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"Wellbeing for Whom? Neoliberalism against the Environment in Climate Fiction"

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The socio-economic environment in which climate fiction novels are produced and read influences their content. The three US novels discussed in this article (Jonathan Franzen's *Freedom* (2011), Richard Powers' *The Overstory* (2018), and T.C. Boyle's *A Friend of The Earth* (2000)) reflect the neoliberal political and economic agenda, which does not focus on human or planetary wellbeing. Current socioeconomic priorities contradict the possibility of a sustainable future, which is increasingly affecting the daily lives of everyone on the planet, and environmental destruction is at the core of capitalist production. The emergence of cli-fi and neocli-fi parallels the rise of neoliberal ideology, and I explore the influence of that ideology on US and other western societies. As I demonstrate, this extends to novels, the narratives of which either attempt to satirize capitalism or subscribe to the idea that there is no alternative to the system. The ensuing aura of complacency is antithetical to action. However, analysing contemporary climate fiction novels written in the US may provide a framework for understanding the popular attitudes when it comes to the social, economic, and political reality and the potential to address the environmental disaster. (Abstract)

2022 Teja Šosterič

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