



## Metacritic Journal for Comparative Studies and Theory

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**CFP: NARRATIVES FOR ECOLOGICAL AND SUSTAINABLE TRANSITION(S):  
TRANSDISCIPLINARY TRAJECTORIES ACROSS THEORY AND PRAXIS**

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**Proposal deadline** (abstract 250 words, 5-7 keywords, bio-note 100 words): **31 December 2024**

**Acceptance notice:** **15 January 2025**

**Deadline for full papers** (5,000-7,000 words for articles, 1,500-2,000 words for book reviews, 150-word abstract, 5-7 keywords, 3-5 theoretical references, 150-word bio-profile): **15 April 2025**

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**Metacritic Journal for Comparative Studies and Theory** is an open-access, peer-review, online publication for academic research, published twice a year by the Faculty of Letters, Babes-Bolyai University of Cluj, Romania. It promotes free-access for academic work and it welcomes authors who want to share their research and resources with their peers. It encourages, recognizes and rewards intellectual excellence in interdisciplinary and intermedial approaches of literary culture, visual culture and theory. The journal welcomes papers in English (or, for regionally oriented topics, Romanian) from the following domains: comparative studies, including digital and posthuman studies; literary studies, cultural studies, including social and gender studies; media and film studies, literary criticism and theory, cultural poetics.

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A discrepancy is visible today between the growing scholarly and media attention dedicated to environmental collapse and the increasing evidence of this crisis in our daily lives. On the one hand, the focus on global warming has risen significantly in recent years, extending beyond academia to include the public discourse, popular culture, infrastructure reforms, and school education; concepts like ecology, environmentalism, and sustainability have become mainstream in all of these areas. On the other hand, the practical effects of climate change—such as droughts, floods, glacier retreat, but also climate-induced migration, poverty, famine, and inflation—have

become constant reminders that (certain) human activities are profoundly and continuously disrupting the ecological balance at both macro and micro levels. Moreover, phenomena such as greenwashing, greenlighting, or astroturfing show how even seemingly ‘ecologically oriented’ initiatives can, in fact, hinder actual efforts to adequately tackle the issues raised by ongoing and escalating climate change.

These and other paradoxes within environmental discourse create tensions that demand new critical perspectives and tools: they should not only engage current emergencies on a *theoretical* level, but also achieve both short- and long-term *practical* outcomes, particularly in enacting sustainable shifts in social, cultural, economic, and political processes. Ecocriticism explores how narratives influence our perception of and responses to the more-than-human world, offering models of sustainable relationality and promoting actions that manifest (widely advocated) new ecological ethics. For example, one can consider discussions on ecopoiesis since the onset of the ecocritical movement, along the idea that poems can be the making of a dwelling-place (Bate 1991, 75). More recently, attention to the ecological impact on narratives has been expressed by emerging areas of study such as econarratology (James & Morell, 2020) and by many other approaches within the so-called ‘fourth wave’ of ecocriticism which illustrate that “‘academic ecocriticism’ is now spawning a new mode of ‘applied ecocriticism,’ encompassing behaviors and lifestyle choices (Slovic 2012, 619). The development of empirical ecocriticism in the past few years, as a specific branch of the ecocritical scholarship, also offered original ways to bridge the gap between theory and practice in the study of environmental narratives by evaluating the effect on audiences through both qualitative and quantitative methods (Schneider-Mayerson et al. 2023). Critics have also dedicated attention to the cultural impact of stories through the concept of literature as “cultural ecology,” which serves to “balance the typical deficits, contradictions, and deformations in prevailing political, economic, ideological, and utilitarian systems of civilizational power” (Zapf 2001, 93; 2016). Eventually, through the broader, interdisciplinary perspectives offered by the Environmental Humanities, significant effort has been addressed to investigate how narratives of different kinds—and their use in different media—influence individuals and communities (Heise, Christensen, & Niemann 2016; Hubbell & Ryan 2021). All these and other developments reflect increasing engagement with paradigm shifts toward post-anthropocentric and post-dualistic takes in environmental

studies, often intertwined with post-humanist discussions as a reevaluation of entrenched exclusivist and speciesist assumptions embedded in (western) humanistic thought (Braidotti 2019; Ferrando 2023).

This issue seeks to further advance this transdisciplinary research trajectory, aiming to explore the contribution of narratives—in the broadest sense, also involving different media and genres—in fostering cultural transitions by raising awareness within civil society and inspiring individual and collective behaviors in response to environmental emergencies, along two main ways: (a) by actively engaging local communities with different forms of textuality through (life-long) learning activities and workshops; and (b) by evaluating these actions through empirical, qualitative, and quantitative methodologies to study their efficacy.

This Call for Papers invites contributions from projects and research that seek to *apply* literature (Behim 2019) in innovative, interacting ways, while developing original models for evaluating their impact. While welcoming studies that pursue the empirical study of literature, we also invite approaches that focus not only on textualities but also on their development of activities connected to an array of disciplines: we aim to create a virtuous cycle between literary and cultural studies, intermedial studies, ecology, and eco-/green pedagogies, bridging theory and practice to develop effective strategies for generating knowledge to address the glocal manifestations of climate change on different scales.

Individual and collective submissions aligned with this topic are welcome, including but not limited to the following areas:

- Empirical Ecocriticism and Local Impact: How can empirical approaches to ecocriticism measure the effectiveness of environmental narratives in fostering behavioral change in local communities?
- Narrative Influence on Climate Awareness: What is the role of literature, media, and storytelling in shaping public consciousness and responses to climate change?
- Educational Interventions through Environmental Texts: How can educational/learning programs and other activities be informed by ecocritical theories to engage communities and inspire sustainable actions?
- Post-Anthropocentrism and New Ethical Paradigms: How post-humanist ethics emerge in environmental narratives and their impact on societal norms and values?

- Greenwashing and the Ethics of Representation: How are ecological narratives co-opted by corporate and political interests, and how can literature resist or reinforce these trends?
- Global Climate Narratives vs. Local Realities: How can global environmental narratives intersect with or diverge from local experiences of climate change?
- Eco-poetics and Activism: How can poetry and/or other creative forms both inspire environmental activism and reflect the complexity of ecological relationships?
- Measuring the Impact of Environmental Narratives: Which (new and creative) methodologies allow for assessing how literature and media influence attitudes, behaviors, and policies regarding sustain?

### **Additional information:**

Papers: Please submit a max. 250-word original proposal (abstract) to [stefano.rozzoni@unibg.it](mailto:stefano.rozzoni@unibg.it) that explains how you intend to approach the topic, how it is offered to a workshop and how the impact is empirically evaluated. Both proposals and final texts should be in English and should observe the guidelines as they appear on the journal's website: <http://metacriticjournal.com> for authors. The final submission should include: a 5,000-7,000-word article, including a 150-word abstract, 5-7 keywords, a list of references (only cited works), 100-word author's bio-note. Proposals and final submissions should be formatted as Word documents and sent to [metacriticjournal@gmail.com](mailto:metacriticjournal@gmail.com).

Book reviews: Please contact us ([stefano.rozzoni@unibg.it](mailto:stefano.rozzoni@unibg.it)) and provide us with the title of the book you intend to review, aligning to the topic of the special issue. The final texts should be in English and should observe the guidelines as they appear on our website: <http://metacriticjournal.com> for authors. The final submission should include: a 1,500-2,000-word book review, including a list of references (only cited works). Proposals and final submissions should be formatted as Word documents and sent to [metacriticjournal@gmail.com](mailto:metacriticjournal@gmail.com).

### **Further reading:**

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- FETHERSTON, Rachel, Emily Potter, Kelly Miller, and Devin Bowles. "Seeking Greener Pages: An Analysis of Reader Response to Australian Eco-Crime Fiction." *Australian Humanities Review*, no. 71, May 2023.
- FERRANDO, Francesca. *The Art of Being Posthuman. Who Are We in the 21st Century?* Polity Press, 2023.
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- SLOVIC, Scott. "Editor's Note." *ISLE: Interdisciplinary Studies in Literature and Environment*,

vol. 19, no. 4, 2012, pp. 619–621.

ZAPF, Hubert. “Literature as Cultural Ecology: Notes Towards a Functional Theory of Imaginative Texts, with Examples from American Literature.” In *Literary History/Cultural History: Force-Fields and Tensions*, edited by Herbert Grabes, Narr, 2001, pp. 85-100.

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