



April 19, 2018

Call for Submissions

### **Mediating Art and Science**

A thematic stream for the journal *Media+Environment*, which revisits the intellectual and communicative barriers once posited between the “two cultures” of the sciences and the humanities via the new synchronies presented by environmentally oriented arts and media; edited by Alenda Chang and Adrian Ivakhiv. “Mediating Art and Science” is the second stream to be slated for publication in *Media+Environment*.

*Media+Environment* is a new journal of transnational and interdisciplinary ecomedia research, founded on the premise that media and environment is a crucial conjunction for our time. Peer-reviewed, open access, and published online by the University of California Press, the journal is the first not only to center environmental media criticism and creative scholarship but also to ensure that this vital work is widely and publicly accessible. Editors: Alenda Chang (alenda@ucsb.edu) and Janet Walker (jwalker@ucsb.edu), University of California, Santa Barbara; Adrian Ivakhiv ([aivakhiv@uvm.edu](mailto:aivakhiv@uvm.edu)), University of Vermont. Founding sponsors: the Carsey-Wolf Center at the University of California, Santa Barbara, and the University of Vermont. <https://mediaenviron.org/>.

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In his 1959 Rede lecture at Cambridge, scientist-turned-novelist C.P. Snow famously described a methodological and conceptual rift between literary intellectuals on the one hand, and scientists on the other. Snow ventured to classify humanists as past-facing, “natural Luddites” who are slow to change, while scientists, he explained, may seem shallowly optimistic to outsiders but in reality have “the future in their bones.” On the fiftieth anniversary of the lecture in 2009, many an author was quick to proclaim that the rift had only widened, in part due to the growing ambit of scientific research and increasing specialization, and in part due to alarming reports of scientific illiteracy and skepticism among general citizens. Yet a host of environmentally oriented humanistic fields, from ecomedia studies and literary ecocriticism to “artscience,” demonstrate promising signs of reconciliation and cross-fertilization across the humanities and sciences. In the meantime, science is arguably more public than it has ever been, communicated via television specials, feature films, YouTube channels, Twitter accounts, records, podcasts, and a myriad of new forms.

With this call, we hope to better articulate media’s place in the supposedly longstanding discontinuity between the arts and the sciences—to use media studies’ conventional expertise in technology, audience, communication, and design to bridge Snow’s incommensurate disciplines. This thematic bundle is also an impetus to drive media studies out of doors, so to speak, to engage more fully with urgent environmental issues ranging from climate change and biodiversity loss to mounting burdens of waste and contamination. As Sarah Kember and Joanna

Zylinska have productively argued, media scholars ought not attend to media solely as objects or artifacts, but also as lively processes of mediation. The belated acknowledgment that media are never isolated from their environments is grim yet salutary; Alenda Chang has argued that Jay David Bolter's and Richard Grusin's foundational concept of remediation may be productively expanded to consider environmental remediation—to treat not only mass media, but natural media, including our bodies, as conduits, and the capacity for media forms of all kinds to transform or even ameliorate a degraded socio-ecological status quo.

In this vein, this themed issue of the transdisciplinary ecomedia journal *Media+Environment* seeks contributors to a prospective issue on media's relationship to the historical "two cultures" of science and the humanities.

Topics may include but are not limited to:

- How do ecomedia initiatives (both theoretical and applied) navigate between the two Snowian cultures (of artists/humanists and of scientists/professionals)?
- How have scientists turned to art and media forms (social media, games, virtual reality, and so on) not only to express their identities, research, and culture, but also to formulate and wrestle with scientific problems? How might this relate to institutional and funding mandates for public outreach and changing standards for scientific professionalization?
- How do artists and media practitioners incorporate science in their work, whether through method, materials (e.g. biomimicry), or site (for instance, through programs that place artists in scientific research centers)?
- Where do media belong in relation to the growth of transdisciplinary "artscience," "SciArt," and eco-humanities initiatives? Is it sufficient to define both "art" and "science" broadly, with "art" including the humanities and design, performance, and media arts, and with "science" including the natural and social sciences, engineering, and computer science? Are media the third cultures that might help to move artscience discoveries beyond the equally rarefied spaces of the lab and studio?
- What are recent challenges to conventional representation, from nonoptical imaging to speculative encounters with deep time or distant futures?
- How have artists, scientists, and/or media practitioners collaborated across disciplines to communicate or visualize contemporary environmental challenges? To engage community needs or movements?

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We look forward to receiving submissions of up to 7,000 words in length, accompanied by abstracts (<300 words) and author bios (<100 words) by **June 30, 2019** through the journal's online system: <https://mediaenviron.org/>. Submissions will be peer-reviewed through a double-blind process. Please see the website under About/Submissions for author guidelines.