ForeWord Reviews
Clarion Review

Global Warming
Raleigh Bruce Barlowe
CreateSpace
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Three Stars (out of Five)

A novel can be an outstanding platform to educate and inform readers. The novelists Arthur Hailey, James Michener, and Michael Crichton wrote bestselling books that informed readers about a range of subjects. Their works provide readers with masses of information about history, geography, science, business procedures, and other subjects. The educational material never overshadows story or character. The reader is both entertained and educated.

In contrast to the works of the aforementioned authors, *Global Warming* by Raleigh Bruce Barlowe is afflicted with extensive exposition of facts and figures and large portions of unnecessary backstory, plus speeches that are obvious author intrusions disguised as dialogue. Set in the distant future of 2216, the novel follows the lives of three characters, Professor Colin Campbell, reporter Bob Maxton, and Deputy Chief of National Intelligence Frank Ryan. Their lives become interwoven as each proves instrumental in protecting a metamorphic Earth and its people, who have just begun to renew themselves following ecological disasters seemingly caused by global warming. Campbell, Maxton, and Ryan are thrown head first into a conspiracy that involves a smart and environmentally friendly business plan of acquiring, transporting, and selling needed topsoil; the hidden agenda of a cocaine cartel; a new religious group and its prophet; and the plotting of a militant Islamic terrorist cell.

The novel opens with Professor Campbell having lunch with three other professors to discuss an upcoming conference they plan to attend called “250 Years of Global Warming.” The author addresses the topic of global warming through the professors’ expertise on history, sociology, nuclear science, or finance. For example, Andrew Carter, a professor of sociology, discusses how global warming has radically changed their society. Barlowe writes, “The world has had plenty of experience with famines, holocausts, the slaughter of war, and visitation by plagues, but none before ever compared with the losses of life caused by Heat I, Heat II and the Green Mold…the world’s population soared to around nine or ten billion…Heats I and Heat II killed more than two-thirds of the world’s people…But then came the Green Mold, which struck everywhere and wiped out two-thirds of those who were left.”

Barlowe’s use of the professors to express the pros and cons of global warming is clever,

but his characters' dialogue sounds more like a commentary on the impact of global warming on the planet. Some exposition is important, but it should not dominate the story. *Global Warming* contains some great ideas, including an intricate plot with wonderful potential. If only it read more like a novel and less like a textbook.

Lee Gooden