

you are here: the journal of creative geography
2021 issue: "bodies & politics"
call for submissions

[N]on-innocent bodies are caught up in each other's conditions of life support and diminishment. From the epidermal schema of anti-Black racism to the heteropatriarchy of gender, bodies are already caught in painful and contradictory matrixes of support and negation...Embodiment is a collective binding of profoundly uneven relations... - Michelle Murphy

...sometimes to walk the street, to exercise that small freedom, poses a challenge to a certain regime, a minor performative disruption enacted by a kind of motion that is at once a movement in that double sense, bodily and political. - Judith Butler



What is the significance of the body in the present political moment? What kinds of politics are imaginable...

...when bodies, their proximities and mundane interactions, appear as a source of contagion and a newfound threat to life?

...when streets are filled for months with protestors chanting "I can't breathe" – pointing both to the lethal outcomes of police brutality and the suffocating, intergenerational trauma of being Black in an anti-Black society?

...when wildfires are choking the lungs of cities and the bodies of those who cannot escape into privileged, purified enclosures?

...when borders and the 'outsiders' they produce dominate national imaginations, marking borders as sites of embodied striving, violence, and political struggle?

...when concerted political and legislative movements are determined to curtail the agency of women's bodies, define trans bodies out of existence, and strip the humanity from countless others?

...when the body politic is contorting and tearing from the mounting pressure of these compounding violences?

In different ways, these moments from 2020 all return us to the complicated fact of our embodiment – prompting us to reconsider and resituate the body as a politicized and political space, one contoured by its uneven relations and entanglements with the wider world. These moments underscore that, to quote feminist science and technology studies scholar Michelle Murphy, "The individualized body, as given to us by Western liberal political structures, as a container for rights, labor, risks, capital, and biological processes, will not do." Rather, the body is extensive – an intimate, sensory medium that *grounds* us in the materiality of life, *connects* us with past histories and

idealized futures, *binds* us to or *excludes* us from collective forms of belonging, and *entangles* us in myriad unequal relations with other humans and the more-than-human world.

In this issue of *you are here*, we invite creative works that explore the present political moment (however defined) from the standpoint of the body. We are interested in the body not simply as a container or the body as a self, but rather the body as a fleshy, permeable site of politics that is situated, relational, collective, and always becoming. In centering the body, we reach toward the past, toward memory, trauma, and embodied histories and geographies, while gesturing toward the possibilities of other ways of being and becoming. We invite submissions that dare to imagine future bodies by conjuring new ways of relating to one another and new forms of embodied practice and solidarity to reproduce human life in more imaginative, less violent ways.

With these reflections serving as a starting point, we invite submissions engaging with the following guiding questions:

- How is the present moment troubling our individual and collective sense of embodiment?
- How can we think about the relations between bodies and politics amidst a pandemic, ongoing racial injustice and state violence, democratic instability, unfolding climate and environmental crises, and the everyday violence of hunger, eviction, and social inequality?
- How are you (and others) experiencing the body as a site of political affects, effects and potentials?
- How can a turn toward the materiality of the body (as sensing, fleshy, breathing, and excreting, as biochemically and ecologically embedded and altered) reshape our engagements with various ecologies and unfolding environmental crises? With the politics of scientific knowledge and expertise? With fights for social and environmental justice?
- How is the body more than the self? How do bodies become entwined – unevenly – in the process of meeting their needs and wants, sometimes in relations of support and at other times, harm?
- How can we represent bodies in crisis in ways that resist the logics of colonialism, racism, ableism, sexism, heteronormativity, capitalism and other normalizing frames?
- What kind of embodied or bodily politics is required of the present political, cultural, and ecological circumstances, however you choose to define that?

We invite creative engagements with these guiding questions (and others!) for the upcoming issue of *you are here: the journal of creative geography*, which will appear online and in print. *you are here* encourages submissions from geographers, historians, anthropologists, architects, scientists, writers, artists, activists and anyone else interested in exploring creative geography. We are particularly excited to engage critical perspectives on these themes, including but not limited to those drawing from feminist, decolonial, Black, Latinx, anti-racist, queer, trans, and disability scholarship, identities, and cultures. We will review and accept submissions in the form of poetry, creative writing, photography, visual art, film, creative cartography, audio/sonic art, interactive digital works, animation, and other imaginable genres. As a journal of creative geography, we are especially

interested in works that engage other geographic themes (in addition to the annual theme), including space, place, and environment.

Submissions are due January 12, 2021, by the end of the day. For details of submission guidelines and process, please visit our website (youareheregeography.com). Submissions will be peer-reviewed by graduate students in geography and the arts. Due to limited space, we cannot accept all submissions for publication.

If you are inspired to respond to this call, please do not hesitate to reach out with any questions or ideas to youarehere.arizona@gmail.com. We are happy to discuss possible submissions with you or answer any questions about submissions formats and the submission process.

ABOUT THE JOURNAL

you are here: the journal of creative geography is published by graduate students in the School of Geography, Development & Environment at the University of Arizona. The journal is an annual publication that seeks to explore geographic themes through articles, fiction, poetry, essays, maps, photographs, and other art forms.

This year, the editors of *you are here* are [Emma Lawlor](#) and [Eden Kinkaid](#).