Editorial

This special double issue of *Colloquy: Text, Theory, Critique* arises from the *(Un)Ethical Futures: Utopia, Dystopia and Science Fiction* conference, held 15–17 December 2017 at the Monash University Law Chambers in Melbourne. The conference was organised by an interdisciplinary team of postgraduate students from Monash University and the University of Warwick, including *Colloquy* editors. Participants explored a wide range of topical issues in science fiction and utopian studies, with a strong emphasis on the ethical dimensions of these genres. Andrew Milner, Jacqueline Dutton and Nick Lawrence gave keynote speeches and participated in an introductory panel, with Meg Mundell, Sascha Morrell and Evie Kendal coming on board to run interactive workshops. In addition to these, the conference hosted 59 research papers and six creative writing presentations, given by postgraduate students, early career researchers, established academics, and independent researchers. The conference saw almost 100 attendees from around the world and feedback was overwhelmingly positive, with strong social media engagement on Twitter under the hashtag #utopias2017.

One of the central aims of the conference was to foster research relationships between Monash and Warwick—a goal realised in this special issue, which has been edited by a cross-institutional team of postgraduate students. We would like to thank Giulia Champion, Jung Ju Shin, Josh Bulleid and Sean Mulcahy for their hard work as associate editors on this issue.

The conference and this special issue would not have been possible without Monash Warwick Alliance grant funding; the editors would like to thank the Alliance

This special issue carries forward the conference's focus on the ethical dimensions of utopia, dystopia and science fiction with eight thought-provoking research articles and two original short stories, including contributions from conference participants and other researchers. It begins with Françoise Campbell's "Of Lost Kingdoms and Strange Moments," which explores Michel Houellebecq's *Les Particules élémentaires* (1998) and how its representation of a future neo-human species contributes to the novel's subjective utopianism and complex ethical positioning. Philip Braithwaite then takes us back to the classic British science fiction TV series *Blake's 7* (1978–1981), delving into the dystopian serial's political and ethical commentary within the context of the rise of Thatcherism.

Shifting to a framework of animal ethics and continental philosophy, João Vicente Faustino's "The Point of View of the Animal" reads Emma Geen's debut novel, *The Many Selves of Katherine North* (2016), with reference to Jacques Derrida, Emmanuel Levinas and Giorgio Agamben, finding in the novel a utopian conceptualisation of interspecies community that recognises the ethical significance of the animal other. Eleanor Smith's article then examines two influential (post-) apocalyptic novels, Nevil Shute's *On the Beach* (1957) and Cormac McCarthy's *The Road* (2006), through the lenses of size and scale, revealing the novels' shared commentary on our global connectedness in an age of crisis.

Freya Verlander's article analyses George Saunders's often-dystopian collection *Pastoralia* (2000) using Michael Thompson's *Rubbish Theory* (1979).

Verlander reads waste theory as central to the dystopian workplace environments in *Pastoralia* and outlines how the stories foreground rubbish and waste in many metaphorical and literal ways. Next, Ursula de Leeuw's "Messianic Nihilism in Gothic Horror" brings Walter Benjamin's conception of messianic time into dialogue with two well-known gothic texts, Mary Shelley's *Frankenstein* (1818) and Edgar Allan Poe's "The Man of the Crowd" (1840), which demonstrate a messianic nihilism in their images of horror.

Adam Lovasz explores Philip Reeve's *Mortal Engines Quartet* (2001–2006) through the lens of Alfredo Bonanno's notion of the propulsive dystopia. Lovasz sees propulsive dystopia as already being enacted within the tetralogy and the article discusses the novels as realising the possibility of deterritorialised subjectivity, using Félix Guattari to help theorise this. The final critical article, by Anne-Maree Wicks, examines the position of women writers within the New Weird and evaluates the way existing criticism remains indebted to H. P. Lovecraft and masculinist ideals. Focusing on Angela Carter's *The Infernal Desire Machines of Doctor Hoffman* (1972), Wicks analyses how women writing within the New Weird may subvert the Lovecraftian Weird tale ideal.

In the creative writing section, Jason Nahrung and Kane Simpson have contributed two very different science fiction short stories. Nahrung's futuristic "Stranded Assets" strongly evokes its Queensland setting and subtly engages with issues confronting contemporary Australia. The story also engages with broader issues, such as the role of technology and the pressures of parenthood. Simpson's "A Branching Narrative," meanwhile, offers a thought-provoking tale of the implications of cloning and subjectivity. The story follows Oliver, who accidentally clones himself, and explores the significance of this in relation to both the original and the clone, as well as their construction of selfhood.

We hope that you enjoy this special issue of *Colloquy*, which joins the ranks of the journal's earlier issues on utopia, dystopia and science fiction: *Changing the Climate* (issue 21, 2011), *Demanding the Impossible* (issue 17, 2009) and *The Futures of Utopia*

(issue 14, 2007). These past issues can be found on the *Colloquy* website and in the monash.figshare repository.

This issue is also our last as editors, having stepped down from the core *Colloquy* team earlier this year, while staying on as guest editors-in-chief. We have loved our time with the journal and look forward to watching its iteration under a new editorial team.

ZACHARY KENDAL *&* AISLING SMITH

Special issue editors-in-chief