

Air and
Environmental Health
in the (Post-)COVID-19 World

FWF Österreichischer
Wissenschaftsfonds



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“Air and Environmental Health in
the (Post-)COVID-19 World”

SYMPOSIUM

Air Matters

ORGANIZED BY
TATIANA KONRAD &
SAVANNAH SCHAUFLE

KEYNOTE SPEAKERS
JEFF DIAMANTI &
HSUAN L. HSU

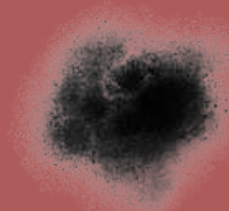
21
NOVEMBER
2025

3–7PM CET

FREE AND OPEN TO ALL



	Friday, November 21, 2025
3:00pm – 3:30pm (CET)	Opening Remarks <i>Tatiana Konrad & Savannah Schaufler</i>
3:10pm – 3:30pm (CET)	Keynote Talk Chair: Tatiana Konrad “Remembering Air” <i>Jeff Diamanti (University of Amsterdam, NLD)</i>
3:30pm – 4:20pm (CET)	Flash Talks: Pandemic Frames: Histories, Spaces, Impacts Chair: Savannah Schaufler • “Haruka Sakaguchi and Marvin Heiferman: Photography and Living through the COVID-19 World” <i>Corey Dzenko (Monmouth University, USA)</i> • “The Importance of ‘Open Air’ for Health: Environmental and Medical Intersections” <i>Clare Hickman (Newcastle University, UK)</i> • “Considerations of Post-Pandemic Life” <i>Jasmine B. Ulmer & James Salvo (Wayne State University, USA)</i> • “COVID-19 at the Zoo: Racial Capitalism, Immunity, and the Zoo” <i>Ishaan Selby (Concordia University, CA)</i>
4:20pm – 4:35pm (CET)	Book Series: Insights from Editors Chair: Tatiana Konrad • “Environment, Health, and Well-being” (Michigan State University Press) <i>Tatiana Konrad, Series Editor</i> • “Environment, Senses and Emotions” (University of Exeter Press) <i>Becky Taylor, Commissioning Editor</i>
4:35pm – 4:50pm (CET)	BREAK



4:50pm –
5:50pm
(CET)

Flash Talks:

Ecologies of Justice: Breathing, Creating, Speculating

Chair: Savannah Schaufler

- “Material Flows in Landscapes of Injustice”
Nikiwe Solomon (*University of Cape Town, SA*)
- “Future Tense: The Role of Race, Risk, and Environmental Justice”
Helen Bond (*Howard University, USA*)
- “A Deep, Slow, Strenuous Breath: Art in the Shadows of Capitalist World-Ecologies”
Raphaelle Occhietti (*University of Guelph, CA*)
- “Thinking over the Airwaves: Immediate Connection in Geoff Ryman’s *Air* and Tade Thompson’s *The Wormwood Trilogy*”
Arthur Rose (*University of Exeter, UK*)

5:50pm –
6:00pm
(CET)

Art Intermezzo

Chair: Tatiana Konrad

- “Transcribing Our Weathers”
Becky Lyon (*Independent Artist, Goldsmiths, University of London, UK*)

6:00pm –
6:15pm
(CET)

BREAK

6:15pm –
6:50pm
(CET)

Keynote Talk

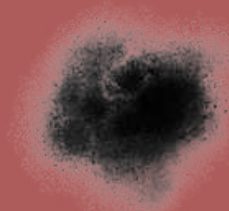
Chair: Tatiana Konrad

“Smell, Worldmaking, and Health”
Hsuan L. Hsu (*University of California, Davis, USA*)

6:50pm –
7:00pm
(CET)

Closing Remarks

Tatiana Konrad & Savannah Schaufler



Project: Air and Environmental Health in the (Post-)COVID-19 World

Funder: Austrian Science Fund (FWF)

Principal Investigator: Tatiana Konrad

Project Overview

This project explores air from two distinct perspectives: pollution and pandemics. While air pollution has been an issue for centuries, it is through the COVID-19 pandemic that humanity worldwide has acutely and concurrently recognized the physical presence of air. The largely airborne virus has made air dangerous, whereas such phenomena as masks, social distancing, and significantly reduced social interaction—key tools in fighting the spread of the virus—further emphasize the polluted nature of air. This interpretation parallels environmental views on air pollution as a critical global threat.

Moreover, the project examines the role of racism in perpetuating current environmental and health crises and, through race, engages with the problem of environmental justice. The project raises several concerns: How does the virus challenge and emphasize the idea of air being polluted? How does wearing masks correlate with filtering air, protecting air, and believing in clean air? How does social distancing both help fight the spread of the disease and generate the myth that we can partition air, and thus do not breathe common air? How can the danger of air infected with the virus help reinforce the alarming nature of environmental degradation, including through air pollution, and mobilize humanity to work toward a healthier environment?

The project examines the changing meanings of air through environmental and medical humanities, literary and cultural studies, race studies, and history. Via this transdisciplinary approach, it foregrounds the coronavirus as flash point for new meanings of unclean air. Tracing the history of airborne pandemics through literary and cultural narratives, the project establishes linkages among air, viruses, pollution, and the human, and thus contributes to the environmental humanities through its unique approach to planetary degradation, air pollution, and environmental health.

Project Website: <https://airproject.univie.ac.at/>

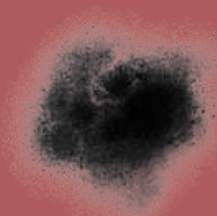
Key Publications

Books:

- Konrad, Tatiana. (ed.) *Imagining Air: Cultural Axiology and the Politics of Invisibility*. Exeter: University of Exeter Press, 2023.
- Konrad, Tatiana. (ed.) *Race and Environmental Justice in the Era of Climate Change and COVID-19*. East Lansing: Michigan State University Press, 2025.
- Konrad, Tatiana. (ed.) *Materiality of Air*. Exeter: University of Exeter Press, 2025.

Special Issues:

- Konrad, Tatiana, and Savannah Schaufler. (ed.) Special Issue “*Cultures of Airborne Diseases*,” *Open Cultural Studies* 8 (2024).
- Konrad, Tatiana, and Savannah Schaufler. (ed.) Special Issue “The COVID-19 Pandemic: An Environmental Humanities Perspective,” *Ecocene: Cappadocia Journal of Environmental Humanities* 6.2 (forthcoming, Dec. 2025).



Imagining Air: Cultural Axiology and the Politics of Invisibility

Edited by Tatiana Konrad
University of Exeter Press (2023)

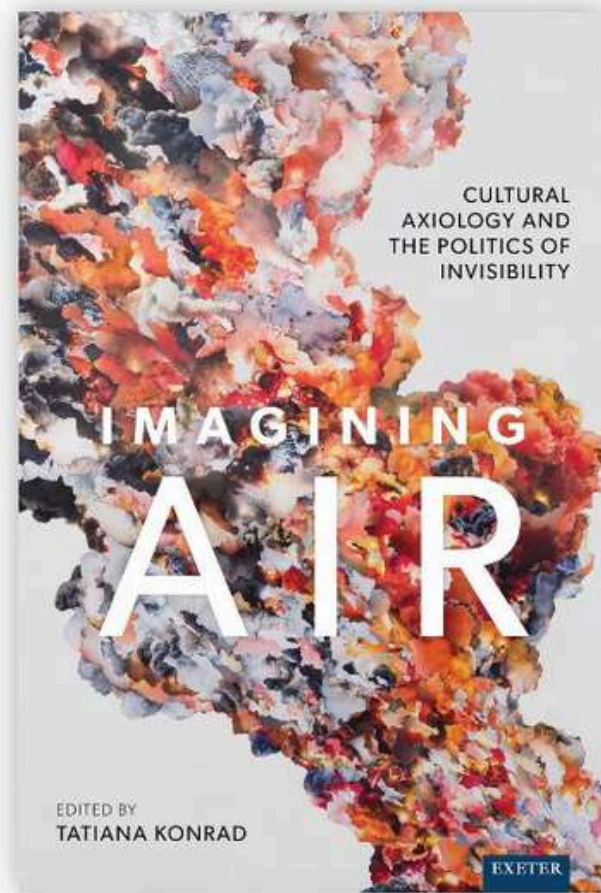


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IMAGINING AIR

CULTURAL AXIOLOGY AND THE POLITICS OF INVISIBILITY

Edited by Tatiana Konrad

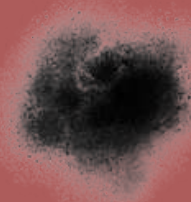


Imagining Air tackles air as a cultural, medical, and environmental phenomenon. Its major aim is to explore air's visibility and invisibility within the environment through the investigation of such phenomena as pollution and pandemics. The book provides environmental and medical perspectives on air, in particular how it has historically been envisioned in U.S., Canadian and British cultural and literary narratives. The authors explore how these representations and the constructed meanings of air can help us understand the complex nature of air as it pertains to the COVID-19 pandemic, air pollution and broader environmental degradation.

Order from exeterpress.co.uk and **SAVE 30%** by using code **UEPVIP**

'Imagining Air is a work of urgent environmental and planetary importance and ought to be read seriously by all who are invested in delivering social, political and climate equality.'

Jack Rondeau, *Green Letters: Studies in Ecocriticism*



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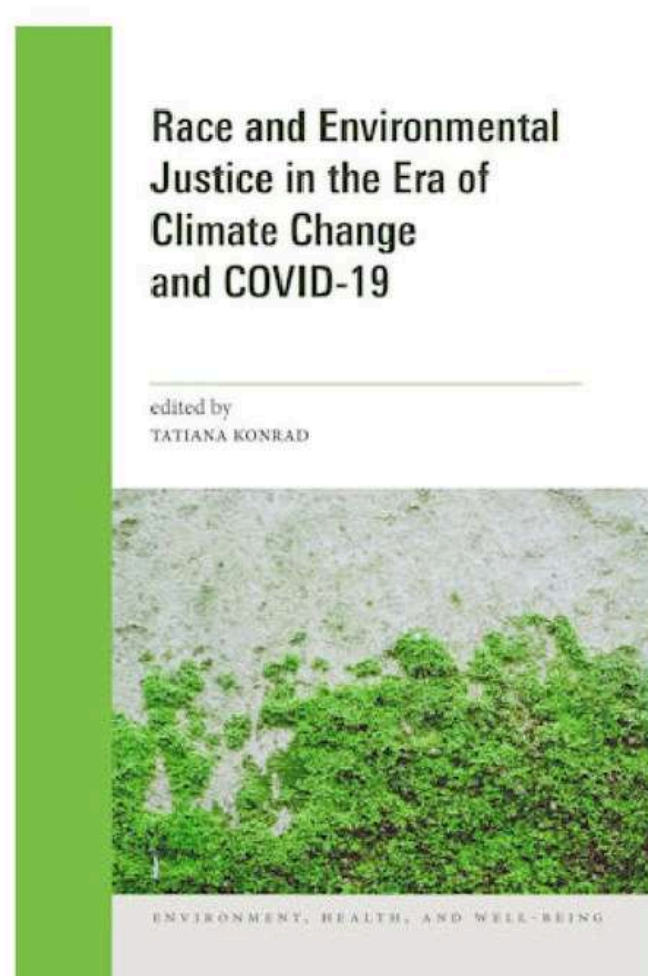


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Race and Environmental Justice in the Era of Climate Change and COVID-19

Edited by Tatiana Konrad

Michigan State University Press (2025)



eBook, 9781609177799, \$34.95

eBook, 9781628955439, \$34.95

Paperback, 9781611865288,
\$34.95

Date: August 2025

Pages: 265

View the book page



Race and Environmental Justice in the Era of Climate Change and COVID-19

Tatiana Konrad

DESCRIPTION

Informed by transdisciplinary research in social and environmental justice, *Race and Environmental Justice in the Era of Climate Change and COVID-19* is a contribution to the scholarly discourse as well as a form of activism for environmental, climate, and health justice. Using race and Indigeneity as an analytical lens, the book explores how justice in the era of climate change and COVID-19 is envisioned, depicted, and achieved. With a focus largely on humans and environments, its explorations of (in)justice illustrate the wide health and safety gaps between individuals, communities, and even nations living under different environmental conditions. The volume also moves beyond the human toward justice for all beings. This book foregrounds voices from world communities, provides solutions to environmental and health crises, and advances environmental justice.

AUTHOR/EDITOR BIOGRAPHY

Tatiana Konrad is the principal investigator of Air and Environmental Health in the (Post-)COVID-19 World, a postdoctoral researcher in the Department of English and American Studies at the University of Vienna, Austria, and the editor of the Environment, Senses and Emotions book series at University of Exeter Press and the Environment, Health, and Well-being book series at Michigan State University Press. She has authored and edited several books, including *Climate Change Fiction and Ecocultural Crisis: The Industrial Revolution to the Present*, *Disability, the Environment, and Colonialism*, and *Imagining Air: Cultural Axiology and the Politics of Invisibility*.

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East Lansing, MI 48823

Materiality of Air

Edited by Tatiana Konrad
University of Exeter Press (2025)

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MATERIALITY OF AIR

Edited by Tatiana Konrad



Exploring air, airborne phenomena, and elemental representation, this book dissects the materiality of air, which comes to the fore ever more vigorously given the ongoing environmental and health crises. Understanding air's materiality is essential to outlining clear solutions to the current challenges and to generating new meanings of what constitutes an environmentally safe and healthy future. Each chapter offers new perspectives on air's material qualities, treating air as a literal and figurative element that provides an important lens on climate change, toxicity, pollution, capitalism, and violence, among other issues. The volume also highlights future directions for engaging with the all-important medium of air.

Order from exeterpress.co.uk and SAVE 30% by using code UEPVIP

'Materiality of Air is an important contribution to our understanding of the crucial significance of this necessary element.'
Professor Laurence Simmons, University of Auckland

Book Series

Environment, Health, and Well-being

Series Editor: Tatiana Konrad

Michigan State University Press

Environment, Health, and Well-being

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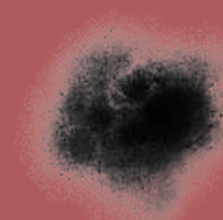
Genese Sodlkoff, Rutgers University

This series tackles the relationship between health and the environment, paying particular attention to changes occurring over time and across place. It seeks to illuminate the causes and consequences of human, more-than-human, and environmental ill-health, while also attending to possibilities for well-being, flourishing, and repair. Encouraging an expanded notion of health, *Environment, Health, and Well-being* presents scholarship that considers human well-being as directly correlated with health systems; extends the notion of health and well-being beyond the purely human frame; and interrogates planetary health through specific landscapes, ecologies, and human and more-than-human activities. Recognizing the ecological, political, social, and viral turbulence of our current times, the monographs and edited collections in this series look to interdisciplinary practice within the field of the environmental humanities as a way of understanding the present, reflecting upon the past, and rethinking possibilities of the future.

Environment, Health, and Well-being, while grounded in the environmental humanities, understands the barriers to environmental health as tied to legacies of extraction, consumption, colonization, and unlimited growth. It is thus especially interested in scholarship from Indigenous, race, gender and queer, and disability studies, as well as approaches that address histories and futures of labor and profit. *Environment, Health, and Well-being* welcomes projects from new and established scholars, in and outside of academia, which make visible for audiences the timeliness and necessity of interdisciplinary research on the relationships between humanity and environments. The contributions in this series capture the multifaceted nature of environmental health and foreground the importance of perpending the planet's well-being in these ecologically precarious times.

SUBMISSIONS AND QUESTIONS?

Email Tatiana Konrad at tatiana.konrad@univie.ac.at



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Book Series

Environment, Senses and Emotions

Series Editor: Tatiana Konrad

University of Exeter Press

NEW BOOK SERIES: CALL FOR BOOK PROPOSALS

ENVIRONMENT, SENSES AND EMOTIONS

Environment, Senses and Emotions aims to provide a comprehensive exploration of how environmental crises are represented, perceived and understood through the senses and emotions and the human impulse to make sense of the world. Books in this series enhance understandings of environmental crises, engaging with these crises' sensory and emotional dimensions, highlighting this emerging area as important to a number of research disciplines. The series also promotes more-than-human perspectives and analyzes how stories narrated by plants, animals and other more-than-human or multisensory accounts of ecological interactions shape and convey environmental knowledge.

The series welcomes edited collections and monographs written by scholars, practitioners, activists and thinkers who address environmental crises, broadly understood from natural disasters and local problems to global issues, and who explore these crises' sensory and emotional dimensions, including eco-anxiety, eco-guilt, eco-shame and solastalgia, among others. The series welcomes contributions from the Global South and prioritizes decolonial perspectives, examining structures of power and subjugation related to activism, justice and ecological well-being.

Environment, Senses and Emotions:

- provides a timely framework for scholarly contributions that deepen understandings of environmental crises, emphasizing sensory and emotional dimensions of human and more-than-human interactions;
- explores the role of the senses and emotions in shaping and communicating environmental knowledge;
- encourages diverse theoretical approaches to understanding the interrelations among environmental crises, the senses and emotions, and welcomes contributions from scholars in a variety of disciplines, including the environmental humanities, anthropology, sensory studies, media studies, geography, history, the health humanities, sociology and philosophy.

The series was recently included in a state-of-the-art review of sensory studies in *The Senses and Society*.

Series Editor: Tatiana Konrad, University of Vienna

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To discuss your book proposal please contact the Series Editor: Tatiana Konrad (tatiana.konrad@univie.ac.at) or University of Exeter Press Commissioning Editor: Becky Taylor (b.taylor@exeterpress.co.uk)