

Book Blog Assignment

Rationale. A major component of this course will be contributing to a class “book blog” in which you will write about a cli fi novel you have selected to read independently, as well as commenting on the writing of your classmates. There are two goals for this assignment: **first**, by giving sustained attention and thought to a longer text, you will gain deeper insight into how literary writing explains climate change phenomena and unpacks their environmental, social, and even moral implications. **Second**, by reading what your classmates have written about their chosen novels, you will gain a sense of the breadth of work that has been produced in the cli fi genre.

Assignment. You will be responsible for writing three different posts, responding to three different prompts, as specified below. We expect you to write as you read, and as such, your first post only needs to cover the first $\frac{1}{3}$ of your novel; the second will cover the first $\frac{2}{3}$; and the final will reflect on the book as a whole. Follow the assignment links in posted in Moodle to access the discussion forum for each blog post. Each post should be between 3-5 fully developed paragraphs in length and must be posted by 9am on the date due. After each posting deadline, you will have two days to read through your classmates’ posts and leave comments on at least two of them. Comments should be 3-5 fully developed sentences long and must be posted by 9am on the date due.

- **Book Blog #1 Prompt** (Post due Monday, 1/7; comments due Wednesday, 1/9)
Post: At this point, you should be approximately one third of the way through your novel (if not more). Based on what you have read so far, provide a brief synopsis of the book. What principles and/or impacts of climate change does it discuss? What seem to be its major themes? (Note: You need to do your own thinking and writing in response to this prompt. Absolutely no copy-pasting or paraphrasing of book reviews!)
Comments: Read through your classmates’ posts and identify at least one novel which appears to be similar in content or themes to your own, and one which appears to be very different. Compare/contrast these novels to your own, explaining key similarities and differences.
- **Book Blog #2 Prompt** (Post due Monday, 1/14; comments due Wednesday, 1/16)
Post: At this point, you should be approximately two thirds of the way through your novel (if not more). Describe one or more of the unique literary features of your novel, such as its perspective/point of view, its setting, its protagonist, its conflict, or its form. What kind of response does this feature provoke in the reader? How might it influence the way a reader thinks or feels about the climate change phenomena being depicted?
Comments: Read through your classmates’ posts on their novels and choose one which seems to describe a similar readerly response to climate change, and one which which appears to strike a different note. What do you think are the relative advantages and disadvantages of these different approaches to writing about climate change?
- **Book Blog #3 Prompt.** (Post due Tuesday, 1/22; comments due Thursday, 1/24)
Post: At this point, you should have finished your novel. Considering what you have learned from our readings about the causes and impacts of climate change, how realistic is your novel’s representation of climate change? Do you think the novel offers an

effective portrayal of climate change phenomena and possible climate futures? Why or why not?

Comment: Over the course of the semester you've read your own "Cli-Fi" novel, the posts on several other students' novels, and many "Cli-Fi" short stories, giving you a good sense of the genre. For your final comments, choose two posts to comment on, picking novels you have not yet responded to. Explain if, in your opinion, you believe each novel represents some of the common themes or conventions we've seen throughout this semester, or if you believe their novel diverges significantly from these conventions. You may need to look back at this classmates' previous posts to get a better sense of their novel. Justify your opinions based on what you have learned about the genre this term.

Grading. Each of the three post and comment sets is worth 10 points. Your grade will be assessed on the timely completion and adequate length of your contributions; the quality of your writing; and the depth of critical thinking represented in your writing. **Good posts** respond directly and thoroughly to the prompt; quote from the novel and include page number citations; and use links and images where applicable to bring in supporting or illustrative evidence. **Good comments** are relevant to the post they respond to (not tangential); insightful and specific; and courteous. For the purposes of this assignment, comments can be made in response to previous comments, rather than directly in response to posts--this is up to your discretion. If you wish to start a new thread in the conversation, however, please respond directly to the post.