In this essay, I set Barbara Kingsolver's *Animal, Vegetable, Miracle: A Year of Food Life* into a context that includes Gary Paul Nabhan's *Coming Home to Eat: The Pleasures and Politics of Local Foods*; Michael Pollan's *Omnivore's Dilemma: A Natural History of Four Meals*; and Eric Schlosser's *Fast Food Nation*. By focusing on local foods, each of these authors raise complex questions for environmental writers and critics including the following: Must environmental writers, critics, or activists, find a local place to which they are willing to commit? Is it even possible in the modern world to live out your life in one place, or have a commitment to one place? Do traditional definitions of "sense of place" continue to be meaningful in the global age? Should environmental writing and criticism reflect, focus or redirect the proliferation of ecodiscourses away from place as it is traditionally understood, and towards an awareness of global ecological developments such as climate change? Building on the work of ecocritics Lawrence Buell and Ursula Heise and anthropologist Arun Appadurai, I analyze how Animal, Vegetable, Miracle, with its focus on Kingsolver's small farm in Virginia, advances the spirited recent discussions surrounding place studies and literary concepts of "sense of place." I explore how Kingsolver’s latest book is providing approaches to food production, energy conservation, and climate change that both build upon the best characteristics of conventional eco-localist nonfiction while reimagining the meaning of "sense of place" in the context of globalizing processes.

Climate change has been a political issue in America for almost my entire life—James Hansen first testified to the reality of global warming before the Senate in 1988—but the prospects for the planet keep getting worse. At first, climate change was discussed as a distant problem, something to fix for future generations. Climate change will be so central to human life and global politics in the coming years, Mann and Wainwright argue, that the response to it will shape the entire future world order, not merely the statements that issue out of the United Nations at the end of every year. If the left is to play a part in shaping this new world, they continue, it needs to think seriously about the “political tools, strategies, and tactics” at its disposal. But we’re not. Instead, the effects on cities tend to be edited out or statistically minimized. Ashley Dawson | Extreme Cities: The Peril and Promise of Urban Life in the Age of Climate Change | Verso | October 2017 | 17 minutes (4,461 words). This story is recommended by Longreads contributing editor Dana Snsitzky. The result has been a fascination with apocalypse, sometimes related to the overarching crisis of climate change, and sometimes of a more imaginative variety: ubiquitous zombies, global pandemics, tidal waves, flash freezes, famines. In the cities of the global South, one third to a half of the urban population lives in informal settlements. Residents of these unplanned zones face highly difficult conditions in their struggle to survive.