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It tells me you have gone on, singing

What is the role of nature writing in the twenty-first century? Is it, as Henwood suggests, to bridge the divide between 'thinking' about climate crisis and 'feeling' it? The metaphor of the river is a powerful thread in Henwood's analysis and in the riverine writing of her two subjects, Rebecca Solnit and Kathleen Dean Moore. The site of the river is one of confluence, and in this era of ecological crisis in which we are living, the forces that meet there are not limited to our own histories or the histories of the place itself. The present and future are evident in 'the telling of the river' (Henwood) in the work of creative non-fiction, to engage our emotions and advocate for environmental action.

More than this, giving the river agency is a way of levelling the human/non-human playing field. The Hunter River (Coquun) runs through my own history and the history of the place in which my research focuses, along a timeline that moves through millennia. It carries stories of invasion, colonisation, industrial pollution and environmental vandalism, but its life-sustaining waters are always moving and shaping us somehow. It carries, like the rivers in Solnit and Moore's work, a sense of 'dual hope and darkness' (Henwood). In order to know where we are going, it is important to connect to where we came from.

References

Henwood, Daisy. 'Flow, form and feeling: reading Rebecca Solnit and Kathleen Dean Moore's Riverine writing in an era of ecological crisis', *Comparative American Studies*, 2021, vol.18, no.1, pp.75-91.