

Corresponding Author:

Ilenia Vittoria Casmiri
University of Ferrara Italy
csmilvt@unife.it

Author(s):

Although climate change has been considered as a strictly scientific concern, quantitative analysis of the current and future estimate of the damages of climate change has neglected alternative approaches to sustainability in the process. The humanities have given voice to contemporary ecological concerns through the genre of science fiction (SF) and more precisely through the subgenre of climate fiction (CF). CF explores possible future outcomes in which the relationship between ecological crisis and human agency is the basic assumption. The causes of the apocalypse and eventual adaptive strategies are investigated on a scientific and technological level without disregarding either the psychological texture of the narrative, or the relationship between human and non-human elements.

After establishing why CF is a congenial literary field for my analysis, I will focus on the definition of climate change denial and provide examples of key climate change denial arguments employed to convince the public and the media of the trifling nature of the current climate crisis in contemporary society will be provided, before moving on to detect the fictional representation of denial in *The Ice People* by Maggie Gee (1998)[2]. The world designed by the British author is a fertile ground for ecocritical reading of some of the most controversial topics of our times, including technology, fertility and feminism.

In the second part I will argue that climate change denial is the result of humanity increasingly alienating itself from the non-human world generated by the anthropocentric and hyper-technological society portrayed in Gee's fictional London. This ecocritical investigation will adopt the Biophilia Hypothesis advanced starting from the 1970s by biologist Edward O. Wilson and social ecologist Stephen Kellert. Biophilia, defined as the inborn affinity with the natural world that characterises human beings, will be interrogated in order to argue that the dystopian novel revolves around the overexertion or distortion of biophilic values such as Attraction and Exploitation. This controversial attitude toward the natural world could explain why denialists feel the urge to doubt scientific consensus on climate change.

[1] Adeline Johns-Putra, "Care, Gender and the Climate-Changed Future: Maggie Gee's *The Ice People*", in Gerry Canavan and Kim Stanley Robinson, *Green Planets* (Middletown, CT: Wesleyan University Press, 2014), 127 – 142, p. 128.

[2] Maggie Gee, *The Ice People* (London: Richard Cohen Books, 1998).

Post-apocalyptic dystopias and disaster studies: Crossdisciplinary perspectives on environmental challenges today