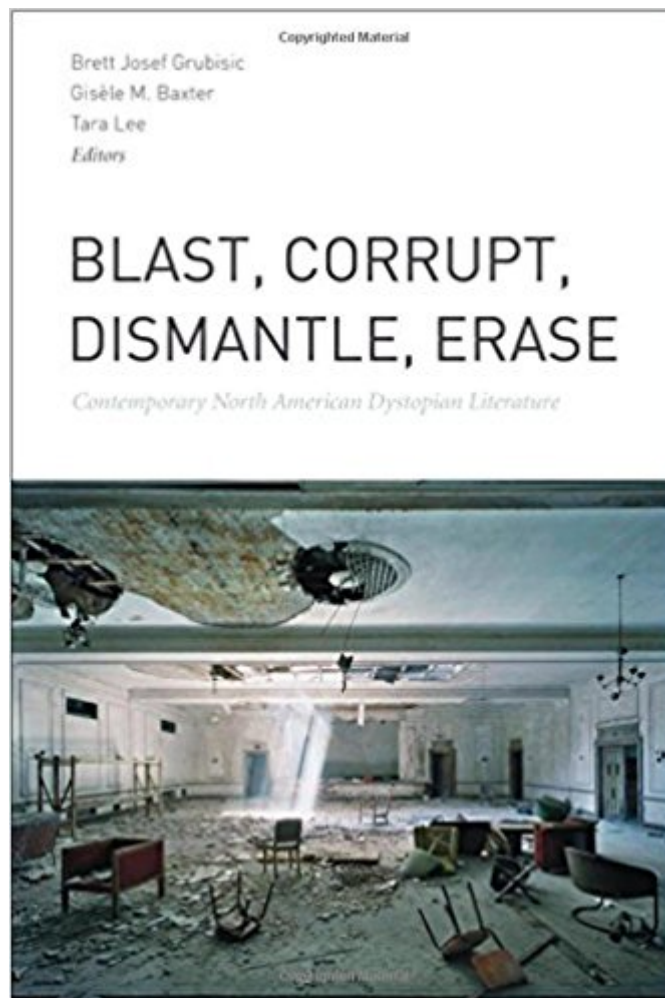




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Blast, Corrupt, Dismantle, Erase: Contemporary North American Dystopian Literature



Synopsis

What do literary dystopias reflect about the times? In *Blast, Corrupt, Dismantle, Erase*, contributors address this amorphous but pervasive genre, using diverse critical methodologies to examine how North America is conveyed or portrayed in a perceived age of crisis, accelerated uncertainty, and political volatility. Drawing from contemporary novels such as Cormac McCarthy's *The Road*, Neil Gaiman's *American Gods*, and the work of Margaret Atwood and William Gibson (to name a few), this book examines dystopian literature produced by North American authors between the signing of NAFTA (1994) and the tenth anniversary of 9/11 (2011). As the texts illustrate, awareness of and deep concern about perceived vulnerabilities—ends of water, oil, food, capitalism, empires, stable climates, ways of life, non-human species, and entire human civilizations—have become central to public discourse over the same period. By asking questions such as “What are the distinctive qualities of post-NAFTA North American dystopian literature?” and “What does this literature reflect about the tensions and contradictions of the inchoate continental community of North America?” *Blast, Corrupt, Dismantle, Erase* serves to resituate dystopian writing within a particular geo-social setting and introduce a productive means to understand both North American dystopian writing and its relevant engagements with a restricted, mapped reality.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

Blast, Corrupt, Dismantle, Erase edited by Brett Josef Grubisic, Gisèle M. Baxter, and Tara Lee, is a very highly recommended scholarly collection of essays on dystopian literature of North America.

Admittedly, Blast, Corrupt, Dismantle, Erase won't appeal to a broad general population, but, for readers with a literary bent who have traditionally enjoyed dystopian fiction and have been reading the new resurgence of titles and authors to the genre, this could stimulate some contemplation and discussions. Published in Canada by Wilfrid Laurier University Press, the twenty-six essays of Blast, Corrupt, Dismantle, Erase: Contemporary North American Dystopian Literature focus on works published by North American writers from January 1, 1994, the day NAFTA (the North American Free Trade Agreement) came into effect, to the tenth anniversary of the suicide attacks of September 11, 2001. Clearly with the number of titles being released that fit into the dystopian category, the publishing industry realizes that dystopian fiction is popular and that it "quickly eclipsed its utopian counterpart; with the brutal regimes and massive casualties of the twentieth century, Atwood remarks, depicting awful societies 'became much easier'""Whereas the World Economic Forum defines dystopia as an actual (and forthcoming) 'place where life is full of hardship and devoid of hope,' Margaret Atwood describes dystopias as real or imaginary 'Great Bad Places . . . characterized by suffering, tyranny, and oppression of all kinds'." Location 391 While some of the titles discussed in the essays are current popular YA fiction offerings, many are not. This would be a great foundational source for a college literature class on dystopian fiction.

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