

Contents

Acknowledgements 7

Introduction: Anthropocene Narratives and Affordances 11

1. A Theory of Anthropocene Affordances 33

1.1 Situating the Anthropocene: Between Continuities and Radical Novelty 35

1.1.1 From Cold War Epistemologies to Earth System Science 38

1.1.2 From Nuclear Discourse to Anthropocene Narratives 43

1.2 Affordances, Environments, and Ecological Change 51

1.3 Affordances and Scale; or, When Scale “Becomes a Matter of Concern” 57

1.4 Affordances, Aesthetics, and Narrative Form(s) 69

1.5 Reconsidering the Anthropocentrism of the Anthropocene 76

2. Narrating Global Climate Regimes 89

2.1 Writing Global Climate Regimes 89

2.2 Global Climate Regimes and Scenario Thinking 94

2.2.1 Climate Awareness and Global Climate Regime Formation 95

2.2.2 Scenario Thinking, Pathways, and Literary Methodology 100

2.3 Future Imaginaries and Scenario Thinking in Kim Stanley Robinson’s *The Ministry for the Future* (2020) 105

2.3.1 Shifting Modes of Narration: Scenario Thinking and Its Limitations 109

2.3.2 Forms and Formations of Knowledge and Experience 121

2.3.3 Narrating Climate Uncertainty, Infowhelm, and Information Dump 127

2.4 A “Realism for Our Time” 139

3. Narrating Civilizational and Geological Collapse 143

3.1 Writing Civilizational and Geological Collapse 143

3.2 Narratives of (Human) Extinction and Collapse 145

3.2.1 Geological Time, Extinction, and 19 th -Century Narratives of Decline	145
3.2.2 From Cold War Apocalypse to Contemporary Narratives of Climate Collapse	151
3.3 Narrating the Rise and Fall of Civilizations in Naomi Oreskes and Erik M. Conway's <i>The Collapse of Western Civilization</i> (2014)	158
3.3.1 Periodizing Collapse: The Failure of Western Knowledge Systems	160
3.3.2 Toward Decentering the Modern Human Subject	163
3.4 Decentering the Modern Human Subject and Engaging Geological Time in Dale Pendell's <i>The Great Bay</i> (2010)	165
3.4.1 Imagining Geological Change: Periodizing Otherwise	169
3.4.2 From Last Man to Lost Man Narratives	177
3.5 Toward a New Historiography for the Anthropocene	183
4. Narrating a Porous Human Subject	189
4.1 Writing a Porous Human Subject	189
4.2 Intersecting Porosity and Scale	192
4.3 Network Structures and the Limits of <i>Homo Sapiens</i> in Richard Powers' <i>The Overstory</i> (2018)	198
4.3.1 Scale, Network Narratives, and Modes of Perception	200
4.3.2 Porosity and Human Perception	207
4.3.3 The Limitations of Human Perception and Cognition	212
4.4 Fragmented Narration, Anthropocene Anxiety, and the Quotidian Anthropocene in Jenny Offill's <i>Weather</i> (2020)	218
4.4.1 Scale, the Fragmentary, and Modes of Refraction	220
4.4.2 The Quotidian Anthropocene and the Ordinarity of "Twenty-First-Century Everything"	225
4.4.3 Fragmenting the Scales of Climate Change Experience	232
Conclusion: Rethinking the Anthropocene as Rupture	239
Figure Index	249
Bibliography	251