

It Doesn't Have to Be This Way: Climate Justice for all - **Francine Maessen**
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Alistair Mackays novel *It doesn't have to be this way* presents an intersectional approach to the climate crisis. In this dystopian novel in which a possible future unfolds itself, Mackay not only pays attention to the more technical side of the climate crisis, but also to the effect this is going to have on different groups of people. Mackay introduces us to characters who are queer, are from different socio-economic backgrounds, people of different colours, different genders, and with different religious backgrounds.

In this talk I will discuss which intersections Mackay addresses and how they are woven into the story. I will show how the different perspectives in the story make intersectionality accessible for a large audience. I will also explain how the effect of the gradual and fragmentary timespan of the novel underscores the realism of the dystopian view of the future and the vulnerability of marginalised communities.

To me, this book is almost impossible to disconnect from my own climate activism. Besides doing work in academia, in literary studies, I am also a climate activist with (mostly) Extinction Rebellion. Because of this, I want to open up the conversation about how intersectionality as discussed in *It doesn't have to be this way* can be connected to the lived experience of activism. How are difficult concepts like intersectionality and climate justice talked about and experienced within the movement? How does that fit with Mackays novel? And can what role can the book play in strengthening these conversations?