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Openings

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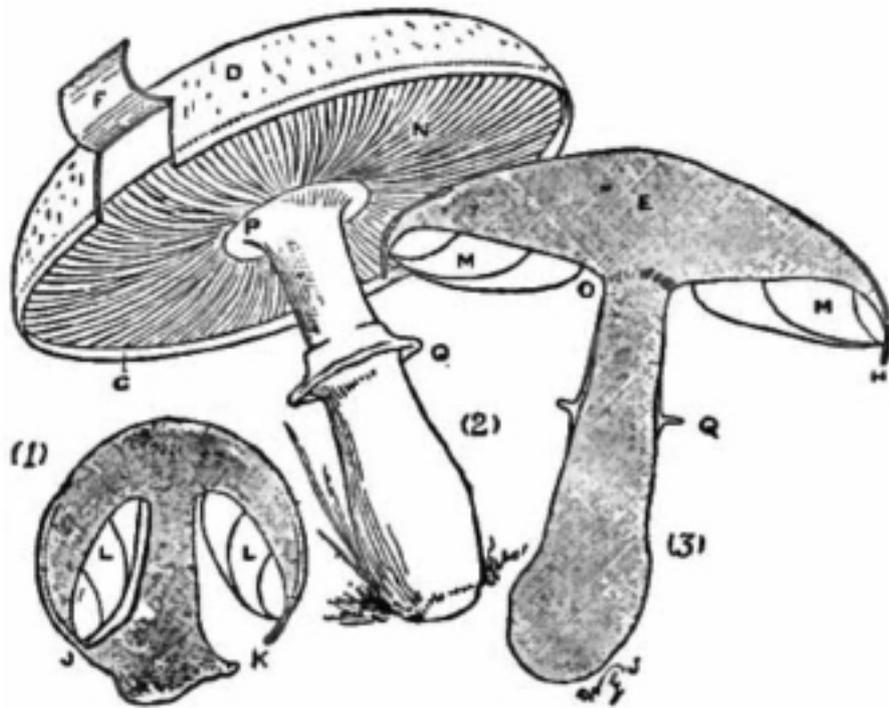


Figure 1: Pasture Mushroom; Attribution: 'Unknown author, Public domain, via Wikimedia Commons'²

Writing once more from behind closed doors, we want to write about openings; and about mushrooms too, which sometimes grow in openings.

Since we set up *entanglements* almost three years ago, it feels to us that Open Access publishing is gaining momentum, at least in the anthropological world and the world of the social sciences (or perhaps we are just paying more attention). Last year (October 2019) during Open Access week, Berghahn Publishers announced their aim, in collaboration with Libraria and Knowledge Unlatched, to convert all 13 anthropology journals they publish into Open Access. This year, the *European Association of Social Anthropologists*, following a motion that was carried forward from its Annual General Meeting held in July 2020, discussions and a vote are currently underway exploring how to convert the Association's flagship journal, *Social Anthropology/ Anthropologie Sociale*, into an [Open Access](#) model.

During this period of time, we, together with a number of other Open Access journals, and following on from the workshop held in September 2019 at the LSE (see editorial 2.2), have also co-authored a manifesto on ethical Open Access publishing which came out in July 2020, titled [Labour of Love: An Open Access Manifesto for Freedom, Integrity, and Creativity in the Humanities and Interpretive Social Sciences](#)¹. The manifesto is published along with a number of recommendations for a range of actors in the publishing ecology (from authors, to deans and provost and librarians) that we hope will enable what was acknowledged at the workshop and is captured in the manifesto, as the tightrope between autonomy for experimentation and the longevity and preservation that comes with institutionalisation. In particular, the manifesto encapsulates the 'wish to repoliticise Open Access to challenge existing rapacious practices in academic publishing—namely, often invisible and unremunerated labour, toxic hierarchies of academic prestige, and a bureaucratic ethos that stifles experimentation—and to bear witness to the indifference they are predicated upon.' The manifesto is signed by a number of wonderful colleagues and journal editors, passionate supporters of Open Access publishing. In the interest of visibility, we have introduced a new page in our journal, listing [fellow Open Access journals](#) who operate alongside similar principles to *entanglements*. (And if you are an editor/member of the editorial collective of a journal that you think should be included in this list, please get in touch with us).



This issue of *entanglements*, is the same as what you may, by now, be getting used to, but also a bit different. Issue 3.2 features two 'expériences' contributions. The first is by Charlie Ramsby and explores the idea of retrospective, graphic, and reflective representation of the ethnographic practice, and its implications for widening access to ethnographic data as well as returning 'findings' to the field. Charlie's narrative can be described as an opening, an opening of what is often the black box of 'making': of how multimodality comes to be, the conditions of its production, and the many con-

versations and collaborations that it can often involve, as well as the cul-de-sacs and detours that transpire in creating more faithful and more nuanced representations of experiences; representations that might stand a chance to act on the world in ways that resonate with the experiences of those depicted. It is a contribution, we believe, that will be invaluable both for the substantive issues it raises, but also, and in the spirit of openness, for anyone wanting to engage with multimodality but perhaps not knowing how to start.

Our second ‘expériences’ contribution in this issue is a film essay. A very beautiful, mesmerising and thought provoking film essay that pushes the boundaries of our visual languages and celebrates the essay form as a genre of directness and intimacy, of wandering thoughts, and undulating moods (Porter 2013). Mattijs van de Port *Knots and Holes* is a film essay that, as Mattijs himself [describes](#) ‘keep[s] alive the tension between openness and closure’ as it documents the life of nets (from fishing nets to lacing) across the different activities of Bahians (from fishing to home-making and love-making) and outwards (or should that be inwards?) to the virtual networks of connection. The ‘re-views’ section of this issue is then dedicated to responses, in writing and in film, to *Knots and Holes*, with contributions from Michael Jackson, Lucas Sanper, and Lisa Stevenson.

In introducing the film *Knots and Holes*, Mattijs van de Port comments that ‘all we humans ever do is to impose structures onto life and being, then to find out that neither life, nor being, follow our designs’. While the film essay was released in 2018, these words find an unexpected resonance and more generalised audience in 2020, in this pandemic year, than that perhaps originally envisaged. Life, of course, during this year has not followed our designs. The pandemic has upset many a well-laid plan calling into question the meaning of design itself including what it means to do ethnography when ‘stuck’ at home. It is this calling out of plans and of anticipated futures, what it does to ethnography and ethnographers in equal measure, that is the focus of our inaugural section to the journal (of which more about in a moment).

Curated by guest editors Francisco Martínez, Eeva Berglund and Adolfo Estalella, this themed section problematises what an anthropology of/at/from home might mean for the field, both in disciplinary terms and in terms of the world ‘out there’ and in here, a distinction that the pandemic makes difficult to uphold despite official policies of physical distancing and of staying home. The section includes a range of essays from diverse geographical locations and using a range of multimodal formats; it is the first in a series of installments on ‘an anthropology of/at/from home’ by the guest editorial/curatorial team with the second installment expected in the spring issue.



Figure 2: A toadstool; anonymous child photographer participant in the ERC Connectors Study³, taken during walk outside of London in 2015⁴ (Licence CC-BY-NC-ND 4.0).

Which brings us to the naming of this inaugural section of the journal, ‘mushrooms at the edge of the issue’. While not always easy, we have since March tried to embrace the idea that while deranging, the pandemic is also a chance to, where possible, do things differently: it is in the experience of time and space being left agape by plans falling through that new edifices might be scaffolded. The title of the section is quite unashamedly a tribute to Anna Tsing’s beautiful ethnography, *The Mushroom at the End of the World*, and what she describes as ‘the possibility of life in capitalist ruins’. Since, the publishing of Tsing’s ‘mushroom’, a fascination with mushrooms, fungi, and mycelium has branched out into popular imagination. From [Entangled Life](#), a popular science book on ‘how fungi make our worlds, change our minds and shape our futures’, to Star Trek [plotlines](#) and [children’s books](#), the mushroom is becoming emblematic of human and non-human interconnectedness and interdependencies at a time when social divisions are also at a high. The mushroom in this sense becomes a symbol of hope and an opening up of the imagination (Tsing 2015).

And so, to the mushrooms at the end of some of our issues going forward. Over the last couple of years, as *entanglements* has grown and spread in reach, we have been occasionally approached by colleagues with wonderful ideas for themed sections, essay collections, and other forms of collaboration. We like the idea of *entanglements* as a fertile ground for experiments in multimodality to grow and to flourish but we also didn’t want to give over entire issues as ‘special issues’ as is the custom in traditional journal publishing. This left us initially a bit stuck: how could we respond to such openings with-

out doing a way with the organisation of each issue that we were quite partial to and which was becoming recognised? Of course, we could have called these emergent collaborations ‘special sections’ or ‘themed section’; but somehow these established nomenclatures seemed a little uninspired, a bit like calling your cat, Cat (one of us had a friend who did this). At the same time, and given how these offers were also contingent, they sprung up unexpectedly, a bit like ‘mushrooms’, we started to play around with the idea of the ‘Mushrooms at the end of the issue’, as an opening, for ideas, for playing around with multimodality and trying out new things around a shared theme. Our mushrooms at the end of the issue are collective experiments in multimodality that subvert established publishing scripts for dealing with extraordinary contributions (e.g. special issue, themed section etc), as well as circumvent and circumnavigate, without entirely doing away with, [our own organising logics of récits, expériences and re-views.](#)

As such, entanglements will, from this issue onwards, occasionally come with an additional [fruiting body](#), the ‘Mushrooms at the end of the issue’. This space will always be guest-edited by colleagues who share the journal’s values of openness, playfulness, and curiosity, and although the topics it will include will vary, the focus of each particular takeover will be either on themes and/or formats that address issues of multimodal ethnography. We aim for this space to be one of *contamination* in which new directions for multimodality may emerge (Tsing, 2015, p. 27); we hope at least it will be fecund and that through such openings, and as our editorial board member Katerina Sergidou put it paraphrasing Anna Tsing, [the mycelia of intellectual thought will be running wild.](#)

Notes

1 https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Britannica_Mushroom_Pasture_Mushroom.jpg

2 Full author list: Andrea E. Pia, Simon Batterbury, Agnieszka Joniak-Lüthi, Marcel LaFlamme, Gerda Wielander, Filippo M. Zerilli, Melissa Nolas, Jon Schubert, Nicholas Loubere, Ivan Franceschini, Casey Walsh, Agathe Mora, and Christos Varvantakis.

3 <https://childhoodpublics.org/projects/connectors/>

4 <https://cpa.childhoodpublics.org/archives/cpa/photo0633>

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