* 62 (1): 125–129.

Frey, R. 2008. *Review of Radical Hope: Ethics in the Face of Cultural Devastation by Jonathan Lear*, 1360. Great Plains Quarterly. https://digitalcommons.unl.edu/greatplainsquarterly/1360.

Futerra. 2018. "Sell the Sizzle." Futerra Sustainability Communications. https://futerra-assets.s3.amazonaws.com/documents/Sell_the_sizzle.pdf.

Ghosh, A. 2016. *The Great Derangement*. Chicago, IL | USA: University of Chicago Press.

Gill, J., and R. Laungani. 2021. "Building Our Climate Futures Through Storytelling (Part 1), Feat. Eric Holthaus and Kim Stanley Robinson." *Warm Regards*. March 8, 2021. https://ourwarmregards.medium.com/building-our-climate-futures-through-storytelling-part-1-feat-5b2a8077e4b1.

Golden, L. 1973. "The Purgation Theory of Catharsis." *The Journal of Aesthetics and Art Criticism* 31 (4): 473–479. https://doi.org/10.2307/429320.

Hand, E. 2017. "Jeff Vandermeer's New Dystopian Novel Borne is Lyrical and Harrowing: Elizabeth Hand Reviews." *LA Times*, April 27, 2017. https://www.latimes.com/books/jacketcopy/la-ca-jc-borne-vandermeer-20170413-story.html.

Harper, D. 2013. "Etymology of Revive." Online Etymology Dictionary. https://www.etymonline.com/word/revive.

Heise, U. K. 2015. "What's the Matter with Dystopia." *Public Books*. January 2, 2015. https://www.publicbooks.org/whats-the-matter-with-dystopia/ .

Henig, R. 2024. *On Revival: Hebrew Literature Between Life and Death*. Philadelphia, PA | USA: University of Pennsylvania Press.

Henry, M. S. 2022. *Hydronarratives: Water, Environmental Justice, and a Just Transition*. Lincoln, NE | USA: University of Nebraska Press.

Hofstetter, D. 2019. "Writing for Impact: How Climate Fiction Can Make a Difference." *Medium*. February 22, 2019. https://dhofstetter.medium.com/writing-for-impact-how-climate-fiction-can-make-a-difference-e7b27e4453dd.

Jameson, F. 1982. "Progress versus Utopia: Or, Can We Imagine the Future?" *Science Fiction Studies* 9 (2): 147–158.

Kingsnorth, P., and D. Hine. 2019. *Uncivilisation: The Dark Mountain Manifesto*. 4th ed. Suffolk, UK: Dark Mountain Project.

Kingsolver, B. 2012. *Flight Behaviour*. London | UK: Faber.

Lawrence, W. G. 2005. *Introduction to Social Dreaming: Transforming Thinking*. New York, NY | USA: Karnac.

Lear, J. 2006. *Radical Hope: Ethics in the Face of Cultural Devastation*. Cambridge, MA | USA: Harvard University Press.

Lloyd, C., and J. Rapson. 2017. "'Family Territory' to the 'Circumference of the earth': Local and Planetary Memories of Climate Change in Barbara Kingsolver's *Flight Behaviour*." *Textual Practice* 31 (5): 911–931. https://doi.org/10.1080/0950236X.2017.1323487.

Lockwood, J. S. 2012. "Charlotte Perkins Gilman's Colonial Revival." *Legacy: A Journal of American Women Writers* 29 (1): 86–114. https://doi.org/10.5250/legacy.29.1.0086.

Long, S., and J. Manley. 2019. *Social Dreaming: Philosophy, Research, Theory and Practice*. New York, NY | USA: Routledge.

Macy, J., and C. Johnstone. 2012. *Active Hope: How to Face the Mess We're in without Going Crazy*. New York, NY | USA: New World Library.

Malpas, I. 2021. "Climate Fiction is a Vital Tool for Producing Better Planetary Futures." *The Lancet Planetary Health* 5 (1): E12–E13. https://doi.org/10.1016/S2542-5196(20)30307-7.

Marshall, T. 2016. *Prisoners of Geography*. London | UK: Elliott & Thompson.

Meek, D. 2006. "The Literature of Religious Revival and Disruption." In *The Edinburgh History of Scottish Literature: Enlightenment, Britain and Empire (1707–1918)*, edited by I. Brown, T. Clancy, S. Manning, and M. Pittock, 360–370. Edinburgh | UK: Edinburgh University Press.

Menger, E. 2018. "'What it Feels Like to Be an other': Imaginations of Displacement in Contemporary Speculative Fiction." *Studies in Arts and Humanities Journal* 4 (2): 79–95. https://doi.org/10.18193/sah.v4i2.141.

Miller, L. 2017. "Jeff VanderMeer Amends the Apocalypse." *The New Yorker*, April 17 2017. https://www.newyorker.com/magazine/2017/04/24/jeff-vandermeer-amends-the-apocalypse.

Millet, L. 2020. *A Children's Bible*. NewYork, NY | USA: W.W. Norton.

Moylan, T. 2000. *Scraps of the Untainted Sky: Science Fiction, Utopia, Dystopia*. Abingdon-on-Thames | UK: Routledge.

Mussgnug, F. 2022. "Ecological Mourning: From Elegy to Expanded Grief." In *Dwelling on Grief: Narratives of Mourning Across Time and Forms*, edited by F. Mussgnug, S. Corso, and J. Rushworth, 179–192. Cambridge | UK: Modern Humanities Research Association.
Nash, R. F. 2014. *Wilderness and the American Mind*. 5th ed. London | UK: Yale University Press.
Oziewicz, M., B. Attebery, and T. Dedinová. 2022. *Fantasy and Myth in the Anthropocene: Imagining Futures and Dreaming Hope in Literature and Media*. London | UK: Bloomsbury.
Publishers Weekly. 2017. "Borne." June 2, 2017. https://www.publishersweekly.com/978-0-374-11524-1.
Rambo, S. L. 2008. "Beyond Redemption? Reading Cormac McCarthy's *The Road* After the End of the World." *Studies in Literary Imagination* 41 (2): 99–120.
Rayner, T., and A. Minns. 2015. "The Challenge of Communicating Unwelcome Climate Messages." *Tyndall Working Paper*.
Reiss, D. 2023. "Kim Stanley Robinson: Science Fiction Offers Roadmap for Our planet's Future." New Hope Network. March 21, 2023. https://www.newhope.com/people-and-company-profiles/kim-stanley-robinson-science-fiction-offers-roadmap-our-planets-future.
Rimé, B. 2007. "The Social Sharing of Emotion as an Interface Between Individual and Collective Processes in the Construction of Emotional Climates." *The Journal of Social Issues* 63 (2): 307–322. https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1540-4560.2007.00510.x.
Rothman, J. 2015. "The Weird Thoreau." *The New Yorker*, January 14, 2015. https://www.newyorker.com/culture/cultural-comment/weird-thoreau-jeff-vandermeer-southern-reach.
Sargent, L. T. 1994. "The Three Faces of Utopianism Revisited." *Utopian Studies* 5 (1): 1–37.
Schneider-Mayerson, M. 2017. "Climate Change Fiction." In *American Literature in Transition, 2000–2010*, edited by R. G. Smith, 309–321. Cambridge | UK: Cambridge University Press.
Schneider-Mayerson, M. 2018. "The Influence of Climate Fiction." *Environmental Humanities* 10 (2): 472–500. https://doi.org/10.1215/22011919-7156848.
Schneider-Mayerson, M., A. Gustafson, A. Leiserowitz, M. H. Goldberg, S. A. Rosenthal, and M. Ballew. 2020. "Environmental Literature as Persuasion: An Experimental Test of the Effects of Reading Climate Fiction." *Environmental Communication* 17 (1): 35–50. https://doi.org/10.1080/17524032.2020.1814377.
Solomon, S., J. Greenberg, and T. Pyszczynski. 2015. *The Worm at the Core: On the Role of Death in Life*. London | UK: Penguin Random House.
Strombeck, A. 2019. "Inhuman Writing in Jeff VanderMeer's Southern Reach Trilogy." *Textual Practice* 34 (8): 1365–1382. https://doi.org/10.1080/0950236X.2019.1583684.
Suvin, D. 1972. "On the Poetics of the Science Fiction Genre." *College English* 34 (3): 372–382. https://doi.org/10.58680/ce197218271.
Tompkins, D. 2014. "Weird Ecology: On the Southern Reach Trilogy." *Los Angeles Review of Books*. September 30, 2014. https://lareviewofbooks.org/article/weird-ecology-southern-reach-trilogy/.
Trexler, A. 2015. *Anthropocene Fictions: The Novel in a Time of Climate Change*. Charlottesville, VA | USA: University of Virginia Press.
VanderMeer, J. 2017. *Borne*. London | UK: Farrar, Strauss, and Giroux.
Whyte, K. P. 2018. "Indigenous Science (Fiction) for the Anthropocene: Ancestral Dystopias and Fantasies of Climate Change Crises." *Environment and Planning: Nature and Space* 1 (1–2): 224–242. https://doi.org/10.1177/2514848618777621.