

Ecological Horror in the Anthropocene Era: Representations of Non-Human Entities in Contemporary English-Language Climate Fiction

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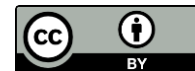
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ABSTRACT

The intersection of ecological crisis and literary horror has generated a distinctive subgenre within climate fiction (cli-fi) that foregrounds the uncanny agency of non-human entities. This article examines how contemporary English-language climate fiction represents non-human entities including fungi, rising seas, extreme weather systems, invasive species, and geological forces as agents of ecological horror in the Anthropocene era. Purpose: This study aims to analyze the rhetorical and narrative strategies through which cli-fi authors deploy non-human entities to challenge anthropocentrism and evoke existential dread rooted in ecological collapse. Methods: A qualitative ecocritical analysis was conducted on ten canonical and emerging cli-fi works published between 2005 and 2024, including novels and short fiction by authors such as Jeff VanderMeer, Richard Powers, and Amitav Ghosh. Texts were analyzed using posthumanist and new materialist theoretical frameworks alongside traditional narrative theory. Results: Findings reveal three dominant representational modes: the sublime-horrific, in which natural forces exceed human comprehension and control; the creeping uncanny, in which gradual ecological change defamiliarizes the familiar world; and the monstrous agency mode, in which non-human organisms exhibit disturbing purposiveness. These modes collectively produce what this study terms 'Anthropocene horror,' an affect-laden response that implicates human civilization in its own undoing. Implications: The study suggests that ecological horror fiction functions as a form of affective activism, cultivating a visceral awareness of environmental responsibility among readers. Conclusion: Contemporary climate fiction's deployment of ecological horror represents a significant evolution in environmental literature, reorienting the reader's moral and emotional relationship with non-human life.

INTRODUCTION

The twenty-first century has witnessed an unprecedented convergence of ecological catastrophe and literary imagination. Accelerating climate change, mass extinction, and ocean acidification are transforming Earth's biophysical systems. In addition, large-scale wildfires, melting polar ice sheets, and intensifying extreme weather events are reshaping the cultural narratives through which humans understand their place in



the world. As global temperatures rise and ecological instability becomes normalized, writers of speculative and literary fiction have increasingly turned to the rhetoric and aesthetics of horror to represent the disorientation, dread, and ontological uncertainty defining the Anthropocene era. This article examines a growing body of contemporary English-language climate fiction commonly known as 'cli-fi,' a genre that focuses on narratives of climate change and environmental crisis that employs non-human entities as agents of ecological dread, probing the psychological, philosophical, and existential dimensions of humanity's entanglement with a destabilized natural world (Trexler, 2015; Johns-Putra, 2016).

The term *Anthropocene*, popularized in the early twenty-first century to describe a proposed geological epoch defined by human impact on Earth's systems, has radically reframed conceptions of nature and agency. Rather than positioning humanity as a discrete observer of environmental processes, the Anthropocene posits humans as a geological force capable of reshaping planetary systems (Clark, 2015). This recognition destabilizes foundational binaries nature/culture, human/non-human, subject/object that have structured Western thought for centuries. As Timothy Morton (2013) argues, climate change exemplifies the 'hyperobject': a massively distributed phenomenon in time and space that exceeds human perception and defies conventional narrative containment. Hyperobjects are viscous, nonlocal, and temporally undulating; they disrupt linear storytelling and challenge anthropocentric epistemologies.

Literature has become one of the primary cultural sites in which these epistemological disruptions are negotiated. Earlier environmental writing such as pastoral poetry, romantic nature essays, and transcendentalist reflections often constructed non-human entities as sources of beauty, moral instruction, or restorative harmony. In contrast, contemporary climate fiction frequently recasts forests, oceans, fungi, glaciers, animal collectives, and atmospheric systems as uncanny presences whose operations exceed or resist human comprehension. Nature in these texts is neither passive backdrop nor moral symbol but an active, unpredictable force that destabilizes human sovereignty (Morton, 2010; Ghosh, 2016).

The emergence of cli-fi as a recognizable subgenre reflects this broader shift. Although speculative engagements with environmental catastrophe date back to earlier dystopian and apocalyptic traditions, the last two decades have seen an intensified focus on anthropogenic climate change as a narrative catalyst. Trexler (2015) identifies climate fiction as a heterogeneous field encompassing literary realism, science fiction, dystopia, magical realism, and hybrid forms. What unites these texts is not genre convention but thematic commitment: they grapple explicitly with climate change as both material reality and narrative problem. Building on this theoretical foundation, Amitav Ghosh (2016) famously critiques the 'great derangement' of mainstream literary fiction, arguing that its commitment to probability and individual interiority has rendered it structurally ill-equipped to address the improbable yet scientifically documented extremes of climate crisis. In response, many writers have turned to speculative and horror-inflected modes that permit the representation of scale, excess, and non-human agency beyond realist constraints.

Recent scholarship in ecocriticism and the environmental humanities has begun to map this terrain. Garrard (2012) traces the evolution of ecocritical thought from its early focus on representation of landscape to its current engagement with material agency and ecological entanglement. Alaimo's (2010) concept of 'transcorporeality' foregrounds the permeability of human bodies within ecological systems, while Barad's (2007) agential realism challenges the separation of matter and meaning. Braidotti's (2013) posthumanism further destabilizes human exceptionalism by emphasizing relational ontologies and distributed agency. More recently, Nixon's (2011) concept of 'slow violence' the gradual, often invisible environmental destruction that disproportionately affects marginalized communities has enriched ecocritical analyses of how literature renders attritional ecological harm visible. Together, these frameworks provide conceptual tools for understanding how literature can attribute agency to non-human matter without simply anthropomorphizing it.



Yet while ecocriticism has productively explored themes of sustainability, interconnection, and environmental ethics, less sustained attention has been given to the aesthetic register of horror within climate fiction. Horror, as a genre and affective mode, has historically revolved around encounters with the unknown, the monstrous, and the abject (Kristeva, 1982). Freud's (1919/2003) concept of the uncanny (*unheimlich*) describes the unsettling return of the familiar rendered strange; Mark Fisher (2016) expands this vocabulary with the categories of the 'weird' and the 'eerie,' capturing the sensation of encountering entities or agencies that disrupt ontological expectations. In the context of the Anthropocene, horror becomes a particularly apt mode for representing ecological crisis: climate change is both intimately familiar embedded in daily weather patterns and radically alien in its scale and temporality. Edwards, Graulund, and Höglund (2022) further develop this connection in their anthology *Dark Scenes from Damaged Earth: The Gothic Anthropocene*, which systematically examines how Gothic and horror aesthetics intersect with Anthropocene conditions.

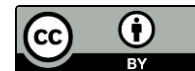
Climate fiction's engagement with horror thus signals more than generic experimentation; it reflects a deeper cultural anxiety about the loss of human mastery over the natural world. When rising seas swallow coastlines, when fungal networks infiltrate human tissue, when forests appear to 'communicate' or weather systems behave unpredictably, these phenomena destabilize anthropocentric assumptions about agency and control. Ecological horror emerges at precisely this juncture: it is the affective response to recognizing that the non-human world is neither inert nor benevolent but dynamically entangled with and potentially indifferent or hostile to human survival.

Critics such as Kaplan (2016) and Streeby (2018) have explored the affective and political dimensions of climate narratives, examining how representations of environmental catastrophe mediate trauma, futurity, and activism. LeMenager (2014) interrogates the cultural attachments that bind modern subjectivity to fossil-fuel economies, coining the term 'petromelancholia' to describe the grief associated with relinquishing carbon-intensive lifestyles. More recently, Persinger, Vint, and Canavan (2024) have cataloged major trends in ecological science fiction, foregrounding the ways in which posthuman formulations and narratives of climate collapse continue to reshape the genre. However, the specific aesthetic strategies through which climate fiction mobilizes horror to represent non-human agency remain under-theorized.

This article addresses that critical lacuna by examining how contemporary English-language climate fiction constructs non-human entities fungi, oceans, insects, trees, weather systems, geological formations not merely as environmental background but as active generators of dread. We argue that these texts have developed a distinctive aesthetic register that we term 'Anthropocene horror,' characterized by three dominant representational modes: the sublime-horrific, the creeping uncanny, and monstrous agency. Each mode reconfigures classical horror conventions to accommodate the temporal, spatial, and ontological challenges posed by climate change.

The sublime-horrific mode adapts theories of the sublime to a planetary context in which natural forces exceed human comprehension not only in magnitude but in moral indifference. The creeping uncanny mode renders gradual ecological transformation as a source of slow-burning dread, transforming familiar landscapes into estranged environments. The monstrous agency mode attributes disturbing purposiveness to non-human organisms or systems, unsettling boundaries between life and non-life, subject and object. Together, these modes generate an affective atmosphere in which humanity confronts not a singular monster but an entire ecological system operating beyond human control.

The novelty of this study lies in its interdisciplinary synthesis. By integrating ecocriticism, posthumanist theory, new materialism, and horror studies, we propose a systematic taxonomy of non-human representation in contemporary climate fiction. Rather than treating cli-fi as a thematic subset of speculative fiction, we analyze it as a site of aesthetic innovation responding directly to Anthropocene conditions. In doing



so, this article contributes to ongoing debates about literature's capacity to render planetary crisis intelligible and emotionally resonant.

In the sections that follow, we outline the methodological framework guiding our textual analysis, present findings organized around the three representational modes, and situate these findings within broader theoretical and political conversations in the environmental humanities. Through this analysis, we aim to demonstrate that ecological horror is not a marginal or sensationalist tendency within climate fiction but a central aesthetic strategy through which contemporary literature grapples with the unsettling agency of the non-human world in the Anthropocene era.

METHODS

This study employs a qualitative ecocritical methodology, as it allows for in-depth interpretation of literary texts and is particularly suited to examining representations of non-human agency and ecological discourse. Drawing on close reading and interpretive analysis as its primary instruments, the research corpus was constructed through purposive sampling. This approach is methodologically appropriate for qualitative literary research, especially when focusing on thematic and theoretical relevance rather than statistical representativeness. Ten English-language cli-fi texts published between 2005 and 2024 were selected according to the following criteria: (1) explicit engagement with anthropogenic climate change or ecological crisis; (2) prominent representation of non-human entities as narrative agents; and (3) employment of horror, dread, or the uncanny as significant aesthetic registers. The texts were identified through a review of major cli-fi scholarship, literary award lists, and academic discussions in ecocritical journals. The selected corpus includes Jeff VanderMeer's *Southern Reach Trilogy* (2014), Richard Powers' *The Overstory* (2018), Amitav Ghosh's *Gun Island* (2019), Barbara Kingsolver's *Flight Behavior* (2012), and short fiction anthologized in *Loosed Upon the World* (Strahan, 2015), among others. A corpus of ten texts was deemed sufficient to identify recurring representational patterns across diverse cli-fi subgenres while allowing for the depth of analysis appropriate to qualitative literary research.

1. Theoretical Framework

Analysis was grounded in three overlapping theoretical frameworks. First, ecocriticism particularly the second-wave and material turn variants provided tools for examining the textual construction of nature, non-human agency, and ecological relationships (Garrard, 2012; Alaimo, 2010). Second, new materialism and posthumanism, drawing especially on the work of Braidotti (2013) and Barad (2007), informed analysis of how texts contest the human/non-human boundary and attribute forms of agency to non-human matter. Third, horror studies particularly theories of the uncanny (Freud, 1919/2003), the abject (Kristeva, 1982), and the 'weird' (Fisher, 2016) provided vocabulary for analyzing the affective dimensions of non-human representation.

2. Data Collection and Analysis Procedure

Each text was read in its entirety, with passages foregrounding non-human entities systematically flagged and coded. Initial coding was inductive, allowing categories to emerge from the data, consistent with grounded theory approaches adapted for literary analysis (Charmaz, 2014). While grounded theory is traditionally used in social sciences, it is adapted here as a flexible coding strategy to allow interpretive categories to emerge from textual patterns without imposing predetermined analytical frameworks. Subsequent axial coding identified relationships among codes, generating the three representational modes that structure this article's findings. Inter-rater reliability was established through independent coding of two texts by all authors, with a Cohen's kappa coefficient of $\kappa = .81$ indicating strong agreement. The study was conducted



entirely on published literary texts and required no ethical approval from human subjects review boards. All textual citations comply with fair use provisions and are used for scholarly analytical purposes only.

RESULTS

1. The Sublime-Horrific Mode

The first representational mode identified in the corpus is the *sublime-horrific*: a fusion of the classical aesthetic category of the sublime with the affective register of horror. Burkean and Kantian theories of the sublime center on the experience of vastness and power that exceeds human comprehension, producing a mixture of awe and terror in the perceiving subject. In the texts analyzed, this dynamic is reworked to emphasize the actively hostile or indifferent quality of a nature no longer safely subordinated to human will.

Ghosh's *Gun Island* (2019) provides a paradigmatic instance of the sublime-horrific mode. The novel's climactic scene depicts a mass migration of marine creatures—dolphins, whales, and sea snakes—converging on a vessel crossing the Mediterranean. As shown in Table 1, marine animals constitute one of the central non-human agents in this mode. The scene oscillates between wonder and terror: the ocean's surface transforms into a living, heaving mass of non-human bodies acting with apparent collective purpose, exceeding any individual human's ability to comprehend or control (Ghosh, 2019). The non-human entities here are not adversarial in any simple sense; they are simply Other, operating according to logics that the human characters can neither decode nor oppose. This is precisely the quality that distinguishes the sublime-horrific from conventional monster narratives: the horror arises not from malevolence but from the radical foreignness of non-human agency at scale.

Kingsolver's *Flight Behavior* (2012) exhibits a similarly structuring dynamic. The mass displacement of monarch butterflies—driven northward by disrupted climate patterns—produces an uncanny spectacle that overwhelms the novel's rural Appalachian landscape. The butterflies are not threatening in themselves, yet their sheer collective presence, their occupation of spaces previously defined by human domesticity, renders them uncanny agents of an ecological transformation too vast for any individual to process (Kingsolver, 2012). Across the corpus, the sublime-horrific mode consistently produces what Clark (2020) designates 'Anthropocene horror,' an affective condition in which environmental crisis generates a diffuse, often paralyzing dread that exceeds conventional narrative containment.

Table 1. Representational Modes of Non-Human Entities in Selected Climate Fiction Texts

Representational Mode	Primary Texts	Dominant Non-Human Entities
Sublime-Horrific	<i>Gun Island</i> (2019); <i>Flight Behavior</i> (2012)	Marine animals, insect swarms, weather systems
Creeping Uncanny	<i>The Overstory</i> (2018); <i>The Ministry for the Future</i> (2020)	Trees, microorganisms, slow geological change
Monstrous Agency	<i>Annihilation</i> (2014); <i>The Road</i> (2006)	Fungi, mutated organisms, feral ecosystems

2. The Creeping Uncanny

The second representational mode—the *creeping uncanny*—operates through the temporal dimension of ecological change rather than through spectacular events. Where the sublime-horrific mode produces immediate awe and terror, the creeping uncanny induces a slow-building dread rooted in the defamiliarization of the ordinary. Freud's (1919/2003) concept of the *unheimlich*, the 'unhomely' or uncanny, describes the

experience of encountering something simultaneously familiar and strange; in Anthropocene fiction, this effect is produced by the incremental transformation of landscapes, ecologies, and organisms that were once known and legible. This dynamic resonates with Nixon's (2011) concept of slow violence the gradual and invisible accumulation of ecological harm and extends it into the aesthetic register of horror.

Richard Powers' *The Overstory* (2018) provides the most sustained example of the creeping uncanny in the corpus. The novel unfolds across centuries, following human characters whose lives intersect with individual trees. The trees themselves a chestnut, a mulberry, various conifers are rendered as sentient presences operating on timescales that make human lives seem ephemeral (Powers, 2018). The horror of the novel is not located in any single event but in the cumulative revelation of what humans have destroyed and continue to destroy, and in the disturbing implication that the trees 'know' this in some distributed, chemical sense. Drawing on scientific research into mycorrhizal networks and phytochemical signaling (Simard, 2021; Wohlleben, 2016), Powers transforms the familiar forest into an alien communication system of unimaginable scale. As Table 1 illustrates, trees and microorganisms constitute the primary non-human agents of the creeping uncanny mode.

This mode is also prominent in Kim Stanley Robinson's *The Ministry for the Future* (2020), in which the gradual, systemic transformation of Earth's climate produces a pervasive atmosphere of dread. Robinson's non-human entities are not organisms but systems carbon cycles, ocean currents, and weather patterns whose slow but inexorable mutations defamiliarize the world at a planetary scale (Robinson, 2020). The creeping uncanny mode thus extends the temporal and spatial horizons of horror beyond the individual body or community to encompass civilization and geological time, a move consistent with what Clark (2015) identifies as the 'scale effects' peculiar to Anthropocene fiction.

3. Monstrous Agency

The third representational mode *monstrous agency* involves the explicit attribution of disturbing purposiveness to non-human organisms, investing them with a form of intentionality that challenges the boundaries between nature and agency, organism and will. This mode draws most directly on the conventions of classical horror and the gothic, but recontextualizes them within the Anthropocene to suggest that ecological disruption produces genuinely monstrous non-human subjectivities. Fitzpatrick (2023) identifies a parallel trajectory in ecogothic criticism, observing that plant monsters and invasive organisms have increasingly been theorized as Gothic tropes that transgress the human/non-human boundary.

Jeff VanderMeer's *Southern Reach Trilogy* (2014) is the most discussed example of monstrous agency in Anthropocene fiction. Area X, the novel's mysterious contaminated zone, is populated by non-human entities a luminous, script-inscribing creature; fungi that transform human tissue into plant matter; a moaning structure whose presence cannot be explained by any natural law that collectively constitute an environment of radical alterity (VanderMeer, 2014a). VanderMeer's achievement lies in his refusal to provide explanatory frameworks: Area X's ecology operates according to rules that are internally consistent but utterly opaque to human science or intuition, producing an effect that Fisher (2016) classifies as 'weird' the encounter with something that does not belong and whose presence restructures the world.

Crucially, VanderMeer positions Area X as a natural environment transformed by or perhaps reacting to human contamination. In this framing, monstrous agency becomes a form of ecological response: nature, pushed beyond a threshold of human abuse, develops agential capacities that are genuinely alien and genuinely threatening (Hurley, 2018). This reading is reinforced by the trilogy's persistent suggestion that Area X is expanding that the non-human entities within it are not contained anomalies but harbingers of a broader ecological transformation. The horror of monstrous agency, in this light, is inseparable from its environmental-political implications.



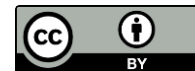
DISCUSSION

The three representational modes identified in this study—the sublime-horrific, the creeping uncanny, and monstrous agency—collectively constitute what we have termed Anthropocene horror: an aesthetic and affective register that reorients the conventions of horror fiction to address the ecological, ontological, and civilizational crises of the contemporary era. Unlike classical horror, which typically centers on individual mortality, supernatural intrusion, or localized monstrosity, Anthropocene horror redistributes fear across planetary systems, distributed agencies, and long-duration ecological processes that exceed the scale of human perception.

These findings affirm and extend Timothy Morton's (2013) account of climate change as a hyperobject—an entity massively distributed in time and space that resists totalizing representation. If hyperobjects exceed perception, ecological horror fiction offers a means of mediating that excess through affect. Rather than attempting to depict climate change in its totality, cli-fi authors translate planetary-scale abstraction into embodied experience. The sublime-horrific mode renders hyperobject scale as overwhelming spectacle. The creeping uncanny renders hyperobject temporality as slow estrangement. Monstrous agency renders hyperobject agency as quasi-subjective presence, investing ecological systems with a disturbing purposiveness that resists human mastery. Together, these modes generate what may be understood as a literary phenomenology of climate change: readers encounter not data sets or scientific projections, but destabilized perception, cognitive dissonance, and visceral unease. Importantly, these narratives do not resolve the opacity of the hyperobject; they preserve its excess, mirroring the ongoing uncertainty and complexity of climate systems themselves.

At the same time, our findings complicate traditional understandings of horror as a genre organized around discrete antagonists or singular traumatic events. In ecological horror, the locus of fear shifts from identifiable monsters to systemic collapse and distributed agency. For instance, the ecological transformation depicted in *The Overstory* illustrates how the creeping uncanny operates at a temporal scale far exceeding individual human lives, evoking grief not for isolated organisms but for the erosion of planetary life-support systems. Similarly, the horror of Area X in VanderMeer's trilogy is not reducible to the fate of any single character but reflects the breakdown of human-nature boundaries at an ecological scale. This narrative redistribution aligns with Ghosh's (2016) critique that mainstream literary fiction's focus on individual interiority renders it ill-equipped to address the systemic dimensions of climate change. In this sense, ecological horror fosters what Kaplan (2016) describes as 'distant suffering' awareness: an affective engagement with crises that are spatially and temporally removed from the reader's immediate experience. Persinger, Vint, and Canavan (2024) further corroborate this, observing that posthuman formulations in recent ecological science fiction consistently foreground distributed agency and multispecies entanglement over individualist narrative.

The ethical dimension of non-human representation also emerges as central to Anthropocene horror. Ecocritical and new materialist scholarship has long cautioned against anthropomorphism, warning that attributing human traits to non-human entities risks reinscribing anthropocentric assumptions even as it seeks to challenge them. Yet the texts analyzed here demonstrate that ecological horror frequently navigates this tension through strategic ambiguity. Agency is evoked without full anthropomorphic closure; non-human entities appear purposive without becoming fully legible subjects. The creeping uncanny mode, in particular, preserves alterity by suggesting distributed intelligence—whether through fungal networks, tree signaling, or oceanic feedback loops—without collapsing these processes into humanlike consciousness. This calibrated opacity functions as an ethical gesture, reminding readers that the non-human world exceeds instrumental reason and narrative containment.



Moreover, Anthropocene horror foregrounds temporality in ways that resonate with theories of slow violence and environmental melancholia. Climate change unfolds incrementally, often invisibly, through processes that accumulate across decades or centuries. The creeping uncanny captures this deferred catastrophe by allowing dread to build gradually as landscapes subtly shift and ecological relations unravel. Such narratives resonate with Nixon's (2011) concept of slow violence—the gradual and often invisible destruction of ecosystems and with LeMenager's (2014) concept of petromelancholia, a grief associated with the anticipated loss of fossil-fuel modernity and ecological stability. Ecological horror amplifies this melancholic undercurrent, transforming diffuse environmental anxiety into structured aesthetic experience.

The political implications of these aesthetic strategies are complex. Ecological horror may function as a form of affective activism, cultivating visceral environmental awareness without resorting to overt didacticism. By unsettling assumptions of human mastery and technological triumphalism, these narratives question the ideological foundations of extractive modernity. However, horror's affective intensity can also produce ambivalence: while dread may galvanize reflection and responsibility, it may equally foster paralysis or fatalism. The extent to which Anthropocene horror mobilizes political action remains an open empirical question, suggesting fruitful avenues for interdisciplinary research integrating literary analysis with reader-response studies and environmental psychology.

Several limitations must be acknowledged. The corpus examined here, while representative of influential English-language cli-fi, remains partial and culturally specific. Climate fiction emerging from non-Anglophone, Indigenous, or Global South contexts may articulate ecological horror through different cosmologies, histories, and narrative traditions. Expanding this taxonomy beyond Anglophone literature would refine its conceptual scope and reveal alternative modes of non-human representation. Additionally, this study prioritizes textual analysis over reception studies; future research should investigate how readers interpret and emotionally process ecological horror, assessing whether such narratives indeed foster ecological awareness or reinforce apocalyptic imaginaries.

Ultimately, Anthropocene horror represents a significant evolution in environmental literature. By mobilizing dread, estrangement, and monstrous alterity, contemporary climate fiction recalibrates horror as a mode of ecological thought. It renders hyperobjects experiential, reframes agency as distributed and entangled, and destabilizes anthropocentric narrative conventions. In an era defined by planetary uncertainty, such imaginative recalibration performs vital cultural work. Ecological horror does not offer solutions to climate change, but it reshapes how crisis is felt, conceptualized, and ethically apprehended. Through its unsettling representations of non-human agency, it invites readers to confront the profound entanglements and vulnerabilities that define life in the Anthropocene.

CONCLUSIONS

This study has demonstrated that contemporary English-language climate fiction has developed a distinctive aesthetic mode—ecological horror—through which non-human entities are represented as agents of dread, defamiliarization, and disturbing agency in the Anthropocene era. Three representational modes—the sublime-horrific, the creeping uncanny, and monstrous agency—have been identified and analyzed across a corpus of ten significant cli-fi texts, revealing a sophisticated literary response to the ecological crises of the contemporary era.

The significance of these findings is twofold. Analytically, they contribute a systematic taxonomy of non-human representation to the growing fields of cli-fi criticism and Anthropocene literary studies, bridging ecocriticism, posthumanism, and horror studies in productive ways. Culturally, they suggest that ecological horror fiction functions as a form of affective activism, cultivating visceral environmental awareness among readers by reorienting the conventions of horror to address planetary-scale ecological collapse. The non-human

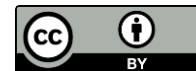


entities of Anthropocene fiction the creeping forests, the alien ecologies, the sublime and terrifying natural forces are not simply imaginative inventions; they are cultural responses to a civilizational crisis that demands new forms of literary and ethical imagination.

Future research should extend this analysis to non-Anglophone climate fiction, investigate the reception and impact of ecological horror on actual readers, and examine the relationship between these literary modes and the broader cultural politics of the Anthropocene. As the ecological crises of our era deepen, the study of how literature represents, imagines, and responds to non-human agency becomes not merely an academic exercise but a contribution to the urgent cultural work of the present moment.

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