

CfP: “Fantastic Climates”, Annual Meeting of the Association for Research in the Fantastic, Kassel, September 5-7, 2024

“Be worried. Be *very* worried” read the headline of a 2006 special edition of *Time Magazine*, referring to the ongoing environmental crisis: melting ice caps and rising sea levels, droughts, pandemics, mass extinctions, and global climate migration – a list that is far from exhaustive. Every year, not only scientists and climate activists but also recurring extreme weather events and environmental catastrophes remind us of the potentially apocalyptic consequences of our mindless exploitation of non-renewable resources and destructive influence on planetary ecosystems. As the greatest existential threat of our time, anthropogenic climate change has been a part of sociopolitical discourse for decades. Yet social awareness has not resulted in sufficient societal or political consequences necessary to change those lifestyle habits which have so far rendered us incapable of responding to the problem.

This vicious circle of apathy and resignation appears to be rooted in our inability to comprehend the ongoing climate crisis in its complexity as a multi-causal and -factorial process that exceeds the human range of experience. As a so-called “hyperobject”¹, the climate crisis is so “massively distributed over time and space”² that it defies human understanding and appears as a variety of seemingly disconnected events instead of one coherent phenomenon. Thus, it requires alternative ways of representation in literature, media, and the public sphere. In this context, the Fantastic, Horror as well as Science- and Speculative Fiction have proven particularly suitable for portraying the dire consequences of our actions, developing alternative futures, and helping us imagine the unimaginable.

We invite contributions on all forms and genres of the Fantastic and their engagement with climate change in the narrower and broader sense, regardless of whether they deal with literature, comics, film, television, music, video and board games, or (live) role-playing games. Papers can be submitted in German or English. Papers dealing with any aspect of the Fantastic can be submitted for the open track. We particularly welcome contributions from the following fields of study:

- ecocriticism
- cli-fi
- environmental destruction/ resource scarcity/ energy crisis in Fantasy/ SF/ Horror
- Fantasy/ SF/ Horror as a form of activism
- climate change in utopian, dystopian and (post-)apocalyptic fiction
- (eco)gothic/ (eco)horror
- plant and animal studies, non-/ more-than-human nature, biodiversity
- climate crisis/ -activism in children’s and YA literature

¹ Timothy Morton, *Hyperobjects: Philosophy and Ecology after the End of the World*, Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2013.

² Ibid.

- the Anthropocene
- trans- und posthumanism
- gender/ race/ class/ sexuality/ disability and ecology
- (post-)colonialism and extractivism
- game studies

Abstracts for individual contributions and panels can be submitted in English or German. For individual contributions, we ask for an abstract of 300 words and a short biography (150 words). For panels, we ask for a summary of the panel topic (300 words), abstracts of the individual contributions (300 words each), and short biographies (150 words) of all participants.

Please send your proposals to **gff-2024@uni-kassel.de** by **March 31, 2024**. Further information about the conference can be found at: **<https://www.uni-kassel.de/tagung-konferenz/gff2024/fantastic-climates>**.

The Association for Research in the Fantastic offers five travel grants of € 200 each, to help students, PhD candidates, and non-tenured participants with their expenses. Membership is not required. Please indicate your interest upon submitting your abstract.