

[Living and Dying in the Anthropocene: Responses in Contemporary Literature from the Western Hemisphere](#)

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A themed volume of AmLit—American Literatures, a journal produced by a consortium of eight European universities and based at the University of Graz, Austria. AmLit is an international peer-reviewed open-access journal for literary criticism in the fields of U.S. American, Canadian, and Latin American Studies. www.amlit.eu.

Guest Editor: Professor Brian Railsback, Department of English Studies, Western Carolina University, USA

"It is worse, much worse, than you think," David Wallace-Wells famously opened his bestselling 2019 book, *The Uninhabitable Earth, Life After Warming*, a holistic examination of climate change and the dire consequences of the Anthropocene: drought, fire, flooding, species extinction, famine, disease, climate injustice, government destabilization, mass human migration, war, and global economic collapse. Each year, signs of the rapidly changing environment abound with increasingly severe climate catastrophes and louder scientific alarms. With the developing environmental disaster, often called an existential crisis by world leaders, the human response has been too slow or even counterproductive, as United Nations Secretary-General António Guterres noted in a statement in conjunction with the latest distressing UN report in 2022, that major carbon producers are "adding fuel to the flames by continuing to invest in climate-choking industries . . . we are already perilously close to tipping points that could lead to cascading and irreversible climate effects." As we enter the Sixth Extinction, the confluence of impending disaster and debilitating inaction has created higher and higher states of anxiety throughout the world.

This special issue of *American Literatures* will explore the question: how has the 21st century literature of the Americas responded to the greatest crisis in human history? Given the broad implications of the Anthropocene, contemporary eco-literature intersects with many ideas: ecocriticism, environmental justice, ecofeminism, ecoethics, place, and ethnic—particularly indigenous—literature. This issue of *AmLit* aims to explore responses to the ecological disasters posed by the Anthropocene in contemporary fiction, poetry, creative nonfiction, and other relevant literary genres.

Contributors to this issue are invited to explore, but in no means are limited to, the following potential areas of examination:

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- Literary authors or works that reflect aspects of our present environmental crisis
- Reflections of the crisis through literary genres
- New directions in literary theory in response to climate change
- The emergence of climate change and vegan studies in literature
- New intersections of literature and science
- New ecocritical considerations of the nature of Nature: how the Romantic/popular notions of Nature have changed in the 21st century
- New reflections of environmental place and/or time
- New intersections of environment and race, gender, or politics
- New literature that responds to the environmental crisis with ways to cope or that suggests routes to salvation

Please send abstracts of 600 words or less via email to Dr. Brian Railsback at [brailsba\(at\)wcu.edu](mailto:brailsba(at)wcu.edu) no later than *May 1, 2023*. Questions for clarification are welcome.

For accepted abstracts, completed essay submissions of 5,000 to 10,000 words (including endnotes and bibliography) in completely anonymized .doc or .rtf-format should be prepared in accordance with current MLA style (9th edition) by **June 1, 2024**. Articles may include visual material, providing it has been pre-formatted into the text by the author and the necessary rights have been secured. *AmLit* cannot commit any funds for securing reproduction rights. *Only manuscripts in English will be considered*. After submission, the editors will transfer the manuscripts to two reviewers with expertise in related academic fields; the resulting reader reports will provide the basis for acceptance or rejection.

Submissions from scholars of all levels, including graduate students, are welcome.

For additional submission guidelines, please see:

https://amlit.eu/public/journals/1/_A_Instructions_for_Contributors_Update_June_2022.pdf

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