

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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I very much enjoyed engaging with the ideas in your article. You provided fresh insights, with articulate and elegant thinking/writing. Your conceptualisation of art as a performative and affective force in response to the exigencies of the Anthropocene/Capitalocene is welcome. The idea of Openness Arts as generating presence and sensitivity through ethical entanglements is interesting, and the three examples you gave – of Forensic Architecture, Cooking Sections, and SUPERFLEX – gave me an insight into an intersectional world where art meets geopolitics, technology, interspecies work – so many fields entangled in a tentacular and spectacular way! It was so interesting that I spent quite some time on each of the websites to understand what work they were doing.

Your critique of the Anthropocene as universalist is fair; and of both it and the Capitalocene as potentially seeking “solutions” within tired paradigms (as Haraway suggests) is also fair. I would push back against your assertion that Haraway proposes the Chthulucene as an *alternative* to either of these other two characterisations of our climate emergency. From my reading of *Staying with the Trouble*, especially Ch. 2, it seems to me that she accepts both descriptors as encapsulating the mess that we’re in. She seems to be proposing the Chthulucene as a conceptual framework with which we can think our way *out* of this mess. After itemising her objections to the limitations of the Anthropocene and Capitalocene as tools to think with, she proposes “the Chthulucene as a needed third story, a third netbag for collecting up what is crucial for ongoing, for staying with the trouble...”

Further, she says that “The unfinished Chthulucene must collect up the trash of the Anthropocene, the exterminism of the Capitalocene, and chipping and shredding and layering like a mad gardener, make a

much hotter compost pile for still possible pasts, presents, and futures.” Finally, she notes that “Despite its problems, the term Anthropocene was and is embraced because it collects up many matters of fact, concern, and care; and I hope Capitalocene will roll off myriad tongues soon.”

So in this way, I don’t think there is a need to think in an oppositional way about these frameworks.

Similarly, I would challenge what appears to be oppositional thinking in characterising the impetus of traditional/conventional art as being merely a reproduction of beauty. Isn’t all art political, affective, and affecting? Isn’t all of it a reflection on existence and the human condition? And if it makes us feel and think differently, coming out of the experience *affected*, then it is doing some performative work; it is sensitizing us. Surely all art is responsive, and with meanings delayed or constantly recontextualised....

These points are by way of provocation but do not negate the fact that your writing was a joy to read. It creates new pathways in thinking about the potentialities for art as a powerful generative force in our current predicament.

Declarations

Potential competing interests: No potential competing interests to declare.