THE CLIMATE OF UTOPIA
Daniel Williams | Harvard Society of Fellows

> *You can't construct clouds. And that is why*
> *the future you dream of never comes true.*[1]
>
> —Ludwig Wittgenstein

Near the end of a changeful century, Oscar Wilde articulates how attempts at demarcating natural from artificial spheres leads one in circles. In "The Decay of Lying" (1891), one of the dialogue's speakers inverts the logic of mimesis to claim that Impressionist painting (rather than, say, coal-burning pollution) is responsible for the urban haze, the "extraordinary change that has taken place in the climate of London during the last ten years."[2] In "The Soul of Man Under Socialism" (1891), Wilde escapes the "unpleasant conditions" of London's "depressing East-end" by a related appeal to artifice. "A map of the world that does not include Utopia is not worth even glancing at," he muses, "for it leaves out the one country at which Humanity is always landing."[3] In the first statement, artistic representation (painting) acts as a cipher for humanity's artificial incursion into natural systems (pollution); in the second, imaginative artifice works as an escape hatch from the dreary cartography of the real. We painted this climate; we can map another society.

Or can we? What happens to the artifices of utopia when they are imaginatively tethered to a climate and environment increasingly marked by human hands? Conversely, does humanity's growing environmental manufacture change how we read the background details of utopian visions? Since Thomas More's *Utopia* (1516), climatic details and environmental conditions have been a standard (if background) feature of speculative fiction. Whether the climate of nowhere is harsh or benign, naturally cornucopian or technologically productive, its features shape what Fredric Jameson nominates the "desire called utopia": its formal constraints apply no matter the concrete political program.[4] Conversely, climate and environmental science and their nineteenth-century forebears (physical geography, climatography) have often appealed to utopian conceits:

envisioning ideal regions; establishing the parameters of climate models; or assessing the im/practicality of weather interventions.[5] Scientific discourses and their science fiction kin share an interest in the environmental conditions that shape our real and imagined maps of social life.

This chapter argues that an engagement with form subtends the deep-seated connection between utopian and climate discourses, and it excavates in detail the formal tensions—spatiotemporal descriptors and landscape features as well as affective and figural elements—that characterize late Victorian literary romances.[6] Utopias from roughly Edward Bulwer-Lytton's *The Coming Race* (1871) to H. G. Wells's *A Modern Utopia* (1905) emerge in an age marked by cyclic agricultural depression and a dawning awareness of resource scarcity.[7] As John Ruskin's vociferous attacks on political economy in *Unto this Last* (1862) took on a proto-ecological cast in *Fors Clavigera* (1871–84); as George Perkins Marsh warned, in *Man and Nature* (1864), of the "dangers of imprudence and the necessity of caution in all operations which, on a large scale, interfere with the spontaneous arrangements of the organic or inorganic world"; and as William Stanley Jevons pondered the timeline for Britain's fossil fuel exhaustion in *The Coal Question* (1865), literary utopias imagined afresh that "country at which Humanity is always landing."

These late Victorian texts reprise a tension in the utopian tradition between adjustment to, and technical modification of, environmental limits. The first section traces these tropes of "resilience" and "renovation," as I term them, back to Thomas More and Francis Bacon, and assesses their adoption in utopian and environmental discourses from the early nineteenth century on. I sketch two general assumptions that guide the chapter's more detailed readings: that we can evaluate literary utopias for the enduring interest of their climatic and environmental features, even where their politics seem dated; and that an emphasis on these aspects of the literary tradition affords a critique of climate discourse in its more utopian guises. Representations of utopia remain

useful not for their technological or agrarian fantasies but because their formal contours advertise the links between mapping climates and modeling societies, between climate and social form.[8]

Subsequent sections examine Richard Jefferies's *After London* (1885) and William Morris's *News from Nowhere* (1891), which respectively make visible the spatial and temporal constraints of imagining utopias in relation to ecological factors. Both can be read to dramatize, with different emphases, the tensions between adaptive resilience and ingenious renovation. In Jefferies, the vision of a post-apocalyptic "Wild England" mines a tension between succumbing to the determinative influences of environment and shaping or exploiting landscape features for strategic purposes. *After London*'s dual structure evinces the uneasy coexistence of both environmental necessity and human contingency, in a vision where "ecological boundaries" make themselves felt precisely as humans attempt to ignore or exceed them. In Morris, the oblique, displaced representation of climatic effects echoes the deferred premonitions of a work shortage that would end sunny Nowhere's ethos of pleasurable labor. *News from Nowhere* hints at the structuring anxiety, the "seasonal affect," of static or resilient utopias: their inability to cement the present and avoid future thinking. It reveals, in turn, the broader sense in which utopian thinking may be as much a matter of ambience and affect as of concrete arrangements.

Parameters of Paradise: Utopian Climates, Climate Utopias

In offering an overview of the utopian elements in contemporary climate thinking, and a speculative genealogy for such elements in the literary tradition, I resort to two terms that are, admittedly, more contemporary than historical. The axis of "resilience" refers to the ability of a system—whether ecological or social—to withstand undue constraints on its usual functioning. The term implies both flexibility, in that a system might 'bounce back' after shock or stress, but also a certain robustness, in that unrelenting pressures could be tantamount to a permanent

distortion. In contemporary parlance, resilience is associated with envisioning "adaptation" and "mitigation" strategies for large-scale environmental change. The term is allied with visions of "sustainability" and "degrowth," but its reactive character can also imply inertia and need not assume the predictable ordering of any future state of affairs.[9] By contrast, "renovation" takes for granted the malleability of systems by artificial or technical means, proposing modifications to offset the consequences of current arrangements without necessarily altering their understructure. While recognizing the risks of technical interference in environmental systems, renovation places its faith in the linked forward movement of engineering prowess and socioeconomic progress. These terms have a formal relation to time that will become important in what follows: renovation works to intensify or outpace temporality, where resilience acts as a bulwark against it.

In emphasizing limits, peaks, and boundaries, the conversation about climate change has been recast along resilience lines. The pioneering work of Johan Rockström (and his colleagues at Stockholm's "Resilience Institute") stipulates, and attempts to quantify, several "planetary boundaries" the transgression of which "could destabilize critical biophysical systems and trigger abrupt or irreversible environmental changes that would be deleterious or even catastrophic for human well-being."[10] This concept reconfigures the open-ended discourse of climate change into a delimited discourse based on ecological economics and earth system sciences. In the first, we hear about inexorable change, runaway emissions, and unstoppable extinctions; we are confronted with the daunting uptick of linear graphs. In the second, we hear about boundary conditions that determine, and in theory render imaginable, the "safe operating space" for humans on this planet; these are accompanied by polar graphs that, while no less daunting in sketching "dangerous" thresholds and "tipping points" for earth systems, at least model conceivable limits.[11] While the planetary boundaries concept does not invoke utopia, its presentation of ideal ("safe") biophysical

and social entanglement, and responsible human leadership ("stewardship"), builds on a normative vision that is typical of utopian imaginaries. Indeed, resilience thinking issues from an implicitly prescriptive ecosystem discourse, from texts like *Patient Earth* (1971), *The Limits to Growth* (1972), and *Environment and Utopia* (1977) to recent sustainability discussions.[12]

The axis of "renovation," by contrast, often steers close to science fiction. Given the impending climate catastrophe, scientists and policymakers have been advocating for methods whereby we might manipulate specific climate parameters: releasing reflective aerosols into the stratosphere, for instance, to mimic the global cooling effect of large volcanic eruptions; or sequestering carbon from the atmosphere by means of artificial "trees" and "leaves."[13] Variously termed "geoengineering," "ecohacking," and "terraforming," these ideas routinely draw on the technological imaginary of utopian (and other) literature, although often without engaging the cautionary message of stories about Promethean ambitions.[14] The Anthropocene itself has been seen as a trope of science fiction, with humans shaping the planet to their ends.[15]

Between these two axes, a more general reflex in scientific and economic discourse about the climate uses "utopian" to name a fanciful or infeasible policy.[16] Such moves may only be reaching for the right dismissive synonym, but they still underline the haunting presence of utopian thinking—whether explicitly invoked or implicitly adopted—in climate discourse. If "utopia" names a type of program that eschews the terrain of prediction, calculation, and political gradualism, it is precisely such an unpredictable nowhere that needs to remain in imaginative view, as the limit marked out by both climate-as-usual inaction and the hubris of climate engineering. In social science and climate discourses, fictional utopias have been taken as overlooked resources for assessing the climate predicament and its possible solutions in terms of equity and sustainability, just as dystopias serve rhetorically to warn against dire emissions scenarios.[17]

The axes of resilience and renovation—of sustainable adaptation to, or radical intervention in, environmental conditions—can be detected from the outset of the utopian tradition in literature. Although More's *Utopia* is the result of landscape engineering, which produces the crescent island and its calm harbor "like an enormous, smooth, unruffled lake," the typical attitude of Utopians to their "not particularly favorable" climate is one of resilience.[18] In agriculture, urban architecture, house design, water management, and sanitation, they make adaptations within certain determining conditions. Their capital is "favorably situated on a mountainside," their streets "laid out to facilitate traffic and to offer protection from the wind," and through "signs that they have perceived from long observation they predict rainstorms, winds, and other changes in the weather."[19] A repeated phrase—"insofar as the terrain allows"—marks the boundaries of *Utopia*.[20] Pride is not present in More's world, which might preclude the hubris associated with weather control and its mythical forebears (Prometheus, Phaethon).[21] Francis Bacon's *New Atlantis* (1627), by contrast, is less interested in environmental givens than in the scientific renovation of nature in all its aspects. The island-state of Bensalem is run by experimenters who would usurp divine power: "Salomon's House" dedicates large resources and many "Fellows," in its underground "caves" and hilltop "towers," to manipulation of plants, animals, materials, landscapes, and even physical phenomena like sound and light.[22] For weather intervention, they have "engines for multiplying and enforcing of winds," as well as "great and spacious houses, where we imitate and demonstrate meteors; as snow, hail, rain, some artificial rains of bodies and not of water, thunders, lightnings."[23] In "orchards and gardens" their "trees and flowers [are made] to come earlier or later than their seasons; and to come up and bear more speedily than by their natural course they do."[24] Experimental manipulation is its own end—"the enlarging of the bounds of Human Empire, to the effecting of all things possible"—and this utopia's achievements occur repeatedly "by art."[25]

The works of More and Bacon were objects of renewed interest in the Victorian period, and their influence can be detected in utopian as well as environmental writing. There were new editions of *Utopia* (including an 1893 edition by Morris's Kelmscott Press, with an introduction by him, and an 1895 critical edition by J. H. Lupton), and a scholarly collection of Bacon's scientific works edited by James Spedding and Robert Leslie Ellis (1857–59). In a telling juxtaposition of historical and imaginative utopias, both were included in Henry Morley's *Ideal Commonwealths* (1885), along with Plutarch's *Lycurgus*, Tommaso Campanella's *City of the Sun*, and a fragment of Joseph Hall's *Mundus Alter et Idem*. In the literature of travel and description leading out from the New World discourse that was More's context, an acceptance of natural variability often encouraged speculations on the model climatic range for human flourishing. These ideas, however problematic, become standard in utopian geographies. In a poem about his plan with Robert Southey for an American utopia, Samuel Taylor Coleridge imagines "other climes / Where dawns, with hope serene, a brighter day / Than e'er saw Albion in her happiest times."[26] The beneficial relocation of utopias to the moon and sun started by Francis Godwin's *The Man in the Moone* (1635), Johannes Kepler's *Somnium* (1634), and Campanella's *City of the Sun* (1623) continues into the Victorian period with Sydney Whiting's *Heliondé* (1855) and John Russell's *Adventures in the Moon, and Other Worlds* (1836). Utopias on Mars and other planets benefit from ideal climates (Edward Mortimer's *Transmigration* [1874]) or abundance aided by technology (Hugh MacColl's *Mr. Stranger's Sealed Packet* [1889]). There are utopias at the poles; above the atmosphere (Gilbert à Beckett's *In the Clouds* [1873]); and beneath the earth's surface (Ellis James Davis's *Myrna: A Commune; or, Under the Ice* [1875]).[27]

In Bacon's lineage, ideal climates ore regions are less assumed than manufactured, often by means of "massive and heroic efforts to terraform a planet or geoengineer its basic physical or

biophysical systems."[28] This tradition includes techno-utopias like Samuel Butler's *Erewhon* (1872) and H. G. Wells's *The Time Machine* (1895), and no less dramatic fictional representations of climate control, like Jules Verne's *De la terre à la lune* (1865), *Sans dessus dessous* (1889), Mark Twain's *The American Claimant* (1892), and George Griffith's *The Great Weather Syndicate* (1906).[29] In Bulwer-Lytton's *The Coming Race* (1871), one operation of the energy-substance "vril" allows the novel's subterranean civilization to "influence the variations of temperature—in plain words, the weather."[30] Walter Besant's *An Inner House* (1888) likewise describes a future society whose "socialism" is underwritten by a medical advance (about which Bacon openly speculated) that suspends natural death.[31] Besant's highly regulated system benefits from a vast greenhouse that obviates the need for seasonal precarity:

> All the year round it furnishes, in quantities sufficient for all our wants, an endless supply of fruit […]. In the old times we were dependent upon the changes and chances of a capricious and variable climate. Now, not only has the erection of these vast houses made us independent of summer and winter, but the placing of much grass and corn land under glass has also assured our crops and secured us from the danger of famine.[32]

This "enormous Palace of glass" is in Canterbury, the famous endpoint of Chaucer's seasonal pilgrimage, marking an ironic connection between Besant's world and both climatic and literary tradition.[33] There is neither anxiety nor hope in this society because there is no seasonality. Such fantasies both draw on and inspire Baconian schemes that would furnish perfect regional climates by artificial methods, from Thomas Jefferson's vision of an American climate ameliorated by agriculture through cloud seeding experiments of the twentieth century.[34]

Early modern English utopias evinced the possibilities of environmental influence or control in a more flexible way than the climatic determinism seen in political theorists from Machiavelli and Jean Bodin through Montesquieu.[35] More and Bacon model a spectrum of options, picked up in different ways across the utopian tradition, that highlight an interplay between adaptation and alteration: in the eighteenth-century tension between utopias of agrarian stasis and

technological change, for instance; and later in the fin-de-siècle division between static romances and proto-SF visions of machine-enhanced worlds, or what Wells called "kinetic" utopias.[36] This spectrum from resilience to renovation offers formal possibilities as well as environmental constraints, and it is in this sense that it situates the readings that follow.

Climate After London: Jefferies and Boundary Ecology

Richard Jefferies's *After London* comprises two parts: a detached relation of ecological and social transformation after an unexplained cataclysm referred to simply as "the change" (11); and a focalized account of the travails of a nobleman's son in a suddenly "Wild England."[37] Joining these stylistically disparate parts, my reading will suggest, are formal similarities that stress how physical parameters and ecological boundaries variously shape the possibilities of social activity. In Part I, these conditions range from macro-features of terrain and climate to details of natural ecosystems. Jefferies's systematic descriptions of another world imply the belief that natural explanation (as against supernatural speculation) accounts for both the catastrophic processes reshaping the landscape and the conditions of its rejuvenated, though markedly different, environment. In Part II, knowledge of environmental boundaries put in service of strategic thinking vaults the ambitious but uncertain Felix Aquila—too restless for agriculture; too imaginative for feudal realpolitik—to a position of power over one landscape and its inhabitants. Yet Felix's near-fatal sojourn through the toxic ruins of London also shows how the natural world sounds a cautionary note to those aiming at power through environmental control. Whether by means of passive naturalist description or the agencies of romance, the "boundary ecology" of *After London* divides attention between environmental limits and the transgression of such limits by human ingenuity. Abjuring the type of static, medieval-agrarian utopia that Morris—responding to *After London*—will offer, Jefferies steers a middle course between Morean and Baconian impulses to

sketch a complex portrait of venal humanity shaped by yet eager to control its environment, despite reminders of its scalar irrelevance and prior historical blunders.[38]

After London's short first part, "The Relapse into Barbarism," details the seasonal and selective pressures that efface traces of human activity and return England to "an immense forest" (3). Starting off-center, in a natural history mode that records passively "related" (10) changes to the landscape, Jefferies at once displaces human predicaments and establishes as primary the physical conditions within which social structures reemerge: "It became green everywhere in the first spring, after London ended, so that all the country looked alike" (1). The work of one seasonal cycle lengthens to decades through which paths, roads, cropland, and dams are overgrown, leaving "not one single open place, the hills only excepted, where a man could walk, unless he followed the tracks of wild creatures or cut himself a path" (3). Without human interference, wild plants— "docks and thistles, sorrel, wild carrots, and nettles," "thorns, briars, brambles" (2, 3)—return in force. Wild animals—mice, weasels, foxes, hawks, owls—run rampant, feeding on agricultural stores, whereas domestic animals die out through "the inability to endure exposure" (10), or gradually morph into new species for which Jefferies gives extensive, dry taxonomies. Notably, of former captive animals only a species that engineers its environment survives: the beaver, "whose dams are now occasionally found upon the streams by those who traverse the woods" (14).

Part I replays in a more forbidding key the observations of Jefferies's naturalist essays, published in various periodicals and collected in *Round About a Great Estate* (1880), *Nature Near London* (1883), and *Field and Hedgerow* (1889). Jefferies risks narrative flow by trying to dramatize slow-motion processes: growth, erosion, siltation, natural selection: the long and locking trails of environmental causation. Whatever the narrative wrests back to human dimensions is eclipsed, in turn, by geological and evolutionary scales.[39] The crucial shaping force in this

landscape is a large geographic feature, the Lake that has spilled into the central terrain of "Wild England," leaving swathes of land surrounding it up to the coastlines, and causing "many villages and towns that anciently existed along the rivers, or on the lower lands adjoining, [to be] concealed by the water and the mud it brought with it" (4). Speculating on the change that gives rise to the Lake, Jefferies's narrator emphasizes observable causes and distinguishes his account from that of a source who posits the magnetic influence of an "Unknown Orb" (17) passing by the earth. In difference from earlier utopias, there is no theodicy here, no appeal to providential or supernatural explanation for environmental features. With regard to the Lake's formation, the narrator dismisses the idea "that the passage of the dark body through space caused an immense volume of fresh water to fall in the shape of rain, and also that the growth of the forests distilled rain from the clouds" (35), appealing instead to oral history, written record, and meteorological evidence: "there is no tradition among the common people, who are extremely tenacious of such things, of any great rainfall, nor is there any mention of floods in the ancient manuscripts, nor is there any larger fall of rain now than was formerly the case" (35).[40] In fact, "the Lake itself tells us how it was formed" (35), its peripheries and flow patterns indicating a formation from the damming of two rivers in the east (the Thames) and west (the Severn), whose waters spill back into the landscape.[41] Jefferies describes the Lake as finding one outlet via the river Avon (which links with the Severn and reaches the sea at the Bristol channel), and another elsewhere in the west where ocean tides ebb and flow across a sand bar (41), by turns obstructing and affording the passage of ships. As a physical feature, the Lake enables agriculture and new communal structures. Settlements along its shores have "more traffic and communication between them by means of vessels than is the case with inland towns, whose trade must be carried on by caravans and waggons" (25). Its perimeter is the location of a "narrow circle of cultivated land" surrounded by "immense forests in every

direction" (25). Whether because of the Lake's alluvial terrain or as a broader result of "the change," the climate of England also appears to have become more temperate: tobacco is grown in Devon, for example (81).

Alongside this assessment of natural transformations runs a critique of the cities that have choked into toxic marshes, in line with Jefferies's complex reaction to the bleak necessity of urban life in his notebooks and other works. "Never go for a walk in the fields without seeing one thing at least however small to give me hope: the frond of a fern among dead leaves," he writes: "rarely go for a walk in town without something to cause depression: almost despair."[42] Summarizing the fate of London, now a "vast stagnant swamp" (37), the narrator observes that "changes of the sea level and the sand that was brought up there must have grown great banks, which obstructed the stream," accelerating a process by which "the river [Thames] had become partially choked from the cloacæ of the ancient city which poured into it through enormous subterranean aqueducts and drains" (36). In an earlier novel, *World's End* (1877), Jefferies recounts how the city of Stirmingham originated after long-run pressures of water, wind, gravity, and tunnels built by "water-rats" (voles) undermine a willow tree, which falls and dams a brook, causing a "geological change" that transforms an arid plain into a fertile marsh.[43] In similar vein, the waters in *After London* find no "ultimate outlet" (39), so the sanitation system cannot but flow back onto itself. Echoing a notebook comment in which he refers disparagingly to "This W.C. Century,"[44] Jefferies envisions the return of everything repressed by Victorian sanitation engineering: "all the rottenness of a thousand years and of many hundred millions of human beings is there festering under the stagnant water, which has sunk down into and penetrated the earth, and floated up to the surface the contents of the buried cloacæ" (37–8).[45] He is careful, however, to stipulate that the sand

dredged up by the water also *protects* the Lake from London, forming "a partial barrier between the sweet water and the stagnant" (38).[46]

The environmental character of this post-cataclysm landscape, then, has both natural and engineered elements, and it is precisely this confluence between ecological parameters and human energies that the novel explores. Jefferies implies that it is the fault of "the ancients," and specifically of the "cunning artificers of the cities" (18), that they did not predict how tying a design element to a physical feature (waste removal to water sources) would undermine them. Yet the order and framing of the descriptions in Part I also show that aggregate effects of ecological forces, flows, and feedback loops supervene on human actions. When human societies reenter the picture, the determinative forces of evolution and environment shape their new arrangements, in what could be read as an allusion to Machiavellian or Hobbesian dictates: "the few and scattered people of those days had enough to do to preserve their lives" (18).[47] Jefferies turns the quasi-ethnographic tropes of Victorian urban sociology—for example, the "unknown country" of East London in Mayhew's *London Labour and the London Poor*—into taxonomic truisms about the "many races" (19) that follow the change: "Bushmen" (descendants of the poor and vagrants: 19–21); gipsies (21–4); and "the house people" (24). That he appeals to such tropes *before* mentioning the conventional ethnic-national categories that still exist (English, Welsh, Irish) bespeaks a world where environment overrides culture and what is left of history or tradition, which it has broadly erased: "in the conflagrations which consumed the towns, most of the records were destroyed, and are no longer to be referred to" (15). Part II, "Wild England," thus begins from a position in which human endeavors—commercial, engineering, agricultural—have no effect at large scales on the physical conditions that they nevertheless enlist and try to shape at smaller scales. *After London* maintains this operative tension between survival and artifice, physical necessity and engineered

possibility—between Morean parameters (human prowess operates only "insofar as the terrain allows") and Baconian postulates (human ingenuity enables, "by art," what nature prohibits).

The novel's longer plot tells how Felix, the more reflective of nobleman Constans Aquila's sons, sets out on the Lake to seek a fortune and thereby win the hand of his love, Aurora. That environmental effects continue to have narrative determination can be seen in the efflux of Part I's unrestrained descriptive mode into this weakly motivated romance, with its dull accounts of medieval estates, hunting practices, and the flora and fauna of "The Great Forest," which the narrative hacks through. Environmental factors also shape Felix's tale in its recurring obsession with zones in the landscape that would offer strategic advantages for settlement. Before he departs, Felix muses on a section of the Lake where only a "furlong of water" divides north from south: "If ever the North came down *there* the armies would cross. *There* was the key of the world" (77).[48] Once on his voyage, an entire chapter is dedicated to this area ("The Straits"), a natural feature which Felix perceives in engineering terms "like a canal cut on purpose to supply a fort from the Lake in the rear with provisions and material, supposing access in front prevented by hostile fleets and armies" (140). Again, he muses on the military possibilities of controlling this slice of land:

> Who held this strait would possess the key of the Lake, and would be master of, or would at least hold the balance between, the kings and republics dotted along the coasts on either hand. No vessel could pass without his permission. It was the most patent illustration of the extremely local horizon, the contracted mental view of the petty kings and their statesmen, who were so concerned about the frontiers of their provinces, and frequently interfered and fought for a single palisaded estate or barony, yet were quite oblivious of the opportunity of empire open here to any who could seize it. (140)

In a nod to More, I suggest that Felix recognizes the confluence between strategy and ecology, two modes of operation in this world represented by the Prince (who cares only for the first) and Felix's father (who excels only at the second). Indeed, the novel recounts how Constans Aquila fell from grace after deploying his "singular talent for mechanical construction" (71) to reconstruct designs for a siege engine (a Morean detail), only to be undermined by jealous nobles and finally viewed

"as no more than an agriculturalist" (72): his "estate, though so carelessly guarded, had become a very garden" (73). When Felix discusses the straits with his father, the latter is diverted by an agricultural project, "a new hatch […] in the brook to irrigate the water-meadow" (77). Similarly, when Felix reveals his thoughts to the Prince in an anonymous missive, the idea is "laughed at" (77). His character reunites ecological *savoir-faire* (his father's mechanically-assisted agriculture) and strategic acumen (the Prince's hawkish goals).[49] Whittling away his canoe, Felix entertains imperial ambitions—"the whole map, as it were, of the known countries seemed to pass without volition before his mind" (76)—and his rise in the novel comes through recognizing not only the "internal condition" of the cities, "the weakness of the social fabric, the misery of the bondsman" (76), but their external, ecological constraints. The novel's detached narration endorses this middle way, where climate and counsel go hand in glove: "Last year there had been a bad wheat crop; this year there was at present scarcely any grass. These matters were of the highest importance; peace or war, famine or plenty, might depend upon the weather of the next few months" (61).[50]

Felix's journey is an exercise, however unwitting, in utopian cartography of a decidedly imperial and Baconian stripe.[51] He keeps to the Lake's edges, "follow[s] the trend of the land" (135)—that is, both its present form and future potential—on the lookout for other ideal sites. Making his way to the city of Aisi, ruled by King Isemberd, Felix is briefly detained in the army camp for criticizing military strategy (179). In his defense, he directly charges the King with being "an incapable commander" who, presented with three cities in a row, attacked one on the end rather than disabling the center and blocking communications and supplies (183), another instance of Felix's canny assessment of how things fall in a landscape. Although he is ejected from the court, having failed to parlay one success—having "invented a new trigger for [their] carriage cross-bows" (184)—into a sales-pitch for his father's invention, the siege engine, Felix continues and

reaches the Lake's southern shore. Here he earns the respect of a shepherd tribe by telling them of his escape from London's "dreaded precincts" (206); using his skill with the bow to rout their enemies; and disclosing an underground water source. Impressed by his "constructive skill and power of planning" (233), they press him to become their king. He agrees—with overtones of Jefferies's republican leanings—to "be called simply 'Leader'" and "only [to] assume royal authority in time of war" (236). This ecological Caesar is set to remain with the shepherds, but not before another episode in construing an ideal landscape.[52] Felix discovers a small lake,

> half a mile across, and the opposite shore was open woodland, grassy and meadow-like, and dotted with fine old oaks. By degrees these closed together, and the forest succeeded; beyond it again, at a distance of two miles, were green hills. A little clearing only was wanted to make the place fit for a castle and enclosure. A more beautiful spot he had never seen, nor one more suited for every purpose in life. (228)

Having (again) "never […] seen a district so well suited for a settlement and the founding of a city," he proposes to leave the shepherds and retrieve Aurora, while they cut through the "trackless forest" a path "thirty yards wide in order that the undergrowth might not encroach upon it, and to be carried on straight to the westward until his return" (229, 237, 240). After mapping much of the Lake, Felix leaves the shepherds in a tireless engineering task that will impose linear control on unsurveyed terrain, and he is "still moving rapidly westwards" (241) at the novel's close.[53]

What could be thought of as *After London*'s "boundary ecology" represents both systemic limits continually balancing in accordance with changed environmental conditions (including those governing the novel's social milieu, with its panoply of loosely federated societies); and a gradual contravention of such constraints in favor of engineered homogeneity, centralization, and a landscape cleared of obstructions to settlement. Like the swamp in *World's End*, the Lake and its landscape "seemed to be fated to demonstrate over and over again at one time the futility of human calculation, and at another what enormous things can be accomplished by the efforts of a clever man."[54] This tension also frames the text's more apocalyptic moments. Both the detached

account of London's demise in Part I, and Felix's close-call experience of its "dreaded precincts" (206) in Part II, dramatize what might result from the urban-industrial pollution which Ruskin, with typically catastrophist fervor, had been excoriating during Jefferies's formative years in *Fors Clavigera* and *The Storm-Cloud of the Nineteenth Century* (1884) (delivered the year before *After London* appeared). Felix's encounter with London is framed as a specifically social-industrial lesson in boundary ecology that he seems destined to ignore.[55] The ground is black and "radiated heat" (202), the water is a red sludge, "unctuous and slimy, like a thick oil" (205), and the sun on the horizon is "a vast up-heaved billow of glowing blood" (202). The scene is a prophecy, a warning to Victorian fossil capitalists akin to the "searchers after treasure" (206) whose corpses Felix discovers, asphyxiated by this atmosphere and on their way to becoming fossils in turn.

Yet Felix is afforded an experience of this otherwise inhuman space through a weather phenomenon that the creaturely world foretells. As he approaches on water, he sees "a ceaseless stream of waterfowl, mallards, ducks, coots, moorhens, and lesser grebes coming towards him, swimming to the westward" against the current, and "swallows and martins flying just over the surface of the water" (196, 197) against the wind. There are other signals that he is approaching a toxic area: "The sedges on the sandbanks appeared brown and withered, as if it had been autumn instead of early summer. The flags were brown at the tip, and the aquatic grasses had dwindled" (197–8).[56] He later realizes that the birds "had anticipated a cyclone, and that the wind turning would carry the gases out upon them to their destruction" (213). This alternation of wind and current first somewhat clears out London's more noxious gases and then helps Felix escape as the atmosphere closes in again. Just as a fragile feature of the climate keeps the filthy water of former cities away from the Lake, one last ecological condition, a lucky weather event, affords a glimpse of the "deserted and utterly extinct city of London" (206).[57]

After London's constitutive oppositions—between natural and artificial, given and engineered, ecological condition and human endeavor—do not always exhibit clear value signs. These tensions replay those in the utopian tradition and situate the text generically in Jefferies's oeuvre, as both a nature-writer seeking spiritual communion beyond humanity and a programmatic believer in human ingenuity and generosity. To read through the lens of Part I means imputing to Jefferies the nature-writer a "fantasy […] that nature should reassert itself over human depredations," a "reactionary" vision of "an ecological utopia in which man has at best a residual role to play."[58] Despite an ecological catastrophe and accelerated evolution, as John Plotz points out in his probing account of Jefferies's "speculative naturalism," whatever changes is also subject to unchanging laws, giving the text an odd sense of "stasis in flux" that evinces Jefferies's post-Darwinian "commitment to both change and uniformitarianism."[59] While nicely characterizing the feel of reading Jefferies, the difficulty with such an account is how to reconcile a developmental human-centered romance with the obvious dominance of inhuman law and nonhuman actors. It seems to me disputable that the narrative is "nearly always secondary to our interest in the facts of the setting."[60] To read through the lens of the novel's bleak social portrait in Part II, by contrast, means reading in sympathy with Jefferies as a critic of agro-industrial capitalism, emphasizing his vision of urban depopulation and the apparent return to Machiavellian city-states and feudalism.[61] Yet here the pressures of nature and environment would seem inexplicable, against the generic grain. The text seems intent on what Plotz reads as persistent scalar flips—between "microscopic description, below the level of experiential subjectivity" and "macroscopic abstraction"—that are more broadly indicative of the scientific and aesthetic tensions in fin-de-siècle naturalism.[62]

Such tensions are rife in Jefferies's wider work. Passionate, almost pantheist writings in defense of nature, intuition, and "soul-thought" collide with practical views on agricultural

adaptation and bitter plaints about economic injustice: *The Story of My Heart* with writing for the *Live Stock Journal*.[63] Jefferies carves out a space for aesthetic vision and celebration within a materialist universe that follows depressing Darwinian tenets, so that "ironclad scientific laws do not erase or undermine but in fact mandate romantic and aesthetic pleasure" and "throughout his work he remains attuned to the beauty that dwells, undespairing, in the same world that makes man despair."[64] His later notebooks swing wildly between these poles of wonder at human capability and despair at human helplessness and cruelty. "There are forces stronger than the sun, else the sun could not burn or exist," he writes: "If we get control sufficient to guide these forces [we] might stop the sun in his course," thereby assuring universal subsistence, "superabundance for all," and an end to hard labor.[65] Yet at the same time, he reflects, "Science. Little power of. Imagine it dark for a month—starvation—kill birds—oil exhausted. Consider in the night that man is blotted out and the fields too; they would grow nothing without light, that is without vibration, motion!" (230). Moreover, the "practical difficulty of the ingrained selfishness of 12,000 years" is clearly in view, and many notes speak to the venality of our species: "All men are wolves—good things for all—But, wolves, wolves, wolves."[66] Even as he flirts with tropes of engineering dominance, Jefferies is sanguine about the forces that partly condition us and dwarf our lives and politics: "All has been tried. Republic. Communism. Aristocracy. Kings. Caesars. [A]nd all useless. All things in vain. Physical forces too strong for us. All the more needful to struggle against them, for unless we do we shall not even have the half loaf"; "No advance of man or new idea even can alter the coming of the snow (unless we become so powerful as to re-tilt the globe as Archimedes imagined even that)."[67] Amid such wavering between a sense of renovating control and resilient incapacity, Jefferies articulates norms that split the difference between surrender and succor. He espouses a cosmic spiritualism, a "larger ethics—of the Beyond" in keeping with *The*

Story of My Heart and his existentialist nature writings.[68] Yet he also envisions an ethics of stewardship along the lines of Ruskin's "help": "*Man the only creature that can help his fellow*."[69] These tensions make *After London* more than a misanthropic forecast, a *memento mori* thrust at urban dwellers as Virginia Woolf does in imagining future London as "a grass-grown path."[70] Aligning the discourses of climate and utopia allows us to read Jefferies as both forecasting our predicament and issuing a call to imagination, action, and collective responsibility.

Climate at Rest: Morris and Utopia's Seasonal Affects

News from Nowhere was Morris's riposte to Jefferies's *After London* and Edward Bellamy's centralized state utopia *Looking Backward* (1888).[71] Few readers fail to notice its portrait of future England's suddenly improved weather. This temperate idyll has tended to encourage prescriptive readings that make Morris an ecological prophet.[72] He is declared a fusion of Marx, Ruskin, and the socialist and communitarian strands of the Christian tradition; an inspiration to fellow travelers of the "Back to the Land" movement like Edward Carpenter, Peter Kropotkin, and Ebenezer Howard, with their visions of sustainable agricultural communes and garden cities.[73] In these readings, Morris's conservation activities and late essays on ecological themes (among others "The Lesser Arts," "Art and Socialism," and "Art under Plutocracy") are held to align with his utopian writing.[74] *News from Nowhere* is thereby reduced to a tract: an "unambiguously enthusiastic portrayal of future ecological change"; a portrait of "pastoralized London" as "a socialist thought-experiment about what complete 'renewal' of an existing city might mean"; a society "where all humans seem aware of their full impact upon the world."[75] Such value judgments are at odds with the sparse details of the text, eliding its aesthetic elements and ignoring the more proximate contexts for Morris's utopia in socialist politics.[76] Claims for Morris's "anticipation" of later green trends do not redound to *News from Nowhere*'s literary qualities.[77]

Without rejecting the content of Morris's environmentalist prescience, I argue that *News from Nowhere* is more compellingly read for its formal elements, as a reflection on the temporal and affective dimensions of ecological precarity. Morris's romance focuses on "seasonal affects": it is a utopia uneasily aware of the changeability, both incremental and cataclysmic, of social structures and environmental parameters. First, *News from Nowhere* persistently deflects or defers its representations of climate, benignly externalizing the environment into proxy objects that confirm its ability to promote present "work-pleasure" (160) but not its determinative power in the longer term.[78] Second, these displacements link up with the text's undertow of anxiety regarding a possible future scarcity in work, a "work-famine" wherein present arrangements will be subject to unpredictable variation. *News from Nowhere* struggles to maintain the vision of a present social stability modeled on, but not isomorphic with the natural world, and tensions repeatedly surface between Nowhere's cheerful apologists and its more sanguine residents. The novel's allegiance to More may not run as deep as expected; its debt to Bacon may extend further than its inclusion of helpful new machines.[79] Reading *News from Nowhere* for the intimations of change it distributes into climate and social form reveals uncertainty as a structuring concern of the "steady-state" utopia.[80] To see the static temporality of resilience lured insistently towards the changeful time of renovation is to find tonalities in Morris that foreshadow our anxieties regarding climate change.

To begin with *News from Nowhere*'s deferred structure of climatic commentary, it is worth noting that only banal cues mark the changed state of meteorological affairs in this "radiantly *unheimlich*" environment: "sparkling" waters, "hot" weather, and "the sun shining brightly" above all (45).[81] The determinative power of climate on longevity is everywhere deflected to focus on present happiness. Dick, one of the naïfs who acts as a tour guide for Morris's narrator William Guest, comments that the inhabitants of Nowhere have "beaten the three-score-and-ten of the old

Jewish proverb-book," but the value of this claim is downplayed: "But then you see that was written of Syria, a hot dry country, where people live faster than in our temperate climate. However, I don't think it matters much, so long as a man is healthy and happy while he *is* alive" (84). While it holds that "one ages very quickly if one lives amongst unhappy people," it is also true "that southern England is a good place for keeping good looks" (57), in contrast to future Britain's ruder peripheries: "There are parts of these islands which are rougher and rainier than we are here, and there people are rougher in their dress; and they themselves are tougher and more hard-bitten than we are to look at. […] Anyhow, the cross between us and them generally turns out well" (63). The hard facts of environmental conditions—age, wear, variability—are benignly recast in terms of present happiness and felicitous breeding, the mild climate conspiring to promote what James Buzard has identified as "a national culture grounded in race," with Nowherians "reproducing an ethnos that will seem at once wholly optional and powerfully determining."[82] Climates that are noticeable because adverse happen elsewhere, in other times and texts.

The earlier parts of the novel thus inure the reader to a logic of displacement that precludes questioning the present state of affairs, so that we pass from utopia's least reflective spokespeople—Dick and Clara—to Old Hammond's account of Nowhere's enabling revolution with a sense of the primacy, the unassailability of the here and now. That such a view might be open to debate is only seen much later when Ellen's grandfather offers his curmudgeonly take on the weather: "now I think I should like it cooler" (172). Indeed, these broad conditions seem particularly to divide the old and the young, so that the grandfather's view that "when the waters are out and all Runnymede is flooded, it's none so pleasant" (173) is deflected by Dick's absurdly game response: "What a jolly sail one would get about here on the floods on a bright frosty January morning!" (173). In a more figurative sense, Guest too feels himself separated from the environing

pleasure of Nowhere and sees Hammond, with his "inverted sympathy" for the past, as "a blanket

for me against the cold of this very new world, where I was, so to say, stripped bare of every

habitual thought and way of acting" (133).

If Morris's explicit invocations of climate defer its undesirable effects and variabilities,

News from Nowhere's many other depictions of climate's indexical results partake of a similar

structure of displacement. Although the people of Nowhere are browned and weathered by the sun,

for instance, the effect is always positive: their bodies are "well-knit and strong," "clean-skinned"

(47, 177). They are cleanly attired, with Hammond—"dressed in a sort of Norfolk jacket of blue

serge worn threadbare" (87)—the only anomaly. An exception that proves the rule is the first

bridge that Guest spies across the Thames, akin to something "out of an illuminated manuscript":

"The stone was a little weathered, but showed no marks of the grimy sootiness which I was used

to on every London building more than a year old. (48). Nowhere's architecture is "not only

exquisitely beautiful in itself, but it bore upon it the expression of such generosity and abundance

of life" (62), sheltered by the weather rather than worn away by it.

The embedding of easeful conditions into proxies—bodies, objects, architecture—fulfills

an ideological role by converting temporal processes into static objects. In the context of utopia's

official dogma of "work-pleasure" (160), it matches the notion of an "epoch of rest." Both process

and product of entirely pleasurable labor need to be enjoyed without anxiety, melancholy, or social

inquiry, and aesthetic ornamentation is typically static. The Hammersmith house where Guest

wakes up sports, "high up above the windows […] a frieze of figure subjects in baked clay, very

well executed, and designed with a force and directness which I had never noticed in modern work

before" (52–3). Later, the company returns to this house and enacts the calm stasis of its external

frieze, indoors: "we even got to telling stories, and sat there listening, with no other light but that

of the summer moon streaming through the beautiful traceries of the windows, as if we had belonged to time long passed, when books were scarce and the art of reading somewhat rare" (166). Guest theorizes the novelty of this experience, an art enjoyed without the disjunction between present and past, without the inquiry into social causes that characterizes Ruskin's analysis of "Turnerian" picturesque:

> for the first time in my life, I was having my fill of the pleasure of the eyes without any of that sense of incongruity, that dread of approaching ruin, which had always beset me hitherto when I had been amongst the beautiful works of art of the past, mingled with the lovely nature of the present […]. Here I could enjoy everything without an afterthought of the injustice and miserable toil which made my leisure; the ignorance and dulness of life which went to make my keen appreciation of history; the tyranny and the struggle full of fear and mishap which went to make my romance. (166)

The lapsed parallelism is significant: art may be enjoyed without critical afterthoughts, but nature offers no corresponding guarantee against "approaching ruin."

A final stage in the idea that climate conditions are displaced into objects and architecture is the precarious nature of the results. *News from Nowhere*, as several critics have observed, represents a frangible and diminutive world. In a reading of Nowhere's economy in the context of Victorian waste management, Natalka Freeland persuasively shows how Morris "advocates eliminating material waste through art," specifically through "labor-intensive craftsmanship" that produces "reliably disposable goods" like glassware.[83] Nowhere thus solves the problem of supply and demand, "creat[ing] ways to take goods out of circulation" and "disposing of surplus time" in a fashion not beholden to capitalist desire.[84] In a related account, Tony Pinkney suggests that Morris's profusion of diminutives—"pretty," "little," and so on—constitute one way in which nature is cut down to size in this utopia.[85] The repetition of the word "delicate," variously describing flowers, vases, food, women, and buildings (54, 62), joins these features of the artifact and natural world and suggests how qualities of representation stand as proxies for a climate putatively at rest. In Ellen's diatribe about the past, the word is wielded against "the times when

this little pretty country was treated by its folk as if it had been an ugly characterless waste, with no delicate beauty to be guarded, with no heed taken of the ever-fresh pleasure of the recurring seasons, and changeful weather, and diverse quality of the soil" (208). If "delicate" operates in one sense as a synonym for "little," "pretty," or "dainty," it also denotes that which is "easily damaged," and by extension a climate that statically shelters such qualities.[86] Occupations such as glassblowing, ceramic-making, and frieze-carving appear in this regime as ways to convert bodily movements—breathing, shaping, chiseling—into proxies for Morris's steady-state fantasy. Art is a way of tidily converting matter to afford what Nowherians valorize as "elbow-room" (69). Every diminutive in *News from Nowhere*, every finely-worked object embodies the effortless hospitality and present lack of care in this utopia, while underscoring how fragile and changeable it all is.[87]

The vision of a society focused on pleasurable work and in harmony with the environment—or at least, as Hammond puts it, "in reasonable strife with nature, […] taking the keenest pleasure in all the life of the world" (92)—thus functions to emphasize presence, stability, and affective levelness. The tacit reliance on climatic factors that are either deferred or otherwise displaced to appear as static products of human effort is all in service of a utopia whose oft-mentioned "green" or "ecological" details can thus be asserted without explanation, since the temporal support for analyzing causation has receded. England is a "superabundant garden" (178), we are assured, "where nothing is wasted and nothing is spoilt, with the necessary dwellings, sheds, and workshops scattered up and down the country, all trim and neat and pretty" (105). Many of Morris's purported ecological insights are phrased as grammatical deflections, passive and past-tense events: "The soap-works with their smoke-vomiting chimneys were gone; the engineer's works gone; the lead-works gone; and no sound of riveting and hammering came down the west wind from Thorneycroft's" (48). When Hammond notes that "whatever coal or mineral we need

is brought to grass and sent whither it is needed with as little as possible of dirt, confusion, and the distressing of quiet people's lives" (102), the passive voice and triple substantive (modeled on Ruskin's prose) aim as such to accomplish the unthinkable task of clean, quiet mining. The effect of a benign Nowhere is a supremely worked effect that allows ecological visions to seem credible because so many difficulties have been suppressed. We cannot simply elide the difference between Morris's lectures, where he does inveigh against the ecological devastation of capitalism, and the vision of a "utopian romance" where nature is as much generic mirage as political prescription.[88]

Nature's restoration is figured as a sort of reverse engineering, a human letting-be. One of the crucial events of Morris's post-revolution projection is an emphatic destruction of London's urban slums in the service of renewal, leaving "a very jolly place, now that the trees have had time to grow again since the great clearing of houses in 1955" (55).[89] London's "highway ran through wide sunny meadows and garden-like tillage," an effect made possible because the river's creek "had been rescued from its culvert" (61). Where Baconian engineering remains—in the water-locks on the Thames, for instance—it cooperates with and is subsumed into natural features, so that Guest admires at once "the nursing of pretty corners" and "the ingenuity in dealing with difficulties of water-engineering, so that the most obviously useful works looked beautiful and natural also" (215). By the same logic, negative description is rife. Villages now have simply "no tokens of poverty," "no tumble-down picturesque" (105), as if Ruskin's distinction between regular and critical picturesque had miraculously vanished, since no abstracted labor, no effortful process need be revealed. When Hammond remarks that, during the revolution, "Thou shalt not steal, had to be translated into, Thou shalt work in order to live happily" (112), he turns the broadly negative form of the Mosaic law into a dubiously positive prescription, while at the same time eschewing any positive description of Nowhere's "arrangements": "our life is too complex for me

to tell you in detail by means of words how it is arranged." This leaves only a negative statement ("I can better tell you what we don't do, than what we do do"), or the contingent perspective of experience ("you must find that out by living amongst us"), as if the myth of stasis would be threatened by description: "We have been living for a hundred and fifty years, at least, more or less in our present manner, and a tradition or habit of life has been growing on us; and that habit has become a habit of acting on the whole for the best" (111–12).

I turn now to extend this analysis of displacement and avoidance to *News from Nowhere*'s concern with work, tilting the critical assumption that joy is the text's "predominant tonality" to emphasize another affective stratum in the anxious underside of Nowhere's blissful present.[90] A set piece of Morrisian description serves to bridge the registers of climate and anxiety:

> The morning was now getting on, the morning of a jewel of a summer day; one of those days which, if they were commoner in these islands, would make our climate the best of all climates, without dispute. A light wind blew from the west; […] and in spite of the burning sun we no more longed for rain than we feared it. Burning as the sun was, there was a fresh feeling in the air that almost set us a-longing for the rest of the hot afternoon, and the stretch of blossoming wheat seen from the shadow of the boughs. No one unburdened with very heavy anxieties could have felt otherwise than happy that morning: and it must be said that whatever anxieties might lie beneath the surface of things, we didn't seem to come across any of them. (185)

Even as temporality and worry are acknowledged, the day and season waning, climate is sealed into an ornament (a "jewel") and in similar fashion the cornucopian stasis of desire ("a-longing for […] blossoming wheat") obviates a concern for what might follow the harvest.

As often as Nowhere's inhabitants marvel at the pleasant arrangements of their world, they kvetch about a "fear […] of a possible scarcity in work"—the memorable hypothesis of a "work-famine" that has been bruited around "for a score of years" (128). As Hammond summarizes it, "there is a kind of fear growing up amongst us that we shall one day be short of work. It is a pleasure which we are afraid of losing, not a pain" (122). *News from Nowhere*'s representation of its core tenet, pleasurable work, is riven by a displacement like those marking its environment. In

a society not driven by market logic, the paradoxical notion that there will not be enough pleasurable work to go around so new objects of work will have to be found is a way of imagining a practical solution (securing *work*) for what is really an affective problem (guaranteeing *pleasure*). It is more straightforward to envision finding more matter to be ornamented, more buildings to be rebuilt, than to imagine new conduits of pleasure-in-labor. This projected affective scarcity, I argue, takes increasing hold over *News from Nowhere*, auguring a return to market-based exchange, casting suspicion over various types of work, leasing anxiety and related emotions of social insecurity, and even aligning itself with the threat of natural catastrophe. These are the sorts of affective concern that will always be proper to the orientation of resilience in utopia.

We learn of the problem of "work-famine" when Guest observes that there exists a quid pro quo exchange of work, or at least occupation, not mediated by the "extinct commercial morality" (74) of exchange. Agreeing to act as travel guide, Dick proposes donating his work to "a weaver from Yorkshire, who has rather overdone himself between his weaving and his mathematics" (51), or to another colleague "on the look-out for a stroke of work" (52). The phrase is significant, since "stroke of work" can be framed in minimal or maximal senses.[91] Seeming to mimic the physical rhythm of labor—Nowhere's road-menders "smote great strokes and were very deft in their labour" (82)—along with its temporality (strokes of a clock), the phrase also harks back to the strategic withholding of work in the revolution's "General Strike" (148). A simple work exchange calls up the possibility of contributing more or less than society requires.

The putative solution to a "work-famine" will be, as Dick explains, the provision of work on new spaces or objects. He predicts that "many grown people will go to live in the forests through the summer" which "gives them a little rough work, which I am sorry to say is getting somewhat scarce for these last fifty years" (65). Rebuilding is framed as a sink for work: "there is always

room for more and more work in a new building, even without making it pretentious. […] Then, of course, there is the ornament, which, as we must all allow, may easily be overdone in mere living houses, but can hardly be in mote-halls and markets" (69). Still, this is sometimes pitched as a last resort. Of the British Museum, Dick notes, "Many people have wanted to pull it down and rebuild it: and perhaps if work does really get scarce we may yet do so," but "the worry and anxiety, and even risk, there would be in moving all this has saved the buildings themselves" and anyway "there is plenty of labour and material in it" (86).

  News from Nowhere's rhetoric of work and famine draws on, and inverts, tropes from Morris's political writings. The vision of pleasurable labor issues from his critique of work in pieces from *Justice* like "Why Not?"—with its vision of young people "go[ing] to their work as to a pleasure party"—and "A Factory As it Might Be," discussing the "conditions of pleasant work in the days when we shall work for livelihood *and pleasure* and not for 'profit.'"[92] The term "artificial famine" becomes Morris's synonym for "capitalism" in the 1880s. In 1886, Morris discusses the plight of Manchester during the depression, stating that "no language can express the sufferings brought on by our artificial famine," and remarks of those who tout emigration as a solution to unemployment, that "their intention is only to get rid temporarily of *their* responsibility and trouble over the people thrown out of work by the system of artificial famine—which they are determined to uphold—so that it may work the smoother."[93] In "Fighting for Peace," Morris discusses the Lanarkshire riots as "distinctly hunger-riots, […] the expression of the despair of men driven into a corner, dying by inches of starvation," and blames capitalism for creating a "famine-test for wages."[94] Such descriptions are echoed in *News from Nowhere*'s characterization of markets that produce "a never-ending series [of] sham or artificial necessaries" (124).

The novel's frequently stated fear might suggest that Nowhere's effortless regulation and division of pleasurable labor will by degrees recapitulate the system of capital and its "ceaseless endeavour" (124).[95] Hammond acknowledges this, musing that "as more and more of pleasure is imported into work, I think we shall take up kinds of work which produce desirable wares, but which we gave up because we could not carry them on pleasantly" (128), a comment that splits the difference between a desire-based system of "sham wants" (111) and a diversified economy of pleasure-based work. Indeed, at the same moment Hammond begins describing something not dissimilar to capital's expansion into new frontiers of expendable energy that it might transform into value.[96] For advanced countries that will see the fear of a work-famine, undeveloped lands "are now and will be for a long while a great resource to us," especially "the northern parts of America," which "suffered so terribly from the full force of the last days of civilization, and became such horrible places to live in" (128). Although this vision promises a weird inversion of colonization—"resources" are implicitly to be worked on with pleasure, not extracted or monetized—there still seems to be a serious question-begging element to the claim that a work-famine will be avoided because such sinks for work are "inexhaustible" (128).

At home on the Thames, the problem of managing supply and demand is figured in terms of apparent excesses—work expended on trifles; and work as unnecessary absorption—that hint at the re-emergence of capitalist desire, on the one hand, and a blending of labor and nature, on the other. Commenting on trinkets, Dick says defensively that "since nobody need make such things unless they like, I don't see why they shouldn't make them, *if* they like. Of course, if carvers were scarce they would all be busy on the architecture [...]; but since there are plenty of people who can carve—in fact, almost everybody, and as work is somewhat scarce, or we are afraid it may be, folk do not discourage this kind of petty work" (81). In this to-and-fro logic it is clear that

the *pleasure* component of work seems to operate in tension with its necessity. Paradoxically the very quality that structures capitalism's "artificial famine"—the furnishing of novel pleasures and wants—is here admitted to utopia as a possible stop-gap against the imminent "work-famine."

The obverse to trinket-producers is a group so absorbed by their work that they consume more than is necessary. The strange chapter that describes these "Obstinate Refusers" concerns a group of architects that our company meet up the Thames. "Now Philippa," a girl asks the head carver, "if you gobble up your work like that, you will soon have none to do; and what will become of you then?" "Thank you for coming to see us, neighbours," she evasively replies, "but I am sure that you won't think me unkind if I go on with my work, especially when I tell you that I was ill and unable to do anything all through April and May; and this open-air and the sun and the work together, and my feeling well again too, make a mere delight of every hour to me" (196). In passing this vignette confirms that things are not always so cheery in Nowhere, but more crucially suggests that there could emerge a category of conscious objectors to this pleasurable economy. As the bemused party leaves the carvers, they hear "the full tune of tinkling trowels mingle with the humming of the bees and the singing of the larks" (198), intimating that the other extreme of work in this utopia would blend human with animal, making masonry and carving akin to the construction of dams, hives, and bowers. The obstinate refusers contradict Clara's thought that Nowhere has transcended the nineteenth century's "life of slavery," "a life which was always looking upon everything, except mankind, animate and inanimate—'nature,' as people used to call it—as one thing, and mankind as another" (200). They fulfill a vision from Morris's "The Lesser Arts" in which decoration drawn on nature, and subsequently forgotten through habit, has as its paradoxical zenith an eventual blending into—nature. Nowhere's ethos of pleasurable labor treads a *via media* between manufactured frippery and natural resorption.

Between the re-emergence of capital's "artificial famine" and the relapse into nature there is a generalized anxiety that crops up in *News from Nowhere* and casts a pall over its sunshine. Indeed, it is often rendered in terms of weather events or natural phenomena, and reveals utopia struggling to generate an appropriate affect for its fear of "work-famine." Nowhere has rejected exchange-based affects such as competition ("success in besting our neighbours is a road to renown now closed, let us hope for ever"), "scowling envy" (113), debt, and gratitude. Since anxiety would seem to be the corollary of market-generated "wants" and "desires"—the restless, enervating affect that attends their pursuit—it only makes an oblique appearance. Such anticipatory affect structures Guest's trip through Nowhere, where despite the assurances that this world values "rest" and "the present pleasure of ordinary daily life" (105), his guides seem frantic lest he should miss the scenery or weather at its best. One wakes him, saying that "our Thames is a lovely river at half-past six on a June morning: and as it would be a pity for you to lose it…" (167). Clara and Annie likewise encourage excitement about the hay-harvest in ominous fashion: "Let him find out for himself: he will not have long to wait"; "don't make your description of the picture too fine, or else he will be disappointed when the curtain is drawn" (168). These reminders of narrative desire, a corollary to anxiety, are brought full circle when Guest slips away at the end, and "A pang shot through me, as of some disaster long expected and suddenly realized" (227).

Anxiety even plagues Nowhere's inhabitants and is often figured as a palpable atmosphere competing with the easy weather. After an odd discussion about how Guest might become younger by spending time in Nowhere, Clara exclaims: "Kinsman, I don't like this: something or another troubles me, and I feel as if something untoward were going to happen. You have been talking of past miseries […] and have been living in past unhappy times, and it is in the air all round us, and makes us feel as if we were longing for something that we cannot have" (162). This comment

picks up Morris's frame narrative, where an oppressive, restless atmosphere—the London underground as a "vapour-bath of hurried and discontented humanity" (43)—eases into the "Morning Bath" chapter that begins utopia. Even cheery Dick is caught by anxiety amid plenty:

> "…certainly of all the cheerful meals in the year, this one of haysel is the cheerfullest; not even excepting the corn-harvest feast; for then the year is beginning to fail, and one cannot help having a feeling behind all the gaiety, of the coming of the dark days, and the shorn fields and empty gardens; and the spring is almost too far off to look forward to. It is, then, in the autumn, when one almost believes in death."
> "How strangely you talk," said I, "of such a constantly recurring and consequently commonplace matter as the sequence of the seasons." And indeed these people were like children about such things, and had what seemed to me a quite exaggerated interest in the weather, a fine day, a dark night, or a brilliant one, and the like.
> "Strangely?" said he. "Is it strange to sympathize with the year and its gains and losses? […] I am part of it all, and feel the pain as well as the pleasure in my own person. […] One thing seems strange to me, […] that I must needs trouble myself about the winter and its scantiness, in the midst of the summer abundance." (224–5)

This is a significant qualification: an account of Nowhere in, say, the dreary November to which Guest returns would present a different picture. But it is also important to note that the sense of coming scarcity undermines the claim of sympathy with seasonal affects: the open-ended temporality of renovation threatens the cycling time of resilience.

Hammond, who responds to such musings by his young charges by telling them to "go and live in the present, and you will soon shake it off" (162), openly courts anxiety. His narrative of the revolution makes clear how historical consciousness and future-thinking are mutually entailing. During those days "many men saw clearly beyond the desperate struggle of the day into the peace which it was to bring about" (155), and "in that fighting-time […] all was hope" (157), whereas now the young can barely intuit future developments. Their history is a vanishing point: "The last harvest, the last baby, the last knot of carving in the market-place, is history enough for them. It was different, I think, when I was a lad, when we were not so assured of peace and continuous plenty as we are now" (89). Note here the figures—agriculture, reproduction, decoration—that are interdependently vulnerable to different environmental conditions. In joking

about his own approach to "second childhood," Hammond introduces the possibility of future

cycles: "the world's next period of wise and unhappy manhood," then "a third childhood" (132).

Further, he at once admits and then disavows a sort of revolutionary postpartum depression that,

like bad weather, needed to pass before idleness could pass into a more pleasantly static *otium*:

> the prophecies of some of the reactionists of past times seemed as if they would come true, and a dull level of utilitarian comfort be the end for a while of our aspirations and success. The loss of the competitive spur to exertion had not, indeed, done anything to interfere with the necessary production of the community, but how if it should make men dull by giving them too much time for thought or idle musing? But, after all, this dull thunder-cloud only threatened us, and then passed over. (159)

For the most part, these swirling uncertainties remain at the level of talk. But when violent events

intrude, they seem to confirm the generalized fear of the unexpected. Dick recalls, in terms that

identify present stability with the weather, that "only a month ago there was a mishap down by us,

that in the end cost the lives of two men and a woman, and, as it were, put out the sunlight for us

for a while" (72). Later, another romance-related homicide is caught in present time, and Dick's

counsel against worry—"you should get over that, neighbour: such things must be" (98)—rings

futile. Murder makes little sense in Nowhere because the abolition of property removes the

conceptual frame for future-oriented negativity: the suspect "used to go about making himself as

unpleasant as he could—not of malice prepense, of course" (188). Malice aforethought can no

more be admitted than other catastrophic forecasts, so homicide appears in the same breath as

natural disaster: "all this we could no more help than the earthquake of the year before last" (189).[97]

In this figurative slippage among human death, social upheaval, and natural cataclysm,

each textual irruption adds another scratch to Nowhere's ideological screen. Buzard has linked

News from Nowhere's narrative interruptions to its refusal of narrative desire, arguing that

Nowhere is "a place inhospitable to storytelling," its inhabitants entertaining fables "only about

things they do not or no longer want."[98] He suggests that when Hammond and Morsom die, "the

last trace of narratable time may go with them, since time for the rest of the utopians is […] an empty, geological medium of horizonless futurity."[99] Buzard's claim functions by seeing narrative as differentiable from desire, but what I have called "seasonal affects" suggest a realignment where desire and narrative are constantly displaced rather than banished.[100] Anxiety cuts against the prevailing sense of Nowhere's stasis, the sense that "time […] seems not to move, everyone becomes a child again forever, and there is no such thing as history […] no more epochs, eras, ages, or periods."[101] Just as *News from Nowhere*'s serialization alongside news and commentary in the Socialist League's *Commonweal* would have generated a complex interplay between utopian dreams and socialist realities, so the novel's latent worries about the future disclose a buried concern in the aesthetics of revolution that Morris adopted in his essays and lectures, where the future seems only to be imaginable in contrastive relation with the present: "looking back on what has been, we shall be astonished to think of how long we submitted to live as we live now."[102] It is Ellen, author of a moving epiphany about cyclicality, who summarizes the present's constant concern that the future may shift, almost like a pattern of wind: "Who knows? Happy as we are, times may alter; we may be bitten with some impulse towards change, and many things may seem too wonderful for us to resist, too exciting not to catch at, if we do not know that they are but phases of what has been before; and withal ruinous, deceitful, and sordid" (214).

Conclusion

In our time, the rhetoric of shared artificiality with which I began—between urban climate and utopian cartography—threatens to become radically distinct again. A climate at once of our making and beyond our control thwarts key tenets of utopian theory and scuttles dreams of a new social order, constraining the options of resilience and renovation to geophysical boundaries. Climatic factors complicate Jameson's assessment of utopia as "an imaginary enclave within real

social space," rendering his enclave imagery uncanny: an "eddy or self-contained backwater"; a "pocket of stasis within the ferment and rushing forces of social change"; "a breathing space." [103] They likewise undercut Ruth Levitas's claim for the importance of *change* to utopia.[104] For all their participation in the tropes of a tradition that takes its orienting points from More and Bacon, *After London* and *News from Nowhere* become decidedly uncanny when read against current predicaments, pointing up the intensifying spatiotemporal constraints of climate change. The year in which Morris pitched his future revolution, 1952, was ironically "ruinous, deceitful, and sordid" for London: far from being a garden, the city fell prey to a pernicious episode of smog that killed thousands.[105] Such an event signaled the limitations of environmental protections that had been coeval with Morris's activities (such as the Coal Smoke Abatement Society, founded 1898). The new regulations to which it gave rise also occur at a moment in hindsight when dramatic economic expansions inaugurated what we now term the "Great Acceleration" in resource use, one of the Anthropocene's likely starting points. Morris's somewhat buried themes now come into sharp relief: climatic displacement is untenable; seasonal affective anxiety moves from nagging tic to unavoidable norm. We might look back on these "chapters from a utopian romance" with a heightened sense of their melancholy impossibility in our time, which hardly promises to be an "epoch of rest." We also read *After London* with a different affect from Morris, who devoured it with a sense of anti-industrial glee: "I rather wish I were thirty years younger: I want to see the game played out."[106] A report of the World Heritage Convention, assessing the threat of climate change to global monuments, lists London and Venice among "major threatened sites" along with "several low-lying coastal ecosystems."[107] There may again be an "after London," although in such an event water will be the primary agent and we'll know full well where "the change" came from.

[1] "Wolken kann man nicht bauen. Und darum wird die erträumte Zukunft nie wahr." *Culture and Value: A Selection from the Posthumous Remains*, ed. Georg Henrik von Wright in collaboration with Heikki Nyman, rev. Alois Pichler, trans. Peter Winch, 2nd ed. (Oxford: Blackwell, 1998), 48e.

[2] "The Decay of Lying," in *The Complete Works of Oscar Wilde*, vol. 4, ed. Josephine M. Guy (Oxford: Oxford UP, 2007), 95.

[3] "The Soul of Man Under Socialism," *Complete Works*, 247.

[4] Fredric Jameson, *Archaeologies of the Future: The Desire Called Utopia and Other Science Fictions* (London: Verso, 2005).

[5] Sharing little with this chapter beyond a title, one example is the modeling experiment by M. Gedalin and M. Balikhin, "Climate of Utopia," *Nonlinear Processes in Geophysics* 15 (2008): 541–549.

[6] I broadly concur with Jameson's sense that utopias "are so often taken to be the expressions of political opinion or ideology that there is something to be said for redressing the balance in a resolutely formalist way" (xiii), although my formalism will tend in more resolutely ecological directions than his.

[7] As, in general, "ecological utopias are especially popular in political discourse at times of resource scarcity": Mattias Hjerpe and Björn-Ola Linnér, "Utopian Thought as a Missed Opportunity and Leverage Point for Systemic Change," *Climate Change and the Crisis of Capitalism: A Chance to Reclaim Self, Society and Nature*, ed. Mark Pelling, David Manuel-Navarrete, and Michael Redclift (London: Routledge, 2012), 162.

[8] I focus on "utopia" as a literary tradition and discursive construct, rather than on its social theory tradition or its practical instantiations, which is not to deny the interest and ecological salience of the many intentional community experiments of nineteenth-century Britain and America. For an excellent account of one group of ventures see Vicky Albritton and Fredrik Albritton Jonsson, *Green Victorians: The Simple Life in John Ruskin's Lake District* (Chicago: U of Chicago P, 2016). See Jameson for a useful assessment of "impulse" vs. "program" in utopian discourse (1–9).

[9] For an overview and critique of the term see Katrina Brown, "Policy Discourses of Resilience," in *Climate Change and the Crisis of Capitalism*, 37–50. Brown focuses on "the tension between resilience as an inherently dynamic concept and its emphasis on maintaining structure, function and identity" (41).

[10] Johan Rockström et al., "Planetary Boundaries: Exploring the Safe Operating Space for Humanity," *Ecology and Society* 14.2 (2009): 1–33, updated in Will Steffen et al., "Planetary Boundaries: Guiding Human Development on a Changing Planet," *Science* 347.6223 (2015): 1–10. See also the commentaries in *Nature Reports Climate Change* 910 (2009) and summaries in *Scientific American*, "Boundaries for a Healthy Planet" (2010). On the use of this concept in framing the Anthropocene see Steffen et al., "The Anthropocene: Are Humans Now Overwhelming the Great Forces of Nature?" *Ambio* 36.8 (2007): 614–621, and "The Anthropocene: From Global Change to Planetary Stewardship," *Ambio* 40.7 (2011): 739–761.

[11] Rockström et al., "Planetary Boundaries." On "tipping points" in climate and atmospheric systems see Timothy M. Lenton et al., "Tipping Elements in the Earth's Climate System," *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences* 105.6 (2008): 1786–1793, and James Hansen et al., "A Slippery Slope: How Much Global Warming Constitutes 'Dangerous Anthropogenic Interference'?" *Climatic Change* 68 (2005): 269–79, and "Target Atmospheric CO_2: Where Should Humanity Aim?" *Open Atmospheric Science Journal* 2 (2008): 217–31.

[12] Donella H. Meadows et al., *The Limits to Growth: A Report for the Club of Rome's Project on the Predicament of Mankind* (New York: Universe Books, 1972); John Harte and Robert H. Socolow, *Patient Earth* (New York: Holt, Rinehart, and Winston, 1971); and Rudolf Moos and Robert Brownstein, *Environment and Utopia: A Synthesis* (New York: Plenum, 1977). See also Helmut Landsberg, "The Meteorologically Utopian City," *Bulletin of the American Meteorological Society* 54.2 (1973): 86–89. Krishan Kumar points to the 1970s as invested, too, in ecological utopias: Ursula Le Guin and Ernest Callenbach are examples; "The Ends of Utopia," *New Literary History* 41.3 (2010): 558, 567, n. 30.

[13] It is the originator of the "Anthropocene" moniker, intriguingly, who has been encouraging of such proposals: Paul J. Crutzen, "Albedo Enhancement by Stratospheric Sulfur Injections: A Contribution to Resolve a Policy Dilemma?" *Climatic Change* 77.3–4 (2006): 211–19. On "trees," see Klaus S. Lackner et al., "The Urgency of the Development of CO_2 Capture from Ambient Air," *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences* 109.33 (2012): 13156–62.

[14] For historical discussion see James R. Fleming, *Fixing the Sky: The Checkered History of Weather and Climate Control* (New York: Columbia UP, 2010), 28–32, who gives a sobering overview of geoengineering in the history of weather and climate control (225–68). Scientific discussions include issues of *Climatic Change* (2006) and *Philosophical Transactions of the Royal Society A* (2008). See also Clive Hamilton, *Earthmasters: The Dawn of the Age of Climate Engineering* (New Haven: Yale UP, 2013), David Keith, *A Case for Climate Engineering* (Cambridge: MIT P, 2013), and Oliver Morton, *The Planet Remade: How Geoengineering Could Change the World* (London: Granta, 2015).

[15] Ursula K. Heise, *Imagining Extinction: The Cultural Meanings of Endangered Species* (Chicago: U of Chicago P, 2016), 215–20.

[16] The economist William Nordhaus, for example, calls the Copenhagen target of limiting global warming to 2°C above pre-industrial levels "utopian" because it cannot rely on universal participation; *The Climate Casino* (New Haven: Yale UP, 2013), 177–8. Yet the same charge has been leveled at his own portrait of an optimal climate scenario that relies largely on cost-benefit analysis: Jeroen C. J. M. van den Bergh, "Optimal Climate Policy is a Utopia: From Quantitative to Qualitative Cost-Benefit Analysis," *Ecological Economics* 48.4 (2004): 385–393. See also Marc Antrop, "Sustainable Landscapes: Contradiction, Fiction or Utopia?" *Landscape and Urban Planning* 75.3–4 (2006): 187–197.

[17] See Hjerpe and Linnér, "Utopian Thought," 164–8, "Utopian and Dystopian Thought in Climate Change Science and Policy," *Futures* 41.4 (2009): 234–245, and Jonas Anshelm and Martin Hultman, *Discourses of Global Climate Change: Apocalyptic Framing and Political Antagonisms* (London: Routledge, 2015), ch. 3.

[18] *Utopia*, trans. Clarence H. Miller (New Haven: Yale UP, 2001), 51, 96. This is perhaps a climatic extension of Jameson's observation about the trench—"the geopolitical secession of the Utopian space itself from the world of empirical or historical reality" that constitutes "the mark of [its] absolute totalization"—as "an extraordinary anticipation of the great public works projects of modern or socialist times" (39).

[19] *Utopia*, 56, 57, 80.

[20] *Utopia*, 53, 56. The Latin phrase is positive in the first instance, negative in the second: "quatenus per locum licet" (112); "quatenus loci natura non obstat" (114). More also comments on how Amaurot's main stream is walled off for protection, and "the water is channeled in tile conduits to the various districts in the lower parts of the city" except "[w]here the terrain makes this impossible [*Id sicubi locus fieri vetat*]" (57/118). Latin interpolated from *Utopia*, ed. George M. Logan, Robert M. Adams, and Clarence H. Miller (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1995).

[21] *Utopia*, 68. Fleming invokes Phaethon as a cautionary figure for climate engineering (16–18).

[22] *New Atlantis*, in *The Major Works*, ed. Brian Vickers (Oxford: Oxford UP, 2002), 471, 480–1.

[23] *New Atlantis*, 481.

[24] *New Atlantis*, 482.

[25] *New Atlantis*, 480, 481–2.

[26] Coleridge, "On the Prospect of Establishing a Pantisocracy in America," ll. 8–10; *The Complete Poems*, ed. William Keach (London: Penguin, 1997).

[27] For discussion see Mark R. Hillegas, "Victorian 'Extraterrestrials,'" *The Worlds of Victorian Fiction*, ed. Jerome H. Buckley (Cambridge: Harvard UP, 1975), 391–414.

[28] Fleming, 26. Bacon is here a foundational figure in weather modification (Fleming, 50–1). His natural philosophy was also recruited for limitless growth ideologies: see Fredrik Albritton Jonsson, "The Origins of Cornucopianism: A Preliminary Genealogy," *Critical Historical Studies* 1.1 (2014): 154–8.

[29] I draw these examples from Fleming, 26–33.

[30] Bulwer-Lytton, *The Coming Race*, 6th ed. (London: Blackwood, 1872), 45.

[31] Vickers points to Bacon's interest in the prolongation of life in *De augmentis scientiarum* and *Historia vitae et mortis* (*Major Works* 797, n.).

[32] Besant, *An Inner House* (Leipzig: Tauchnitz, 1888), 34.

[33] Besant, 33.

[34] Later American examples include John Goodridge, "Can the Temperature of the Atlantic States by Changed?" *Scientific American* 53 (1885): 280–3; and Travis Hoke, "Utopia by Thermometer," *The North American Review* 234.2 (1932): 110–116. On Jefferson see Gillen D'Arcy Wood, *Tambora: The Eruption that Changed the World* (Princeton: Princeton UP, 2014), 206–17.

[35] William G. Palmer, "Environment in Utopia: History, Climate, and Time in Renaissance Environmental Thought," *Environmental Review* 8.2 (1984): 162–178.

[36] Frank E. Manuel and Fritzie P. Manuel, *Utopian Thought in the Western World* (Cambridge: Harvard UP, 1979), 20. Wells, *A Modern Utopia* (London: Penguin, 2005), 11.

[37] Parenthetical references are to *After London, or Wild England* (Oxford: Oxford UP, 1980).

[38] The best account of Jefferies's influence on Morris remains Roger Ebbatson, "Visions of Wild England: William Morris and Richard Jefferies," *Journal of William Morris Studies* 3.3 (1987): 12–29, linking *After London* to *News from Nowhere* and the later romances and sagas.

[39] For an account of the nature writing in relation to *After London*'s style see John Plotz, "Speculative Naturalism and the Problem of Scale: Richard Jefferies's *After London*, after Darwin," *Modern Language Quarterly* 76.1 (2015): 39–40. Plotz suggests that Jefferies's later fiction owes its "fractured quality" to the "odd, beautiful, and elliptical essays" of his earlier period (34).

[40] This propensity to compare the evidence of earth systems with that of ancient traditions is seen in "Hours of Spring" (1886), where Jefferies contrasts European myths "of a former world destroyed by a deluge of water" with "the strange characters of the Zend [i.e., the Zoroastrian scripture also known as the Avesta]" and its "legend of an ark (as it were) prepared against the snow. It may be that it is the dim memory of a glacial epoch"; *Field and Hedgerow* (London: Longmans, Green, and Co., 1889), 15. Jefferies gives his own cast to this myth in a vision of catastrophe published posthumously and sometimes seen as a pair to *After London*'s flood, entitled "The Great Snow."

[41] According to computer simulations, these are probably the estuaries that would contribute to flooding in parts of England in the event of drastic sea-level rise. In an 1878/9 notebook, Jefferies reflects on the slow formation of another lake: "Deposited in 57 years: now geological time, do not think it was regularly deposited in the same amount every year but varied with the floods or drought, flood bringing down the earth of the uplands. Also varied by the water being sometimes diverted for water-meadows; and by the height of the lake water"; *The Nature Diaries and Note-Books of Richard Jefferies*, ed. Samuel Looker (London: Grey Walls P, 1948), 39.

[42] *Note-Books*, 161. Urban critique often blends with measured appreciation and a sense of the city's anti-natural contest in Jefferies. He notes, in 1887, "you cannot go back to Nature. How could the millions of London return to the fields?" (*Note-Books*, 279). He is "no back-to-the-lander who hated the metropolis" and had "no lingering nostalgia for any elements of medieval culture," as Caroline Sumpter notes in "Machiavelli Writes the Future: History and Progress in Richard Jefferies's *After London*," *Nineteenth-Century Contexts* 33.4 (2011): 320.

[43] *World's End* (London: Tinsley Brothers, 1877), 1:1–12, 1:8.

[44] Jefferies goes on: "The sewers system and the W.C. water. The ground prepared for the Cholera plague and fever, zymotic, killing as many as the plague" (*Note-Books* 181).

[45] For a perceptive account of waste in Haggard, Jefferies, and Morris see Natalka Freeland, "The Dustbins of History: Waste Management in Late Victorian Utopias," *Filth Dirt, Disgust, and Modern Life*, ed. William A. Cohen and R. Johnson (Minneapolis: U of Minnesota P, 2004), 225–249. Freeland identifies a "scatological tropology" in *After London* whereby the "intangibly dangerous weight of history is concretely embodied in its residue of human filth," establishing a "causal link between history and stagnation" (229). Jed Mayer points out that this aqueous downfall makes use of the "very element which facilitated global expansion of the British Empire": "A Darker Shade of Green: William Morris, Richard Jefferies, and Posthumanist Ecologies," *Journal of the William Morris Society* 19.3 (2011): 83.

[46] In "The Great Snow" Jefferies also mocks the "mighty city that defied nature and despised the conquered elements" (*After London*, Appendix, 248).

[47] For a reading of Jefferies along these lines see Sumpter, who leans on the unpublished "Machiavelli: A Study" (1877), differs from socialist readings that align Jefferies too closely with Morris, and shows the various influences (including Gibbon, Tylor, and Arnold) that make this return to barbarism "far from idyllic" (316). Another text not mentioned by Sumpter confirms Jefferies's interest in Machiavelli: the satirical pamphlet *Jack Brass, Emperor of England* (London: T. Pettitt and Co., 1873) frames its advice to a man of new fortune as "The Modern Prince" (3).

[48] Compare *World's End*: "Alexander the Great […] chancing to pass a landlocked harbour utterly neglected, saw at a glance its capabilities, and built a city which is renowned to this day" (1:13).

[49] Jefferies here embodies Jameson's observation that the "Utopian calling […] seems to have some kinship with that of the inventor in modern times, and to bring to bear some necessary combination of the identification of a problem to be solved and the inventive ingenuity with which a series of solutions are proposed and tested" (11), making utopia a "workshop" or "garage space" (14), the province of "home mechanics, inventions and hobbies," "puttering and active *bricolage*" (34).

[50] W. J. Keith notes Jefferies's own experience of the link between bad weather and agricultural depression in the 1870s (especially 1879), recorded in *Nature Near London*; see *Richard Jefferies: A Critical Study* (Toronto: U of Toronto P, 1965), 28. For an account of Jefferies and D. H. Lawrence on similar issues, see Rebecca Welshman, "Literature and the Ecological Imagination: Richard Jefferies and D. H. Lawrence," *Victorian Network* 3.1 (2011): 51–63.

[51] In addition to the ideology of *New Atlantis*, Felix fits the mold of *The Advancement of Learning*, where Bacon disavows "the applying of knowledge to lucre and profession" but points to historical examples of "a meeting and concurrence in learning and arms": Alexander the Great, Julius Caesar, and Xenophon (*Major Works*, 148, 127, 158–64). Thinking of the essay "Of Gardens," Jefferies elsewhere makes Bacon seem more like Constans. The hero of his last novel *Amaryllis at the Fair* (London: Sampson Low, 1887) has "a tinge of the Baconian culture, naturally, and not from any study of that author, whose books he had never seen. The great Bacon was, in fact, a man of orchard and garden, and gathered his ideas from the fields" (37). But in "Nature and Books" (1887), he issues a broader appeal: "Let us not be too entirely mechanical, Baconian, and experimental only; let us let the soul hope and dream and float on these oceans of accumulated facts, and feel still greater aspiration than it has ever known since first a flint was chipped before the glaciers" (*Field and Hedgerow*, 36).

[52] Julius Caesar makes an appearance in *The Story of My Heart: My Autobiography* (London: Longmans, Green, and Co., 1883) as the historical figure who "comes nearest to the ideal of a design-power arranging the affairs of the world for good in practical things" (85).

[53] As Sumpter puts it, "the rise of the city state and cycle of acquisition looks set to begin again" at end of novel (327).

[54] *World's End* 1:55.

[55] As Jesse Oak Taylor puts it, Jefferies envisions "the fossilized economy of modernity itself": *The Sky of Our Manufacture: The London Fog in British Fiction from Dickens to Woolf* (Charlottesville: U of Virginia P, 2016), 204.

[56] An allusion to the lines of Keats's "La Belle Dame Sans Merci"—"The sedge is withered from the lake, / And no birds sing"—that gave Rachel Carson the famous image of *Silent Spring*.

[57] As Matthew Beamont observes, Jefferies "presses the urban picturesque to its extreme" when envisioning the sublimity of depopulated London; "Socially Empty Space and Dystopian Utopianism in the Late Nineteenth Century," *Utopian Spaces of Modernism: British Literature and Culture, 1885–1945* ed. Rosalyn Gregory and Benjamin Kohlmann (Houndmills: Palgrave Macmillan, 2012), 22.

[58] Michael Schmidt, *The Novel: A Biography* (Cambridge: Harvard UP, 2014), 418–9. Or, as Plotz puts it, "What if you held an eco-apocalypse and nobody cared?" (40). Compare Mayer's vision of Jefferies's "ecogothic" ("Darker Shade of Green" 86–9).

[59] Plotz 40, 42; see 40–3 for a discussion of Jefferies's syncretic use of Darwinian notions. Compare Heidi C. M. Scott's account in *Chaos and Cosmos: Literary Roots of Modern Ecology in the British Nineteenth Century* (University Park: Pennsylvania State UP, 2014), 52–62, which reads Jefferies along the lines of "ecological succession" (53). Scott rightly emphasize "a narrative dynamic of the damaged world recovering toward something more whole and stable" (54) in Part I, but overextends this reading to see Part II as tending to a "deep-ecological mold" where Felix "founds his new green world on the principles of sustainability, community, and harmony" (61).

[60] Keith, 115.

[61] Darko Suvin, for instance, emphasizes "politicogeological devolution" and "neobarbarism" as Jefferies's contributions; *Metamorphoses of Science Fiction* (New Haven: Yale UP, 1979), 188, 193.

[62] Plotz, 33.

[63] The term "soul-thought" is from *The Story of My Heart* (24). In the context of both agricultural depression and rural modernization, Jefferies wrote frequently for the *Live Stock Journal* and similar venues. Keith notes that the publication of *The Story of My Heart* (1883) complicates Jefferies's subsequent nature

writing, noting the widening of emphasis between *Nature Near London* (1883) and later productions like *The Life of the Fields* (1884) (151–2). He quotes a review of the posthumous collection *Field and Farm* that labels Jefferies as "vague because mystical, and precise because practical. Having set down his intimations *de rerum natura*, he would turn away to analyse the contents of a rook's stomach" (21).

[64] Plotz, 44.

[65] *Note-Books* 138, 137.

[66] *Note-Books* 137, 84.

[67] *Note-Books* 225, 226. In more general vein, he states: "Natural selection a true cause modifying but not a sufficient cause to explain all phenomena. Climate a true cause but not sufficient" (250).

[68] *Note-Books* 241. A further example, from "Hours of Spring": "The bitter truth that human life is no more to the universe than that of the unnoticed hill-snail in the grass should make us think more and more highly of ourselves as human—as men—living things that think. We must look to ourselves and help ourselves. We must think ourselves into an earthly immortality" (*Field and Hedgerow*, 6).

[69] *Note-Books* 226. Jefferies adapts the Ruskinian notion of "help" in many diary entries at the end of his life (e.g., *Note-Books* 241). Compare also: "No kindness to man, from birth-hour to ending; neither earth, sky, nor gods care for him, innocent at the mother's breast. Nothing good to man but man. Let man, then, leave his gods and lift up his ideal beyond them" (*Field and Hedgerow*, 11).

[70] *Mrs. Dalloway* (London: Harcourt, 1981), 14.

[71] In William B. Meyer's thoughtful interpretation, Bellamy's utopia, the sequel *Equality*, and the journal he edited (*The New Nation*) promote accommodations to the environment by adaptation and social improvement, in distinction from most late-nineteenth-century visions of climate engineering in American techno-utopias, typified by William Dean Howells's romances about "Altruria." See "Edward Bellamy and the Weather of Utopia," *Geographical Review* 94.1 (2004): 43–54, especially 47–9.

[72] Patrick O'Sullivan summarizes several ecological readings in "Morris the Red, Morris the Green: A Partial Review," *Journal of the William Morris Society* 19.3 (2011): 22–38, tracing the tradition to Raymond Williams and E. P. Thompson. He offers his own readings in "Struggle for the Vision Fair: Morris and Ecology," *Journal of the William Morris Society* 8.4 (1999): 5–9, "The Ending of the Journey: William Morris, *News from Nowhere* and Ecology," *William Morris and News from Nowhere: A Vision for Our Time*, ed. Stephen Coleman and Patrick O'Sullivan (Hartland: Green Books, 1990), 169–181, and "¡Homenaje a Aragón!: *News from Nowhere*, Collectivisation, and the Sustainable Future," *Journal of the William Morris Society* 19.3 (2011): 93–111. In "An Aesthetic Ecocommunist: Morris the Red and Morris the Green," *William Morris: Centenary Essays*, ed. Peter Faulkner and Peter Preston (Exeter: U of Exeter P, 1996), 21–46, Florence Boos offers a foundation for later work: she surveys antecedents for Morris's environmental views in communitarian aspects of Christianity (Ambrose, More) and in nineteenth-century social reformers (24–7), and argues his connection to "'spiritual' ecologists, ecofeminists, socialist ecologists and advocates of environmental justice" (40).

[73] See Boos, "*News from Nowhere* and 'Garden Cities': Morris's Utopia and 19th-Century Town-Design," *The Journal of Pre-Raphaelite Studies* 7 (1998): 5–27, for further connections to Kropotkin and Howard, and "The Ideal of Everyday Life in William Morris' *News from Nowhere*," *The Literary Utopias of Cultural Communities, 1790–1910*, ed. Marguérite Corporaal and Evert Jan van Leeuwen (Amsterdam: Rodopi, 2010), 141–70, for Morris's "holist convictions that human fellowship is an intrinsic part of a larger flux of natural interrelations" (141). For further accounts of Morris's linking of environmentalist and socialist agendas, see Regenia Gagnier, "Morris's Ethics, Cosmopolitanism, and Globalisation," *Journal of the William Morris Society* 16.2/3 (2005): 9–30, Eddy Kent, "William Morris's Green Cosmopolitanism," *Journal of William Morris Studies* 19.3 (2011): 64–78; Bradley J. Macdonald, "William Morris and the Vision of Ecosocialism," *Contemporary Justice Review* 7.3 (2004): 287–304, and "Morris After Marcuse: Art, Beauty, and the Aestheticist Tradition in Ecosocialism," *Journal of William Morris Studies* 19.3 (2011): 39–49. On Morris and "Back to the Land" more specifically see Jan Marsh, *Back to the Land: The Pastoral Impulse in Victorian England, 1880–1914* (London: Quartet, 1982), ch.3, ch.9; Peter Gould, *Early Green Politics. Back to Nature, Back to the Land, and Socialism in Britain, 1880–1900* (Brighton: Harvester, 1989); John Payne, "William Morris: 'Back to the Land', Pessimism and Utopia," *Journal of the William Morris Society* 13.4 (2000): 48–56; and Martin Delveaux, "'O Me! O Me! How I Love the Earth': William Morris's *News from*

Nowhere and the Birth of Sustainable Society," *Contemporary Justice Review* 8.2 (2005): 131–146, especially 134–9.

[74] See O'Sullivan, "Struggle for the Vision Fair," Boos, "An Aesthetic Ecocommunist," Matthew Ingleby, "Utopian Bloomsbury: The Grounds for Social Dreaming in William Morris' *News from Nowhere*," in *Utopian Spaces of Modernism: British Literature and Culture, 1885–1945*, ed. Rosalyn Gregory and Benjamin Kohlmann (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2012), 89–90; Kent, 71–2; Macdonald, "Vision of Ecosocialism," 294–301.

[75] Mayer, "Darker Shade of Green," 84; Boos, "News from Nowhere and 'Garden Cities,'" 12; Kent, 73. Compare O'Sullivan: "a just about perfect description of an *ecological* society" ("Collectivisation," 94).

[76] Exceptions that attend to Morris's aesthetic qualities include Roger C. Lewis, "*News from Nowhere*: Arcadia or Utopia?," *Journal of the William Morris Society* 7.2 (1987): 15–25, Mayer, "William Morris and the Greening of Science," *Journal of Pre-Raphaelite Studies* 17 (2008): 56–76, and Elizabeth Carolyn Miller, "William Morris, Extraction Capitalism, and the Aesthetics of Surface," *Victorian Studies* 57.3 (2015): 395–404. Although not focusing on features as such, Macdonald gives a strong argument for the abiding aesthetic sense in Morris's environmental views: "To think that Morris's socialism could have only arisen through the reading of socialist texts or through political activism ignores the importance that an attachment to a 'critical notion of beauty' had not only on developing his political consciousness as a socialist but also in constituting his ecological vision" ("Vision of Ecosocialism," 294).

[77] O'Sullivan points to "alternative technology, renewable energy, simplicity of lifestyle, community self-reliance, production only for need, prolonging the life of goods in order to reduce resource depletion, reduction of waste, and above all the key role of what is defined as 'work' (for both men and women) in allowing us all to express our essential humanity in a free and sustainable society" ("Morris the Red, Morris the Green" 23); Dennis Bartels, "The Road to Nowhere: Morris, Utopia, and Global Climate Change," *Journal of William Morris Studies* 12.3 (1997), foresees through Morris a contemporary need for "dispersal of settlements and productive facilities into relatively small, self-sufficient units" (43); and Delveaux suggests that Morris echoes Herbert Girardet's principles of a sustainable city, with "the reduction and recycling of waste, the decentralization of the population and the provision of open spaces" ("Birth of Sustainable Society," 142). See also Paul Thompson, *Why William Morris Matters Today: Human Creativity and the Future World Environment* (London: William Morris Society, 1991), and Delveaux, "From Pastoral Arcadia to Stable-State Mini-Cities: Morris's *News from Nowhere* and Callenbach's *Ecotopia*," *Journal of William Morris Studies* 14.1 (2000): 75–81. Sara Wills is critical of this trend, pointing out that Morris's vision of nature is broadly anthropocentric and often draws on Christian tradition: see "Woods Beyond Worlds: The Greening of William Morris," *Australasian Victorian Studies* 7 (2001): 137–49, and "A Resource of Hope or a Religion No Longer Believed In? The Religious Nature of a 'Green' William Morris," *Journal of Religion & Society* 6 (2004): 1–28.

[78] Parenthetical references are to *News from Nowhere and Other Writings*, ed. Clive Wilmer (New York: Penguin, 1993).

[79] Ruth Kinna gives a good account of Morris's debt to More, as against more programmatic utopians like Fourier, in "The Relevance of Morris's Utopia," *The European Legacy* 9.6 (2004): 745–8. See also Kumar, "*News from Nowhere*: The Renewal of Utopia," *History of Political Thought* 14.1 (1993): 133–143. On the technology in Morris's utopia see Boos, "Ideal of Everyday Life," 150–1.

[80] For accounts of Morris as anticipating Herman Daly's development of the "steady-state" concept in ecological economics, see Delveaux, "From Pastorial Arcadia," and Adam Buick, "A Market by the Way: The Economics of Nowhere," in *William Morris and News from Nowhere*, 163–8.

[81] James Buzard, *Disorienting Fiction: The Autoethnographic Work of Nineteenth-Century British Novels* (Princeton: Princeton UP, 2005), 302.

[82] Buzard, 304.

[83] Freeland, 227, 240.

[84] Freeland 237, 241.

[85] Tony Pinkney, "The Dialectic of Nature in Nowhere," *Journal of the William Morris Society* 19.3 (2011): 55–8.

[86] *OED*, def. 8 and 1c.

[87] For a reading of hospitality in Morris, see Marcus Waithe, *William Morris's Utopia of Strangers: Victorian Medievalism and the Ideal of Hospitality* (Woodbridge: D. S. Brewer, 2006).

[88] Pinkney, "Dialectic of Nature," 50.

[89] Freeland describes Morris's "familiar rhetoric of destructive radicalism" in which "revolutionary social progress is essentially a clean-up project" (236).

[90] Lewis, 23. One of the few commentaries to focus on Morris's less cheerful strain is Payne.

[91] *OED*, def. 11.

[92] *William Morris: Political Writings, Contributions to Justice and Commonweal, 1883–1890*, ed. Nicholas Salmon (Bristol: Thoemmes, 1994), 26, 33 (emphasis original). See also "The Dull Level of Life": "it will be one of the chief aims of a socialized state to limit pleasureless labour to the uttermost" (*Political Writings*, 30)

[93] "Notes on Passing Events," *Commonweal* 5 June 1886: 73.

[94] *Political Writings*, 228. The same rhetoric is used in "Notes on News," *Commonweal* 26 February 1887: 65, and in *Signs of Change*, vol. 23 of *Collected Works* (New York: Russell and Russell, 1966), 9, 13, 94–6.

[95] For a related argument that reads the "work-famine" threat in relation to Victorian political economy, and the persistent threat of gluts, overproduction, and stagnation, see Freeland 238–9.

[96] For comments on Nowhere's imperial ambitions see Freeland 238–40.

[97] Pinkney sees Morris "hankering for more than the aesthetics of the beautiful allows, for a degree of physical turbulence and social upheaval" ("Dialectic of Nature," 59), and identifies such impulses with Ellen (59–61).

[98] Buzard, 309, 306.

[99] Buzard, 309.

[100] Buzard states that in Nowhere "desire and narrative remain possible only if they are strictly delineated from one another" (309).

[101] Buzard, 301. Ingleby points to the spatial specificity and localism of *News from Nowhere*, especially its portrayal of Bloomsbury, to argue that Morris's is "a world not transcendent of history" ("Utopian Bloomsbury," 93).

[102] "How We Live and How We Might Live" (*Collected Works* 23:26). Morris may also be tacitly responding to failures of intentional communities, such as those associated with Ruskin. For perceptive accounts of *News from Nowhere*'s place in *Commonweal* and late Victorian socialist print culture, see Elizabeth Carolyn Miller, *Slow Print: Literary Radicalism and Late Victorian Print Culture* (Stanford: Stanford UP, 2013), 32–81, and Christine Marie Woody, "The Newspaper and the Novel: William Morris's *News from Nowhere* in *Commonweal*," *Victorian Periodicals Review* 50.1 (2017): 139–156.

[103] Jameson, 15, 279; on the "enclave" see 15–18, and 187 (presenting Morris in these terms).

[104] Levitas, *The Concept of Utopia* (New York: Philip Allan, 1990).

[105] See Christine L. Corton, *London Fog: The Biography* (Cambridge: Belknap P of Harvard UP, 2015), 279–89, 297–314, on the event and the resultant Clean Air Act of 1956; and Taylor, 213–17.

[106] Letter to Georgiana Burne-Jones, 28 April 1885; *The Collected Letters of William Morris*, vol. 2, pt. B, ed. Norman Kelvin (Princeton UP, 1988), 406.

[107] UNESCO, World Heritage Convention, *Case Studies on Climate Change and World Heritage* (2007), quoted in Nordhaus, 111.