





EDITORIAL

Climate Fiction of the Anthropocene

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(Received 04 August 2025; revised 04 August 2025; accepted 04 August 2025)

Here and Now; The Need for this Special Issue

Humanity is collectively experiencing the Anthropocene, right here and right now. Human-induced climate change is catastrophically altering the relationships between Earth systems and human systems. The homeostasis of the whole-Earth ecosystem is dangerously off-kilter, with marginalised humans, other than humans, and more-than-humans most at risk as hydroclimatic volatility lurches us from floods to fires and back again in ways that forever alter our social and cultural (well)being. Some of us can only endure this repeated ontological whiplash for so long, while others are already enduring its most catastrophic effects. As environmental educators, we realise the role that education might play in supporting children and young people, with their adult allies, to learn to live with this climate change by radically altering the relationships that we humans have with our biotic and abiotic kin. First Nations Peoples and Non-Indigenous Peoples, whose presence on these lands is shaped by ongoing colonial occupation, must come together to learn from and with each other to realise such desirable futures.

In this Special Issue, we showcase contributions that explore the power of Climate Fiction (Cli-Fi) as integral to environmental education as a transformative force for good in the Anthropocene. The papers in this collection are in three sets, those that: *theorise Cli-Fi and its vital role in environmental education*; *investigate innovative interdisciplinary research that engages with Cli-Fi in the context of environmental education*; and *present Cli-Fi as creative practice-as-research in environmental education that involves rich and varied representational forms*. As a collective, the authors of these papers seek to extend, revise and challenge current notions of Cli-Fi as that between fiction and nonfiction, humanities and sciences, and through varied styles and substances offer hope for re-imagining education for the Anthropocene through/as environmental education.

What is Climate Fiction (Cli-Fi)?

‘Cli-Fi’ has been acknowledged as a literary practice for almost two decades, gaining currency as attention to human-induced climate change has accelerated (Goodbody & Johns-Putra, 2019). Reaching back before that time and looking forward — speculatively by definition — Cli-Fi has given rise to new forms of cultural texts that frequently, although not necessarily, disrupt existing genres and emphasise interdisciplinarity. Cli-Fi’s multifaceted textual forms include, among others: print, performance, theatre, film, games and visual art modes. These diverse perspectives on what Cli-Fi is — a unique genre, a subset of science fiction or a broad conceptual framework for evaluating cultural production and its effects on the climate and environment in the

Anthropocene — prompt a re-examination of fundamental disciplinary questions and debates around the power of the speculative within scholarship and educational frameworks.

Specific to Cli-Fi's positioning is the focus on the human-induced and xeno-induced catastrophes of climate change and, consequently, its narrative on what life on Earth has and may become. Importantly, these fictions interweave the structural inequalities and violences that are inherently embedded within human-driven climate alterations (Leikam & Leyda, 2017). Indeed, due to its future-thinking, it may be tempting to conflate Cli-Fi with Science Fiction (Sci-Fi). However, much of Cli-Fi does not adhere to the genre conventions of Sci-Fi, and not all Sci-Fi centres on climate change. While Cli-Fi considers future outcomes, it often grapples with notions of risk and the responses to it in the present. Mayer and Weik von Mossner (2014) refer to this as “the narrative of anticipation” (p. 13). In this sense, Cli-Fi is future-thinking and future-feeling but often through present conditions. It sits in the speculative space and time of anticipation and futuring. As Evans (2017) argues, Cli-Fi's multiple genre links, such as fantasy, mean that it is ripe not only to explore climate justice but also queer temporality. If Cli-Fi's future is linked to present failures, then current normative and exploitative social and environmental scripts are inadequate. In this sense, Cli-Fi can offer different futurities and ways of being. The criticality in this space and time comes from an engagement with present environmental and social conditions, and futures based on scientific forecasts. Therefore, it could be argued that Cli-Fi is both fiction and non-fiction, it is, at its core, *speculative*.

Rousell, Cutter-Mackenzie, and Foster (2017) consider the speculative as having “the capacity to inhabit new bodies, landscapes, and planets; propose radical changes in social and political organisations; and explore the very limits of human experience through graphic description and visualisation” (p. 657). They point to the speculative as a tool that can be harnessed within climate change education as a resistance to the traumas of the climate emergency. Alongside Gough (2008), they engage with the speculative through Deleuze's and Guattari's geophilosophy, expanding the conceptual landscape of educational philosophy and engagement. This fictional approach is what Gough terms “rhizosemiotic play” (Gough, 2004, 2006, 2007), arguing “that the binary opposition of fact and fiction is itself a fiction — a story fashioned to rationalise the strategies used by modernist researchers in the sciences and social sciences to produce facts” (2008, p. 338). As Mayer and Weik von Mossner (2014) point out, the fictional aspects of Cli-Fi “may ... succeed in making the various cultural, social, political, economic, and psychological factors ... more easily perceptible, intelligible, and concrete” (p. 23). Indeed, scientists such as James Hansen and Naomi Oreskes, as well as Erik Conway, who write about climate change, have included fictional sections in their texts to communicate their science in multiple forms (Weik von Mossner, 2017). In this scenario, Cli-Fi is a psychological, social, scientific and political engagement that grapples with the potentialities born from human-induced climate change in a storied form.

Evans (2017), Schneider-Mayerson (2019), and Pierrot and Seymour (2020) point to the inherent and unspoken privilege embedded within many popular Cli-Fi narratives, in which it is the “universal” white and wealthy — “the monolithic and flattened ‘we’ of *homo sapiens*” — whose lives are disrupted in the textual framework (Schneider-Mayerson, 2019, p. 2, emphasis in original). Existing inequalities between groups that are highlighted within climate justice movements have been ignored in many popular Cli-Fi narratives. Similarly, fictions around new dystopian worlds often erase Indigeneity altogether, expunging settler colonialism and environmental eradication from the narrative as if it never was (Anson, 2017). The temporal disconnect in apocalyptic language can fail to acknowledge “that the hardships many non-Indigenous people dread most of the climate crisis are ones that Indigenous peoples have endured already due to different forms of colonialism: ecosystem collapse, species loss, economic crash, drastic relocation, and cultural disintegration” (Whyte, 2018, p. 226). Gergan, Smith, and Vasudevan (2018) point to the apocalyptic conceptions within “scientific debates and cultural representations ... that escape specific culpability (for instance, in processes of settler

colonialism, capitalism, or imperialism) and instead center [sic] a universal human frailty that ends with triumph, a clear moral, and a clean slate” (p. 2). Pierrot and Seymour (2020) have looked to “other ways of composing climate change” (p. 107) by valuing Cli-Fi texts that incorporate the present effects of colonisation and slavery on future stories, alongside queer and trans stories, citing the heteronormative project of colonialism that polices singular sexualities and genders.

The hybridity of terms that can encompass Cli-Fi, as well as its multiple mediums, communicates the cross-section of its scholarly and creative reckonings. Within literary criticism, there is climate change fiction, pet fiction, ecofiction, solarpunk, ecodrama, the risk novel, Anthropocene fiction; in cinema and media studies, there is ecocinema, ecomedia, Anthropocenema, crisis cinema, climate trauma cinema and eco-trauma cinema; within the environmental humanities, there are media ecologies, petroculture studies and energy humanities (Weik von Mossner, 2017). Thompson (2021) adds to this list, naming Afrofuturism, Africanfuturism, Indigenous futurism, crip futurism, queer futurism, cyberpunk, solarpunk, ecopunk, hopepunk, utopia and ecotopia. These imaginaries that interweave hope, critique, reclamation, protest, guidance and warning, amongst so much more, have their own lineages, ideologies and approaches, yet can also be attached to the pluralities of Cli-Fi. Its transmediality and manifold genres present a variety of ways to “imagin[e] futurity” and “participate in the construction of social alternatives” (Evans, 2017, p. 99).

The intensity of the climate metacrisis seems to be too much of a psychological and economic burden for many to come to terms with. Storytelling, in its various forms, can make-felt and untangle the complexities that stifle action and change.

Why is Cli-Fi Important in Environmental Education?

Environmental education, and increasingly climate change education, has been and will continue to be concerned with imagining possible futures (Auld et al., 2023), both good (utopia) and bad (dystopia) (Everth et al., 2023; Ott, 2023). As such, Cli-Fi has a central role to play in our enactment of environmental education in ways that empower young people and children to engage in not just futures thinking, but also futures feeling (D’Avanzo, 2018). This is not just the consumption of Cli-Fi but, just as importantly, the creation and critique of Cli-Fi as part of understanding and re-imagining our world in radically different ways (Lindgren Leavenworth & Manni, 2021; Talgorn & Ullerup, 2023).

Perhaps most critically, re-imagining coexistence between humans and more-than-human others through Cli-Fi (Reinertsen, 2022) offers relational forms and perspectives on socio-ecological entanglements to be reconsidered in ways that also make possible processes of decolonisation (Rousell & Peñaloza-Cacedo, 2022; Williams, 2023) that underpin what intersectional environmental education ought to be (Walker & van Holstein, 2023). Cli-Fi, whether expressed through literature, interactive media, creative practice, performance or multi-modal storytelling, has the potential to enhance environmental education by making apparent the emotional and psychological dimensions of climate change. In this way, Cli-Fi as part of environmental education is all about “climating” and “becoming-climate” (Verlie, 2017, 2019, 2021); the stories we engage with contribute to our understanding and integration of climate change into our lives. These new vocabularies disrupt conventional thinking, highlight overlooked aspects and communicate complex experiences in ways that traditional forms may not.

We follow Ross (2019) and Stiegler (2013) in considering this role of Cli-Fi in futuring for better worlds as dreaming, but more specifically a proto-cinematic/arche-cinematic form of dreaming in the sense that we dream as moving images. To dream as a human is to create and play images in our heads and in our hearts. This is not to say that Cli-Fi as cinematic dreaming is restricted to film — although it certainly includes that form — for it includes all Cli-Fi media, with

the commonality that these fictions are dynamic stories. In this way, to think and feel about futures in/as environmental education is to dream in vividly narrative ways; in other words, environmental education necessarily involves Cli-Fi. To be clear, this is not Cli-Fi as simply a resource to be used and abused, but rather Cli-Fi as a way of being environmental educators. As students and teachers of environmental education, we must dream to realise transformative climate change education, and we must do so with an ethics of the unconscious that transcends humanistic assumptions of moral decisions based on finite discrete evidence.

In appreciating this intimate link between environmental education and Cli-Fi, we realise that environmental education needs to be transdisciplinary (Cabrera *et al.*, 2023) for us to transformatively dream, to embrace these fictions full of potential to change our realities. Dreams must be inclusive of diverse ways of knowing and being (Schmidt, 2023). Environmental education, and by extension climate change education, is not a discrete subject to be taught, but rather a way of doing education in ways that challenge the status quo. And so, to do education in this way is to dream, to embrace Cli-Fi in all its forms.

Following are the short introductions for each of the 21 manuscripts that comprise this special issue. We present the works in sections plus a review of a contemporary author — Tim Winton’s *Juice*, published recently as Cli-Fi. Authors represent works from across Australia and international locations such as Mexico, England, Denmark, Indonesia (Bali), Belgium, Austria, Portugal and Canada.

Theorising Cli-Fi and its Application in Environmental Education

The challenge and opportunity of defining Cli-Fi in relation to environmental education/climate change education is a complex and intertwined thread to explore, one which some authors in this Special Issue take up with much gusto. Each author frames the nature and implications of Cli-Fi in different ways. But all authors agree that Cli-Fi is a distinctive way to express and engage with our thoughts and feelings about the metacrisis that is the Anthropocene, and as such it can serve a potentially transformative role in education as futuring.

What is Cli-Fi? by Andrew Milner

Andrew Milner in his historical consideration of the meaning of Cli-Fi makes a very important point when it comes to such matters; terminology is key. If we are to really understand the role of Cli-Fi in terms of education and more specifically environmental/climate change education, then we must use our words wisely and with precision. In this way, Andrew proposes that Cli-Fi is intimately entangled with Sci-Fi; it is a sub-genre of this broader genre. The works of Kim Stanley Robinson are presented to show what Cli-Fi is in practice in the context of the Anthropocene (or Capitalocene, depending on your focus), as both “high” literature and “popular” fiction that may constitute important possibilities and perspectives for environmental education/climate change education.

Agentive Activity to Transform Cli-Fi into School Science Problems about Climate Change by José Manuel Ruvalcaba Cervantes

In working with three Mexican secondary biology teachers, José Manuel created a guide, grounded in agentic activity theory, which empowered teachers to engage with Cli-Fi in new ways in relation to science. By embracing the cognitive power of this guide, these teachers were able to transform specific Cli-Fi narratives into school science problems for their students. As such, Cli-Fi need not retain its original narrative form to remain as Cli-Fi, rather these stories can be acted on by teachers and transformed into objects of learning for their students. José Manuel makes clear in his paper that environmental education/climate change education can be made more

approachable for science teachers through framing it as material to be acted on and with, and not just material to be consumed.

How Did We Get Here? Truth-listening to Climate Crisis Through Reading Literary Works by Australian First Nations Writers by Joanne O'Mara and Glenn Auld

The focus of Joanne O'Mara's and Glenn Auld's explorations of Cli-Fi in the context of environmental education/climate change education is Anita Heiss' *Dirrayawadha: Rise Up*. They do so as self-identified settlers/invaders who benefit from the limited justice on stolen Land in so-called Australia. This positioning is critical as Anita is a Wiradjuri woman and her books (including *Dirrayawadha: Rise Up*) are first and foremost celebrations of Indigeneity and powerful literary forces for social/cultural change. The shifts between English and Wiradjuri languages by Anita in her book are revealed to transcend the limitations of English and its entanglements with colonial violence and socio-ecological crises. In other words, for Cli-Fi to play a revolutionary role in empowering teachers and students to relate differently with the Anthropocene, then Cli-Fi must be defined in ways that embrace diverse perspectives and foreground traditionally silenced voices, particularly those of Indigenous Peoples in the Australian context.

Cli-Fi as Climate Change Education: A Posthumanist Ecofeminist Approach to Thinking with Australian Cli-Fi Narratives by Chantelle Bayes and Hasti Abbasi

An important question environmental/climate change educators must ask themselves is: can Cli-Fi be a force for climate justice? Chantelle Bayes and Hasti Abbasi answer this question very much in the affirmative as they creatively and conceptually explore, through a posthumanist and ecofeminist lens, Cli-Fi as full of potential to disrupt the anthropocentric and patriarchal logics that have disproportionately impacted those who have least contributed to our current climate crises. Chantelle and Hasti thoughtfully engage with *Locust Girl: A Love Song*, by Filipino-Australian writer Merlinda Bobis, and *The Swan Book*, by Waanyi woman Alexis Wright, to outline the opportunities, particularly in the tertiary education setting, to realise Cli-Fi as so much more than simply a genre. It is a way of being and knowing in more desirable ways for the whole-Earth ecosystem.

Climate Across Genre: Hyperobject Reading and Evaluating the 'Use' of Climate-Fantastic Fiction by Rachel Fetherston

Human-induced climate change has a huge presence in our hearts and minds; it is at times overwhelming. In this way, it can be considered a hyperobject, and this is made powerfully clear in Rachel Fetherston's paper. Rachel engages with N.K. Jemisin's fantasy series *The Broken Earth* (2015–2017) and Jeff VanderMeer's horror/New Weird series *Southern Reach* (2014–2024) to explore "climate-fantastic" novels as particular expressions of Cli-Fi that activate speculative and fantastic possibilities. Considering Cli-Fi in this way paves the way for exceeding the limitations of Western-capitalist-colonial storytelling that get in the way of us realising more desirable futures.

Innovative Interdisciplinary Research that Engages with Cli-Fi in the Context of Environmental Education

Some of the authors in this Special Issue are motivated to explore and share the ways in which Cli-Fi is, and can be, specifically implemented in particular (environmental) educational contexts. Such papers that adopt a practical focus on Cli-Fi, as driven by a commitment to research-informed practice, are essential for showing what is possible in opening up radical potentialities

for changing practice. This is all about Cli-Fi as both the ‘object’ of research and a means to inform practice.

Save the Bees and Save Ourselves: Young People’s Cli-Fi as Normative Myths of the Future by Joseph Paul Ferguson and Peta J. White

This exploration of the pedagogical power of Cli-Fi concerning bee and human futures is situated within the context of Year 6 primary science classes in an Australian school. Joseph and Peta present an argument, based on analysis of student-generated bee Cli-Fi of various forms, that the students’ narratives serve as normative calls for humans to value and care for bees as kin. Cli-Fi is thus positioned as a highly expressive means for children and young people to exert their agency to demand that humans do much better in relating to bees as more-than-human.

Mashing It Up: Creative Writing Pedagogy and the Affective Possibilities of Genre Meeting Climate Fiction by Rachel Hennessy, Alex Cothren and Amy Matthews

In this project, first-year Australian tertiary creative writing students wrote Cli-Fi and then constructed exegetical reflections on their creations. These Cli-Fi writings were expressed in the form of dystopia/science fiction, fantasy/high fantasy, realism, horror, and satire. Rachel, Alex and Amy show through their analysis that while these young people mainly imagined the worst for the future through their stories, “mashing” Cli-Fi with other genres opened a richer range of eco-emotions than just despair. In this way, young Cli-Fi writers of the future are afforded opportunities to reconsider Cli-Fi as full of hope.

The Promise for Posthumanist-Cli-Fi: Writing With/In/For/As Stormy Worlds by Charlotte Hankin and Hannah Hogarth

Charlotte as an educator — in a school without walls in a jungle in Bali — creates Cli-Fi with a Gecko, while Hannah as an educator — in an early childhood forest school setting in an urban area in London — creates Cli-Fi with a Robin. In this work, Gecko-human and Robin-human strive to enable responsible and caring educational “pastpresentfutures” in the figurative and metaphorical storminess of the Anthropocene. These human/more-than-human entanglements emerge as essential to posthumanist-Cli-Fi as practice-as-research in empowering environmental educators to transcend the limits of humanity and celebrate the wisdom of more-than-human kin.

Reading Climate Fiction (and Non-fiction) through First Nations Cultural Genre Theory by Mykaela Saunders

Laying Down the Lore: A survey of First Nations speculative, visionary and imaginative fiction is an ongoing project by Koori/Goori and Lebanese writer, teacher and researcher, Mykaela Saunders. In her contribution to this Special Issue, Mykaela outlines her efforts to systematically document and celebrate First Nations speculative fiction and make evident the power of such writings for First Nations people to emphatically articulate the colonial violence of human-induced climate change. Mykaela’s work is an essential lesson in the power of First Nations stories to change hearts and minds through love of Country, and to this we must all be attuned.

Reworlding Together: Learning with Place through Cli-Fi Urban Role-Play by Troy Innocent

In reflecting on his involvement with *Reworlding: Cardigan Commons* — a Live Action Role Playing (LARP) event in Naarm (Melbourne) — Troy Innocent explores Cli-Fi as finding impactful form as gaming. The public participated in this neighbourhood-grounded game as reworlding, that is manifesting alternate social/cultural imaginaries in various potential forms.

Troy highlights that play in this way can activate Cli-Fi as embodied and material speculation, with the possibility to value Indigenous cosmologies that open up times and spaces of hope.

The Stories of “Plants for Space”: Exploring Intentionally Positive and Sustainable Futures by Frazer Thorpe and Kim Johnson

Shifting focus away from anxiety-inducing narratives that limit students’ agency and capacity for future-thinking, Frazer Thorpe and Kim Johnson explore the educational possibilities of Cli-Fi through the lens of *Plants for Space* (P4S), a transdisciplinary research initiative that uses speculative scenarios to reimagine sustainable agriculture in extreme environments. Through story-based activities, Sci-Fi prototyping and participatory design, the work introduces students to climate issues within emotionally safe, future-facing contexts such as lunar and Martian habitats. In doing so, it counters apocalyptic narratives with optimism and curiosity, positioning Cli-Fi as a vital pedagogical tool in the Anthropocene. By cultivating imagination, biophilia and agency, P4S encourages learners to envision alternative futures in which plants, people and technology coexist sustainably — on and beyond Earth.

Young People Speculating With and About Hope through a Life-Friendly Cli-Fi Roleplaying Game: Disrupting Environmental and Sustainability Education/Research by Michael Paulsen, Sara Mosberg Iversen, Mette Elmoose Andersen and Amanda Glob Nielsen

Engaging young people as co-researchers and co-narrators in roleplaying in which hopes and disasters combine in non-dystopian engagements is the focus for Michael, Sara, Mette and Amanda. The boundaries of environmental and sustainability education research are stretched as players imagine life-friendly futures. In conversation with the theoretical inspirations of the game — which are post-Anthropocene pedagogy, climate literacy research, speculative fiction and multispecies storytelling — the article discusses insights from the first prototype playtests. When the game flows it produces engagements with speculative futures and understandings of hope’s relational and complex character. This article explores the four playtests of the game and suggests productive ways forward regarding motivation, relational dynamics and spacetime-mattering.

The “Heat is On” — A Game to Envision Thriving Futures in a Climate Changed World by Chloe Lucas, Kim Beasy, Charlotte Earl-Jones, Nick Earl-Jones, Isabella Conroy, Andrea Hay and Jieming Hu

A game produced by the *Curious Climate Schools* programme which attends to climate communication, education and research with researchers from the University of Tasmania offers this role-play game. *The Heat is On* aims to shift narratives about climate changed futures toward an active, adaptation-oriented focus for young people (high school aged). Set in 2050, the game focuses on building decision-making skills necessary for town councillors when planning climate adaptation and resilience, envisioning climate-changed futures in which communities thrive. Explorations of diverse and cascading impacts of climate hazards that takes place on a fictional island called “Adaptania” are a key focus. In the presented case study, the authors showcase how one group of young people made decisions related to flooding, heatwaves, bushfires, inequality, health issues and economic challenges through the web-based game. The co-designed game develops learner agency with outcomes also related to educators and policymakers.

Speculating-With Other-Than-humans in Multispecies Climate Fiction: Canopy of the Hidden Alley by Antje Jacobs

Speculative fiction with other-than-humans multispecies Cli-Fi is a research-creation approach that combines artistic exploration with scholarly inquiry. *Canopy of the Hidden Alley* is a story that

emerged from the “Multispecies City Lab” project, a participatory research project that invited participants to imagine multispecies life in urban areas affected by climate change. The article discusses the potentiality of speculative fiction as a form of research-creation, demonstrating how creative writing enabled deeper engagement with issues of identity and positionality, social and relational hierarchies and the interplay of multiple temporalities, guiding towards new understandings of multispecies entanglements in the context of climate change and speculative climate futures.

Advancing Climate Literacy through Storytelling, Cli-Fi and Input from the Arts: A 2CG® Framework by Christina Merl

The transformative potential of the 2CG® method (Content- and Context-specific Generic Competency Coaching) in advancing climate education across disciplines, hierarchies and cultures is explored through this article. Case studies and theoretical insights, in a community of practice model, demonstrate how the approach deepens emotional engagement through imagination, challenges entrenched behaviours and supports the development of climate-responsive competencies. Pedagogically, this model cultivates the cognitive, emotional and dialogical capacities learners need to navigate complexity and contribute meaningfully to just and regenerative transitions.

Cli-Fi as Creative Practice-As-Research for Environmental Education that involves Rich and Varied Representational Forms

A number of the contributions to this Special Issue are creations of Cli-Fi themselves. These works do not simply represent climate crises but mobilise fiction as a *method* to unsettle dominant epistemologies and open new modes of learning. This Cli-Fi employs speculative techniques to imagine alternative futures, pedagogies or knowledge systems, with an emphasis on multispecies narratives, more-than-human entanglements and land-based ethics. Works like *Excerpts from Inbetweenness: Joanne and SPÁ,ET on Death and Hope* by Nick Stanger, *Clouds Running Out of Juice: A Special Podcast Episode Featuring Tim Winton’s Cli-Fi* by Rumen Rachev, Jo Pollitt, and Emma Nicoletti and *What Were We Thinking? A Climate Fiction Beginning and Ending, Told Inside and Outside and Backward and Forward* by Alison Neilson, Sevgi Aka, Dwight Owens, Julia Jung and Małgorzata Suś directly engage with animals, weather and ecological forces as agents in the storytelling. *Excerpts from Inbetweenness: Joanne and SPÁ,ET on Death and Hope* by Nick Stanger and *Speculative Documentary as World-Building: Contaminated Knowledge and Future-Making* by Cassandra Tytler both critique colonial logics, either by centring and respecting Indigenous ways of being or by unsettling purity narratives, fixed categories and hierarchical ways of organising life and society, while proposing ethical alternatives grounded in responsibility and accountability.

Contributions like *A CLiFi Zine Comic Harri’s Guide to Hippieness in Apocalyptic Heat* by Claire Bowmer and *The Stories of “Plants for Space”: Exploring Intentionally Positive and Sustainable Futures* by Frazer Thorpe and Kim Johnson model optimism as method, drawing on speculative design, perzines and Sci-Fi prototyping to imagine sustainable futures with curiosity, imagination and accessible entry points into climate thinking. Each piece experiments with form, from video installation to zines, podcast-writing hybrids to poetic-scholarly fragmentation. These compound formats reflect a shared resistance to fixity and a drive to represent the multiplicity of climate experiences and futures. As pedagogical tools, these examples of Cli-Fi offer generative approaches to learning, dialogue and engagement with very real futures.

Excerpts from *Inbetweenness: Joanne and SPÁ,ET on Death and Hope* by Nicholas Richard Graeme Stanger

Nick Stanger, as a non-First Nations academic, offers an excerpt from his hopepunk novel *Inbetweenness* that blends Cli-Fi, posthumanism and Indigenous knowledges to explore ecological storytelling and allyship in environmental education. Set in a near-future, *Inbetweenness* follows the interwoven lives of a settler academic, Joanne, and a black bear mother, SPÁ,ET. Through the use of SENĆOTEN, (the language of the WSÁNEĆ peoples), other-than-human narration and a refusal of settler-colonial tropes, the piece enacts a work of Cli-Fi literature grounded in land-based relationality and decolonial ethics. This narrative offers a counterpoint to apocalyptic framing, illustrating how Cli-Fi can be mobilised to imagine futures rooted in connection, accountability and hope.

What Were We Thinking? A Climate Fiction Beginning and Ending, Told Inside and Outside and Backward and Forward by Alison Laurie Neilson, Sevgi Aka, Dwight Owens, Julia Jung and Małgorzata Suś

This poetic and experimental contribution mixes mythic narrative with reflexive scholarly dialogue. Centring on the figure of Cassandra, a being entangled with water, fire, weather and grief, the work unfolds through episodic storytelling and interspersed commentary from the authors. The structure invites readers into a process of shared meaning-making. The work models how creative storytelling can offer ways to engage with complexity, emotion and more-than-human perspectives, positioning Cli-Fi as a vehicle for relational and affective environmental education.

Clouds Running Out of Juice: A Special Podcast Episode Featuring Tim Winton's Climate Fiction by Rumen Rachev, Jo Pollitt and Emma Nicoletti

Framed as a “papercast,” this work combines fictional podcast transcript, critical reflection and poetic fragmentation to engage with Tim Winton’s *Juice* as a site of atmospheric speculation. Positioned as a pedagogical experiment in creative non-fiction, it integrates climate science, creative writing and feminist theory to explore how weather and cloud imaginaries shape climate consciousness. It proposes a new approach to reading Cli-Fi that is intentional, critical and imaginative, aiming to reveal fresh patterns and insights. AI-generated listener responses inhabit the space between present and future, reading the cloud patterns within *Juice* the text. The work demonstrates how Cli-Fi can function as both method and provocation, unsettling dominant narratives and opening space for speculative inquiry and pedagogical possibility.

A Cli-Fi Zine Comic Harri's Guide to Hippieness in Apocalyptic Heat by Claire Bowmer

This visual contribution, presented as a perzine that reflects personal narrative through an auto-ethnographic methodology, captures a scene of children waiting for a bus in oppressive heat. The story points to the slow violence of a warming world. Its simplicity allows the weight of the moment to emerge without directly invoking crisis. The author evokes Solar Punk as a way to approach “pro-environmental behaviours” in young people. In this way, the piece shows how Cli-Fi, in the form of a low-fi perzine, can register environmental realities through the everyday, offering accessible entry points into conversations about climate futures.

Speculative Documentary as World-Building: Contaminated Knowledge and Future-Making by Cassandra Tytler

This written and video contribution challenges singular truth claims through the experimental video installation *It Will Not Be Pure*. Framed as a speculative documentary, the work imagines a near-future where healthy soil for growing vegetables no longer exists. Cassandra Tytler draws from research into soil health and the social impacts of erosion. She also examines masculinism and its entanglement with nativist ideologies in Australia. The work speculates on how these environmental and cultural forces might influence future communities and land practices. Combining documentary theory and narrative address, the piece interrogates purity politics in relation to land, food and bodies. It envisions a feminist space beyond hierarchy, where small communities live in synchronisation. As transdisciplinary creative practice research, the work uses speculative methods to disrupt epistemic authority, expanding environmental education into a space of critical, situated and imaginative inquiry.

Post-Anthropocene Provocations, Human-sized Scholars' Rocks, Cronenbergian Flesh Caves and Zen Garden Design Cues for a FUTURE PROOF Re(image)ining by Brenton Rossow and Darren Tynan

Brenton Rossow's and Darren Tynan's contribution blends speculative fiction, critical reflection and reimagined installation to respond to life in the Post-Anthropocene. Centred around the multi-modal project *FUTURE PROOF*, the work critiques digital overstimulation and the commodification of attention, while exploring the residual impacts of biotechnological and ecological collapse. Drawing on Cronenbergian aesthetics, Taoist philosophy, Zen design principles and machine-learning generated imagery, the piece proposes a constellation of fictional and material responses. Through playful world-building and an evolving Cli-Fi narrative, the work invites participants into alternative modes of contemplation that resist the speed, spectacle and distraction of contemporary life.

Cli-Fi Book Review

A Review of Tim Winton's Juice by Russell Tytler

Russell Tytler offers a review of the contemporary Cli-Fi novel *Juice* by Tim Winton. He starts by reminding us that "Tim Winton's novels often have a dark underbelly – an exploration of tussles with a landscape or seascape that is challenging but ultimately rewarding to those who know it and how to adapt." He adds that "Every Cli-Fi narrative work reflects underlying decisions about what aspect of change is in frame, about how much is explained in what level of detail, and about what themes are foregrounded. In *Juice* we have some very big and challenging themes." He elaborates . . . "*Juice* is a sobering, dystopian wake up call to both the implications and causes of climate collapse. It is a strong and frightening vision of a planet in crisis, and a humanity that, while resourceful and community minded at the local scale, has turned on itself at the larger, planetary-moulding scale. The nature of the climate follows the warning vision of the IPCC and the societal collapse premised on runaway, cynical industrial interests is plausible; a strong statement that we can take as due warning." Russell concludes that "All in all, this is a challenging but rewarding read by one of Australia's best-known writers at the top of their game."

Invitation to Read the Special Issue

Together, these contributions reflect the generative potential of Cli-Fi when taken seriously as an educational form. They explore how storytelling might reshape the frameworks through which environmental education is understood and practiced. Rather than offering solutions or didactic takeaways, these works dwell in complexity and uncertainty, prompting speculative and situated

engagement. Across forms and genres, they blur the boundaries between fiction and non-fiction, theory and practice, affirming the need for transdisciplinary approaches that are imaginative, ethical and deeply attuned to the more-than-human world.

Acknowledgements. The Guest Editors would like to thank the authors who responded so generatively towards the open call. We would also like to thank the reviewers who contributed positively towards shaping each manuscript. The ideas generated and shared are what move our field forward.

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