



Call for Papers: Media Mutualities

Media Fields: Critical Explorations of Media in Space, Issue 18

Mediascapes have always been the site of trans-, multi-, and inter-. From transspecies encounters in Jean Painlevé's zoological journeys within French surrealism, the internationalism gestured in Chris Marker's "I'll do what I can" to a young Patricio Guzman's call for production aid [1], to the global multilingual manifestations of Black Lives Matter, relationality has always been a prime mover in shaping radical mediascapes. While trans-, multi-, and inter- serve well as descriptive categories of the sociocultural designs that we inhabit, encounter, resist, or even seek to unlearn (Azoulay 2019), the clarion call from both the margins and the centers of capital have been to go beyond mere descriptions of designs. To imagine another design is to first analyze the very design principles that engender such descriptive categories and learn from those principles to make "another world" possible. At the core of every design principle lies a set of relations, fungible or otherwise, that actuate such design.

We at the *Media Fields* collective suggest that the form of relations at stake for potentiating a new design is mutuality. Mutuality is an active form of relationality. Not dictated by the forces of capital or state, but by an immanent desire to potentiate interrelations among communities, regions, or even species into counterhegemonic action, mutuality is reciprocity's political offspring. We acknowledge the implicit presence of mutuality in conceptual paradigms like "Hemispheric imagination" (Taylor 2001), "Global South" (Sousa Santos 2005), "Urban South" (Simeone 2018), "Friction" (Tsing 2004), or "Pluriverse" (Escobar 2019) as they underline how mutuality shapes cultures and spaces across geographies. Spatial design aside, scholars of commons have also thought of strategies of temporal design. Instead of being bound to capitalist speculative models of risk, they argue for a more radical notion of the commons where the vocabulary of risk is replaced by the praxis of "affirmative speculation" (Uncertain Commons 2014), staying open to futures whose potentialities are not already harnessed by a predictive model of risk. In pushing mutuality to its brink, we propose that mutuality allows a transversal movement across the epistemic categories like Commons, Global South, Hemispheric Imagination etc., binding them together into a field of mutual pedagogy where the design principles implicit in these categories can learn from each other to shape, as Zapatistas remind us, those possible worlds to come.

“Media mutualities” is then an invitation to think of encounters between media, mediation, and mutuality. Both mediation and mutuality are, in effect, design principles of the existing and potentially sensible world(s). “Media mutualities” thus moves along two primary axes of inquiry: a) the ways in which perceived examples of mutuality are mediated, and b) using a capacious understanding of media, how does media facilitate mutuality as a practice. Keeping these two axes as the foci of our present issue, we are interested in a wide spectrum of possibilities of mutualities, ranging from but not limited to:

- Media festivals by oppositional collectives
- Ecocritical thinking, creative geographies, and non-extractive design
- Sensing strategies and their interfaces (e.g., the corporeal, the environmental)
- Conversations between epistemological categories (e.g., Global South, commons, Hemispheric imagination)
- Emergent mediascapes amongst and between marginalized or displaced communities
- The relationship between forms of activism, media, and mutuality
- Genealogies of mutualities in film and media studies (e.g., historiography, theory)
- New archival forms and potential knowledge formations

We are expecting articles of 1500-2500 words (excluding footnotes) from potential contributors. Please email submissions to submissions@mediafieldsjournal.org by October 1, 2022.

Please review our submission guidelines at mediafieldsjournal.org ahead of submission.

[1] For more on how Marker supported Guzman’s *The Battle of Chile* see: <https://chrismarker.org/chris-marker-2/patricio-guzman-what-i-owe-to-chris-marker/>