

EDITORIAL

THE EDITORIAL BOARD

KEYWORDS

key concepts, emergent emergencies, open access journal, reflexivity, knowledge production

PUBLICATION DATE

Issue 1, May 30, 2016

HOW TO CITE

The Editorial Board. "Editorial." *On_Culture: The Open Journal for the Study of Culture* 1 (2016). <<http://geb.uni-giessen.de/geb/volltexte/2016/12074/>>.

Permalink URL: <<http://geb.uni-giessen.de/geb/volltexte/2016/12074/>>

URN: <urn:nbn:de:hebis:26-opus-120746>



Editorial

We, the Editorial Board of *On_Culture: The Open Journal for the Study of Culture*, are proud to present this pilot issue and thereby launch an exciting new publication platform at the [International Graduate Centre for the Study of Culture \(GCSC\)](#) in Giessen. This e-journal supplements the Centre's existing publishing program, consisting of the book series [Concepts for the Study of Culture](#) (de Gruyter), [Giessen Contributions to the Study of Culture](#) (WVT Trier), the series [English Literary and Cultural History](#) (WVT Trier), and the online book-review platform [KULT_Online](#).

Our e-journal distinguishes itself by putting conventional forms of publication into conversation with creative contributions in a wide range of media formats. It comprises an *_Article* section featuring double blind-peer-reviewed scholarly articles in the field of the study of culture, an *_Essay* section, as well as a more dynamic section showcasing virtual exhibitions, interviews, field reports, videos, and critical commentary. While academic articles will be published with each new issue biannually, contributions to our *_Perspective* section can be submitted on a rolling basis.

The pilot issue on “Emergence/Emergency” sheds light on the concepts of ‘emergence’ and ‘emergency’ from different angles and disciplinary perspectives. Taking their cue from our [Call for Abstracts](#), the authors discuss instances of the interfacing of emergence and emergency, or what we call ‘emergent emergencies.’ We consider such emergent emergencies as urgent tasks that scholars in the study of culture and related disciplines need to tackle with the help of new approaches.

The focus of the first issue is on emerging topics such as [hunger](#), [permaculture](#), [digital preservation](#), [technological developments on the Internet](#), [school shootings](#), [depression](#), [ecology](#), and the [Gezi protests](#). The contributions reflect *On_Culture*'s concept-based methodology. They add to the development of an aggregate of keywords that aim to come to terms with the meaning, reach, and operational values of key concepts in the study of culture.

Other foci of the pilot issue include the [interface of emergence and research processes](#) and [digital art](#), as well as the debatable epistemic value of models of emergence for the study of culture, which is unpacked in an opinion piece entitled [“The Trouble with Emergence.”](#) Together, the contributions fulfill one of the presupposi-

tions of the concept of emergence, namely that the whole is more than the sum of its parts. We have paired the concepts of emergence and emergency to highlight the degree of urgency with which much research on the phenomenon of emergence and emergent phenomena is conducted. Both terms call for self-reflexivity and cautious intervention in the cultural analysis of processes of transformation.

Thanks to our custom-programmed platform, developed by Karin Knibba and Henrik Heil, *On_Culture* offers scholarly content for free and thus takes a step forward in countering the privatization of academic knowledge in the humanities. As a fully open-access journal, *On_Culture* helps to contribute to an increase in transparency of the discursive processes behind the production of academic knowledge, to a heightened degree of effective sharing and use of research, and to improved access for the general public. The journal aims at opening up pathways for wider participation in collective and collaborative knowledge production in academia.

With this publication, we also wish to intervene in the meta-discussion surrounding the transition of academic publishing from a subscription-based model to an open access model. Guerilla open access publishers like Alexandra Elbakyan, the founder of Sci-Hub, an online repository of approximately 50 million academic articles, made headlines earlier this year when Elsevier sued the highbrow pirate from Kazakhstan in federal court in New York for copyright infringement and fraud.

Pirating is anything but a silver bullet. What we aim to stress with this example is that the stakes are high in the discussion about open access, which is ultimately also a discussion of the future of the humanities. In light of the political relevance of publications such as *On_Culture*, we are particularly grateful to the GCSC for financing this endeavor and to our [partners: Justus-Liebig-University \(JLU\)](#), the [Giessener Elektronische Bibliothek \(GEB\)](#), the [Centre for Media and Interactivity](#) at JLU Giessen, and the [Hybrid Publishing Lab](#), which was part of the Centre for Digital Cultures (CDC) until July 2015, at Leuphana University of Lüneburg.

Special thanks also go to the team of JLU's main library and its director, Dr. Peter Reuter, as well as to Michael Bartel and Dr. Marcus Burkhardt. We would also like to thank the peer reviewers for their considerate feedback and our proofreaders, Kate Oden and Madeleine LaRue, for their assistance. We are indebted to the GCSC's Executive Board for the generous support and joint effort in terms of the realization of this project. Last, but certainly not least, we thank the authors who contributed their

research efforts, creative ideas, opinions, and observations to make this first issue.
On_Culture would not have been possible without you all!

[The Editorial Board](#)

Giessen, May 2016