

ANTARCTICA IN FICTION

This comprehensive analysis of literary responses to Antarctica examines the rich body of texts that the continent has provoked over the last three centuries, focussing particularly on narrative fiction. Novelists as diverse as Edgar Allan Poe, James Fenimore Cooper, Jules Verne, H. P. Lovecraft, Ursula Le Guin, Beryl Bainbridge and Kim Stanley Robinson have all been drawn artistically to the far south. The continent has also inspired genre fiction, including a Mills and Boon novel, a Phantom comic and a Biggles book, as well as countless lost-race romances, espionage thrillers and horror-fantasies. *Antarctica in Fiction* draws on these sources, as well as film, travel narratives and explorers' own creative writing. It maps the far south as a space of the imagination and argues that only by engaging with this space, in addition to the physical continent, can we understand current attitudes towards Antarctica.

Elizabeth Leane is a senior lecturer in English literature at the University of Tasmania. She is author of *Reading Popular Physics: Disciplinary Skirmishes and Textual Strategies* (2007) and editor of *Considering Animals: Contemporary Studies in Human-Animal Relations* (2011) with Carol Freeman and Yvette Watt.

ANTARCTICA IN FICTION

Imaginative Narratives of the Far South

ELIZABETH LEANE

University of Tasmania



CAMBRIDGE
 UNIVERSITY PRESS

University Printing House, Cambridge CB2 8BS, United Kingdom
 One Liberty Plaza, 20th Floor, New York, NY 10006, USA
 477 Williamstown Road, Port Melbourne, VIC 3207, Australia
 314-321, 3rd Floor, Plot 3, Splendor Forum, Jasola District Centre, New Delhi - 110025, India
 79 Anson Road, #06-04/06, Singapore 079906

Cambridge University Press is part of the University of Cambridge.
 It furthers the University's mission by disseminating knowledge in the pursuit of
 education, learning and research at the highest international levels of excellence.

www.cambridge.org
 Information on this title: www.cambridge.org/9781107020825

© Elizabeth Leane 2012

This publication is in copyright. Subject to statutory exception
 and to the provisions of relevant collective licensing agreements,
 no reproduction of any part may take place without the written
 permission of Cambridge University Press.

First published 2012
 First paperback edition 2015

A catalogue record for this publication is available from the British Library

Library of Congress Cataloging in Publication data
 Leane, Elizabeth.

Antarctica in fiction : imaginative narratives of the far south / Elizabeth Leane.
 p. cm.

Includes bibliographical references and index.
 ISBN 978-1-107-02082-5 (hardback : alk. paper)
 1. Antarctica—In literature. I. Title.
 PN56.3.A65L43 2012
 809'.9332989—dc23
 2012008821

ISBN 978-1-107-02082-5 Hardback
 ISBN 978-1-107-50771-5 Paperback

Cambridge University Press has no responsibility for the persistence or
 accuracy of URLs for external or third-party internet websites referred to in
 this publication, and does not guarantee that any content on such websites is,
 or will remain, accurate or appropriate.

Cambridge University Press
978-1-107-02082-5 — Antarctica in Fiction
Elizabeth Leane
Frontmatter
[More Information](#)

For Damian

Contents

<i>List of figures</i>	<i>page</i> viii
<i>Acknowledgements</i>	ix
Introduction	i
1. Speculative Visions of the South Polar Regions	22
2. Bodies, Boundaries and the Antarctic Gothic	53
3. Creative Explorations of the Heroic Era	84
4. The Survival Value of Literature at High Latitudes	111
5. The Transforming Nature of Antarctic Travel	133
6. Freezing Time in Far Southern Narratives	153
Coda	180
<i>Notes</i>	183
<i>Bibliography</i>	211
<i>Index</i>	237

Figures

1. 'Attacked by bears'. Illustration from William Kingston's <i>At the South Pole</i> .	page 13
2. World map from Joseph Hall's <i>Mundus alter et idem</i> (Vltraiecti (Utrecht): Apud Joannem à Waesberge, 1643).	28
3. Illustration of the whirlpool scene from <i>Australis, or, the City of Zero</i> , from a souvenir programme accompanying the performance.	37
4. Illustration from William Earl Johns's <i>Biggles Breaks the Silence</i> .	44
5. Photograph of scene from the Berlin performance of Reinhard Goering's play <i>Die Südpolexpedition des Kapitäns Scott</i> , published in the <i>Graphic</i> , 8 March 1930, 369.	90
6. George Marston reading in bed during Ernest Shackleton's <i>Nimrod</i> expedition.	113
7. Sketch from the diary of Sydney Jones, a member of the Australasian Antarctic Expedition.	115
8. The cast of <i>Ticket of Leave</i> .	127

Acknowledgements

There are many people I would like to thank for their contributions to the development of this book.

Polar librarians and archivists have been generous with their time and knowledge. In particular, I am grateful to Andie Smithies and Graeme Watt at the Australian Antarctic Division library; Shirley Sawtell, Heather Lane and Hilary Shibata at the Scott Polar Research Institute, University of Cambridge, where I spent a productive few weeks as a visiting scholar; Mark Pharaoh at the Mawson Collection, South Australian Museum; Lynn Lay at the Goldthwait Polar Library, Byrd Polar Research Centre; and the staffs of the Mitchell Library, State Library of New South Wales; Canterbury Museum, Christchurch; and the Alexander Turnbull Library, National Library of New Zealand. My time as a visiting researcher at Gateway Antarctica, University of Canterbury, was highly useful, and the researchers there, including Bryan Storey, Michelle Rogan-Finnemore and Daniela Liggett, made me very welcome. An enthusiastic community of book collectors, bibliographers, writers, researchers and expeditioners have offered suggestions, information, advice and productive conversation. They include Jesse Blackadder, Joan Booth, Adrian Caesar, Lester Chaplow, Christy Collis, Craig Cormick, Bill Fox, Elena Glasberg, Chris Gosling, Tom Griffiths, Stephen Haddesley, Robert Headland, Bernadette Hince, Nicholas Johnson, Max Jones, Valmar Kurol, Bill Manhire (who provided very useful feedback and kindly allowed me to reprint his poem 'Visiting Mr Shackleton'), Peter Morse, Sarah Moss, Robyn Mundy, Steve Nicol, Lisa Roberts, Heather Rossiter, Lyman Tower Sargeant, Ann Savours, Barbara Smith, Robert Stephenson, Rupert Summerson and Lynn Willshire. Special thanks are due to the late Fauno Cordes, who provided me with lists of new titles early in my research, always signing off with her cheerful advice, 'carry on!'; Laura Kay, who more recently has kept me up to date with new publications and generously sent me a number of titles; and Gordon Bain, who made his extensive library of Antarctic fiction available to me.

Many colleagues and students at the University of Tasmania have contributed to the evolution of this book through lending expertise and encouragement, including Paul Burton (who advised me on classical Greek texts), Marcus Haward, Julia Jabour, Lorne Kriwoken, Guinevere Narraway (who helped with German texts) and Andrew Saunders. Karen van Druuten provided helpful advice at a pivotal point in my research. The collegial atmosphere in the School of English, Journalism and European Languages has been a significant benefit; in particular, Ralph Crane, Lisa Fletcher, Lucy Frost, Anna Johnston, Helen Tiffin and Danielle Wood have given advice and support over the years of the book's development. Coffees, walks and chats with Ian Murray have been an important and enjoyable part of my research process. I have had the benefit of not one but two excellent research assistants: Stephanie Pfennigwerth and Anna Lucas. Both have a deep knowledge of and enthusiasm for the Antarctic regions; both have helped me to develop my ideas; and both have gone well beyond the call of duty in helping me research and prepare the book.

While, as Stephen Pyne notes, it is not necessary to travel to Antarctica to study its literature, my voyage to Casey Station and Macquarie Island as an Australian Antarctic Arts Fellow added an important dimension to my research and confirmed my fascination for the region. The expeditioners who travelled with me on the *Aurora Australis* were unfailingly friendly and interested in my project. I am grateful to the Australian Antarctic Division for providing me with this unique opportunity.

This project also received considerable support from the Australian Research Council through their Discovery Projects funding scheme. This enabled many activities – in particular, travel to libraries and archives – which otherwise would have been difficult. I am very appreciative of this financial assistance.

Cambridge University Press has made the publication process a smooth and enjoyable experience. In particular, I would like to acknowledge Linda Bree, Gillian Dadd, Marielle Poss, Maartje Scheltens and Andrea Wright. Madeleine Davis and Bindu Vinod also assisted me with aspects of the production process.

Lastly, I would like to thank my family, especially my parents, Peter and Christine, who are always encouraging and do their fair share of proof-reading; my children, Zachary and Tessa, who are a constant source of joy; and my husband, Damian, who triggered my interest in the Antarctic region, and who has been unstintingly patient and supportive. This book is dedicated to him.

Sections of this book draw on previously published research. Parts of Chapter 1 are taken from 'Romancing the Pole: A Survey of

Acknowledgements

xi

Nineteenth-Century Antarctic Utopias', *ACH: The Journal of the History of Culture in Australia* 23 (2004): 147–71, and 'Antarctica as a Scientific Utopia', *Foundation: The International Review of Science Fiction* 32.3 (Autumn 2003): 27–35. The analysis of 'Who Goes There?' in Chapter 2 was originally published in 'Locating the Thing: The Antarctic as Alien Space in John W. Campbell's "Who Goes There?"', *Science Fiction Studies* 32.2 (2005): 225–39. The section on Oates in Chapter 3 appears in a slightly different form in *Imagining Antarctica: Cultural Perspectives on the Southern Continent*, ed. Ralph Crane, Elizabeth Leane and Mark Williams (Hobart: Quintus, 2011), 42–54. Chapter 4 incorporates small sections of 'Isolation, Connectedness and the Uses of Text in Heroic-Era Antarctica: The Cases of Inexpressible and Elephant Islands', *Island Studies Journal* 2.1 (2007): 47–56, and the discussion of the performance of *Ticket of Leave* is drawn from 'Antarctic Theatricals: The Frozen Farce of Scott's First Expedition', *Theatre Notebook: A Journal of the History and Technique of the British Theatre* 57 (2003): 143–57. Sections of Chapter 6 first appeared in 'The Land that Time Forgot: Fictions of Antarctic Temporality' in *Futurescapes: Space in Utopian and Science Fiction Discourses*, ed. Ralph Pordzik (Amsterdam: Rodopi, 2009), 199–223. I am grateful to the publishers and editors of these works for giving me permission to reprint this material.