

Peer Review

Review of: "Culture and the Climate Crisis: An Emotive Transformation of Openness Art as a Foundation for Reconceptualising the Anthropocene"

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This is a great topic for a paper, and I really liked how the author has put into contact three elements of thinking, doing, and responding to address Big Questions of our times. The paper has lots of potential, but I don't think it's ready yet.

It needs to be double its current size, it needs some images or at the least some detailed explanations of specific works, and it needs lots and lots of connecting veins running through it. It will be great if the author can give it a lot more love and attention.

Here are my specific comments for you. I hope you see them as supporting and not condemning. Scholarly writing is not easy, and a good paper should require blood, sweat, and tears!

Thank you, and good luck!

The introduction is really strong. The key ideas and concepts are clearly explained, and the narrative flows well. The suggestion in the introduction is that the paper presents some very complex ideas. I loved the three questions as these clearly establish the parameters of the paper and its key aims – so good.

So, I was a bit disappointed to see that the end of the introduction was quite vague with this noncommittal statement:

'This research does not offer answers. Rather, it explores the courage to dwell in the absence of answers, the ability to be sensitive in delayed responses, and the quiet ethics that art can perform in all its contexts.'

While I agree that not all research needs to be positivist, it is important to commit to something rigorous and challenging. And you have written three deductive questions (see the end of the review), so you need to come up with something! So I hope the author will revisit the statement above and articulate what the paper does do, and talk it up! I believe a revised statement will improve the introduction and lead readers into the rest of the article.

I suggest a connecting sentence at the end of 2.1 to support the discussion going from the Anthropocene to concepts and ontologies of responsiveness, as the leap is not smooth at present. Similarly, at the end of 2.2, the author could improve the cohesion of the two sections by adding a statement about how they connect in relation to the focus of the paper. And again, at the end of 2.3, some connecting writing would help the reader understand how these three quite different topics interrelate.

I'm not sure if the writer has written a lot of scholarly writing, and I apologise if they have, as this isn't meant as an insult! But just to say that scholarly writing is different from story writing, in that a scholarly paper reveals all the secrets up front, including the big punchline, big mystery solving, etc. At the moment, Section 2 feels like it's holding back, not telling all, and waiting for the big reveal at the end. The problem with this is that for a scholarly idea to be effective, the Big Idea needs to be explained, reiterated, and unpacked from the beginning. It's almost the opposite of a good page-turner fiction. I think that if the author can introduce the really big, important stuff at the front and weave it through the subsections that provide the theoretical, conceptual, and practical contexts, it will be much stronger and more enticing. It will really help the reader understand and connect with the author's thinking.

For Section 3, I would move the second paragraph in 3.4 to the front of Section 3 because it introduces the relationship between the artistic works described. I recommend that this section also include some additional writing to help the subsections communicate with each other and flow smoothly from one to another, and to effectively weave in commentary on the three questions, discussing how they relate to them.

Section 4 is where all the components of the paper come together, and the author synthesises the ideas presented in the three questions through the theories discussed and the work examples included. As a guide, I would expect this section to be three times the current length, with detailed discussions that address each question and draw on relevant works and theories to present in-depth examples. Therefore, because Section 4 is so underwritten, the claims in Section 5 seem unfounded, as the writing refers to key ideas not covered in the earlier sections.

I would also suggest a Section 6 that revisits the three questions, answering them as they are all deductive – The questions have used What does.. in Q1, How does.. in Q2, and In what ways.. in Q3. These are questions that set up definitive investigations that need answers. Including a sixth section will allow the author to come full circle to the introduction and produce a wonderfully strong paper.

Thank you for allowing me to review your work, and keep going!

Declarations

Potential competing interests: No potential competing interests to declare.