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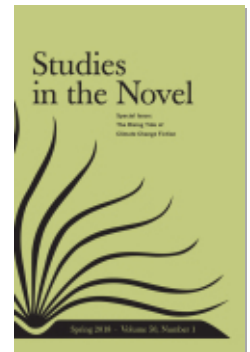
## The Hot War: Climate, Security, Fiction

Ben De Bruyn

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## THE HOT WAR: CLIMATE, SECURITY, FICTION

BEN DE BRUYN

Across a broad range of contemporary writings, the problem of global warming is explicitly connected to the problem of global war. In his pamphlet *An American Utopia* (2016), for instance, the world-renowned Marxist critic Fredric Jameson considers the present erosion of basic public services, the prospect of structural unemployment, and the loss of faith in traditional politics before concluding that the best way forward for American society is “the conscription of the entire population into some glorified National Guard” (29). This remarkable plea fits into a broader diagnosis in which “today, all politics is about real estate” (19)—that is, land and resources—and in which the best if not the most realistic strategy is argued to be “the wholesale seizure of all energy sources, the appropriation of the oil wells and the coal mines and the destitution of the immense transnational companies that control them,” especially, he adds, “in the era of climate change now upon us” (15). If we want to safeguard our collective future, in other words, we need to confront climate change and the best strategy to do so is to join a new “universal army” (25).

Ecology and security are also linked in the work of Roy Scranton. As he recalls at the start of his short book *Learning to Die in the Anthropocene* (2015), the destruction visited on New Orleans by Hurricane Katrina in 2005 reminded him of the time he drove into Baghdad in 2003 as a private in the US Army. The point of this parallel is not only that the chaotic aftermath of the Iraq invasion and the preparations for Katrina reveal “the same failure of planning and the same tide of anarchy” (14). Nor is it simply that bombs and storms burn away differences between cities (Baghdad and New Orleans) to reveal the same post-apocalyptic landscape. For his experiences as a soldier in the “damaged world” of Iraq also yield a crucial insight about life in the so-called Anthropocene (14). Our only hope for the future is to accept the end of our destructive way of life, in Scranton’s view, and all of us, even ordinary civilians, should therefore embrace a lesson at the heart of classic meditations