



Multimedia Library Collection: Periodicals

"Foreword: A Wrinkle in Space"

Helmreich, Stefan

Helmreich, Stefan. "Foreword: A Wrinkle in Space." *Environmental Humanities* 9, no. 2 (2017): 300-308. doi:10.1215/22011919-4215306.

In *The Wild Blue Yonder*, Werner Herzog's 2005 film fantasia on space voyaging, viewers learn about the "Interplanetary Transport Network," a set of winding pathways twisting invisibly through the solar system, sculpted by the shifting pushes, pulls, and resonances of gravitational forces among the planets. Martin Lo, a research scientist at NASA's Jet Propulsion Laboratory and a mathematician who has mapped the network's manifolds, calls this swerving web of ribbon-like gravity tubes a system of "chaotic transport." Riffing on Madeleine L'Engle's epic 1963 children's tale of time travel, *A Wrinkle in Time*, we might describe this system as a suite of wrinkles in space.

Each of the more-or-less anthropologically minded essays in this issue of *Environmental Humanities* offers the reader a novel wrinkle in space—where a wrinkle, following the *Oxford English Dictionary*, might be "a crease, fold, or ridge caused by the folding, puckering, or contraction of a . . . pliant substance," "a minor difficulty or irregularity," "a clever or adroit expedient or trick," or "a piece or item of useful information, knowledge, or advice." Taken together, all these wrinkles in space—tugging on one another, reshaping the path of the reader as she, he, or ze goes—offer a journey through this issue that is one-part cosmic transport and one-part chaotic transport, whirling the reader into zones that an anthropologist would call both familiar and strange. (Author's introduction)

© Stefan Helmreich 2017. *Environmental Humanities* is available online only and is published under a Creative Commons license (CC BY-NC-ND 3.0).

Download:

PDF: https://www.environmentandsociety.org/sites/default/files/key_docs/300helmreich.pdf

Related links:

- *Environmental Humanities* website
<http://environmentalhumanities.org/>
- *Environmental Humanities* 9, no. 2
<https://read.dukeupress.edu/environmental-humanities/issue/9/2>